UN TOIT POUR LES ENFANTS DES BIDONVILLES DE COLOMBIE
SHELTER FOR THE KIDS OF COLOMBIA’S GHETTOS

En offrant un gîte, des soins médicaux et surtout beaucoup d’amour, la fondation Aide aux enfants combat la misère infantile en Colombie. Recueillis dans un foyer, les enfants retrouvent espoir et dignité.

Sur une population de 47 millions, 3 millions de personnes sont jetées sur les routes pour fuir les violences de la guérilla colombienne. Meurtres par des dizaines de conflits armés, ces populations déplacées sont les plus pauvres d’entre les pauvres. Parmi elles, des dizaines de milliers d’enfants mal nourris s’entassent dans les bidonvilles. La fondation Aide aux enfants lutte pour leur redonner le sourire depuis 1985. Elle a recueilli plus de 10'000 bambins dans huit foyers Bambi répartis dans différentes villes du pays (Bogota, Cali et Darien). Aujourd’hui, l’action est reconnue dans tout le pays. Le gouvernement colombien lui a même décerné deux médailles et il assure 40% de ses frais de fonctionnement. Le reste des financements provient de Suisse. Rencontre avec Cristina M. Feciele, secrétaire générale de la fondation Aide aux enfants.

Avant d’intégrer un foyer, quel est le quotidien de ces enfants?
Leur situation est dramatique. Leur famille, très souvent des mères célibataires, ont fu la guérilla et ont échoué dans les bidonvilles, à la périphérie des villes. Là, les personnes s’entassent dans des baraques où les populations souffrent de l’extrême pauvreté, de maladies ou bien ont été les victimes de violences physiques ou sexuelles.

Quel âge ont les enfants que vous accueillez?
Nous sommes spécialisés dans la petite enfance. Nous recueillons des petits entre 0 et 6 ans. Mais l’objectif n’est pas de les garder six années consécutives. En moyenne, les enfants restent un an. L’expérience nous

The «Fondation Aide aux enfants» is fighting juvenile misery in Colombia, offering kids shelter, medical aid and, above all, lots of love. The kids are taken in where they can find the hope and dignity so many have lost.

Colombia guerrilla violence has displaced 3 million of the country’s 47 million people. The poor have been hardest hit by the decades of armed conflict, and many have ended up on the streets, especially malnourished children, who amass into the ghettos looking for food. Since 1985, the «Aide aux enfants» foundation has been striving to bring a smile back on those sad faces. The organisation has helped nearly 10,000 youngsters through its eight shelters located in various cities (Bogota, Cali, Darien). It is now internationally recognized, and the Colombian government, which has already presented it with an award, underwrites 40 per cent of its activities. Outstanding funding comes from Switzerland. We interviewed Cristina M. Feciele, the foundation’s secretary general.

What’s daily life like for these kids before they arrive at one of your shelters?
They have tragic lives. Their families, often little more than single mothers, have run from the guerrillas and most have ended up stranded in ghettos outside big cities. These favelas offer nothing but grinding poverty, disease and physical and sexual violence.

How old are the kids you take in?
We specialize in toddlers, so we stay between newborns to six-year olds. That’s not to say that we want to keep kids for six years. Most only stay one. Time has taught us that too long a stay only makes it harder for them to reintegrate the often precarious conditions they came from.
EN TOIT POUR LES ENFANTS DES BIDONVILLES DE COLOMBIE
SHelter for the Kids of Colombia’s Ghettos

La fondation Aide aux enfants lutte contre la misère infantile en Colombie. Dans un foyer, les enfants retrouvent la santé, l’amour et la dignité.

La population de 47 millions, 3 millions de personnes sont déplacées aux routes pour fuir les violences et les batailles du conflit armé colombien. Parmi elles, des milliers d’enfants mal nourris s’entassent dans les bidonvilles. La fondation Aide aux enfants lutte pour donner le sourire à ces enfants depuis 1985. Elle est à l’origine de 10 000 bennins dans des foyers de bidonville. Le gouvernement colombien lui a attribué deux médailles et l’organisme assure 40% de ses frais de fonctionnement. Le reste des financements proviennent d’associations ou de la fondation Aide aux enfants.

Pour intégrer un foyer, quel est le quotidien des enfants?

La situation est dramatique. Leur famille, très souvent dévastée, ont fui les guerres et ont échoué dans les bidonvilles, à la périphérie de villes. Là, les enfants sont dans des baraquements où les populations d’extrême pauvreté, de maladies ou bien ont eu des expériences de violences physiques ou sexuelles. Là, les enfants sont accueillis, nourris, soignés, enseignés, et sont accélérés vers l’avenir.

Quel âge ont les enfants que vous accueillez?

Les enfants ne sont plus que 3 ans et 6 ans. Mais l’objectif est de les garder six années consécutives. Ensuite, les enfants restent un an. L’expérience nous a prouvée que plus longtemps les enfants restent, plus ils ont de chances de trouver un emploi et d’intégrer la société plus facilement.

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PIGUET
Watchmakers & Jewellers
A seller of dreams on the shores of Lake Geneva

An air of magic reigns at PIGUET watchmakers & jewellers in Nyon. Outside, the elegant shop sign is one of the first clues that this enchanting boutique possesses a special kind of charm; an indication that this particular place is owned by those who know how to marry an admiration for innovation with a deep respect for tradition.

In the elegant shop window and within the beautiful display cabinets, much-loved classic brands such as Baume & Mercier, Chopard, DoDo, Ebel, Girard-Perregaux, Gucci, Hermès, Jaeger-LeCoultre, Louis Erard, Montblanc, Oris, Patek Philippe, Universal Genève, world famous pen manufacturer Montegrappa as well as precision clocks by Erwin Sattler, sit side-by-side with more contemporary creations, ready to inspire and delight all those who cross the threshold of this gem of a boutique.

Stealing a glance to the rear of the shop, one is transported back in time. Bent over a double workbench, two master watchmakers in white coats are hard at work. Wearing specialist eyeglasses, they restore and repair the timepieces that have been entrusted to them; and it is clear that these watchmaker & jeweller are men who know their roots intact.

Founded in 1966, PIGUET has been servicing customers with easy-going and non-conformist style for over 40 years, and is well-established as a watchmaker, repairer and jeweller. With ample parking on site, the heart of picturesque Nyon, it adds to the pleasures of this delightful shop.

How do the shelters help?
When they arrive, these kids have nothing. They’re often not even on state records. Once they leave a Bambi shelter, they’ve got a solid, basic education, an up-to-date health certificate, a name – the cornerstone of their identities, and, of course, a handful of toys, like teddy bears. The goal is to get them back on track in the hope that they will not return to the streets or slump back into drugs.

What about the families?
In order to assist the family as a whole, we’ve set up a professional training programme called PROFEMA (Programa de Mejoramiento Familiar). It consists of three parts: parents learn a trade, we find them a job and we provide them with the basic material necessities for them to get started. That could mean a sewing machine, for example. The whole point is to make parents independent so that they can make ends meet to support their families.

And what happens after kids have been to a shelter?
Orphans start a new life with an adopting host family. As for the others, about three quarters return to the families they never lost sight of. For two years, in as much as it is possible, a social worker will keep tabs on them. We put a lot of emphasis on this, and cherish a few success stories that thrill us. I recall a 20-year-old man coming back to thank us. He’d been part of the first wave of Bambi kids in 1985. Today, he’s an engineer. Keeping in touch with these kids also helps us fine tune our programmes by noting what has worked and what hasn’t.

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