



UK supporters bring peace and hope to Latin America

We begin this newsletter with a huge thank you to all our supporters! Thanks to the financial contributions of individuals and churches, Paz y Esperanza UK was able to send the offices in Latin America £15,050 at the end of 2020 and a further £17,680 at the end of 2021. What fantastic amounts! We asked the teams in Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia to share with you how the money was used in 2021 and some of their plans for 2022.

Colombia

PyE Colombia are involved in a number of ongoing projects. In Granizal, an informal settlement of internally displaced persons (IDPs) located in Antioquia department, the team have been working with a number of groups, including women and young people. In 2021, the team started a weekly art workshop with young people which helped them build relationships and come alongside the participants in their many daily challenges. Laura, one of the young people, said: *"I am not the same Laura as before. Now I am more engaged, responsible and I have learnt how to work in a team"*.

In Uraba, also in Antioquia, the team has been working with 12 churches and 27 pastors and leaders as part of a project called *'United by Co-Existence'*. The training includes discussions and practical help on how the church can transform communities and care for neighbours. Jobani Agamez from a local church said he had learnt how to be an agent of change and reconciliation in the middle of conflict from sessions on Biblical teaching and discussions about our calling as Christians.



Some of the money raised by PyE UK in 2021 will fund the director, Giovanni Gomez Molina, as he continues to implement these projects. It will also fund a new project in Nueva Jerusalem on the outskirts of the city of Medellin. The team aim to start building relationships

with churches and community leaders. Most of the 4,500 families living there lack basic amenities and are displaced people or economic migrants.

Peru

In Peru, one of the main objectives of the team is to support the victims of the armed conflict which occurred in the country between 1980 and 2000. The team was able to hire lawyer Milton Campos in 2021 using the money sent by PyE UK to help with the legal processes in three cases. One of the cases began in Callqui in Ayacucho region on 1 August 1984. Six men were murdered by an army patrol while they were at church. There have been legal cases brought against five of the military involved in the murders. On 21 July 2021, the leader of the patrol, Luis Alberto Celis Checa, was sentenced to ten years in prison. The PyE lawyer is helping the families of the six victims to get compensation from the Peruvian state and also bring those who were high up in the military in Ayacucho in 1984 to justice.

In a second case, PyE is helping support the families of 123 victims killed by armed forces in Putis in Ayacucho in 1984. The hearings began last year and will continue during 2022. The money allocated to PyE Peru for 2022 will continue to help bring justice to the people who have been seeking resolution for decades.



Ecuador

The 'Healthy Families, Free from Violence' project continues to be developed by the team in Ecuador in north-eastern Guayaquil where many vulnerable people, including Venezuelan migrants, live. Some of the workshops on offer to the community include one which focuses on what the Bible teaches about masculinity and another which teaches people their rights in the face of psychological and physical domestic violence. In 2021, the team offered 30 sessions with psychologists to victims of violence as well as English lessons to community members. It also trained church leaders on how to help their congregations, especially those who are suffering from violence.

Mixcis Cortes, one of the women who participated in a course on the rights of women said: *"I didn't know that women have sexual rights. I really enjoyed the talks and I want to know more."* A church leader from the community, Oscar Andrade said that many of the children in the area experience violence in their homes and the training helped him as a pastor to understand their rights and ways they can help practically.



The coronavirus pandemic has increased levels of violence in society and therefore the team in Ecuador will continue these essential projects into 2022 using the money allocated to them from PyE UK funds. They will develop carpentry workshops with the men and increase education about contraceptives given the high rates of teenage pregnancy

Bolivia

In 2021, PyE UK helped to fund a programme called 'Yo Te Escucho' (I Am Listening) in Bolivia. It aims to give psychological, legal and spiritual help through workshops and conferences which focus on preventing violence. Last year the team helped with several legal cases to bring those who have suffered from violence to justice and more than 1,000 people attended their events. It also set up a help group for women which gives training on the prevention of violence, increasing self-esteem and entrepreneurship



In 2022 director Marcelo Rodriguez will continue to implement 'Yo Te Escucho' as well as other projects, including helping vulnerable communities suffering from the consequences of the pandemic

Some of the money raised in 2021 will be also be going towards the work of PyE Brazil and Chile this year. Please pray for all the teams, that they may continue to help those suffering, as the consequences of the pandemic continue.

Please join us with a regular or one-off donation at: <https://www.justgiving.com/pazyesperanza>

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