



HELLO!

A warm welcome to the latest issue of Street Life.

As we settle into this new year, I want to take this opportunity to express my sincerest thanks to you, our wonderful supporters, for your continued commitment to the street children we work alongside.

We have been completely overwhelmed once again by your response to our Christmas Appeal which, at the time of going to print, has raised over £264,000 to help register children in Guatemala with their birth certificates. Your generous support meant that our partner, CONACMI, could hold a series of largescale registration events which formed part of a programme that has registered over 1,100 children in the last six months. I am also

pleased to tell you that the team recently renewed their formal partnership agreement with the Guatemala Registry Service (RENAP), the government body responsible for registration in Guatemala. This is a fantastic step forwards and means that we can continue to work alongside RENAP to register even more children and young people. We hope that this during this partnership, we can work together to make registration simpler and more accessible, particularly for some of the most vulnerable children.

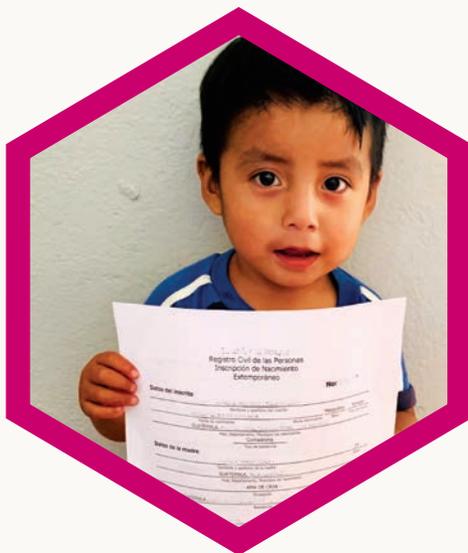
A birth certificate opens the door to so many opportunities for the children and young people we work alongside, including access to education and formal employment. Inside this issue of Street Life, we take a look at our vocational and skills training projects, another area of our work and the next stage in the process after registration, supporting young people in their journey away from the streets. You will hear from Zanthia, Adamu, and Anesh, three young people involved in our projects in Guatemala, Kenya, and Nepal. Sadly, these young people spent much of their childhoods



on the streets, missing out on years of formative education, while living a hand to mouth existence at high risk of exploitation.

We know that once children and young people are on the streets, there are very few options available to them, and they rely on finding work within the informal economy - where working conditions are completely unregulated and earnings low and unpredictable. At a time when countries across the world continue to deal with the fall out of COVID-19 and economies are struggling to recover, our work to support young people with vocational training is more important than ever. Through these projects, young people can learn the skills they need to secure employment opportunities that will enable them to live with more certainty and security. Alongside a focus on training, some of the projects also provide small grants to help young people to set-up their own businesses. This is another path which can support them to move away from the streets for good.

For me, the experiences shared by the young people featured in this issue show how, with the right support and guidance, those who have been leading desperately difficult and chaotic lives on the streets, can – and do – completely turn their lives around. This is



precisely why it is so important for Toybox to continue to work alongside and offer support to children on the streets as they transition into early adulthood. With somebody by their side to encourage them, young people like Zanthia, Adamu, and Anesh – and many more – can grow in confidence and can start to think beyond their daily survival needs and plan for their futures - something they will have never been able to do before. This is certainly something to celebrate and be inspired by!

Once again, thank you so much for everything you do to support all our work. I really hope you enjoy this issue of the magazine.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynne" with a small heart symbol and a flourish below it.

Lynne Morris OBE
Toybox CEO



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www.toybox.org.uk



@TOYBOXCHARITY

“WHEN I LIVED ON THE STREETS, I EXPERIENCED SO MANY HORRIBLE THINGS. EVERYONE IGNORED ME AND NO ONE EVER RESPECTED ME AS A PERSON.”

REDEFINING FUTURES

IN GUATEMALA THE RATE OF UPPER SECONDARY AGED CHILDREN ATTENDING SCHOOL IS 31%. MEET ZANTHIA...

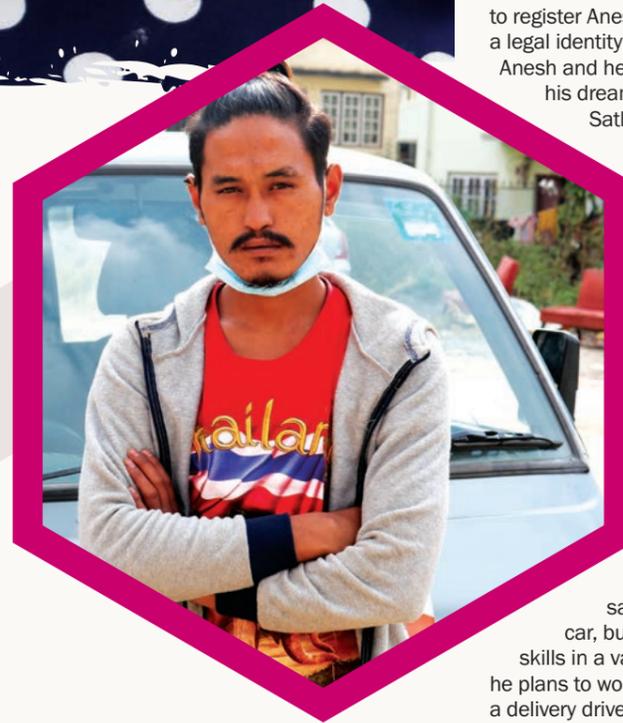
21-year-old Zanthia, in Guatemala, first met CONACMI when the team supported her through the process of registering her three young children. It was during this time, the team learnt more about the pain and trauma Zanthia had experienced from a young age and how she had ended up alone on the streets at just 11 years old when she escaped a dangerous and abusive homelife.

With nowhere to go and no adult to care for her, Zanthia ended up at one of Guatemala City's largest markets. "When I lived on the streets, I experienced so many horrible things. Everyone ignored me and no one ever respected me as a person." It was at this point that Zanthia first met Alfredo, who would later become the father of her children. He was the first person to support her and help her to change her life, yet, over time, he too became violent towards her. With a young family to care for, Zanthia made the difficult decision to leave Alfredo and

moved in with her mother-in-law, where she continues to live today.

Zanthia is currently involved in CONACMI's youth employment programme and recently received support to establish her own small business. With the help of a small grant, she has set-up a stall and also runs a mobile cart where she sells clothes, cleaning materials and soaps. This has made a huge difference in Zanthia's life and prospects. Now, as well as having enough money for her family's day-to-day needs, she is also building up some savings, which she hopes one day will help her children finish their studies, go to university, and lead good lives.

"My greatest wish is that my children finish their studies. Now I've got my own business, I feel good. It's a bit tricky at the moment because I can't always get to see my children because I'm walking so much just to sell. Pregnancy is



IN NEPAL JUST OVER 35% OF YOUNG PEOPLE AGED FROM 15-24 ARE NOT IN EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION OR TRAINING. MEET ANESH...

Anesh, 21, has called the streets of Kathmandu, Nepal, home for over 15 years. When he was just eight years old, he had to navigate one of life's harshest experiences when both his parents died. Anesh, his older brother and younger sister had become used to life on the street, but without their parents to care for them, things became even tougher.

"I felt my life would end on the street. I didn't have any legal identity, which made me sad. It was hard for me to get a job because I didn't have any skills."

Anesh spent most of his time on the streets with his friends, using drugs as a coping mechanism and begging to survive. From time to time, he would also work at one of the city's crematoriums.

Fortunately, it wasn't long before SathSath, one of Toybox's partners in Nepal, met Anesh and began supporting him and his siblings through challenges they were facing on the streets through medical support, access to food and other basic needs, recreational activities and non-formal education. The team were also able to register Anesh with his birth certificate. With a legal identity, new opportunities were open to Anesh and he began to think about realising his dreams of becoming a driver. With SathSath's support, he was able to start a vocational training course to build his skills and enrol in a local driving school, where he is currently preparing for his written theory test to enable him to apply for his driving licence.

"I feel very happy because SathSath has positively changed my life. I am so thankful and I'm looking forward to my future," shares Anesh. "Sitting behind the steering wheel, I feel so proud of myself."

It will take Anesh some time to save enough money to buy his own car, but for now, he is practising his skills in a van owned by SathSath. In time, he plans to work for a taxi company or become a delivery driver to kickstart his savings and move him closer towards his dream of having his own car. "I feel happy that SathSath have helped me become a better person and change my bad habits. I feel lucky to have the chance to learn to drive. In the future, I hope I will be able to move off the streets completely and work hard for a good future. I am also planning to work as a driver in other countries too."

also making me tired. The biggest challenge about having my own business is that there are some days where I don't sell a thing. I feel proud of myself and of my children. I've set up my business on my own and my children have helped me get there - even though looking after them on my own is very hard."

HOW IS TOYBOX SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO REIMAGINE THEIR FUTURE?

Toybox projects in Nepal and Kenya focus on supporting young people on the streets through vocational training - giving them the opportunity to develop technical skills in areas such as hospitality, hair and beauty, catering, tailoring, and mechanics. Young people can use these skills to help them earn a living, support themselves and their families, or build a small business.

In Guatemala, small grants form a key part of our work and are an invaluable way of enabling young people living a hand-to-mouth existence the chance to establish or grow a small business. In turn, this means that young people on the streets with limited opportunities to earn enough to survive can become self-supporting and self-sufficient. They can live a life where they are no longer forced to beg or resort to becoming involved in dangerous or hazardous labour.

Life skills training is another key component of Toybox's work with young people living or working on the streets, many of whom have grown up with limited input from a responsible and caring adult. Through workshops, role play, youth forums and networks, young people are supported to develop essential skills in areas such as decision making, effective communication and personal resilience that are key foundations to support them in their lives.

"Vocational training is an essential component of Toybox's approach to supporting street children to have an alternative and safer future- in which they are less reliant on the streets for daily survival. Many young people connected to the streets have missed out on so much education that they don't feel comfortable going back to school with much younger classmates or have got used to earning an income they rely on. For older children and young people, vocational training is a great alternative to education as it equips them with specific skills they can employ to start their own businesses, work flexibly or gain employment in a sector they have expressed an interest in. Many of these young people have creative talents which are also a perfect outlet for certain vocational skills. Vocational training is supplemented by life and business skills for the greatest impact and the type of training is identified in collaboration with Toybox's partners and the young people. This is so they enrol in courses they are not only passionate about and/or have shown a particular talent in, but that there are sufficient opportunities for employment or self-employment after training."

Naomi Hall Opiyo, Toybox's Director of Impact and Programmes

IN KENYA AN ESTIMATED 1.8 MILLION CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS AGED 6-17 YEARS ARE OUT OF SCHOOL AND NOT RECEIVING A FORMAL EDUCATION. MEET ADAMU...

After leaving school at 15, Adamu, 21, began supporting his mum and sister when his mum lost her job. Life at home was hard and, before long, friends he met on the street had convinced him to move to Nairobi with the prospect of earning more money. Sadly, life in the city was more difficult than Adamu had ever imagined and before long, the streets had become his home.

In July, Adamu became aware of our partner, Pendekezo Letu (PKL), and their activities with other young people on the streets. In the short

period of time that the team have been working alongside him, they have seen big changes in him and, not long after he started joining in with activities, Adamu asked for guidance on how to start his own luggage carrying business.

"Now I've got my trolley and business I'm now able to provide for myself and even buy food for my friends who cannot afford it. Before, I used to wear dirty clothes and beg for food. I've learned from the project how to manage my business by being kind to customers and not misusing my profits. My life has totally changed, especially when it comes to making good decisions about life issues."



I'm so proud of myself for buying my trolley and for being self-employed. My trolley is the most important thing in my life because it is my means of earning an income here on the streets. My dream is to become a successful businessman. I want to work hard and when I get enough money, I will rent a house and move out of the streets. I want to start a family and show other street children they can come out of the streets and live like other people."

OUR IMPACT AT A GLANCE

With the support of our amazing supporters during the last financial year, Toybox continued to adapt and innovate, tackling new challenges brought about by the pandemic.

Thank you for making this work possible. Find out more about all we have achieved together in the last 12 months:

www.toybox.org.uk/annualreport



121,836 children, young people and their family members were supported directly and indirectly.



3,585 children and young people received counselling or mental health support.



335 young people and caregivers were supported to advance their livelihoods – including vocational training and savings groups.



8,038 children and family members affected by COVID-19 received emergency support including food rations, hygiene kits, stationery kits, play equipment and seed capital for livelihoods support.