



December 2020

TO ALL FRIENDS OF FOUNDATION TOTAI

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your faithful and continued prayerful and financial support of Fundacion Totai (Foundation Totai in the UK) through the ongoing social demands and economic impact of the covid-19 pandemic.

Back in May 2020, we advised you that the country of Bolivia was in lockdown, with Trinidad, in the Beni region, declared the epicentre of the virus. The authorities prevented the population from leaving their homes except for a once weekly visit to the shops to purchase essential goods. This caused great hardship to the local people, many of whom are employed on a daily basis and with no work available, they struggled to feed their families and source any critical medical and dental care. Sadly through April to July, in particular, there was an explosion of positive cases of covid-19 and many deaths. Businesses folded, employees were made redundant, many lost family members, and the confinement in homes led to mental health issues. Some restrictions were lifted in August which has brought a degree of relief to the community. The statistics in Bolivia, as in much of South America, highlighted the disproportionate impact of the virus in the poorer regions of the continent.

The work of Fundacion Totai (FT) had to be suspended to protect the health of the staff, their families and all those who attended the health centre, together with those involved in the community, education and sports ministries. The revenue generated from the provision of services completely dried up, depriving the Fundacion of a key source of income. They were only sustained by the generous donations received through the Scottish Charity, Foundation Totai, and a German medical charity, CBM, whose support was often delayed because of the lockdown in Bolivia and in Germany. With the commitment of paying salaries to around 22 staff members coupled with insufficient financial resources, the management team persuaded their employees to agree to a 50% reduction in their salaries, rather than pursuing the option of redundancy, in an effort to support the wider families of each staff member.

This course of action was necessary to protect the livelihoods of many local people and they could not have achieved this without the very generous support from the donors in the UK.

We are delighted to advise that, within the last two months, the **health centre, sports ministry and community and education depts** have all re-opened, albeit with many restrictions in place. Regrettably, salaries are still frozen at 50% and are likely to remain so, until such times as the health centre is able to operate at full capacity.

6 Strathblane Drive, Hairmyres, East Kilbride G75 8GA Tel: 01355 702234 Email: alastair.fergusson@gmail.com

Directors: Alan Cunningham, Alastair Fergusson, Rachel Peebles, Allan Munn

Foundation Totai is a company limited by guarantee, registered in Scotland, No.SC297194 and a recognised Scottish Charity, No.SC037260.

Registered Office: 180 St Vincent Street, Glasgow, G2 5SG

Health Ministry

With all medical specialities available and biosecurity measures implemented, the health centre staff were ready to receive the backlog of patients but there is still fear in the population about attending clinics, as a consequence of the virus. The predominantly Christian staff are resilient despite the levels of anxiety and financial pressures, and they enjoy weekly devotions which are led by members of the local church “El Jireh”. They are keen to maintain Christian values with other staff and patients alike.



The Fundacion has been able to appoint an Ear and Hearing Care Physician, Dr Ana Yensy Semo Bazan, who fully understands the Christian ethos and vision for the work in Trinidad and is an AWANA club leader (a Christian youth ministry). In September, Dr Claudia Jimenez joined the team as an obstetric gynaecologist



The centre already has specialists in general medicine, otolaryngology, paediatrics, dentistry, audiology, phoniatrics, nursing and physiotherapy. Fundacion Totali's iOye Bolivia (Hear Bolivia) programme, which is nationally acclaimed, leads the way in Ear and Hearing healthcare in the Beni region.



Much of the Ear and Hearing ministry takes place off-site and in September 2020, a health campaign was carried out in the rural town of Sachojere, 28km from Trinidad. Medical checks, ear cleaning, audiological tests and delivery of medicines were carried out free of charge. There was opportunity to share the Word of God with the local children and they had a great time with games, as they received school supplies, refreshments and prizes.

Dr Miguel Angel Arauz, a dentist and the President of FT, has, for a number of years, supported the “missionary boat” ministry which provides much needed medical services to remote river communities in the Beni region through multi-national teams of professionals.

In commemoration of the International Week of the Deaf, FT staff conducted health campaigns for people affiliated with the Beni Deaf Person Association (ASORBENI) and the IDEPSO Special School, whose students receive free medical care, audiological tests and medication.

Sports Ministry

With the approval of the local authority for the opening of sports activities in Trinidad, the FT coach, San Oniava, resumed training. They started by giving all the children in the football school a medical check-up with the help of the health centre staff who also provided guidelines on covid-19 prevention measures.

Some of the young people attended with their mums, and there was great excitement about the resumption of the sports activities. Many children from the adjacent neighbourhood joined in, just as delighted to join their friends after lockdown.





Training began with 45 children in attendance (aged 6 to 15 years) but they are now averaging 60 to 70 children, whose health is regularly monitored. In October, the young people participated in a municipal football championship, with the help of a volunteer from England, Simon Howling.

The training sessions always include a Bible study and opportunity for questions about the Christian faith. The leaders visit the children's homes and encourage them to come along to the youth events organised by "El Jireh" church.

Pastoral care is an important aspect of the ministry and families are helped with medical expenses and food provision. San Oniava, who travels with the health team to rural locations for the health campaigns, runs sporting activities and evangelism amongst the young people there.

Community & Education



Many children come from socially deprived communities with little parental support, resulting in poor health and diet, and little access to education. The FT Education and Community Director, Carla Camader, was able to donate clothes to children in the local neighbourhood as part of the community initiative.

Carla developed a scheme to provide the children in primaries one, two three and four with additional educational support. The scheme contains the topics of maths, language, Christian values and safety measures for covid-19. They are also given school supplies in cases where parents cannot afford them, together with medical check-ups and free medication as required.

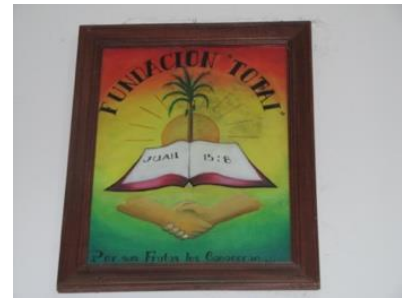
The Bible education classes have resumed and the children have the opportunity to grow in their knowledge of the Word of God. They learn that God loves them regardless of their circumstances and they are encouraged to accept Jesus as their Saviour. The teaching material includes "My First Friends of the Bible" and "Adventures with Moses and Joshua". Carla encourages the young people to attend "El Jireh" church and she too travels with the health team to rural locations to engage in evangelism with the local people.



Dr Ruth Obando organised the resumption of the arts and crafts classes which reach women within the community, developing their skills and gifts in embroidery, working with fabric, producing useful items using recycled materials. They enjoy fellowship through devotional times within this Christ-centred community.

The aims of FT

The palm tree is the logo and symbol of FT's aims, using John 15 v 8 as their purpose statement: "*this is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples*".



The ministry has a significant social impact on the people of Trinidad and they have the capacity to reach many more people with the skills of health professionals, and many young people with the Gospel through sports and education. However there is often political turmoil; they do not have support from local authorities and with limited financial resources, they are heavily dependent on gifts from sponsors. The ministry is faith based and they regularly pray that God, through His love and mercy, continues to provide them with the necessary resources to function effectively and meet the needs of the people they serve. Their faith is founded in Jesus Christ, who sustains them and they pray that all their plans are honouring to Him. They are challenged to provide cohesive medical specialities, adopt a workable strategy for stabilising the finances and utilise social networks to raise awareness of the Fundación's desire to demonstrate the love of Christ through affordable healthcare, fellowship and companionship through sporting and community activity, in a loving environment.

They would welcome prayer for the new Government as it works for the good of the people of Bolivia; God's strength and peace to those who have lost family members in the pandemic, and the healing of those who are sick; a Christ-like attitude of staff and volunteers as they "love their neighbours"; a resolution to their economic situation.

Your partnership

Miguel Angel Arauz wishes to express enormous thanks to you for your faithful partnership with FT, for your prayers and your generous provision of financial resource. Your various gifts have contributed to payment of the modified salaries, helped honour some of the statutory social security costs paid to leavers, facilitated the purchase of biosecurity material (PPE), supported the football ministry and financed the cost of medication and educational material for the young people of Trinidad.

One of the goals of FT is the provision of healthcare to those who live in rural communities where there is no access to medical services and your gifts contributed to the cost of medicines and supplies given to patients during the recent health campaign in the town of Sachojere.

On behalf of the Directors of Fundación Total in Scotland, may we express our appreciation for your generosity which is so much appreciated by everyone involved in this ministry.

Yours in Christ



Alastair Fergusson
Director/Treasurer

