



**Asociación para la Rehabilitación del Infantil Excepcional**

**Lima, Peru**



**STICHTING VRIENDEN van ARIE**

**August 2022**



Dear Friends of ARIE,

As you can imagine, the last two years have been extremely challenging for ARIE. Peru has been hit disproportionately hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, made worse by late and often incompetent reaction by the authorities. Extremely worrying has been the indiscriminate closure of all education facilities for 24 months. Without a proper back-up of on-line teaching the damage to the long term development of the country will be severe. Fortunately, schools have recently started to re-open trying to recoup some of the lost time.

After three months of complete closure during the second quarter of 2020 ARIE was allowed to re-open, but not before taking all kinds of

COVID protection measures.



*Facemasks are still required*

In effect 2020 was a year with considerable expenditure and very little activity. In 2021 ARIE operated at no more than 60% of capacity, with the expectation to reach 80% during 2022. The interruption of treatment of so many children with a disability is

of great concern. Much of the progress in their development is lost and will have to be made up once they return to ARIE. Also for the ARIE staff it has been a very difficult time, with much to worry about.

The consequences of the COVID pandemic, coupled with global instability has led to a very volatile political situation. Like in many countries, inflation has increased and more and more people fall back into extreme poverty. The best ARIE can do under the circumstances is to concentrate on its core competence of professional treatment with a strong human touch. Luckily, the exceptional generosity of many “Friends of ARIE” has enabled us to support ARIE in Lima during this difficult period and to face the future with confidence. THANK YOU!

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Please read how two mothers experienced the pandemic:



*Camila and Monica*

**Monica Valderrama is Camila's mother**, who suffers from cerebral palsy. At ARIE she receives physio and occupational therapy, in addition to communication and speech training. Before the pandemic Monica had a full agenda as a cleaner, mother and housewife and taking Camila every week to ARIE. Her husband rendered motorbike taxi and courier services. All this came to an abrupt standstill in March 2020 and remained so for two years. In Peru no work means no income, so Monica's extended family decided to pool resources. Many family members contracted COVID. With little availability of oxygen, a very worrying prospect. Monica was not so much afraid of dying as leaving Camila behind without proper care. Somehow they pulled through and are now looking to pick up their old life again. Monica realizes that Camila's condition has deteriorated significantly during lock-down, requiring significant remedial therapy.



*Valentin and his mother Pamela*

**Pamela Grande is the mother of Valentin.** Valentin requires regular therapy to assist his development. Not surprisingly Pamela's first concern during lockdown was the effect the interruption of the therapies would have on Valentin's development. Although she had received some instructions from the ARIE professionals, in practice she found it very hard. Valentin's father works outside Lima. During the past two years he has hardly been back and the little money he sent arrived irregularly. When a new law made it possible to access Pension Savings Accounts, Pamela did so. Sacrificing her future pension helped her to pull through. As conditions are slowly returning to normal her first priority is to make up for lost time in the development of Valentin.

It should be stressed that not only Monica and Pamela, but many ARIE – Parents are extremely grateful for the extra support they receive from

Stichting Vrienden van ARIE to pay for the treatment their children require, now more than ever.

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After more than two years since the COVID - 19 pandemic started, we can begin to assess the impact it has had on ARIE. As you know under normal circumstances parents are means' tested and pay accordingly for the treatment of their children. This is the main source of revenue for ARIE. It is intended to cover operating expenditure, while capital expenditure is mainly paid out of donations received by the Stichting Friends of ARIE. With total lockdown fees payment dried up overnight and only very slowly started to build up again in the second half of 2020. At the same time major expenditure was required for personal protection equipment. Our first priority was to look after ARIE staff and the Stichting ensured that all contracted employees received a minimum of 1,500 Soles (\$ 370) per month. Not a huge amount but enough to see them through within the local context. In addition the Stichting financed the purchase of personal protection equipment and paid for ongoing maintenance. In this way the sustenance of people, property and equipment was ensured.



*Physical therapy*

Now that many things are returning to normal, the greatest concern is clearly the regression in the development of so many children with a disability. ARIE has identified this challenge and is working tirelessly to do everything possible to recoup lost time. Although the

challenge applies to nearly all children, for remedial action to be effective it requires a highly personalized approach. This comes at a time, when absenteeism is still very high. At the same time the economic situation of most people has deteriorated significantly during the past two years. Poor families are struggling under high inflation and uncertainty. It is with this in mind that the Stichting will focus on assisting these parents to pay for the necessary treatment of their children. All this will take time, but with the dedication of the ARIE staff, the commitment of the parents to have their children treated and the generous support of our benefactors, we are confident that we shall overcome the most serious challenge in the 34 years of ARIE's existence.

#### **Founder**

Carola Beelaerts van Blokland

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