



Children of the Andes

Building a better future for vulnerable children in Colombia

Autumn 2012

Speaking Out



Nubia is 9 years old. She called Corpolatin's helpline because her mum used to hit her; with a belt, with her hand, with the flex of the iron. She would tell her that she was a devil and that she never wanted to see her again, threatening to send her to live in care.

For 7 years Nubia suffered this abuse in silence; it was all she had ever known so she didn't know it was wrong. Then Corpolatin came into her school to explain that parents shouldn't hurt their children and talk about their helpline and how easy it was to call and have someone to talk to. After Nubia called, Corpolatin got local social services to visit the house

to talk to her mum and make sure Nubia was not in any danger. Corpolatin have helped Nubia's mum access psychological support and things have already started to get better.

Corpolatin provides this type of vital support to over 2,000 children each year, going into schools and communities to talk to children and their families about some of the challenges they might face at home, and who they can go to for help if they need it. Last year 5,831 children called them – for these vulnerable children who don't know who else to turn to, Corpolatin is an essential lifeline.

This lifeline can't continue without your help.

Please make a donation today and help us to continue supporting this crucial work.

Putting Children First

COTA believes that children know their own feelings and thoughts better than anyone else. Children also have the capacity - and the right - to make choices about what will help them most. The vulnerable children our partners work with lack confidence, are not used to their opinions being taken seriously, and need support and encouragement to express their views. Helping them build this confidence is important, not only because children should have a say in projects that are working for their benefit, but also because having the confidence to speak up is an important first step to empowering children to protect themselves.

With this in mind, COTA's partner Corpolatin visited schools where they work with vulnerable children, to get their opinions and ideas on Corpolatin's services. Barbara, COTA's Cali based Field Officer, was invited to join them. Here she shares some of her impressions.

"Despite an initial reluctance to join in, the children soon got involved in the activities and games, losing their shyness or worry that they would be told off for speaking out, and beginning to shout out



ideas gleefully, laughing and having fun. At the school I visited the children were all older than the standard age for their year or had learning difficulties, and many were from care-homes. Because we knew they had weak literacy levels, the activities used puppets to try and engage the children.

One boy, Inness, was enthralled by the puppets. He had come into the room tongue-tied and barely able to meet my eyes or answer my questions. But when he saw the puppets his eyes lit up and he began to smile. Before long, Inness had asked permission to use one of the puppets. From then on, this puppet was Inness; he

had found his voice through a simple foam puppet with a funny face and hat. I am sure this puppet gave Inness the courage to hold up a green (yes) card when the children were asked by 'Pepito' (another puppet) whether they would call Corpolatin's child line if their parents hit them; and I believe it was this puppet that then gave him the courage to say in a whisper "my mother hits me sometimes and it really hurts. I don't think she should hit me." *

Working with Corpolatin's puppets enabled a group of unconfident children, children who are accustomed to being labelled as a 'problem', to find their voice and use it to express feelings and opinions that were encouraged and taken seriously."



*Corpolatin's psychologist spent some time alone with Inness during this session and the team are working with his mother to resolve this issue.



2011: What we raised and how we spent it

Despite the challenging economic environment and thanks entirely to our generous donors, Children of the Andes raised £727,032 in 2011. We have continued to raise funds from a wide range of sources, which has helped to give us stability. In addition, we opened a new source of funding by securing our first ever grant from Comic Relief for Albergue Infantil's family reunification programme.

Some 20% of our income came from individuals donating through standing orders, supporting our appeals, doing challenges, getting their churches and schools involved

and leaving legacies. Individuals continue to be our main source of unrestricted income, which is the life-blood of the organisation – these funds provide a vital safety cushion for our grant giving, finance our capacity building work and cover the infrastructure and staff we need to ensure we operate effectively and maximise the impact of our work on vulnerable children in Colombia.

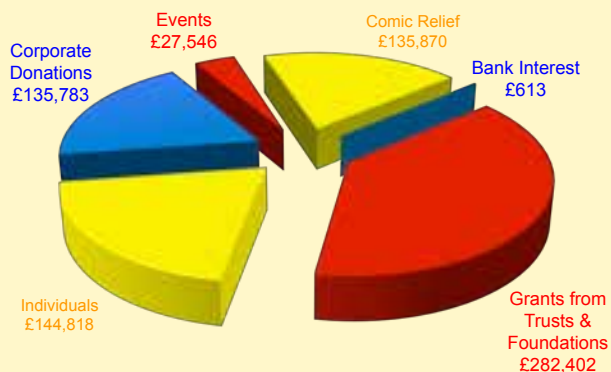
Over the course of the year we sent £399,638 in grants to support the work of ten partner organisations. In addition, we spent £166,733 on providing ongoing technical support to our partners through our Field

Office. Once again, thanks to our tight financial management, we were able to keep governance and fundraising costs to a minimum – only 18% of total expenditure.

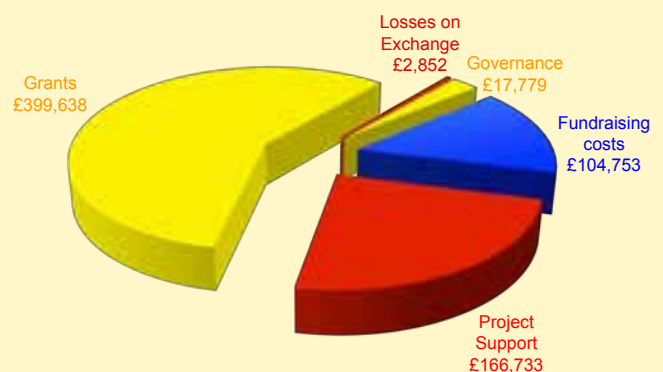
If you would like to have a look at our audited accounts and annual report for 2011, please visit our website www.childrenoftheandes.org

Warmest thanks to all our supporters who make our work possible and continue to inspire us with their generosity

Sources of income in 2011



What we spent in 2011



82p in every pound was spent on supporting projects



Key facts about Colombia¹



Education is now free in Colombia, although more than **1 million children** are still out of school.



Colombia has **1.8 million** child workers.



Photo from Wiki Commons.
Author: Daisy Tierrier
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An estimated 34% of Colombia's population live below the national poverty line of approximately £2 per day; this is less than the cost of a cup of coffee in many UK coffee shops.



Colombia is the world's fifth biggest producer of coffee, and its beans are widely regarded as the **highest quality in the world**.



Colombia has the highest level of inequality of any country in South America; the top 10% of the population share 46% of the total income compared to the bottom 10%, who share less than 1%.



Colombia has the second highest number of victims of landmines in the world. Between 1990 and 2011 over **950 victims were children**.



¹A fully referenced version of this article is available on our website www.childrenoftheandes.org



A recent poll that measured sustainable well-being ranked Colombia as the **3rd happiest country** in the world.



The number of kidnappings in Colombia **decreased by 94.5%** between 2000 and 2010, from 3,700 to 205.



Colombia has the world's highest population of internally displaced people; between 3 and 5 million. This is greater than the entire population of the Republic of Ireland.



Between **8,000 and 11,000** Colombian children have been forced to become child soldiers by illegal armed groups. The average age of recruitment of child soldiers in Colombia is now **12 years old**.



The four day long 'Carnaval de Barranquilla' is on UNESCO's list of 'Masterpieces of Intangible Cultural Heritage' and is attended by over half a million people every year.



Bogotá is one of the **cultural centres** of Latin America, with **58** museums, **62** art galleries, **33** library networks and **45** theatres.



News

The Olympic Torch Challenge



One of COTA's trustees, Felipe Alviar-Baquero, carried the 2012 Olympic Torch on 20th July.

Felipe has decided to use his Torch to raise funds for COTA. The challenge is to find 8,000 people who want a photo with the torch, in exchange for a donation to COTA. Visit www.fab8000torch.co.uk for more details and contact us if

you know a group who would be interested.

Other events

Thames Walk - Thanks to all the Thames Walk 2012 participants, we raised over **£7,000**. Make sure you join us next year on Saturday 11th May 2013.

Party - We celebrated Colombian Independence with a great party at Cubana Bar-Restaurant, and raised almost **£1,000**.



Like our page www.facebook.com/ChildrenAndes to see more photos and stay up to date

Letter from our Director

In my last letter we made a call to our supporters to do one thing for COTA this year, to help us raise the funds we need to be able to safeguard the support we offer our partners.

We have been so overwhelmed at the response that we have set up a network of "COTA Promoters" to help channel this support. Our COTA Promoter network consists of people who are keen to help us in some way, whether it's by organising an event, taking part in a challenge, getting their family, friends or colleagues involved or volunteering for us at one of our events. We hold regular meetings which COTA Promoters

are welcome to attend, as an opportunity to meet one another, find out more about our work and share fundraising ideas. 21 promoters have joined so far this year and we hope to recruit 50 by the end of the year. If you are interested, why not get in touch, or come to one of our events to find out more? We will be holding meetings on October 6th and November 17th (see our web-site for more details).

I would also like to announce the wonderful news that the Colombian Royal Ballet dancer, Fernando Montaño, will be joining Virginia McKenna as our Patron. Fernando grew up in

Buenaventura and Agua Blanca – one of the most dangerous neighbourhoods in Colombia. He defied all the odds to become one of the world's leading dancers. His story of hope, determination and achievement is an inspiration to us all; we are delighted to have him on board!

Warmest thanks to you all for your continued support – our work would not be possible without you,

Rachel

Murray's Tennis Clinic

A big thank you to the Murray family, Westside Lawn Tennis Club and the volunteers who helped with the Children's Tennis Clinic on 23rd June. We had an amazing day, met the top tennis players from Brazil, Colombia, the UK and the USA and raised almost **£4,000** for COTA's projects in Colombia!



Thank yous

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

Individuals

Amparo Marquez, Helen Statham & Maureen Stewart-Jones asked for donations instead of birthday presents. **Andy & Andrea Hinds** asked for donations instead of wedding presents. **Nils Klöfver** and **Steve Henderson** organised concerts. **Daniel de Castro** organized an International Food Fair and Charity Bazaar at work. **Sammy Elgie** and **Carolina Múnevar** organised a raffle at a party. **Wendy Glynn** donated the proceeds from counselling work. **Isobel Rainey De Diaz** organised a garage sale.



Community

Thanks to churches and religious groups that have supported us recently, including: Alexandra Presbyterian Church (Belfast), the Catholic Church in Billericay, Carmelite Monastery (Preston), Didsbury United Reformed Church (Manchester), Our Lady of Sorrows Roman Catholic Church (Effingham), St Andrews Clubmoor (Liverpool), St Botolph Lullingstone (Orpington), St Mary's Church (South Molton), St Leonard's Toddler Group (Teignmouth), St Peter's Church (Marlow) and Southdown Methodist Church (Harpenden).

A big thank you to the Anglo-Colombia Society, Brackenfield School (Harrogate), St James CE Primary School (Hereford), Magdalene House Preparatory School (Wisbech), Roehampton University and the Spanish Society at Imperial College.

Sports and Challenges



Betty Encinales is fundraising through Iron Man 2012 (£625), **Juan Montoya** participated in La Marmotte [cycling 174 km (108 mi) in the French Alps] and the Milan Marathon (£1,340) and **Neil Bramley** ran the Edinburgh marathon (£550).

The Bupa 10K London 2012 Team: **Anyela Quintero, Catalina García, Conor Ryan, Craig Watson, Henry Bedoya, Jayne Wall, Jill Forgham, Lorena Portilla-Garcia and Victoria Illingworth**; together, raised £4,377.

The British 10K 2012 Team: **Craig Phillips, Diana Silva, Diego Punin, Hannah Punin, Henry Bedoya, Jorge Retana, Steve Hervouet and Stewart Moore** together, raised £1,942.

Regular Giving

Autumn 2012

Remember: a standing order is the most cost effective way for us to administer your contribution

Instructions to the Manager

Your account:

Name of the Bank or Building Society: _____

Address: _____ Postcode: _____ / _____

Account No.: ____ / ____ / ____ / ____ Sort Code: ____ / ____ / ____

Your donation:

Please pay **Children of the Andes** (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 would like Children of the Andes to reclaim tax on any donations I have made over the last 4 years and all future donations until I notify you otherwise.

Signature: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Please let us know if you change your address or if you no longer pay an amount of income tax or capital gains equal to the tax we will reclaim on your donation (currently 25p for every £1 you give).

Please return completed form to Children of the Andes, Development House, 56-64 Leonard Street, EC2A 4LT

Thank you!



Field Office Diary

Jennifer, our Project Development Coordinator, writes about her experiences from her first visit to Colombia.

As we drove towards our partner Renacer's project base in Cartagena, leaving behind the beauty and relative tranquillity of the walled city, I was shocked by the seemingly never ending shanty-town that we entered; house after house cobbled together out of corrugated iron, tarpaulin or plastic sheets as far as the eye could see.

Walking in to the project base we were greeted by the sounds of children laughing and singing. We were soon swept up in the laughter and cheeriness as we were welcomed and introduced. We sat down and the children introduced themselves to us, telling us their names, ages and what they wanted to be when they grew up - ranging from teachers and doctors, to footballers and soldiers. Surrounded by these shy, energetic, mischievous children I found it difficult to remind myself that Renacer works with children victims of or at risk of

commercial sexual exploitation (CSE), and that almost all of these children had either been exposed to CSE or had been sexually abused.

This was soon brought home to me though, when the children started to talk about how the project has changed their lives. 12 year old Maria broke down in tears as she told us that before she came to Renacer she didn't see a future for herself beyond the gangs and violence that dominate her neighbourhood. Similar stories came from the mothers and grandmothers who joined us later, many of whom struggled to hold back tears as they told us their experiences. One mother in particular told us how devastated she had felt when she found out that her 11 year old son was being coerced by male tourists to perform sexual acts

in return for money he knew his family desperately needed.

Although it was distressing to hear such stories, what was amazing was that everyone we spoke to had turned their trauma into opportunities. For me, what shone through all of this from children, mothers and staff, was this feeling of opportunity and of hope; hope for a positive future, hope for a community in which children are protected from sexual exploitation, hope that, with the right support, these children could overcome the barriers they face to achieve their dreams.



All photos have been taken with the children's permission and full consent has been given for their use in COTA publications. All names have been changed and photos carefully chosen to protect the child's identity.

Children of the Andes: Keeping children safe, defending children's rights and strengthening children's organisations in Colombia

Please donate now

Your donation:

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

Payment details:

Cheque (Please make cheques payable to

Children of the Andes)

Visa Mastercard CAF Charitycard.

Card No.:

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Expiry Date: ___/___/___ (mm/yy)

Signed: _____

Date: ___/___/___ (dd/mm/yy)

Donor details:

We won't share your details with anyone else.

Title: _____ First name: _____

Last name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ / _____

Tel: (_____) _____

E-mail: _____

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

Gift Aid Declaration

I would like Children of the Andes to reclaim tax on any donations I have made over the last 4 years and all future donations until I notify you otherwise.

Signature: _____

Date: ___/___/___

Please let us know if you change your address or if you no longer pay an amount of income tax or capital gains equal to the tax we will reclaim on your donation (currently 25p for every £1 you give).

Please send me a COTA fundraising pack

Thank you!

Children of the Andes, Development House, 56-64 Leonard Street, London, EC2A 4LT
t: 020 7549 0225 e: info@childrenoftheandes.org w: www.childrenoftheandes.org

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