



ALDEAS DE PAZ

ALDEAS DE PAZ



ANNUAL REPORT 2017



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Dear volunteers,

beneficiaries, coordinators, teachers, local supporters, board members, program partners, families and readers.

I am deeply thankful for all the great united efforts in bringing the charity closer to be self-sustained and effectively managed and at the same time improve its impact on the community!

Today I feel honoured and at the same time delighted as I recognize that I am able to pass on the direction of Aldeas de Paz to the next generation of NGO-managers. Day to day operations at Aldeas de Paz are now run by volunteers and coordinators, our school teachers and supports of the community. Watching the happy faces of our children at Mama Elba school is the greatest gift I receive and keeps me in touch with the original motivation I felt 30 years ago when I first enjoyed the privilege of being able to reach out and share my work with the less fortunate.

A heartfelt thanks to all and everybody involved for their contribution to a successful 2017!

I wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Manfred Mönnighoff



Who we are

What we do
Children and adults with special needs
Medicine and Healthcare
Education

How we do it

Our believes

Who we are

Aldeas de Paz is a sustainable and transparent grass-roots NGO based in Santa Barbara de Samaná and Las Terrenas in the Dominican Republic. Manfred Mönnighoff originally founded Aldeas de Paz in Venezuela, where he operated nearly 15 years until the actions had to be temporarily suspended in 2014 due to the increasingly difficult political situation.

To continue the foundation's work a new branch of Aldeas de Paz was founded in 2015 in the Dominican Republic.

The foundation operates independent from political, religious or business interests and maintains its independence by completely funding and operating programs with the practical and monetary contributions of volunteers and interns.

They are coming from more than 10 different countries over the world to contribute to the foundation's projects.

Working with children and adults with special needs, taking care of abandoned animals or giving first aid courses – Aldeas de Paz works in a lot of different fields in order to enhance people's lives.

What we do

Children and adults with special needs

Aldeas de Paz is a youth orientated organization with the purpose of educating, mentoring, inspiring and empowering young people.

The objective is to develop their potentials and help them to create opportunities for them and their community through our educational programs and recreational activities.

The organization focuses especially on the work with children and adults with special needs as they are often excluded from society and educational opportunities.

With the Mama Elba school we want to raise awareness for the needs of disabled people, who are among the most excluded in the Dominican Republic.

Medicine and Healthcare

The medical situation in the Dominican Republic and developed countries differ a lot. Even though treatment in the state hospital is free, medication is often unaffordable for people.

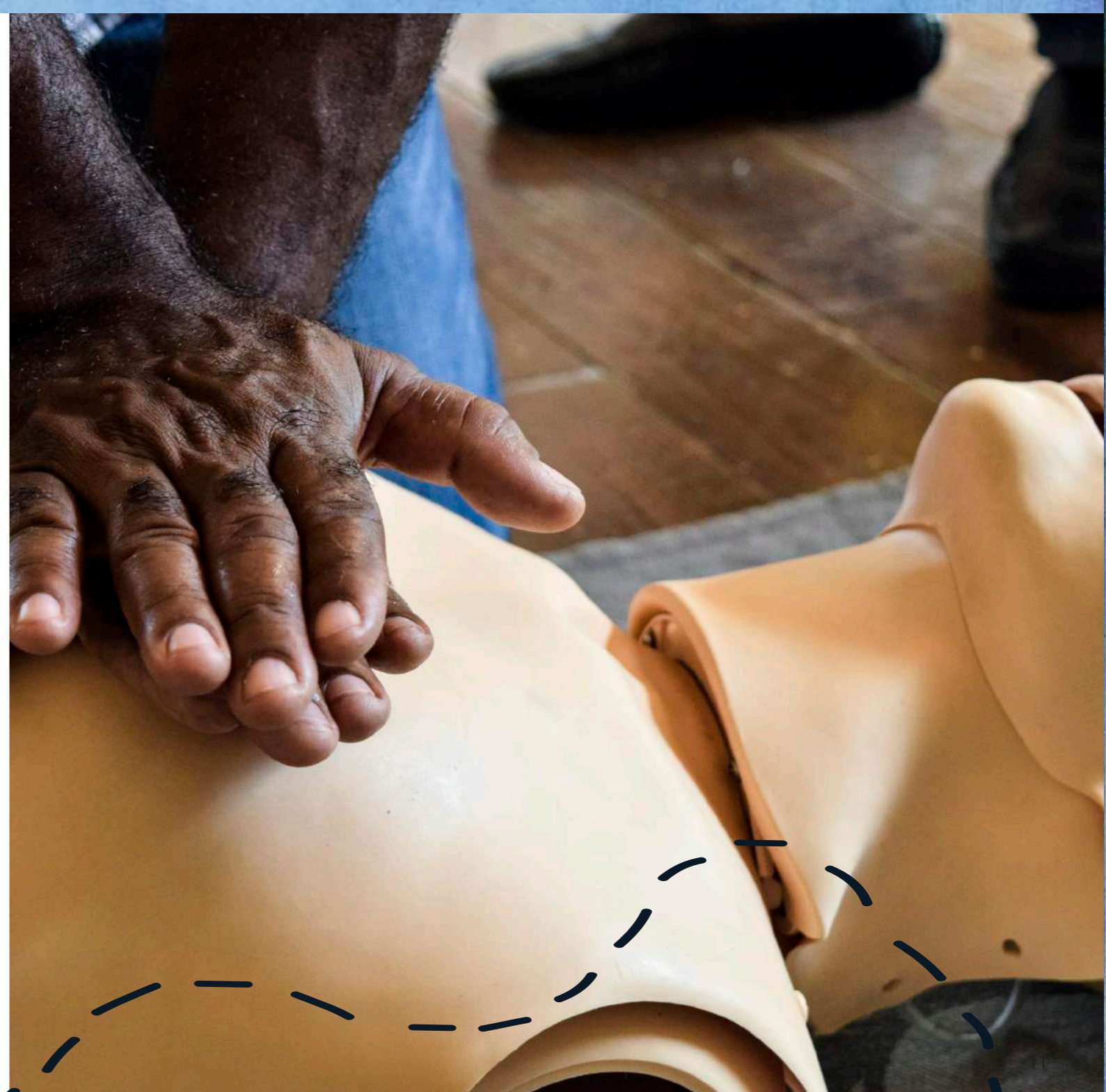
Aldeas de Paz works to improve the medical situation in the hospitals in Samaná and Las Terrenas by providing support both through staff and through financial and material donations.

Education

Volunteers of the organisation educate adults by offering English and German classes as well as computer classes. Every member of the community interested in participating is able to join these projects for free.

Furthermore, volunteers prepare and give first aid courses to people with a working background in tourism.

There are many more small projects like recycling workshops in communal schools and a life-guard training, which depend on special qualifications of the volunteers visiting the organisation.



How we do it

Aldeas de Paz encourages volunteers and beneficiaries to fully develop their potential and helps them to create opportunities on their own, which in turn will positively affect and give back to the whole community.

Volunteers do their tasks as self-reliant as possible, side by side with local employees learning and benefiting from each other. When needed, full support by colleagues or coordinators is always provided.

Cultural sensitivity is a necessity for promoting mutual respect. Therefore, we embrace both domestic and foreign cultural values.

Cross-cultural exchange between people of all races and nationalities enriches the perspectives of volunteers, partners and beneficiaries while promoting a Culture of Peace.

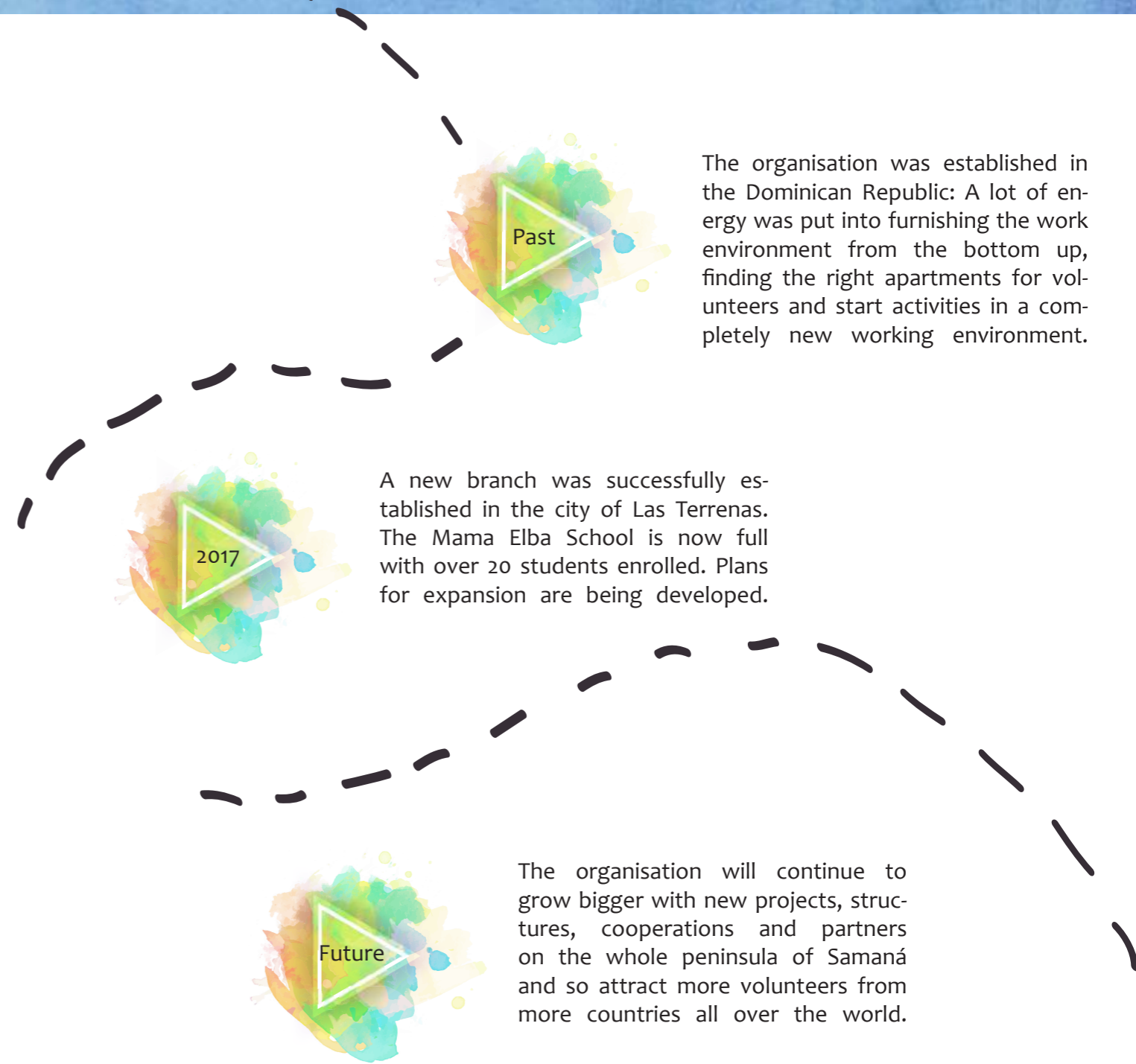
Meanwhile, we always take advantage of locals' knowledge and their willingness to let us be part of their activities.

Our believes





TIMELINE



The organisation was established in the Dominican Republic: A lot of energy was put into furnishing the work environment from the bottom up, finding the right apartments for volunteers and start activities in a completely new working environment.

A new branch was successfully established in the city of Las Terrenas. The Mama Elba School is now full with over 20 students enrolled. Plans for expansion are being developed.

The organisation will continue to grow bigger with new projects, structures, cooperations and partners on the whole peninsula of Samaná and so attract more volunteers from more countries all over the world.



Beneficiaries

22

Students in Mama Elba School

OVERVIEW OF 2017

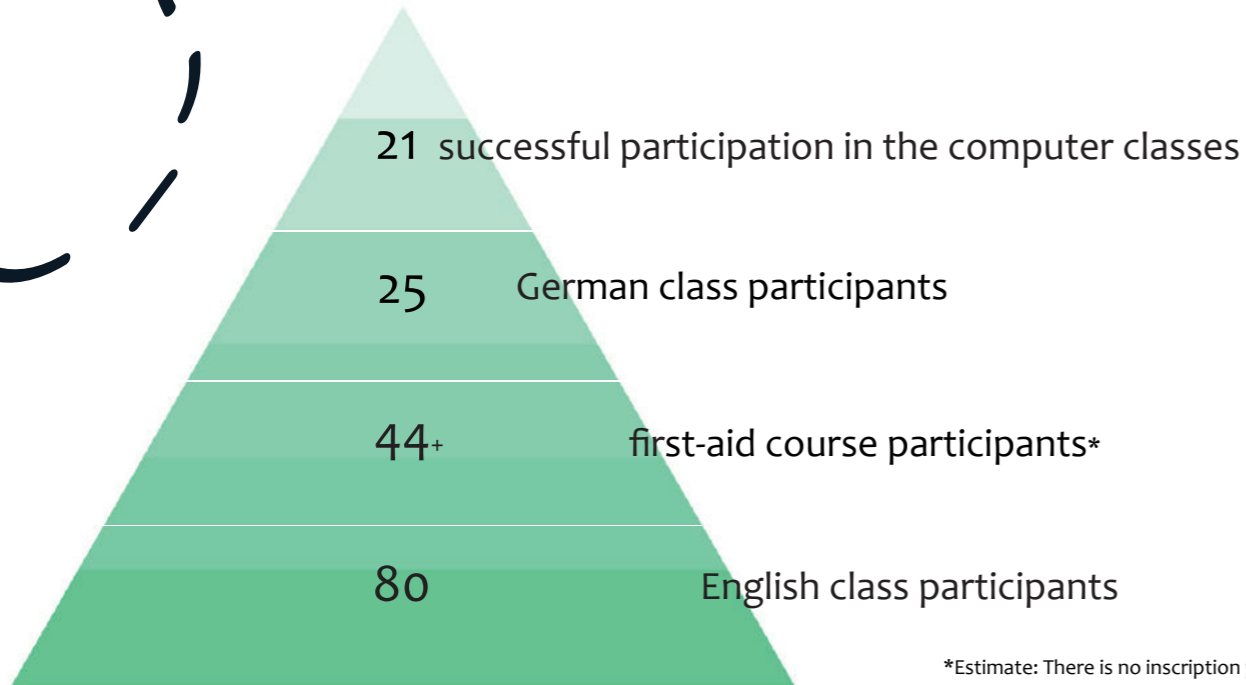
Beneficiaries

Staff

Volunteers

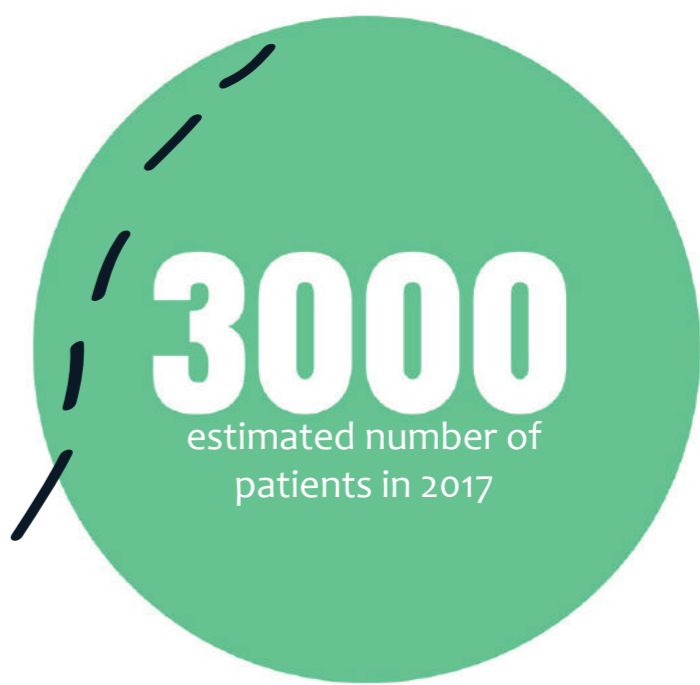
Volunteers' Experiences



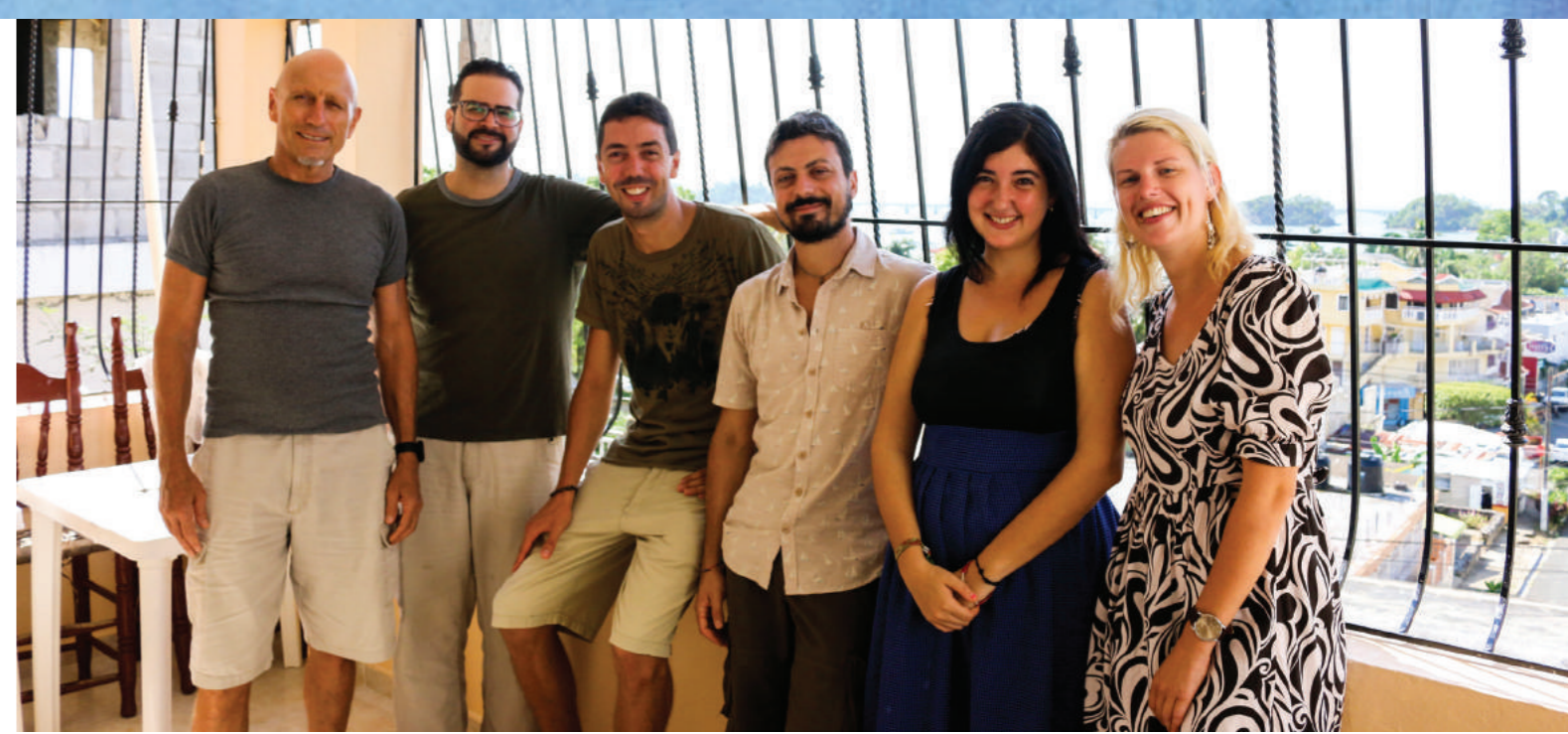
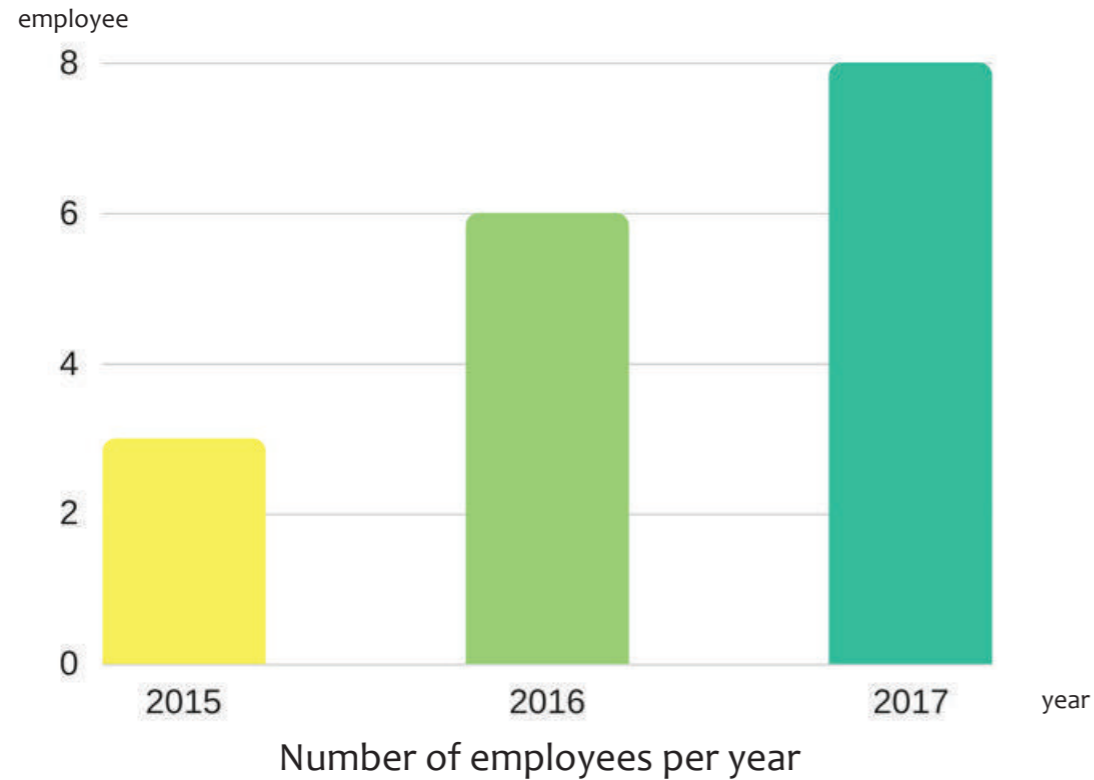


*Estimate: There is no inscription progress for our first-aid course in order to keep it simply accessible.

Volunteers help out the local staff in the hospital of Samaná with everyday tasks and work hand in hand with them. Interestingly, there is a high fluctuation in the amount of patients in the health facilities. People are more likely to visit the hospital on monday than on friday.

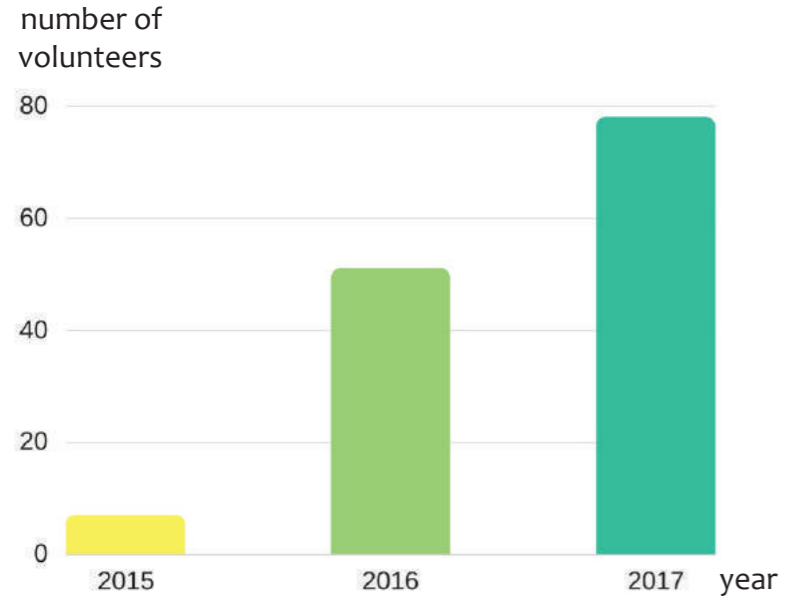


Staff



| | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|---|--|
| Sebastian Kervyn | Belgium | joined in April 2017 | Volunteer and Project Coordinator |
| Jéssica Perez | Spain | joined in April 2017 | Director Mama Elba School |
| Vito Chimienti | Italy | joined in October 2017 | Volunteer and Project Coordinator |
| Julia Schaaf | Germany | joined in June 2016 | Volunteer and Project Coordinator |
| Yunior Rodriguez | Dominican Republic | joined in March 2016 | Coordinator Mama Elba School |
| Elizabeth Vazquez | Dominican Republic | joined in March 2016 | Teacher Mama Elba School |
| Zena Clemens | Venezuela | joined in October 2017 | Youthcare program in Las Terrenas |
| Adrian Hernandez | Mexico | joined in October 2017 | Assistant for international cooperations |
| Manfred Mönnighoff | Germany | founder in 2001 in Venezuela and 2015 in the Dominican Republic | |

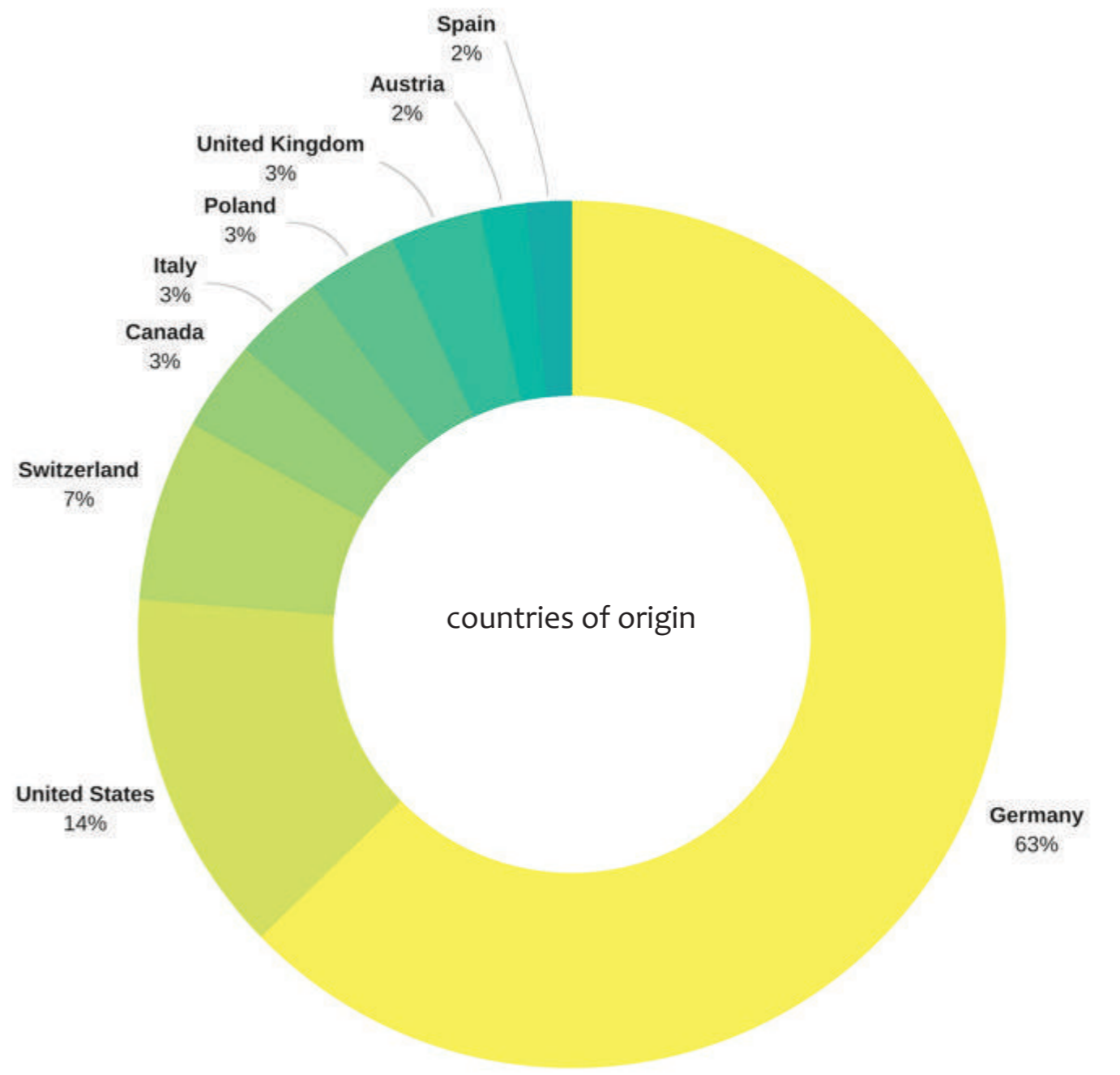
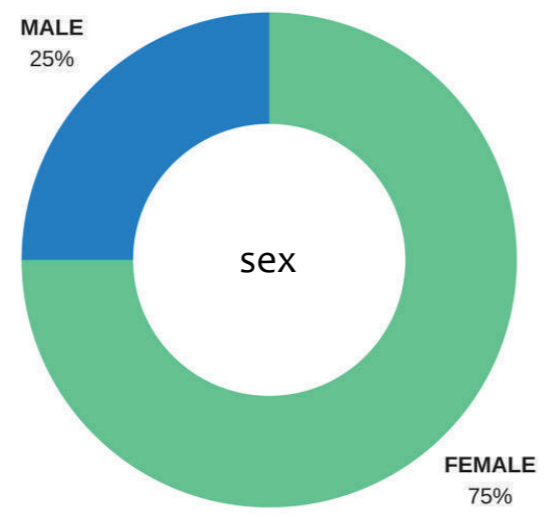
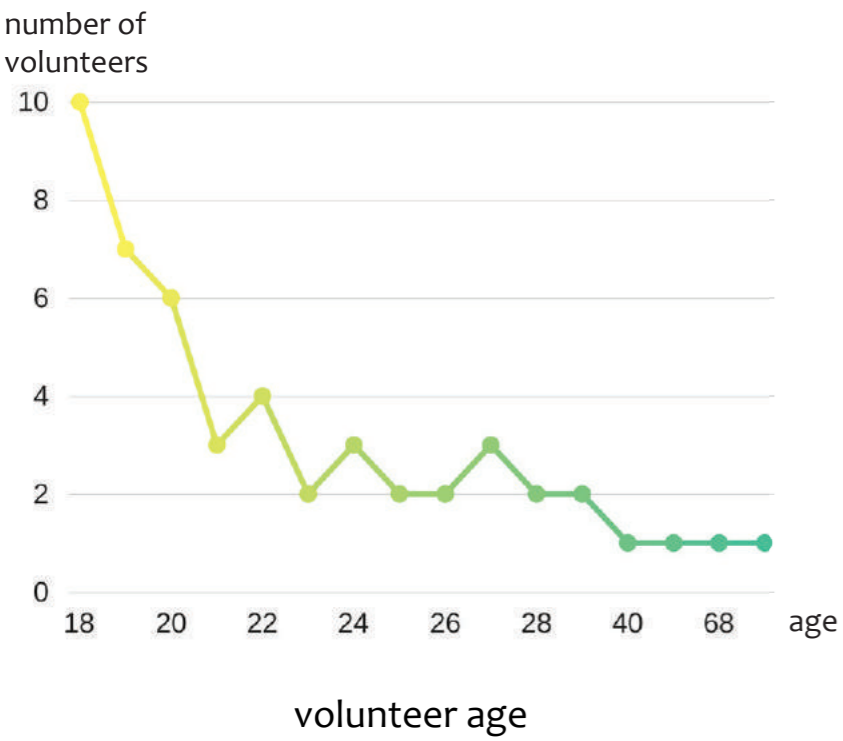
Volunteers

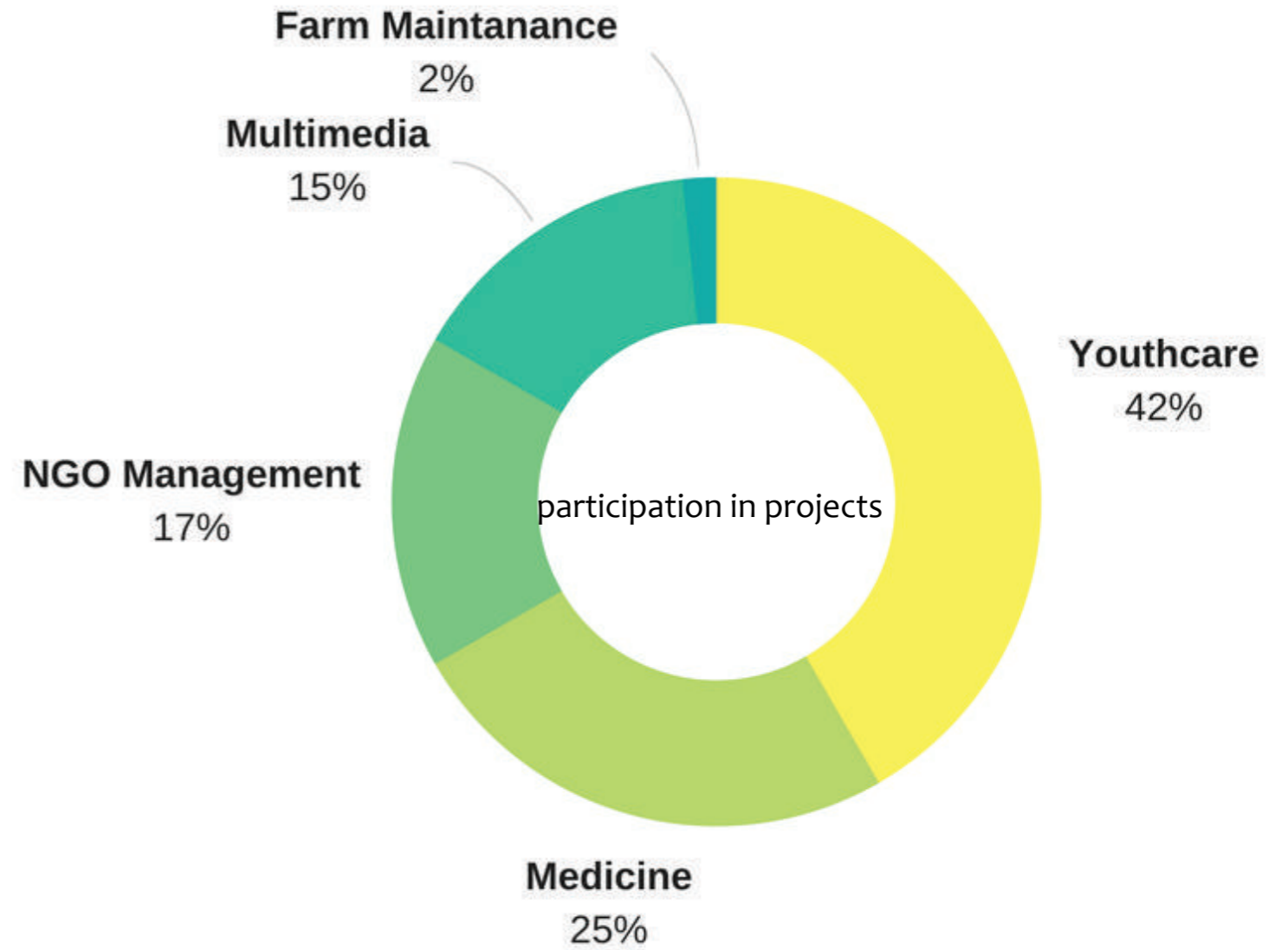
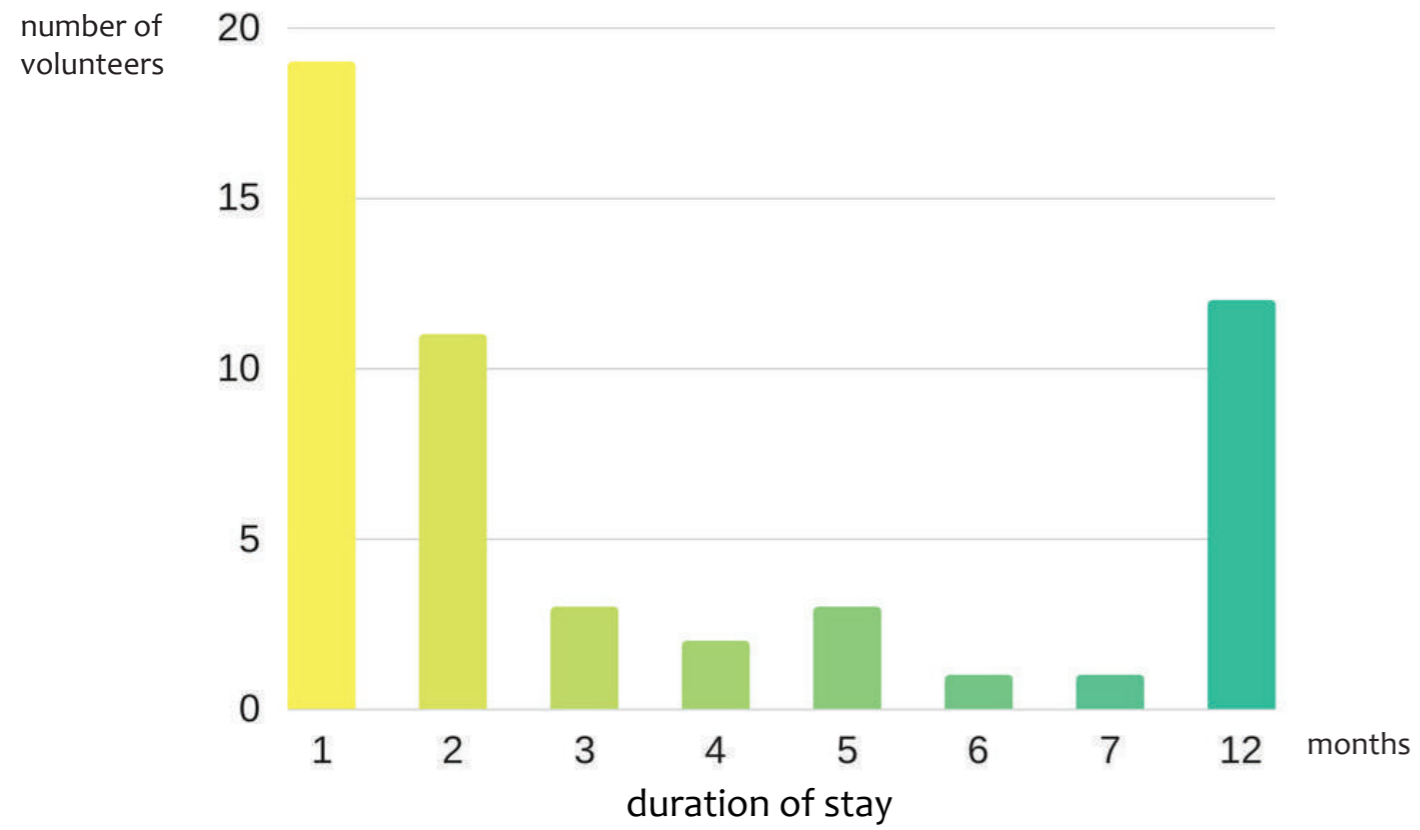


25
average age

number of volunteers per year









Volunteer's Experiences

**Janine
Burger**

"I am extremely thankful for how open and helpful the other volunteers and locals were. My experience was enriching and enjoyable."

understand where their abilities and difficulties lay also taught me a lot about myself and my own limits and skills."

**Katarzyna
Fajbusiewicz**

"As prophylaxis of oral hygiene hardly exists in the education system, patients usually come with complex problems and complicated cases, which can not be properly treated considering limited possibilities of free health care. It was a heartbreaking experience for me to see a 9-year-old having his permanent teeth extracted."

„During parent-teacher-conference one of the mothers told us that for the first time in her life her 27-years-old mentally disabled daughter has the chance to go to school and learn something and is now able to read numbers and write some letters and not only the mother but also friends and family realise a positive difference in her daughter's social behaviour. This was one of the situations where I realised that we really do have an impact in the kid's lives no matter if we work there for only a few weeks or for some months."

**Naomi
Baumgarten**

**Anne
Trenczek**

„I really liked the one-on-one teaching as well as the practical approach of learning. Working with the children and trying to





CHALLENGES IN 2017

In 2017, volunteers and staff sometimes faced unpredictable circumstances. Occasionally, volunteers were not able to work due to sickness or other circumstances like hurricanes, power outages or strong rain. Some volunteers became ill, for example because of the different hygienic conditions in the Dominican Republic. However, the caring coordinators and the good private hospital

and doctors nearby were always able to help. Every situation was handled successfully and in a professional manner. As it turns out, patience, improvisation and getting ahead in small steps is sometimes the key to success. In addition to that, cultural differences and language barriers were an obstacle. But more often than not, locals were more than happy to cooperate with our volunteers.



ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2017

Aldeas de Paz brought and brings people together. Partners, beneficiaries and volunteers learned from each other, gave each other a hand and formed a great community. Everyone involved gathered many great unforgettable experiences.

Although no social impact study has been done yet, we are proud to say that there have been great achievements during the year providing a good basis for continuation in the future.

Some of the highlights are:

- more volunteers
- new branch in Las Terrenas
- new projects to achieve more in the community
- more program opportunities for volunteers
- more cooperations with Dominican partners
- more cooperations with agencies all over the world

Aldeas de Paz established a concept for collaboration with Kim Bedall, a whale specialist living in Samaná for over 20 years. The Canadian woman runs a farm and a dog shelter, where volunteers can help out.

Even the participation in a whale-monitoring program organized by Kim Bedall during the whale-watching season from January to March might soon become a possibility.

New branch in Las Terrenas

The opening of the second branch of Aldeas de Paz in the Dominican Republic in August 2017 enabled us to not only offer volunteer programs in Samana but in Las Terrenas as well. The fact that we could extend the organization and open a second location after only two years of work in the Dominican Republic, truly is something we are proud of. Firstly, we took this step because our team of coordinators grew and secondly because we had a constant and stable number of volunteers interested in working with Aldeas de Paz. We would like to thank the team, our volunteers and the Red Cross Germany for their work and their commitment.

In Las Terrenas, volunteers are working in different fields. One of them is the educational program. In the school “Casa de los Niños” volunteers are helping to teach English, giving classes or doing their own workshops in the afternoon, like dancing, teaching Portuguese or offering sports. Our second program is Medicine and Healthcare, where volunteers are observing and assisting in the public health sector. A big support for the team are the volunteers in the NGO and Multi Media program, who are helping with administrative and technical tasks. Our brand-new program focuses on conserving the environment. Volunteers in this program have

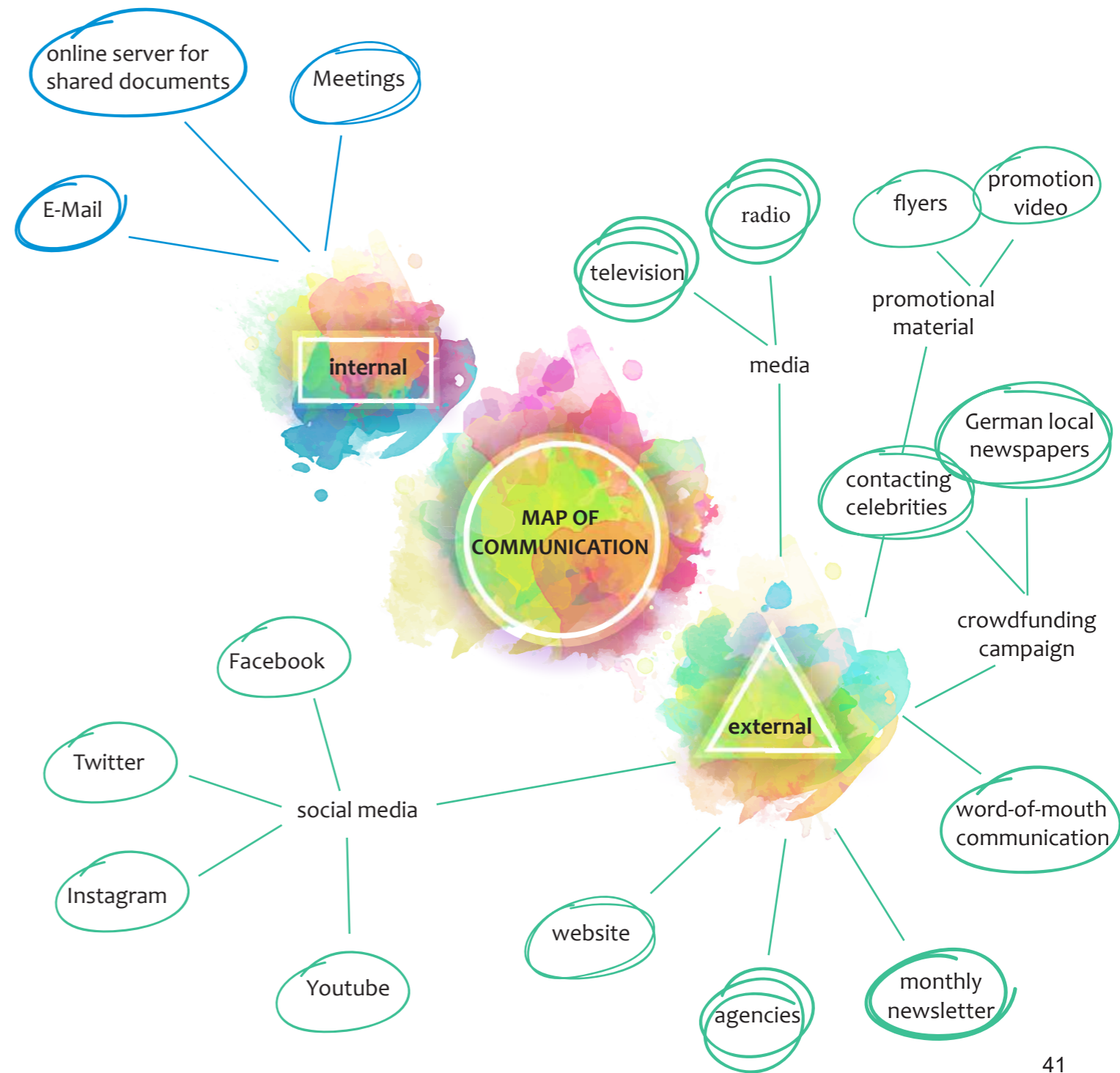
many different tasks like planting trees, elaborating profile of beaches or cleaning the sea while diving. After a few months of working in Las Terrenas, we are happy to have taken this step and we look forward to the new projects that we will perform in 2018, like community-awareness projects in Las Terrenas.



COMMUNICATION

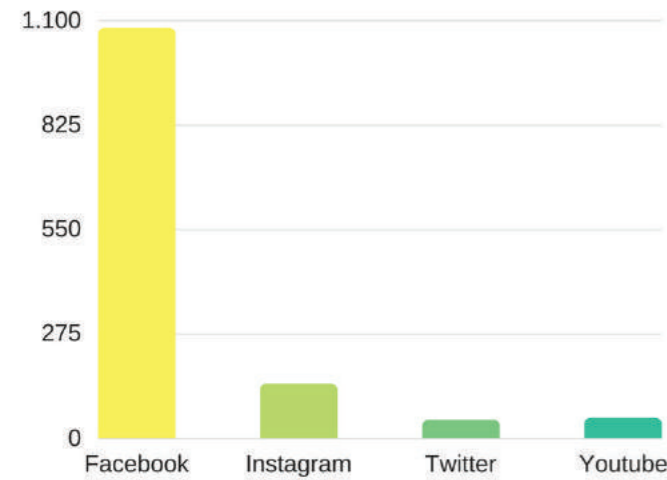
Map of Communication

Analysis of Social Media



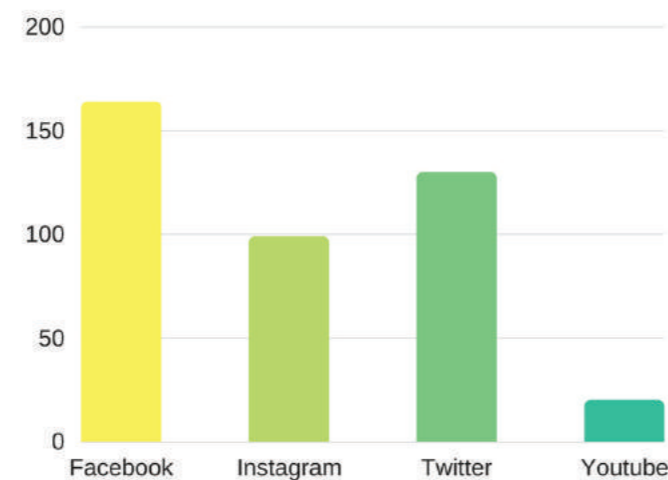
Analysis of Social Media

number of followers



Followers*

number of postings



Numbers of Postings*



*status: 29.11.2017, launch Instagram: 02.05.2017

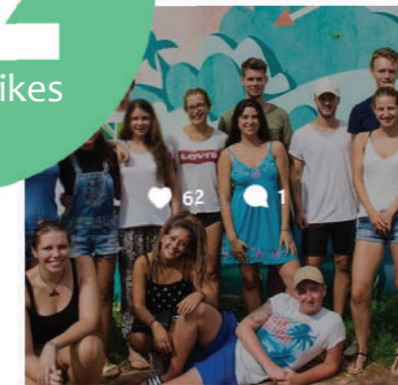
Most successful postings



185
Clicks



62
Likes



90
Interactions

5559
Reached People





FIELDS OF WORK

Santa Barbara de Samaná

Mama Elba
Medicine and Healthcare
English Class
German Class
Computer Class

Las Terrenas

Casa de los Niños in Las Terrenas
Endangered Marine Species Protection /
Environmental Conservation

Santa Barbara de Samaná

Mama Elba School

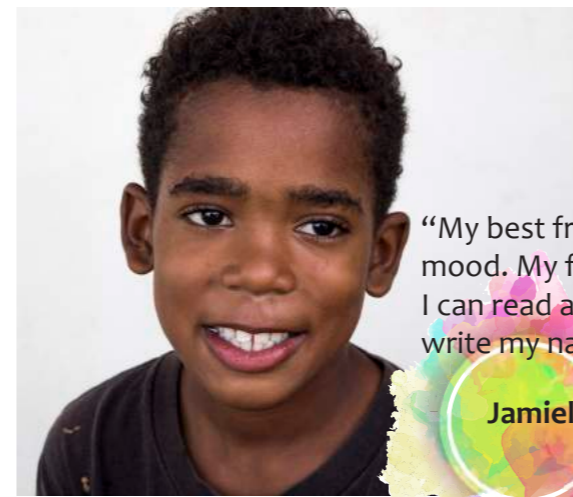
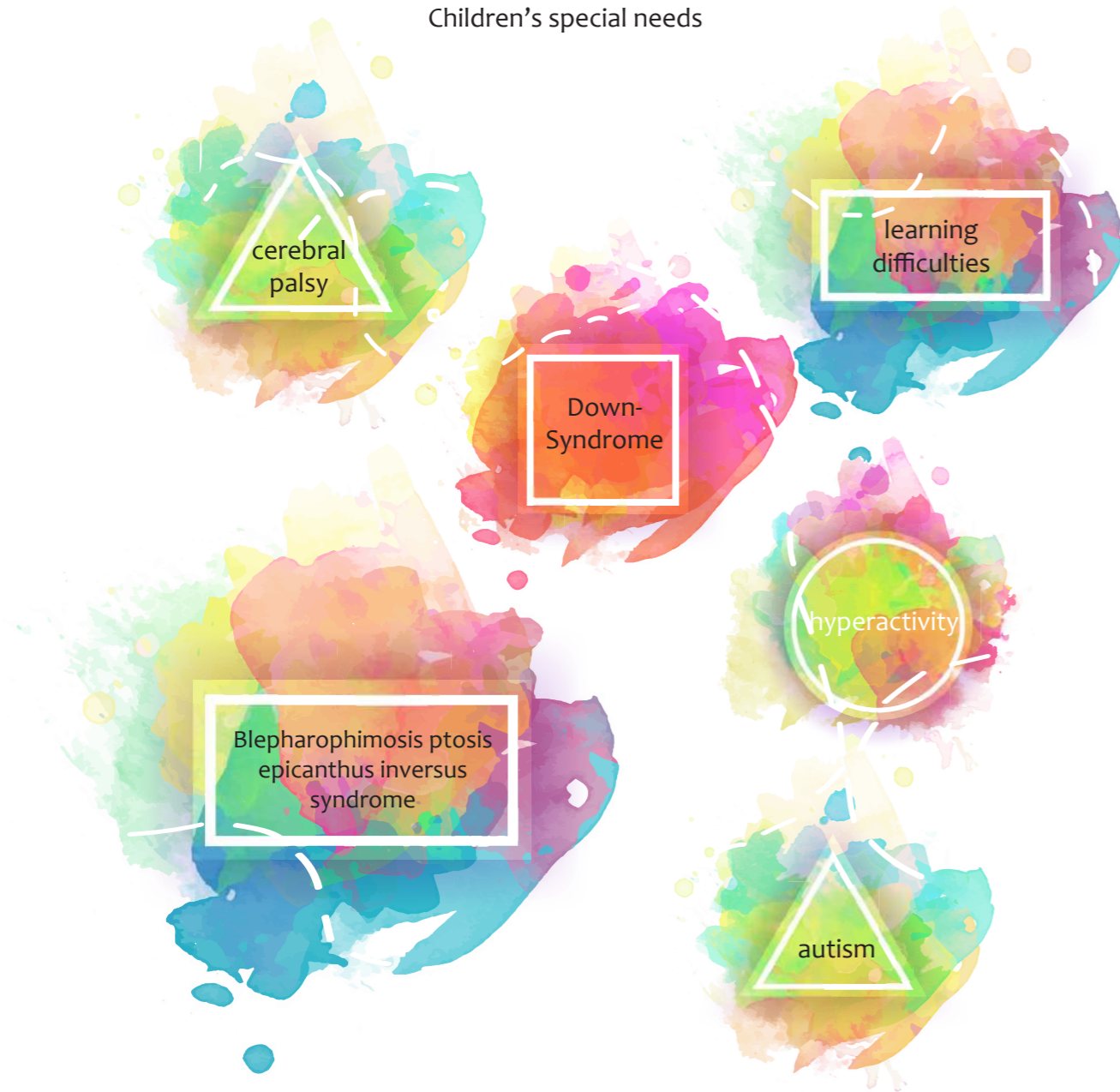
What we do

The true heart of the foundation is the Mama Elba school: a development and learning center for children and adults with special needs. It is one of the few institutions in the Dominican Republic where they are given the much-needed attention they would otherwise be denied. Currently, 22 children and adults with different special needs, ranging from physical and mental disabilities to developmental disorders or learning difficulties, attend the Mama Elba school every day. The school's work is crucial for their development.

The learning concept is

based on the Montessori Pedagogics to work as individualized as possible. This is realized through small learning groups and the recognition of the individual learning process of each child. Another integral component of the school's work are individual dialogs and interventions in order to establish a good connection to them and improve their social behaviour. As inclusion of special needs kids into the society is not very common in the Dominican Republic, the Mama Elba school does its best to change that by bringing together children with and without special needs to learn from each other.

Children's special needs



“My best friend here is Jesus, because he is really funny and always in a good mood. My favorite things to do in school is to go to the beach, play and relax. I can read a lot faster than before, I can add numbers, I can write better, I can write my name, and I learned to share more. I feel really good here.”

Jamiel

Challenges

Most children are not able to go on the streets or walk around like everybody else does.

Too little:

- facilities for the handicapped
- support for families
- awareness and sensitivity for the handicapped
- material and qualified teachers to work with
- education about disabilities





“I have a lot of friends here like George, Alicía, Jesús, the volunteers, the teachers and a lot more. I really like that there are so many children here. I can dry the dishes, help with things and play. I have learned to listen to the teachers. I can write, I can read better than before and I know how to do math.”



Rachely

Accomplishments

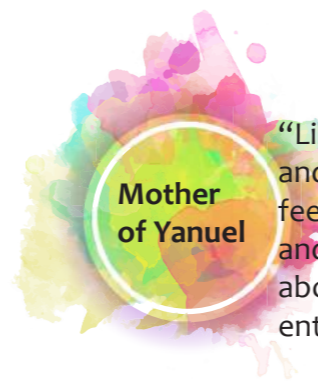
There are no other schools in the area concentrating on kids with special needs.

Kids improved their autonomy and are more self-reliant in their everyday lives:

- brushing teeth on a regular basis
- washing hands
- going shopping
- cooking and drying dishes
- cleaning and washing
- Kids did fun activities

Most did not do that very often before attending the school:

- going to the beach or playground
- eating pizza
- visiting places
- The work burden for kids’ families diminishes



Mother of Yanuel

“Like 2 years ago he did not want to go to school at all but now he loves it and never misses a day of school. I really love it, because I think that the kids feel loved and they have another family here. Yanuel socializes a lot more and feels comfortable in another environment than his home. He learns a lot about life and people especially getting to know the volunteers from all different parts of the world.”

Strategic aims for 2018

find a bigger building

get a diagnosis and therapy for each kid

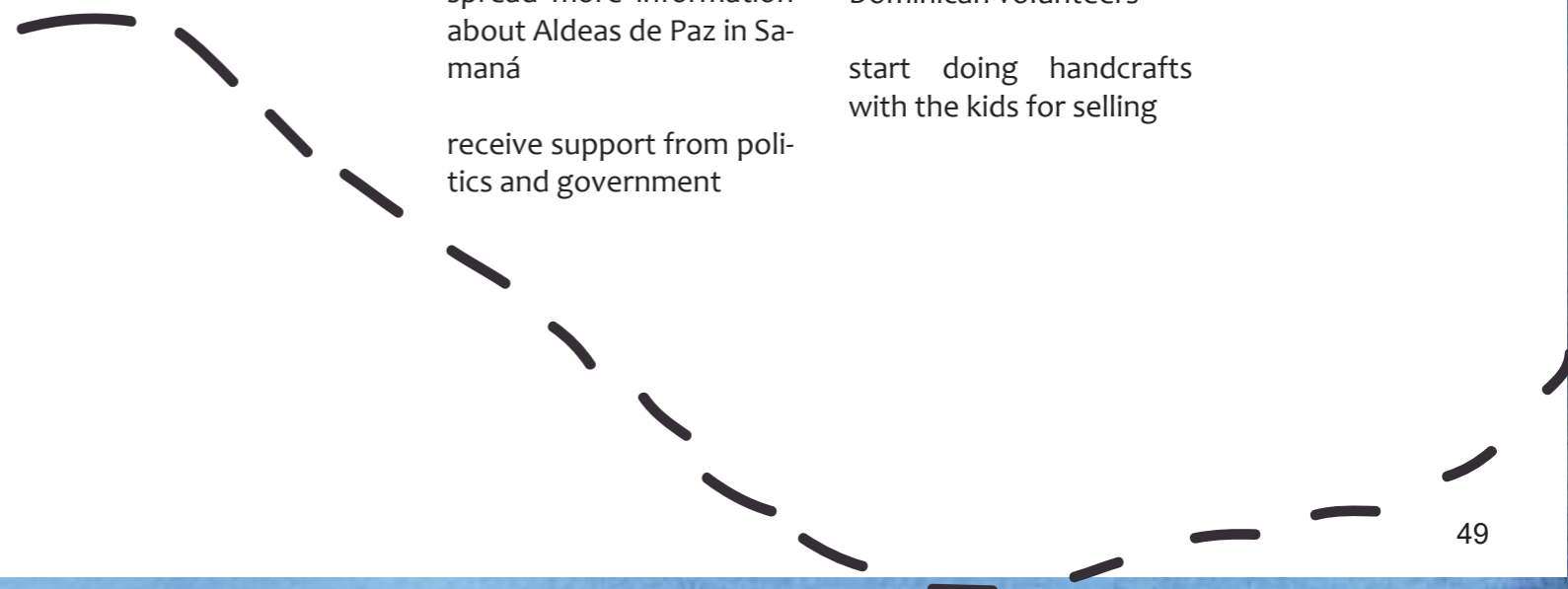
spread more information about Aldeas de Paz in Samaná

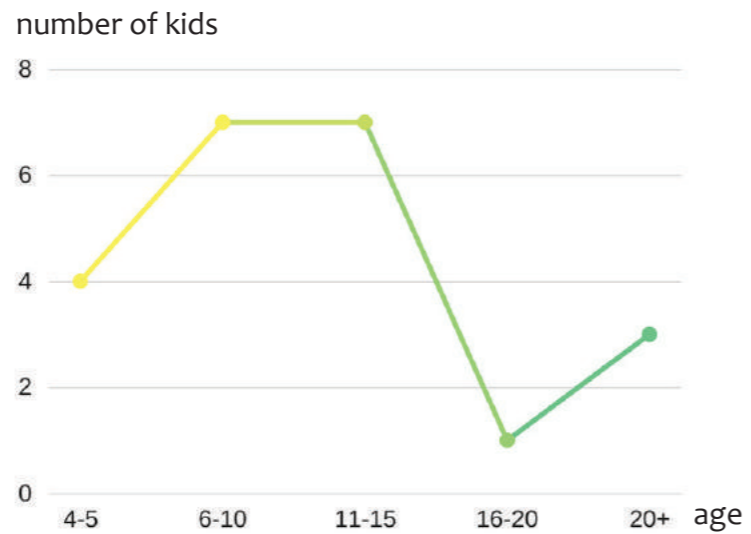
receive support from politics and government

employ a speech therapist and psychologist 2-3 days per week (6h per week)

Dominican volunteers

start doing handcrafts with the kids for selling





Age of the kids

- Director of School Mama Elba School -

“Everyone who reads this and is interested in our work, the reality of the Dominican Republic and our children, is more than welcome to visit us. You will be amazed to see the world through our children’s eyes and you will go back as a different person. I love it to work here and discover a new way of living, working and meeting people. The many aims we have are not all reachable yet, but we do what we can with the little resources we have.”

Jéssica



Medicine And Healthcare

Thanks to the willingness of the local staff to work together with foreigners, this year's volunteers were able to gain a vast insight by observing the work from the doctors and staff and collaborating closely with employed professionals. Clearly, there is a stark contrast between western medical practice and the realities of medicine in the Dominican Republic. The public health facilities here function in a different way like hospitals for instance in the U.S. or Germany, where there are more advanced medical machinery and many more disposables available. Above all, the operational procedures and the workflow is not as advanced, simply because these health facilities never had the chance to develop as fast.

Tasks our volunteers participated in this year are among others:

- HIV-prevention-programmes
- filling in health records or digitizing them
- assisting physicians
- other tasks depending on the individual skillset of a volunteer, ambitions, duration of stay and Spanish level.

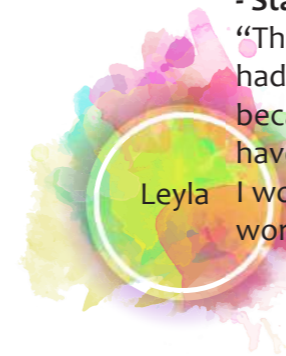
Aldeas de Paz accepts both volunteers with and without former experience in the medical sector. Obviously, the potential support someone with former knowledge in the field and someone without can offer, differ a lot. However, everyone is welcome to support us and this year we had many volunteers from both groups. In the future we seek to improve the number of participants with a medical degree in order to provide even better development aid in the medical sector.



Linnet

- Staff in the laboratory of the local hospital -

“For me it is great to have young people working in the laboratory. Not only do we have the cooperation with Aldeas de Paz, but also a cooperation with World Friends Korea.”



Leyla

- Staff in the HIV prevention department -


“The cooperation with Aldeas de Paz is an enormous help for me. In 2017 we had many volunteers, who did great work. The work they do is very important, because they work voluntarily and without earning money. Even though we have different cultural backgrounds, we understand each other. In the future I would love to have even more volunteers so that we always have someone working here.”



English Class

We realized there was a high demand and interest of locals to learn the English language, so we initiated the English class. Locals of all ages can

come and join this class to gain invaluable skills which will improve their future opportunities both in their career and their private life.



Francina

- Student -

“I want to learn English because one day I want to move to the United States with my whole family.”



Bryant

- Student our youngest with 11 years old -

“I want to learn how to count, speak and read English. My favorite song is ‘We Are The World’ from Michael Jackson and I really would like to sing the song.”

German Class

Teacher Kristina about the German Class: “During our stay here a lot of people asked us to help them to learn German so we had the idea of starting a German class. We spread the information about our class in town and expected only a few people to come. In the end more

than 20 people came to our class. We were very surprised about this success. Now, after some month, we still have a group of 10 to 15 motivated people, who want to learn German because of very different reasons: some of them have German families or friends, some of them need to

speaking German at work in the tourist sectors and some of them just do it for fun or want to spend their free time in a meaningful way.

We always start our classes with a presentation about culture in Germany, so we already spoke for example about food, the political situation at the moment, the nature and landscape as well as rules and regulations.

After the presentation we continue with repetitions, new vocabulary, grammar and games to practice. It's always very fun and often the students ask for learning more than we prepared.

The motivation of the students and the noticeable improvement of their German skills show us that we started a very useful project.”

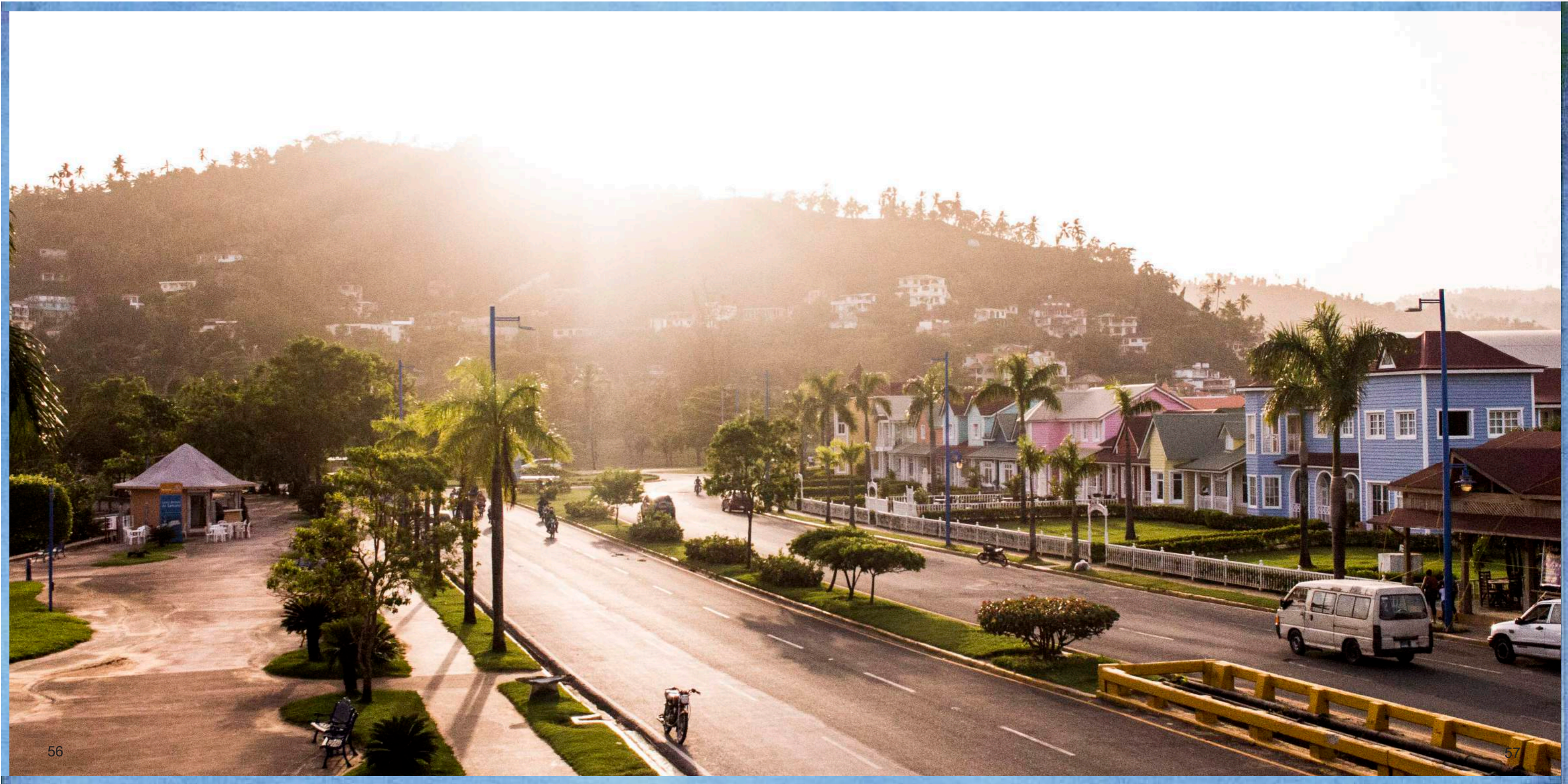


Computer Class

In order to improve the local's work opportunities, Aldeas de Paz is giving a weekly computer class. The level of the classes depend on the students previous knowledge and the topics they would like to learn.

Course content is among others:

- difference between hardware and software
- Microsoft Office products
- Internet



Casa de los Niños in Las Terrenas

The school “Casa de los Niños” in Las Terrenas has been directed by Susy Belussi for eight years. Children from the age of 6 until the age of 18 years with and without special needs attend the school, whose learning concept is based on the Montessori Pedagogics. The school starts at 8 a.m. and ends at 4p.m. During the classes the children and teachers have one break in the morning and a lunch break, where everyone eats typical Dominican dishes together, such as rice with beans and chicken or rice with fish. In the afternoon the volunteers are able to cre

ate workshops on their own. With the arrival of the new volunteers from the German Red Cross in September, two volunteers joined the school team. Their work fields are divided into two different areas: one of the volunteers works in English language teaching for the youngest children, aged 6 to 10, by assisting the English teacher. The other volunteer is involved in the work with children with dyslexia. To improve their writing and spelling skills she dictates different texts, reads with them individually and explains the content once again.

Endangered Marine Species Protection and Environmental Conservation

The Samaná Bay is not only a significant breeding ground and nursery area for humpback whales from all over the North Atlantic, it is also the most important multi-species fishing ground in the Dominican Republic, a growing international tourist destination, and a commercial port. While tourism is an important source of economic activity and financial income, its impact on sensitive coastal-marine ecosystems is of particular concern. In order to protect the en

vironment of the Peninsula de Samaná, we created a new program called “Endangered Marine Species Protection and Environmental Conservation”. In this program volunteers work in cooperation with the Department of Environmental Protection of the Dominican Republic. The tasks include among others the restoration of coral reefs, beaches and coastal areas, the plantation of mangroves and the monitoring of sea turtles and humpback whales.



- The first volunteer in this program -

“During my stay in Las Terrenas I was working with the Department of Environmental Protection of the Dominican Republic. I worked together with locals, planting trees mostly in order to stop the erosion in the coastline and in the ground in general. What I most liked was the working environment. Everybody was relaxed and friendly and they would take me to nice places I would not get to see otherwise, like caves, lakes, etc.

The organization Aldeas de Paz made it really easy for me to do this volunteering service and I liked that they offered a lot of different activities where I could also take part and help.”



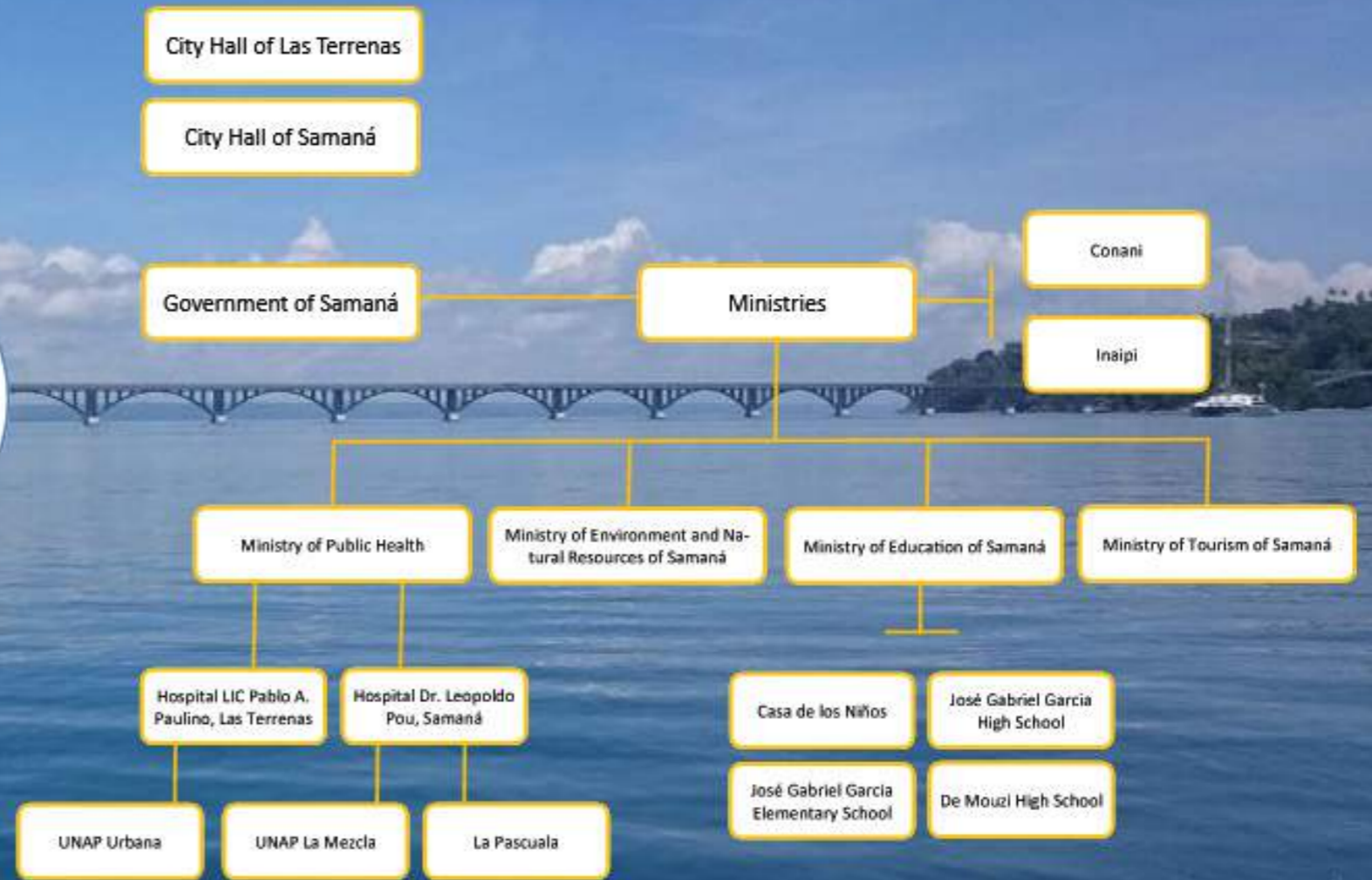
Partners



NON GOVERNMENTAL PARTNERS



GOVERNMENTAL PARTNERS

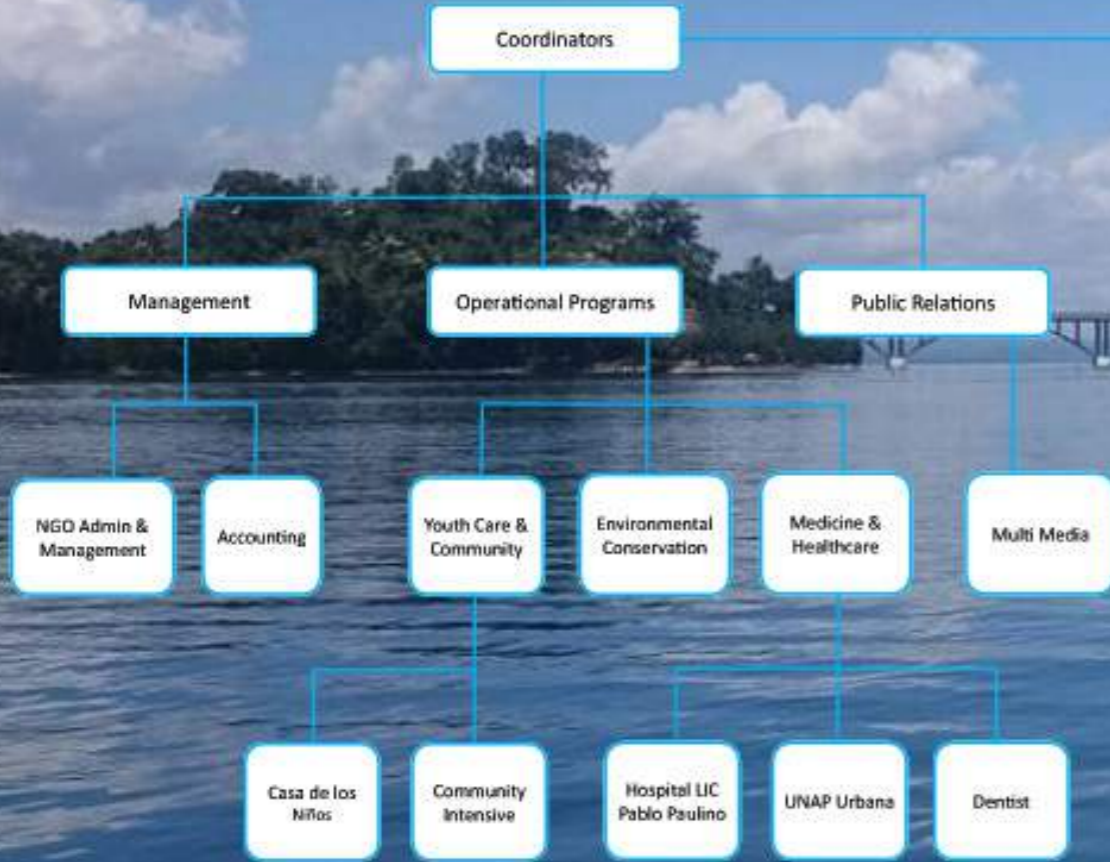




LAS TERRENAS

SAMANÁ

Managing Board
 President: Manfred Mönninghoff
 Vice President: Flor Thomas
 Further Members: Jimmi Castillo, Julia Schaaf, Olga Paredes



Closing words from some of our partners in the area of Samaná

- Special operations manager for the Red Cross in Samaná -

“In Samaná, there is no budget for aid and volunteers from the national Red Cross, because there are too few volunteers. This year’s activities took place without financial support of the national Red Cross. The Red Cross delivered speeches about breast cancer in public schools about dengue fever and the chikungunya virus and undertook prevention work. Before, during and after the hurricanes, the Red Cross worked with COE and distributed emergency relief packages. Aldeas de Paz’ volunteers supported our operations with first-aid-courses and the collection of information about hurricane victims in different districts. The aim for 2018 is to build a new branch in Samaná. We still need to achieve more effective integration of the general public, especially experts, and we will improve the training of our volunteers.”

Jose Luis

- Associate at CEBSE -

„El Centro para la Conservación y Ecodesarrollo de la Bahía de Samaná y su Entorno is an organisation working for the conservation and economic development of the Samaná bay and its environment. This year we experimented with man-made stimulation of coral growth near the island Cayo Farola. In our work. We both try to support the local fisherman and find new possibilities for a more sustainable future. Aldeas de Paz’ volunteers helped us with their manpower in cleaning beaches, diving down to the ‘coral babies’ and cleaning them with a toothbrush and other small projects we introduced them to.”

Aurelio

- Quisqueya branch in Samaná -

„Volunteers assisted us in our small office with folding many new kits for new learning groups. The whole office was full with kits one day. We work with people from other countries in our branch in Samaná, because the volunteers are willing to help us with the tasks we have and we shared a nice time together.”

Ariel





Additional Information

Statements from our partners, the children at school and other testimonials have been translated from the Spanish language.

The end of period for the statistics is November 2017.

Editors: Julia Jansen, Fabian Rudolf, Saskia Haas and Julia Schaaf

Layout: Theresa Hösch

Aldeas de Paz is a registered nonprofit organisation in the Dominican Republic by Law 122-05.