



**CHILDREN
CHANGE
COLOMBIA**

Formerly Children of the Andes




**WE ARE
25 YEARS
OLD THIS
YEAR!**

An impossible dilemma

Don Jaime lives with his sons Andres and David, aged 9 and 11 in a rundown building, in one room with one window. That window has to be covered with a blanket. They live in Bogota's 'tolerance zone' for sex workers, who gather on the street below their room. The blanket blocks out the light but it also blocks out the street scene below, giving them at least one place where they can just be children and forget about their surroundings. Don Jaime has to work to put food on the table, but he also has to accompany his sons every time they leave their room; the streets are simply not safe and there's no-one he trusts to look after them. Every day he faces an impossible struggle between keeping his sons safe and keeping them fed.

“Raising children here is exhausting. I dream of a future where my sons and I are a happy family together”

This is a real story. Only the name and photo have been changed for child protection reasons.

“Since my wife was committed to a psychiatric unit 6 years ago I've had to be both mum and dad. It hasn't been easy. Raising children here, surrounded by drug use, prostitution and crime is exhausting. I always have to be with my children, making sure no-one with bad intentions comes near them and that they don't learn bad things. Since they joined ACJ's project our lives have got so much better – ACJ have helped me to be a better dad, my sons are doing well in school and in the project they learn to understand what they see on the streets and how to protect themselves from it. I dream of a future where my sons and I have our own house and we are a happy family together.”

Don Jaime represents just one of many families in this area that are determined to keep their children safe from the dangers that surround them.

PLEASE DONATE TODAY
CHILDREN CHANGE COLOMBIA is working to help parents protect their children but we can't do this without your support.



How to reduce the risks to children

Commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) continues to be a significant problem in Colombia. Between 2011 and 2013 Colombian Social Services removed 2,135 children from situations where they were being sold for sex. 45% were under 11 years old. Organisations working in this field have estimated that over 35,000 children are involved in CSEC in Colombia but large numbers of cases go unreported.

Bogota has some of the highest levels of CSEC in the country, and Santa Fe and Martires are two of the zones in Bogota with the highest levels of CSEC. It is believed that the risks are so high there because of the very visible presence of sex workers. Santa Fe is a designated 'tolerance zone' where sex workers are permitted to operate without prosecution and can be seen in large numbers at all hours of the day. This means that just on their way to and from school children pass groups of sex workers, and people who pay for sex, on the streets.

The potential risks of this are:

- Children see sexual exploitation as a normal transaction in exchange for money or goods. In a neighbourhood where many families are living in poverty, this is a dangerous message.
- Many children in the area have a parent or other family member involved in sex work or sexual exploitation, which can further increase the likelihood that they see the sale of their own bodies as normal.

- There is a complete lack of police presence in the district, which has created spaces for gangs and drug dealers to operate openly. This exposes children to potentially dangerous adults who seek to violate their rights – this includes those who recruit and control adults and children for sexual exploitation, those who pay for sex, and those involved in gangs, drugs and other crime.
- It is more difficult to identify children who are being sexually exploited for money when there are so many adults in this situation. Children are often placed on the streets with false documents stating that they are over 16, the legal age for sex workers.

All these factors combine to create an extremely high risk of CSEC and other forms of physical and sexual abuse. There are many parents like Don Jaime who are doing their best to make sure that their children are protected against this, but they can't do this alone.

What are we doing?

Children Change Colombia began working with ACJ Bogota this year to reduce children's risks of abuse. 120 children from these communities are learning about the different forms that CSEC can take and what to do if threatened by it. They also learn that CSEC is not normal but a violation of their rights, and that they are not to blame if they experience it. Young adults who are already involved in sex work/sexual exploitation are also participating in activities to help them gain the confidence to escape it, find other ways to earn money, and where necessary to provide support to their own children. In addition to this, ACJ is working in nearby schools to raise awareness of CSEC among students and teachers, and to make sure that teachers know what they should do to protect children.

To encourage long-term protection of children, community members, including street vendors and shopkeepers, are taking part in

activities to raise their awareness of CSEC, enabling them to identify it when they see it happening and encouraging them to take action to stop it.

Successful experiences

Children Change Colombia has experience of working on this type of project. You may recall that from 2010-2015 we worked with Renacer to prevent and reduce CSEC in Cartagena, an area with high levels of 'sex tourism'. This project was a huge success, directly reaching 333 children and enabling Renacer to mobilise the whole community to take action to protect children from CSEC.

Through working with 276 teachers and 181 public servants in the District, Renacer was able to a) create a public sector that is significantly more aware of CSEC, where there is less prejudice and stigma surrounding the issue and b) improve the care available for those who experience CSEC. These

public officials are now capable of taking independent action to protect children against CSEC and to care properly for those who have already experienced it. During the period, they also provided training in CSEC to a further 932 teachers, 6,554 children, and 1,347 parents.

20 young people were able to develop leadership skills and joined a network dedicated to combating CSEC. They now play an active role in protecting other children from CSEC, sharing what they've learnt with their communities and teaching others what can be done to prevent it.

We hope that our experience with Renacer and the lessons that we learnt during that 5 year project will complement the experience of ACJ Bogota and that together we can increase children's protection from CSEC.

With your support we can help to create a safer community for children at risk of commercial sexual exploitation - PLEASE DONATE NOW.



25 years of CHILDREN CHANGING

Our work is not really about numbers. Our emphasis has always been on the quality of our work so that we can be sure we are making long-term improvements in children's lives.

Just counting the children and families we have worked with, for example, tells you little about whether we've really made a permanent difference.

In all our newsletters, on our website and elsewhere we try hard to show you how the work that you support leads to genuine long term changes. Where we can, we try to illustrate this with real stories, of real people like Jaime, Andres and David's story on the front page.

But sometimes, of course, numbers do help, especially when you're trying to grasp the scale of something. And the scale of what we have achieved over the last 25 years, with your help, is immense!

So here are some numbers.

How many children and adults have we reached?

It is difficult to be absolutely precise about this figure for a number of reasons: For example, some figures from our early years are a bit difficult to come by. Also, we didn't always make the distinction between children who we have worked directly with and children whose lives are affected indirectly by our work. We may work with one child on a programme to return them safely to their family after life on the street. But if we help their family stay together, their brothers' and sisters' lives are changed too.

Based on the figures that we do have, we estimate that at least **1,072,000 children and adults** have been affected significantly by our work over the last 25 years.

1,072,000

children and adults have been affected significantly by our work



WE ARE
25 YEARS OLD
THIS YEAR!

COLOMBIA, in numbers!

How many partner organisations have we worked with?

We aim to work on the issues that others overlook, so that means we are always seeking new partners who have the knowledge and expertise to make a real impact on the issues that are really affecting children's rights.

Since 1991 we have supported **46** partner projects on issues as diverse as child labour in the coffee industry and child sexual

exploitation in the tourist industry, street living, landmines, HIV and Aids, educational inclusion for children with disabilities and the social exclusion of young people leaving care. We have always helped to put such neglected issues on the map, so that once we move our limited resources elsewhere our partners' work on these issues, and that of others, can continue to flourish.

We have supported

46

partner projects

How much money have we raised?

Up to the end of 2015 we had raised a staggering **£11,610,781**

Our highest ever annual income was £727,032, which we achieved in 2011. This was nearly matched by 2015's income, which was £725,219.

In fact, since 1991 our annual income has generally been on an upward trend, thanks to your generosity, and your understanding of the seriousness of the challenges that face children and young people in Colombia.

How has Children Change Colombia grown?

As our income has grown over the last 25 years, so has the size of our organisation. We now have 10 dedicated, professional staff.

With more staff has come the capacity to work more effectively, with more partner organisations on more issues, and to reach more children.

81%

of our expenditure of the last five years has gone to support our work in Colombia

Although spending money on fundraising and administration is essential if we are to become an ever more effective and professional defender of children's rights in Colombia, we have not spent our increasing income on higher admin costs or plusher offices.

In fact, as our expenditure has grown we have steadily increased the proportion that goes to our work in Colombia, rather than on fundraising, admin and governance costs.

Over the last five years an average of **81%** of our expenditure has gone **in grants and support to our work in Colombia**, significantly higher than the average of the previous 20 years.



Thank you

Thanks to all our supporters whose generous donations make our work possible!

We don't often get to thank by name the many of you who donate regularly by standing order. You are essential to our ability to support children at risk in the long term, so huge thanks to all of you.

We'd also like to thank our fantastic corporate supporters, who include **Amerisur, Anglo American, Aramark, Ashmore, Capital International, Comercial Fox, Complete Coffee, EMBL, Fyffes, RE Cares** and **Succession Group**.

Individuals



Sonia Romero led a yoga class in return for donations. **Alexandra Jones** organised a Rugby World Cup sweepstake. **Fernando Montaña** held a dance performance and donated a Signapura painting auctioned at the event. **The Murray family** organised a Wimbledon Tea event. **The Everett family** fundraised during their stay in Colombia. **Catalina Vitolo** organised

a Zumbathon in return for donations. **Georgie Maddock** moved to Australia and fundraised through her leaving drinks. **Lyn and David Payne** held a chilli fundraising night for their running group. **Teresa Molano** invited us to have a fundraising stall at Calthorpe Project.

Community



A big thank you to everyone at **Ickburgh School** and **St. Winefride's Convent School**.

Thanks to religious groups that have supported our work in recent months, including: **Alexandra Presbyterian Church (Belfast), Carmelite Monastery (Preston), Didsbury United Reformed Church, Peter's Church Third World**

Aid Committee, St. Andrew's Church, St. Andrew's Clubmoor (Liverpool), St. Botolph Lullingstone Parochial Church, St. John's Hyde Park and St. Joseph's Catholic Church (South Molton).

Sports Challenges

Thanks to everyone who raised funds through sporting challenges, including: **Trevor Buckland, Tiffany Giraldo, Hiroko Rodaway** and **Javier Rodriguez**.

The 2016 North London Half Marathon Team: **Albert Alvarez, Pau Ocasar, Andrea Restrepo, Paolo Rizzo** and **Fredy Sarmiento** and the British 10K team: **Jeyfer Balanta, Samantha Braddish, Guilherme Damas, Mario Giraldo** and **Adriana Restrepo** who together raised nearly £2,000.



Thanks to the Guildford Hash Harriers Running Group

Upcoming events

Children Change Colombia Fiesta Wednesday 12th October 2016

Join us and invite your friends and family to a celebration of Colombian music, dance and food. Enjoy a unique Colombian Fiesta and help us raise funds for our work.

News

Thames Walk

This year's Thames Walk raised £8,000! We would like to thank all participants and fundraisers for making this event such a great success. Join us next year, on Saturday 10th June 2017.

Help us spread the word!

By distributing Children Change Colombia leaflets around your local community, whether it is your school, church, library or workplace, you are helping us tell more people about what we do! Please contact Doreta doreta@childrenchange colombia.org if you would like to help.

If you would like to organise an event to fundraise in support of our work or for more information about fundraising challenges please contact doreta@childrenchange colombia.org or 020 7549 0225.

Letter from the Director

Dear Friends

Children Change Colombia is 25 years old. Many of the children that we supported in our early years will now have children of their own.

Are these children living safer, happier childhoods than their parents did? For many, we think the answer is yes.

This is partly because of the support that their parents received from you during their own, difficult childhoods. You have helped thousands of young people find safety and love and develop the skills and confidence to establish fulfilling lives for themselves and come to have healthy and happy children of their own.

Yet many children in Colombia still face childhoods as uncertain and dangerous as children did 25 years ago.

One of the causes of this danger and uncertainty, the armed conflict between the government and the FARC guerrillas, may be about to reach a negotiated end. This is a significant moment for Colombia, and one of opportunity, but also of risk, for children and young people.

It is an opportunity because it could bring greater safety and more chances for children to develop their talents unhindered by the fear of violence.

It is a risk because the other threats to children that will remain could be overlooked in any 'post-conflict' euphoria.

We know that if a peace agreement is signed with the FARC, many other criminal armed groups, and the threats they pose to children, will remain. What's more, a peace agreement will not put an end to poverty or inequality overnight.

The response to these opportunities and risks must be the same. We must continue to create safe places where children, and the adults responsible for their protection, can be empowered to change their own lives and the lives of their communities.

If we can do this then today's children can begin to create a Colombia for their children that is truly free from conflict.

They need your help to do this. So if you are not already a regular donor, please consider setting up a standing order through the form below. With this sort of regular help we can stand by the children who are striving to change Colombia.

Thank you.



Duncan Millar,
Executive Director

Autumn 2016



Regular Giving

Instructions to the Manager

Your account

Name of bank or building society:

Address:

Postcode:

Account No. Sort Code - -

Your donation

Please pay **Children Change Colombia** (Account No.: **22052801**, Sort Code: **60-07-02**) at NatWest Bank plc, 14 High Street, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 1AX,

The sum of £ on the day of / /20

(This date should be at least one month from today).

And the same sum Monthly Quarterly Yearly

Your details

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms

Address:

Postcode:

Email:

Tel:

Signed:

Date: dd/mm/yy

Gift Aid Declaration

I am a UK Tax Payer and I would like Children Change Colombia to reclaim the tax on all qualifying donations I have made to them in the past 4 years as well as any future donations. I will notify them if I am no longer eligible or if I change address.

To qualify for gift aid I understand that I must have paid income / capital gains tax that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs I donate to will reclaim on my Gift Aid donations in the tax year in which they are received and that other taxes such as Council Tax and VAT do not count for this purpose.

Signed:

Date: dd/mm/yy

Colombia Diary

Our new Colombia-based fundraiser, Diana Bello, writes about a moving moment during a meeting of our partners in Cali.

Earlier this year I took part in the first meeting of all our current, and some previous, partner organisations. Over 3 days in Cali, Si Mujer, the host partner, ran workshops about 'Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights', giving partners the knowledge and tools to provide support to the young people they work with, on 'invisible' issues like sexual violence and abortion.

Each of the 11 partner organisations was represented by young people who presented their work and talked about their greatest achievements since joining the project. There was one very emotional moment during one of these presentations. We had grown close as a group and one girl opened up and explained that she had been a victim of sexual violence by members of an illegal armed group when she was just fourteen years old. She told us how difficult it had been for her to recover from this, but that doing so was a huge

achievement. For most of us listening, her story brought home the reality of life for some children in Colombia. But for others, a couple of young people from another of our partner organisations who are former child soldiers, it was the opportunity for them to ask forgiveness from victims of the armed conflict, a conflict in which they had been forced to play a role. The whole room came together in a big group hug; it was a very healing moment for us all.

The process of reconciliation and reintegration into society for all of our children and young people who have been victims of the conflict will be long and it's so important to continue strengthening our partners' work with them. The time has come to offer young people the opportunity to build and enjoy an inclusive, safe and peaceful future. I'm certain that Children Change Colombia is on the right track to support this process.



“The time has come to offer young people the opportunity to build and enjoy an inclusive, safe and peaceful future.”

Please donate now

Donor details (We won't share your details with anyone else.)

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms

Address:

Postcode:

Email:

Tel:

Your donation

I would like to make a donation of: £5 ; £10 ; £25 ; £50 ; £100 ; Other £

Payment details

(By BACS transfer: **Children Change Colombia**; Sort code **60-07-02**; Account no. **31623212**)

Cheque (Please make cheques payable to **Children Change Colombia**)

Visa; Mastercard;

CAF Charitycard Card No.

3 digit security number (on signature strip): Expiry Date: / (mm/yy)

Signed:

Date:

Gift Aid Declaration

I am a UK Tax Payer and I would like Children Change Colombia to reclaim the tax on all qualifying donations I have made to them in the past 4 years as well as any future donations. I will notify them if I am no longer eligible or if I change address.

To qualify for gift aid I understand that I must have paid income / capital gains tax that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs I donate to will reclaim on my Gift Aid donations in the tax year in which they are received and that other taxes such as Council Tax and VAT do not count for this purpose.

Signed:

Date:

Yes, I require an acknowledgement (please tick or we will assume you do not; this will help us save on administration costs).

Please send me a fundraising pack

Children Change Colombia, Development House, 56-64 Leonard Street, London, EC2A 4LT
t: 02075490225 e: info@childrenchangecolombia.org w: childrenchangecolombia.org

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Thank you!