

FEBRUARY 2018 NEWSLETTER

Happy new year!

We hope you had a good Christmas and New Year

Thanks to your generosity and kindness, the children at the residential homes in Guatemala, Mexico, Honduras and Nicaragua were given the greatest gift of all - food, gifts, warmth, care and love from their friends and Casa Alianza staff. Thank you for your kind donations. Each child felt your love and unconditional support from afar.

We are excited to share with you an update on our new direction for 2018, how we will be working with our existing and new partners and our priorities for funding this year.

We wanted to have the voice of the children at the very heart of our new direction, so we asked them to choose, based on the future they dream of. Here's what they came up with:

A world where children are free, safe
and can realise their potential



Our new mission and strategy are aligned with the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - a set of 17 "Global Goals" which describes the future all nations want to see for the next generation.

We have identified six focus areas (based on the SDGs) that we believe if achieved, would enable children we work with to truly realise their potential. They lay the foundations for each child's future.

Why are we working worldwide?

Thanks to **your** tireless support, countless children are moving off the streets into safety. This is an incredible achievement. However, new, insidious danger for the children we seek to help is on the increase:

- Globally the number of children trafficked, subject to commercial sexual exploitation and domestic servitude is on the increase;
- We are witnessing rises in refugee and displaced children, forced to flee violence and persecution;
- Gangs continue to lure children with promises of solidarity and a direct route out of poverty. Others are forced to join, threatened with violence or murder, coerced into committing crimes, murder or rape in the name of survival and often **murdered** themselves when they try to leave.

This situation must change. Now.



To provide the best response to the rise in this disturbing global trend, we need to build partnerships with reputable international organisations, with whom we can both share our experiences and learn from.

We are already supporting Casa Alianza Mexico with their refugee and migrants programme and La Alianza, working with trafficking survivors. We want to learn what really works and strengthen our support to our Latin American partners to continue doing fantastic work – and – share our expertise with the world.

What about the Casa Alianza's?



We remain committed now, more than ever, to continue to support the work of Casa Alianza Mexico, Honduras and Nicaragua and La Alianza Guatemala. Our priority is to provide the best possible care and support for children surviving in an increasingly complex and dangerous world. **Any new partnerships we support outside Latin America will be from our fundraising efforts – not from our supporters.**

Your regular donations and our appeals will continue to be 100% focused on improving the lives of children in our Casa Alianza and La Alianza programmes.

We hope you agree this is an exciting time for us. We look forward to sharing with you updates and news going forward! If you have any questions about our new strategy, we would love to hear from you!

2018 Fundraising Priorities:

One of the most vital areas for funding this year is for the **street outreach** programmes. We cannot emphasise how important this first meeting with children who live on the streets is to build trust. It is the first step on a long journey towards a child leaving the streets. In addition to the street outreach programme, we have committed to support the following programmes this year:

- The specialist **unit for refugee and migrant Central American children** who have fled violence and persecution and are seeking protection and essential residential services.
- The **Family Reintegration** programme – supporting children and family to be reunited where possible.
- **Independent life** and vocational training – supporting children as they transition to adulthood.

We are a small charity with **one** full time employee and **five** dedicated Trustees. We are doing all we can but we need support to continue to make an impact on the lives of disadvantaged children. So... want to ask **YOU**...

We need urgent help from the following, can YOU help?

- **An experienced volunteer fundraiser** – Someone to help us identify potential funders and help us write funding applications for our projects
- **Individuals with corporate connections** – Who can introduce us to access potential sponsorship
- **Individuals with marketing/social media experience** – Who can help raise our profile and increase supporter sign ups
- **Individuals to recommend us to their schools or businesses** – If we were your charity of the year, you could really help us to raise funds and awareness!

Our big ambition is to support innovative and creative projects to support the most at-risk children

If you have any fundraising ideas... If you can introduce us to anyone or any organisation who can support our work... If you have some spare time to help in the above areas... We would love to hear from you!



Spotlight on Mexico:

Casa Alianza Mexico – Christmas celebrations and dreams for 2018:

Christmas in Mexico begins with the *Posadas* (inns) celebration. A *posada* is the re-enactment of the Census pilgrimage to Bethlehem by Mary and Joseph in search of a room. From December 16th through December 24th, Mexican families customarily hold a *posada* party one evening in each of their homes. During the re-enactment, the *posada* host acts as the inn keeper while guests act as the pilgrims. Holding lit candles, each group takes it in turns to sing verses to each other. The inn keeper hosts open the door welcoming the pilgrims inside with food and warmth.

Each Casa Alianza Mexico residential home had a *posada* where all children gathered together with piñatas and food to celebrate the imminent arrival of Christmas. Christmas and New Year was filled with festive food, love, laughter, gifts and games – focusing on celebration, reflection of the year that has passed and setting goals for 2018. On 6th January, 'El Día de Reyes' (Three Kings Day) is celebrated, which marks the culmination of the twelve days of Christmas and commemorates the three wise men bearing gifts for the baby Jesus. Children in Mexico look forward to this holiday as traditionally, gifts are hidden in or near their shoes for them to find on this date by 'the three wise men' - a more traditional version of Father Christmas perhaps?



Visit to Casa Alianza Mexico:



Prior to the September earthquake, our Chair, Poonam Sattee, visited Casa Alianza Mexico:

"I was fortunate to be in Mexico for work and was able to visit Casa Alianza Mexico. This was my first visit to the 'Casa Albatross' Home – which is the home for Central American refugee children – which is flourishing because of your generous support.

I arrived during a birthday party for one of the boys from Guatemala – followed by the traditional 'face-pushed-in-the-cake' moment which seems to happen across all Central America! It took me back to when I was a volunteer at Casa Alianza Guatemala, the girls did the exact same to me!



The boys know how lucky they are to be safe in Mexico but also fondly remember home. Familiar foods and celebrations of national days help keep them connected to their heritage. The stories of their journey into Mexico were truly horrific: jumping between trains, escaping from traffickers, threatened by gangs, hiding in the harshest conditions... Yet this was better than staying in their home country and risking further violence and murder. In many ways, these boys are lucky to be alive.

The boys have such energy, hope and determination to change things for the next generation. Their commitment to completing their education and changing the world is inspirational.

Whilst those dreams are nurtured, one of the biggest priorities we have is restoring a sense of childhood... And after all, it was a birthday party so what's a party without any games! I was taught a few Mexican games and in turn shared games from the UK, love, laughter and cake with them all.

"Just one afternoon with these boys served as a stark reminder just how much we can make a difference from the UK and it made me incredibly proud to be supporting them."

Casa Alianza Nicaragua: Update on the Young Mothers Home:



A HUGE thank you to our supporters for your overwhelming response to help restore the young mothers' home at Casa Alianza Nicaragua. We raised a staggering **£14,326** which enabled repair work to begin immediately and the girls could move back into the home in October. The mothers from the home wanted to share this message with you all:

"it makes us feel happy to have a safe place where we aren't afraid that we have to live on the street. Thank you for supporting us and for giving us a beautiful new home. The people who have helped us have a great heart because they support us without knowing us; may God bless them".

La Alianza Guatemala

Every single day 33 children and young people become entrapped in sex trafficking rings in Guatemala.

In 2017 alone, over 60% of 50,000 survivors of sex trafficking in Guatemala were children according to UNICEF. Tragically, 50,000 is just the tip of the iceberg. With just two prosecutors working on bringing traffickers to justice in the whole country, it's unsurprising that the number of convictions remains incredibly low. July 30th is **World Day Against Trafficking in Persons...**

Can you help with organising an event or fundraiser to support this work?

Casa Alianza Honduras

Thousands of families with young children escaped Honduras for the US, fleeing violence, torture, rape and murder.

More than 800,000 children enrolled into the *Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals* (DACA), an initiative to allow children to grow up in the US to study, work and live without fear of being deported. For these young people, 'home' is the US.

They have studied, gone on to further education or are in regular employment, actively contributing to society, the economy and culture of the country where they have grown up. **Sadly, the Trump Administration has resolved to terminate DACA**, creating the likely outcome of deportation for these children back to Honduras. Casa Alianza Honduras is lobbying the United States Congress to protect these young people, to regularise their residence and protect their future.

We will keep you informed of any further updates.

Contribute to Compass for free!!

Do you shop online? If YES, read on...

Compass is part of a fantastic scheme called 'Give as you Live'. Each time you shop online, they donate a % to Compass. It costs you nothing & makes an enormous difference to us. It really is as simple as that!

How it works: First, please sign up: www.giveasyoulive.com/signup

Search for Compass Children's Charity (1073903)

Download the donation dashboard which will show on top of your browser, meaning you *will never forget a donation again*. Try it today!



Legacy Giving

Your wishes can fund a homeless child's future

Every child deserves a chance in life...

If you believe in our vision, leaving a legacy to Compass Children's Charity is an excellent way to ensure your beliefs will live on, in the most practical way possible.

Leaving a legacy to Compass Children's Charity:

We are part of The Goodwill Partnership, an organisation that can help arrange for a solicitor to draw up your will in the comfort of your own home. Please visit:

<http://www.thegoodwillpartnership.co.uk>

and simply select 'Compass Children's Charity' from the drop-down list.

Otherwise, if you would like to speak to us about leaving a gift to street children please get in touch.

www.compasschildrenscharity.org.uk

Address: Unit 2, The Business Exchange, Rockingham Road, Kettering, Northants, NN16 8JX

Email: contact@compasschildrenscharity.org.uk