



A Breeze of Hope

Salon "Peluqueria CUBE"



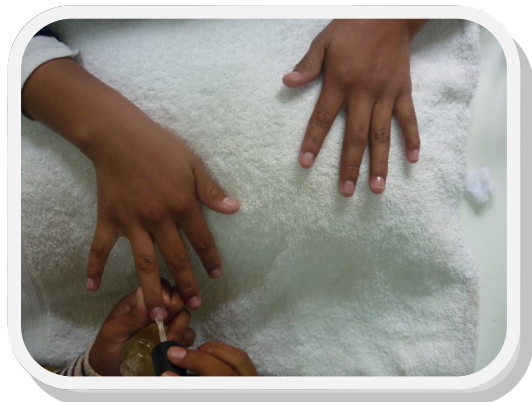
Our Story – A New Salon and a Vision for Change

As I attended the inauguration of the new salon in Chilimarca that will soon be run by adolescent survivors of sexual violence, I was surprised as one of the young ladies greeted me with a hug, that was then followed by a bashful smile. I have grown accustomed to seeing the scars of sexual violence, which are all-too-often thought to be invisible, expressed in mumbled greetings, downcast eyes, and a shyness that keeps these teenagers from seeing their true beauty and abilities.

They know all too well the pain of being robbed of their innocence, self-confidence, and the carefree spirit that usually accompanies childhood and adolescence. They see life from a different lens than that of their peers in school, and they know that if they get up the courage to share their stories, that their friends will feel sorry for them, but will not be capable of expressing true understanding that comes from a shared experience. And they are happy for this. They are happy that their friends who have not suffered sexual violence have not seen its ugly face, and do not share its ugly scars.

So I was pleasantly surprised to receive a physical sign of affection from someone who usually is more reserved, and I am hopeful. I am hopeful that the therapy that these young women are receiving in CUBE (Centro Una Brisa de Esperanza) will continue to nurture their abilities, and that this latest venture into learning new skills and accepting new responsibilities will help them to bring these abilities to life.

Our mission at a Breeze of Hope is to: [1] implement and support projects that provide free comprehensive services to child and adolescent victims of sexual violence; [2] work to eradicate sexual violence through transdisciplinary prevention strategies; and [3] promote healthy, comprehensive childhood development.



Vision: We envision a world in which each child grows-up in a loving, richly nurturing, and safe environment where she or he can experience the fullness of life.



During the inauguration, a welcome speech was given by Luz Stella Losada who shared the hopes and dreams that the salon will be a place “...where they can develop their creativity and self esteem through technical/vocational training, not only learning how to work in a salon, but also how to manage a micro-business .”

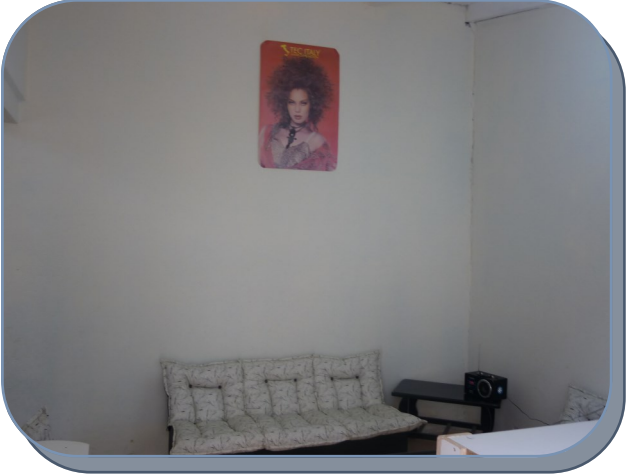
She also expressed her gratitude for everyone’s attendance, to everyone who had a hand in making the salon possible, including Brisa De Angulo whose vision helped to make the salon possible, the professionals who have accompanied the girls through their difficult journeys, and special recognition to the adolescents themselves who are strong survivors and who are continuing along their life paths with courage and perseverance.



Prayers for blessings and of thanksgiving were shared. One of the young ladies who will be working in the salon helped cut the celebratory ribbon, and everyone excitedly piled into salon’s waiting room. Although the room is small, it offers comfort and class from the cushy couches to the soothing music that will help welcome clients while they peruse their styling options in modern books.

Next, everyone proceeded into the middle room, which was already set up to receive hair and nails clientele, and where we viewed hair styling sessions with two eager volunteers. As we moved into the last room, we took in the hair washing station, comfy towels, and sweet smelling styling products.

As everyone mingled and cookies and soft drinks were shared, I couldn’t help but think of all of the conversations and care that will make CUBE’s salon more than just a place for clients to be pampered. As skills are learned and improved upon, the talent that they exhibit will also nurture the confidence of young ladies who are being given a second chance to come out of their pain and into all the beauty that life has to offer.



Clementina's Story

When I looked at Clementina, I saw strength, poise, intelligence, and a comfort with others that makes them comfortable with her. When Clementina looked at herself, she saw fear, a lack of ability, and timidity with others.



Which brings us to a very important question: why do we allow others to rob us of our self-worth?

Clementina shared with me that she is a survivor of sexual violence, and attributes this to her fear of speaking in public, discomfort with those whom she does not know personally, and taking longer to learn new tasks than others.

But this is not what I saw.

What I saw was beauty, a beauty that shone from her eyes with passion when she looked at new hairstyles and make-up techniques, a care in the inflection of her voice when she spoke about how she wants to lift up the girls who apprentice here, who are also survivors themselves. And I saw a humility that draws others to her, when she talked about how she will share “the little that she knows” with her students, and that she will learn alongside them.

Most impressively, I saw how the students took to her. How they were more comfortable in the salon in Chilimarca than they are in the city center. How they came out of their shells, smiled, laughed, and joked as if they were at home.

And I believe that they were. Clementina shared her hopes for the environment that she would like to offer the adolescents while they are learning, “more than a teacher, I hope to be their friend.”





NoVo Foundation
create. change.

Thank You to NoVo Foundation

All of this would not be possible without the support of the NoVo Foundation, a foundation that is “dedicated to catalyzing a transformation in global society, moving from a culture of domination to one of equality and partnership.”

“We are willing to venture where others are reluctant to go; we remain patient in developing sustainable solutions; and we wish to convene diverse stakeholders to address common challenges. We seek out these ideas from both traditional and non-traditional sources, including academic research and conversations with grassroots organizers.”

We are thankful for their commitment to developing the capacities of human beings to help create a world that exists through mutual respect and collaboration to fight against a system of “hierarchy, violence, and the subordination of girls and women.”

A Breeze of Hope is honored that the NoVo Foundation, which does not accept unsolicited proposals for fund-raising, has chosen to collaborate with us to work toward renewing the world, one young person at a time.

To learn more about who the NoVo Foundation is and how they work, please see <http://novofoundation.org/about-us/faqs/>.

The mission of the NoVo Foundation is to foster a transformation from a world of domination and exploitation to one of collaboration and partnership.