

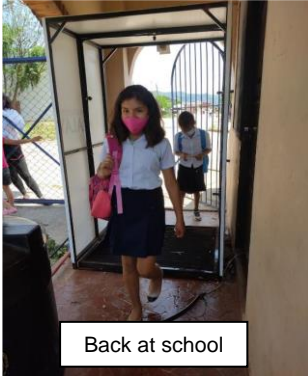


FRIENDS OF ALALAY (SANTA CRUZ)

Registered charity no. 1123425

AUTUMN 2021 NEWSLETTER

Even though Bolivia overall continues in crisis as far as Covid 19 is concerned, the Santa Cruz region is faring better and, compared with other regions, [currently has the highest number of people who have had at least one vaccination](#). Our children and staff have remained largely free of the virus, and we are slowly returning to “normal” life. This is therefore going to be a “GOOD NEWS” newsletter and I’m including a second sheet of photos that reinforces that idea.



Back at school

Firstly, our children are beginning to physically attend school classes once more – suitably protected, and keen to be back.

Secondly, we are working hard to maintain the mental health of our children and staff, after so many lockdowns and difficulties, and have organised a number of great fun field trips, picnics and other recreational activities.



Having fun!

Thirdly, we have been running a series of life skills training for the kids, reminding them that they can become future leaders in their communities – part of a wider initiative named “I also matter!”. Within the programme, proposals aimed at reducing the incidence of violence are being developed by the children and discussed with local decision-makers

In addition, with the help of ToyBox, Alalay has been working hard to ensure that ALL our children finally have birth certificates and ID cards. Many of them previously possessed no documentation, meaning they were virtually “invisible” in the eyes of the law and society. Now they can access their full political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights, with multiple knock-on effects, including reducing the worst forms of child labour (currently an estimated 152 million children work worldwide – made worse by the pandemic and desperate financial difficulties in which many families now find themselves).

“[...] street children face various injustices and are exposed to abuse by social protection systems that do not cover them due to a lack of identity papers. When they reach adulthood, a lack of identification documents and birth certificates proving their identity and age further complicates their entry to work in the formal sector, enrol in education and access social protection aid. Ensuring that every street child can access their birth certificate has to be part of multidisciplinary efforts to end child labour.” (Consortium for Street Children 2021)



The girls' team

Watch a video [HERE](#) to see what having documentation has meant to one family who have been helped by Alalay (in Spanish only).

Furthermore, some of our teenage girls have formed a women’s football team, which we hope will take part in the “Street Child World Cup, Doha 2022” and perhaps represent Bolivia in Qatar. The initial selection of players has taken place and the chosen national teams should be announced soon.

And finally, we have finally been able to re-build our children’s playground – which as you can imagine is proving enormously popular.

I’ll end on that happy note – thank you all so much for your continued support - please do take a look at my website.



New playground

Annie Syrett-Jones, Tibú, Colombia – October 2021

www.alalay.co.uk