

May 2015

New Activities in Samaná, the DR!

Because of the political situation in Venezuela volunteer programs are temporarily suspended. Since January 2015 we are active in Samaná, one of the safest place in Dominican Republic.

There is hardly any crime and you can walk around the streets even at night. People here are so kind and peaceful, and when someone is in trouble they help each other. Although there are many challenges in people live they look happy and welcome our volunteers because they know we are here to help them a hand.....

Educational opportunity for children with special needs

There are quiet some Children with special needs in Samaná. However, they do not have any educational opportunity like other children because there is no special school for them in Samaná. Due to lack of attention and therapy those children are locked away in their house all day (usually they cannot go out without parents), and this is quiet a burden for their parents in many aspects.

Education is an important right for children and offering educational opportunities means providing children not only with knowledge but also dignity and tools for their future. We hope this project will be the first step for those children to develop their potentials and be integrated in social and productive life of the society.

Fortunately also local people are aware of this problem and so we have lots of local support! Felicitas Gerónimo de la Cruz, a retired school teacher, is one of our local volunteers. She has great vitality and is a well-known person in this town. She is our local partner to lead our special need kids attention center.

Maintaining the school

We use a local culture center as our new school (also as our office) but since this building has been abandoned for a couple of years, some equipment are broken and we had to fix it. In order to provide good educational conditions local handyman together with us repaired and reconditioned the facility (desks, doors, toilets, windows, paintings, etc.)



In addition, we purchased furniture and office equipment and requested new computers for the children from the town mayor of Samaná. He willingly accepted our request and provided a computer literacy laboratory with new computers. Now the center is ready to launch.

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Cooperating with local Institutions

Since we were aware of the necessity of obtaining know-how in educating special need kids, we purchased the educational material and researched the didactic we will need. We have visited Asociación Dominicana de Rehabilitación INC. in Santo Domingo (HQ) and in Sanchez (affiliate). In Santo Domingo, we had the opportunity to obtain the type of material which is used in special education and could see how those didactic toys are made in their workshop. They are sold in order to obtain income for the special needs students who build them!



Meeting with parents

In order to promote the new school among local people, we had launched a publication through television and local media. A dozen parents came to our first meeting and listened with great interest to our presentation. We had to limit our initial class to 12 students and hope to mobilize resources which allow us to expand the school in the near future!

In fact, we had more than twelve applications for this school but due to school capacity we are forced to start with 12 children and 2 teachers. We will start school activities from 2nd of June on and will mobilize more resources for a future expansion of the school.....

Upcoming activity

Defending children's right is an important and necessary cause in the DR. Although Samaná belongs to the safest places in the DR, we know that children rights are often violated and we decided to launch a Multi Media campaign for prevention. We aim to make the local people aware of children rights and raise political will to enforce the law in order to protect children from sex-tourism and sexual exploitation.

New volunteer info

End of April, Waku, from Japan, arrived at Samaná and he works as a NGO manager until the end of February 2016. From June on many new volunteers will come to Samaná and together with Waku and the local staff we will welcome them and introduce them to local live and Aldeas de Paz programs.

Get in touch!

To get in touch with us write you can write us an E-Mail at mail@peacevillages.org. We will welcome to those who want to work with us! Don't forget to follow us on our new Twitter account, [@AldeasDePaz](https://twitter.com/AldeasDePaz), and to like us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AldeasDePaz) for frequent updates on our projects here at the foundation!