



Association partenaire de
l'asociación de protección del niño y adolescente "Apronia"
Puerto Maldonado - Perú



Padre Xavier launches a CRY OF ALARM!

We need our friends now!

Our main working tool, the coffee shop, ice cream parlour “GUSTITOS DEL CURA” IS IN DIRE STRAITS! due to the disrepair and dilapidated state of its production sector.

Flooding and decay of the structure may lead to an imminent closure by the Civil Protection Service.

WITHOUT THE REGULAR INCOME FROM «GUSTITOS» OUR CHILDREN CARE HOME “PRINCIPITO» CANNOT LIVE ANY LONGER

You can help us.





Located in the central square of Puerto Maldonado, the Apronia ice cream parlour has become a must-see meeting and tasting place for the entire city.

Photo: Florian Kopp

Apronia cares about children welfare. At the same time, the Association is an important local employer and economic player.

Apronia (Association for the Protection of Children and Adolescents) protects children and adolescents in difficulty, under the various forms of care that life imposes on us. The hospitality place is the «Principito» children care home, visited by Pope Francis last January. Around 35 to 40 children are cared for and then followed up in their studies. We also extend our help to distress situations happening beyond our children care home.

Through its projects, Apronia provides work, directly and indirectly, to many people, always with a social priority, and thus contributes to the development of the employees' families and, in so doing, to the progress of the region. Currently, no less than 350 people, employed with their families and suppliers, are involved in the association's activities.

Our financial engine needs to be renovated.

Apronia's main source of funding is the "Gustitos del Cura" ice-cream parlour, but the "Production" section became too small and does not meet the requirements of the Civil Protection Department. (Defensa civil). The glacier is threatened to be closed any time from now!

To make things worse, four accidents have recently occurred that could have had very serious consequences: a fire in the fryer due to poor electrical contact, the collapse of a wall on an employee who was planting nails, the burning of another employee due to lack of space, and three floods, one of which was caused by a heavy shower (fortunately the power was off, otherwise workers should have been electrocuted).

We need to rebuild the entire electrical system. It rains everywhere on the working benches, the structure is rotten because of termites, the roofs are too rusty and the floors are full of gaps. In short, demolition and re-building of production laboratories are essential. In the meantime, the inner courtyard must be laid out and protected from the elements (rain and sun).

Closing the ice-cream parlour is out of the question:

Apronia cannot afford the luxury of closing a 30-table sales area for at least two months. Not to mention the costs of the refurbishment work. The loss would be too great!

A change immediately seized.

A providential solution emerged: the two neighbouring arcades were for rent! They happen to have the same surface as "Gustitos" and connecting doors can be practiced.

Except for the main part of the current surface, where the cash drawer is located (historically the first "Gustitos" room!), the ice-cream parlour just moved to these neighbouring rooms where operations will continue, while the repair works will take place in the damaged premises.

Where to find the money we need?

How to fund the reconstruction of the production premises and the inner courtyard?

The cost is difficult to estimate because there may be surprises, both good and bad. Anyway, we estimate it should not exceed 60,000 Swiss Francs. The amount of CHF 30,000 has already been made available from Apronia-Peru's own resources. Works have started. The remaining CHF 30'000 CHF have still to be found!

And it is with the final objective to gather this sum that, for the first time, we are making a plea to our friends.



Located in the central square of Puerto Maldonado, the Apronia ice cream parlour has become a must-see meeting and tasting place for the entire city. It has found its place in all tourist guides. It produces and distributes some 60 varieties of pastries, ice cream and snacks.



The ice cream parlour provides work for many women.

Varied clients, coming from different environments.

A very professional job.

Tasty quality products made with local ingredients.



Photos: Florian Kopp

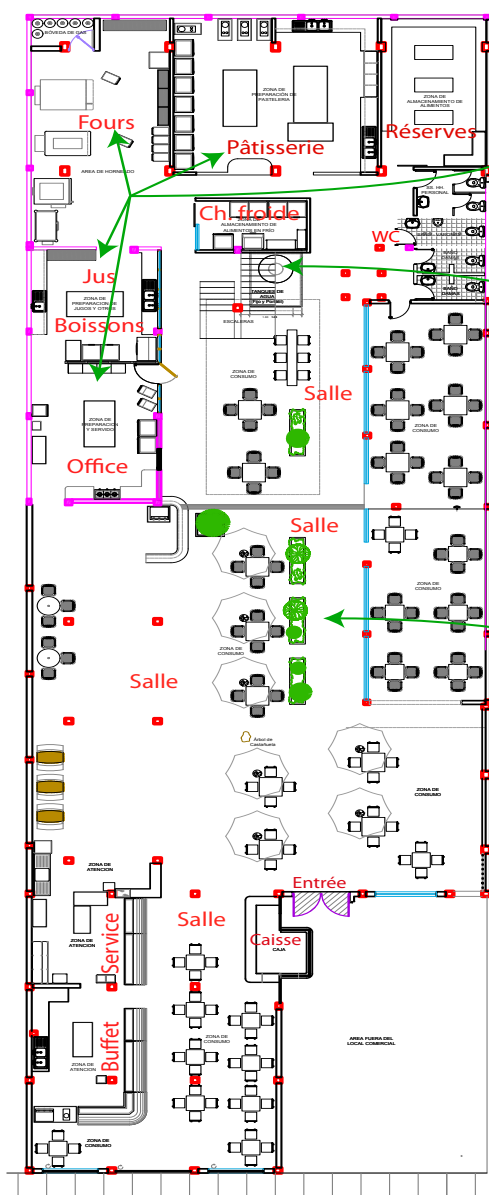
The damages

When it rains – we are in the Amazon rainforest! – the dilapidated roof causes flooding in the reserves, the courtyard and the laboratories where ice cream and pastries are produced.



“Gustitos del Cura” Ice cream parlour. Rehabilitation, renovation.

New premises

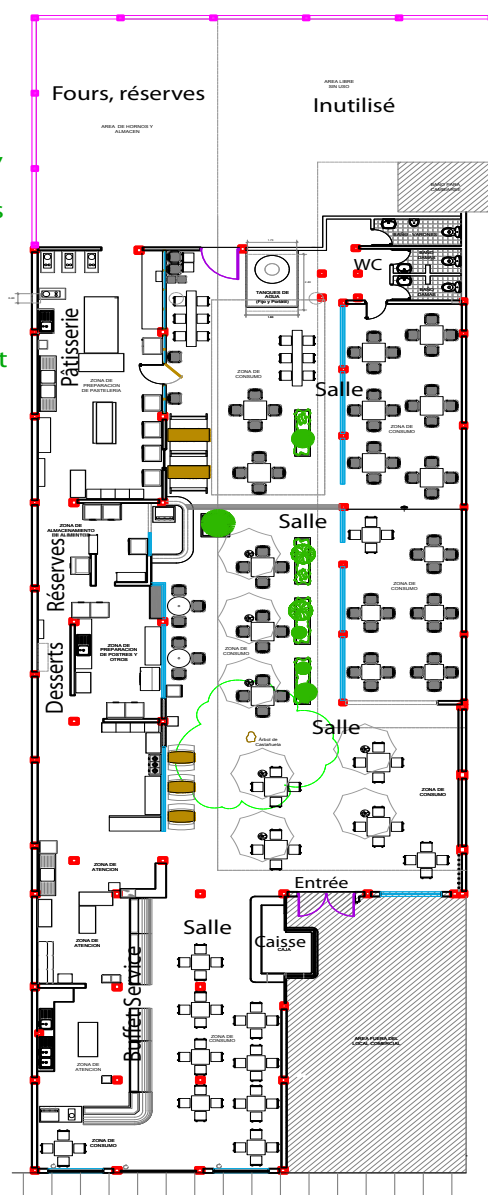


Des locaux de travail,
mieux organisés,
séparés, fonctionnels

Un accès permettant
l'exploitation de
l'étage

Une salle beaucoup
plus vaste

Old Premises



Emergency intervention was and remains essential:

The workspaces were dangerous due to lack of space. Serious accidents were narrowly avoided. The non-standard general electrical system was in such poor condition that the Civil Protection Service threatened to close the parlour.

The rotten roof let the water through. A wall had collapsed.

It was decided to:

- . redo the entire roof, which would also cover the rear part that has been unallocated thus far. (Please remark in the previous page scheme the ten red rectangles indicating the location of the concrete pillars supporting this roof extension),
- . to use a part of the storey thus created,
- . to refurbish the central and rear part.

All without ceasing operations, thanks to the rental of the adjoining premises.

The move has taken place.

Thanks to the rental of the neighbouring arcades, production, which has been moved, continues in temporary laboratories during the renovation work.



The new (temporary) production premises in the neighbouring rented arcade, at the bottom right, the door opened to connect both premises.

The urgency of children welfare “with acute family problems” or “without a family” does not diminish in Puerto Maldonado.

During the last 18 months, the total number of unaccepted requests for care in the children home has been 99 boys and 88 girls. As a reminder, the children care home offers between 35 and 40 places.

To get a sense of the unaccepted children living conditions, here are some figures:

They are rather grown-up children and teenagers:

- 32% are from 11 to 15 years-old, 47% are older than 15
- 36% are behind at school.
- 58% live with their mothers.
- 36% need to be cared due to parents work, 35% due to poverty, 11% due to health problems.
- While only 1% of them are homeless, 49% of them have homes without basic services.
- 95% of them have no health insurance.

The call from the Apronia-Suisse Committee

ALARM!

This is no time to give up!

We, members of the Apronia-Suisse Committee, sometimes have the feeling of being in the backseat driver. We do not actually work on a daily basis to guarantee “Principito’s” children a family life - while they are actually deprived of their families - and provide them with a healthy and open education, a condition for normal development. Because of the distance and many other factors, we have difficulty providing help in concrete terms. Sometimes our advice even falls flat.

But, for more than 10 years, we are faithful WITNESSES:

first, of the small miracle the “Principito” has become. All visitors agree to praise the atmosphere of the children care home, to share thoughts about the joy of the children and the strong emotional bonds that are forged thanks to the attention they receive.

It is undoubtedly this flourishing “foster family” that Pope Francis wanted to honour with his presence at the beginning of this year. If you want to understand the meaning of it, listen again to the testimony of Dirsey, the eldest of an orphan family in front of Pope Francis (please find all the corresponding documents on our website Apronia.ch)

What we have OBSERVED and continue to OBSERVE:

are the intelligent and tenacious efforts of Father Xavier Arbex and the entire Apronia-Peru team to ensure that the “miracle” of the Principito continues, while adapting to the needs created by the rapidly changing social situation in Puerto Maldonado.

The first of the association’s strategic goals has been, for years, an efficient handover,

particularly with capable Peruvian leaders at the front of Apronia Peru. **It’s done:** with Jennifer Romero as President, and Jessica Arbex as CEO, competent young people are in charge and fully in line with the idea that created the children care homes. We can TESTIFY our admiration for this team, which is deeply committed to continuing to provide care for children in need.

The second goal, as well pursued since long time, is financial independence.

Apronia has benefited from the great generosity of its donors. The collected money made possible to build successive children care homes, buy land and ensure the homes running on a daily basis. At present, Apronia-Switzerland’s assets are almost exhausted. This is actually a good thing, since we want Apronia-Peru to become self-financed.

For a long time, Padre Arbex and his team have been devising and implementing all kinds of ways to earn money while offering jobs and training: this is the idea of **creating flourishing social enterprises.**

The main three ones are: the bookstore, the Amazonian lodge hotel “Bello Horizonte” and the ice-cream parlour “Gustitos del Cura”.

Thanks to its steady benefits, the Company that is most likely to provide regular financing for the children care home is undoubtedly “Gustitos del Cura”, a renowned establishment. Unfortunately, they had recently to dismiss, in very unpleasant terms, the couple who were in charge for the last two decades and who, with Father Xavier, launched the ice-cream parlour almost 20 years ago.

We have seen the new CEO introduce **modern and transparent management, reorganize, replace machines and rebuild teams**, as well as to deal with the bad blows of the envious individuals who revolve around successful business.

Unfortunately, it is at a time when this “financial engine” should be (re)launched, that it proves **to be, in addition, essential and urgent to upgrade the premises**, which can no longer suffer from bad weather, and to refurbish the electricity network which is dangerous and becomes a serious threat of administrative closure for non-compliance. The team grasped this new problem and set up **a rehabilitation project**, thanks to the above-mentioned rental opportunity, in order to continue serving the clients during the refurbishing works.

But the money is still missing

Apronia-Suisse can no longer intervene. If the repair works could not be carried out immediately in order to provide compliant and safe workspaces rapidly, with customers' premises protected from the rain, the "Gustitos" would be forced to close, and the main FINANCIAL ENGINE providing the money necessary for the life of the children care house would stall.

Hence this urgent appeal to your generosity. Your donations will be transformed into a rainproof roof, secure workplaces and welcoming spaces for customers. The engine that sustains the children care house will then continue to run and will even be strengthened in the long term.

Thank you in advance.

The Apronia-Suisse Committee

You can help us by providing your contribution in our account APRONIA Suisse. 17 ch. du Banc-Vert, 1110 Morges (tax-deductible). IBAN CH09 0900 000 1756 8298 9 (Postfinance : (CHF) 17-568298-9)

Thank you for disseminating as widely as possible this call