Camaquito - 10 Years of Project Work in Cuba
Who is Camaquito?

Camaquito is a politically and confessionally independent Swiss Children's Aid Organization that supports Cuban children and teenagers in the fields of education, sport, culture and health. Its projects centre around Camagüey Province. Camaquito was founded in Switzerland in 2001. The year 2003 saw the launching of Camaquito e.V. Deutschland.

Thanks to the generosity of its sponsors and donors, Camaquito has received more than 1.5 million Swiss Franks over the last 10 years, and has invested this in projects in Cuba.

The story of Camaquito

Mark Kuster travelled to Cuba for the first time in 1998 at the age of 25. Following his short stay, Mark decided to support children and teenagers in Cuba. June 21st 2001 saw the formal launching of the Children’s Aid Organization Camaquito, a publicly recognized charity. And Mark has now been living in Camagüey since 2003, to accompany the projects.

In Cuba Mark’s work is supported by Cuban specialists. And in Switzerland many voluntary helpers are involved too.

These Camaquito ambassadors also support the work:

- Anita Buri, ex-Miss Switzerland and presenter
- Jörg Stiel, former Captain of the Swiss National Football Team
- Heinrich Villiger, cigar manufacturer
- Stefan Schärer, Director ImmoScout24 / flag bearer Atlanta 1996
EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS

Camagüey School for the Blind

The first project that Camaquito realized in Cuba was the complete renovation of the Antonio Suárez Domínguez special school for visually handicapped and blind children.

- Beneficiaries: 104 children aged between 2 and 7 and school staff (teachers etc.)
- Amount: CHF 85'000.00
- Start: 2001
- End: 2005

Rural School “El Zanjón”

Protesta de Baraguá Primary School is in El Zanjón rural community (Sibanicú District). With this project the school was also completely renovated and extended. The school now has more classrooms, a kitchen, a dining-room, and toilets.

- Beneficiaries: 34 children aged between 6 and 12 and school staff (teachers etc.)
- Amount CHF 27'000.00
- Start 2004
- End: 2006
Lourdes Juliana Primary School

Complete renovation of Lourdes Juliana Eizmendiz Vegas Primary School in Camagüey’s La Yaba Urban District. A kitchen, dining-room and additional classrooms were also built.

Beneficiaries: 443 children aged between 5 and 11, and school staff (teachers etc.)
Amount: CHF 57'000.00
Start: 2005
End: 2009

This project was among others supported by The Stanley Thomas Johnson Foundation.

América Latina Kindergarten

Complete renovation of the América Latina Kindergarten in Camagüey City. This was the first kindergarten project that Camaquito could implement as a result of donations made.

Beneficiaries: 180 children aged between 1 and 5, and the kindergarten staff
Amount: CHF 55'000.00
Start: 2005
End: 2007
Rebuilding rural schools after the hurricanes

In the autumn of 2008 Camaquito had decided to provide the sum of CHF 100’000.00 for the rebuilding of rural schools that had been destroyed as a result of the severe Hurricanes IKE and Paloma.

30 schools in 6 districts of Camagüey Province (Guáimaro, Sibanicú, Najasa, Jimaguayú, Vertientes und Santa Cruz) were repaired and rebuilt.

The rebuilding program was among other things supported by the Swiss/Cuban Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Soli Cuba e.V. Düsseldorf.

Further Support in the Educational Field

Over the last 10 years the education authority of Camagüey Province has received various donations in kind, including PCs, screens, writing and office stationery. These supported the education authority as well as many schools.

Vegetables for the children

Luis Casa Romero Art School in Camagüey City was provided with a vegetable garden and tools. The aim was to increase the school's self-sufficiency. CHF 13’000.00 were invested in this project.

The newly constructed vegetable garden at Luis Casas Romero Art School

A rural school in Sibanicú District, rebuilt after Hurricanes IKE and PALOMA
Camaquito is currently financing two projects in the field of education:

**Complete renovation of Ismaelillo Kindergarten**

- **Beneficiaries:** 180 children aged between 1 and 5, and the kindergarten staff
- **Amount:** CHF 52'000.00 (50% of this amount is being contributed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation DEZA)
- **Start:** 2010
- **End:** 2011
- Insulation of the roof was already completed

![The kindergarten prior to the project](image1)

**Maintenance work at Antonio Suárez Dominguez School for the Blind, Camagüey**

Following Camaquito’s complete renovation of the special school in 2005, a further investment of funds was made. This time maintenance work was done.

- **Beneficiaries:** 104 children aged between 2 and 7, and school staff (teachers etc.)
- **Amount:** CHF 16'000.00
- **Start:** 2011
- **End:** 2012
FUTURE EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS

Camaquito will continue to support educational projects, and will in future too renovate or extend other schools and kindergartens.

Similarly Camaquito will back up its financing of all complete renovation projects in schools and kindergartens in the form of regular “maintenance” or “extension” work.

And, together with the education authorities, the strategy will be continued of investing too in the production of food (fruit, vegetables and milk) for various schools and kindergartens.

These educational projects have been supported by the Restaurant National in Winterthur, the community of Meilen and the Canton of Schaffhausen, among others.
SPORT PROJECTS

„viva el fútbol“

Sport as a way of assisting the healthy development of Cuban children and teenagers – this is the aim of the football project „viva el fútbol“. Particular emphasis is placed on the program “fútbol en los barrios” (football in the outskirts). Cuban football and sports teachers coordinate children’s football training in the outer suburbs. With this program Camaquito would like to improve the recreation options of young Cubans. In addition Camaquito also organizes together with the football association the annual Juniors Tournament / League “Copa Infantil Camaquito”.

And those Camagüey football teams that take part in national championships are also fitted out by Camaquito.

The project is also supported by Jörg Stiel. Every year he organises various junior training sessions, and also coaches young goalkeepers.

In 2010, thanks to the Hakin brothers, Edelweiss Air, Cubarealtours, Portmann, Tabak and other sponsors, Camaquito was able to invite the Cuban U15 National Football team to Switzerland, to take part in an international juniors tournament in Winterthur.

„viva el fútbol“, is also supported, among others, by swiss sportsystem (gpard), Reusch, Brother, Feralmet SA and FC Winterthur; and every year CHF 13’000.00 are invested.
FUTURE SPORT PROJECTS

Football Stadium in Camagüey

The dream of Camagüey’s football community is to have a small football stadium built. In a first phase a new football pitch and a new (modest) domicile for the Football Association of Camagüey Province (this can also be used for the ‘viva el fútbol’ project) are foreseen.

This first building phase is budgeted at CHF 100’000.00. Camaquito is still looking for sponsors for this project. A 2nd Phase foresees the construction of small spectator stands, changing rooms etc.

Note:
This project will use specific project-related donations only, i.e. ‘normal’ contributions of individual donors will not be invested in this project.
Project “School of Artistic Gymnastics“ Camagüey

The Camagüey School of Artistic Gymnastics was founded in 1961 and currently caters for 48 school children aged between 5 and 17. Artistic Gymnastics has a great tradition in Camagüey Province. Unfortunately no larger scale renovation work could be undertaken in recent decades, and to make matters worse Hurricane Ike severely damaged the school in 2008.

Camaquito would like to invest CHF 36’000.00 in renovating the school.

Apart from a variety of repair works being performed on the building (sanitary infrastructure, kitchen etc.) 3 new classrooms will be built for the primary school pupils, so that the obligatory school lessons can also be conducted in the school.

This project is also supported by the Kinderhilfe Foundation of Swissair staff.

Additional sports projects are also included in Camaquito’s project strategy, including:

- Project for the Renovation of the Previsora swimming pool
- Project “Health for All”

**Project „salut para todos“ (Health for All)**

Under the project „salut para todos“ everyone, from school children to the elderly, is encouraged to take more exercise; whether in “Aerobic Rooms” or in the fresh air in the outer districts. Camaquito supports, among other things, the schooling of the fitness trainers.
CULTURAL PROJECTS

Ballet de Camagüey

Ballet de Camagüey is a classical ballet ensemble, founded in 1967. The annual sponsorship supports production and administration as well as the two living quarters of the dancers. In addition Camaquito supports Ballet de Camagüey with its promotional work. Thanks to a generous donor, for example, a wonderful coffee table book of the ensemble has been published.

Beneficiaries: the ensemble's 65 dancers and staff  
Amount: CHF 13'000.00 annually  
Start: 2007

Children’s Theatre “La Andariega”

The Children’s Theatre celebrated its 15th anniversary in 2011. With its acclaimed work, this company has gained great prestige not only in Cuba but also abroad. La Andariega is also supported by the Studiosus Foundation, among others.

Beneficiaries: 45 children and teenagers aged between 8 and 19, and company staff  
Amount: CHF 6'500.00 annually  
Start: 2008
The Hermanos Saíz Association (AHS)

Camaquito has been supporting the Cuban Hermanos Saíz Association for some years. This is a Cuban institution active in the cultural field and run by young Cubans.

Until now the socio-cultural “Golpe a Golpe” project has received more than CHF 12’000.00 in support. The project last year ran more than 400 different cultural activities in rural regions of Camagüey Province.

20th October 2009 saw the opening of Café Literario. This is a meeting place for the young, where various cultural activities take place every day. The entire cultural program is free of charge. To date Camaquito has invested CHF 17’000.00, which has been spent on purchasing the furniture and electric equipment.

An Internet Café was also installed at Café Literario on 11th August 2011 – open and free-of-charge internet access for young Cuban artists.

The cooperation with the Hermanos Saíz Association has been enormously valuable, and Camaquito would in future like to support further projects of these innovative, young Cubans.

These individual projects have been financially assisted by Tax Partner Cigar Night.
“vivan los barrios”

This project, initiated by Camaquito, has the goal of organizing various events and workshops in outer suburbs (“barrios”) of Camagüey City. As a result of this project Cuba’s cultural diversity is preserved, and children and teenagers have access to cultural activities. The social value of “vivan los barrios” is enormous for families in the outer suburbs.

Camaquito is supporting “vivan los barrios” with CHF 65’000.00.

“vivan los barrios” is also supported by the community of Wallisellen, Switzerland.

Camaquito wishes in future to support even more cultural institutions, such as:

- **The Children’s and Youth Symphony Orchestra, Camagüey**
  (The Musikkollegium Winterthur in Switzerland is project partner)
- **Province Museum “Ignacio Agramonte”** (special offers for handicapped children, among others)
- **Rumbatá** (Afro-Cuban music group)

Activities in the outer suburbs
(Project “vivan los barrios”)

(Images of children and teenagers participating in the project.)
HEALTH PROJECTS

Ana Betancourt de Mora Maternity Clinic, Camagüey

The complete renovation of Camagüey's Maternity Clinic in Camagüey is Camaquito's largest project. Around 7000 children are born annually in this facility, which was built in 1942.

CHF 60'000.00 for new windows were invested in a first phase. Currently, the birth wards and operation rooms are being completely renovated. Thanks to its donors Camaquito was able to contribute CHF 150'000.00 for this. In the next phase, the sanitary facilities will be partially renovated: CHF 66'000.00.

The entire project is budgeted at over CHF 500'000.00.

The Maternity Clinic is supported by the City of Winterthur, among others.
Camagüey Home for the Handicapped

This facility was inaugurated on 5th December 1981. The specialist staff of 180 persons cares for 195 handicapped, some of them severely handicapped. The majority lives in the home.

In 2011 the first of the complete renovation could be started. Thanks to a donation of EURO 74’611.00 from the Japanese Embassy in Cuba the entire roof could be insulated to prevent the intrusion of rain water during heavy showers. Additionally the in-house laundry is being provided with new equipment.

A subsequent planned phase foresees the renovation of the sanitary facilities.
WATER PROJECTS

El Zanjón water project

Camaquito has been implementing water projects in rural areas of Camagüey Province (Sibanicú District) since 2005. Financial support has been provided by the Lions Club Zurich-Waldegg. The Cuban project partner is the Instituto Nacional de Recursos Hidráulicos (INRH). To date three rural communities have, with Camaquito’s support, been connected to the drinking water supply.

Beneficiaries: 191 inhabitants  
Amount: CHF 26'000.00  
Start: 2005  
End: 2006
## Batalla de Santa Clara water project

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## La Yaya water project

<table>
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<th>Beneficiaries:</th>
<th>211 inhabitants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amount:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start:</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End:</td>
<td>2011</td>
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- Project work being undertaken Batalla de Santa Clara community
- The new water tank in La Yaya community
- Inauguration of La Yaya water station
FUTURE WATER PROJECTS

Camaquito would like to continue the good cooperation in drinking water projects. The next project is the connection of San Bernardo rural community, with a population of around 800, to the drinking water supply. The project budget is EURO 53'000.00.

In addition Camaquito would like to use donations to support the existing provision of drinking water to Camagüey City. A planned CHF 13’000.00 annually for maintenance is foreseen. Part of these funds will be invested in maintenance teams (e.g. for tools, machinery etc.). Some quartiers also have major problems with sewage systems. Camaquito would like to help here too. We depend on your support!

A road tanker still has to deliver water to the people of San Bernardo community
CHILDREN’S PLAYGROUNDS

Recreational activities too are of great importance to Camaquito, such as the projects “viva el fútbol” or “vivan los barrios”. Camaquito would like to improve children's playgrounds in Camagüey City.

With CHF 6’500.00 a first small playground is being built in the Quartier Monte Carlo (Parque Infantil Monte Carlo). This was made possible by the support of the community Hersberg BL, Switzerland.

Camaquito Playground
(Parque Infantil “Camaquito”)

Planned is the construction of the first “Blasio-Park” (Camaquito Playground) in Camagüey. We still need donations for this project.
AID CONTAINERS

In the last years Camaquito was able to ship 7 aid containers to Cuba. Various institutions such as schools, playgrounds, Camagüey Maternity Clinic, the football project, the Ballet de Camagüey etc. benefited from the goods sent: PC's, office stationery, toys, toilet articles, tools, textiles, footballs and much more.

Just recently Camaquito started working with the gad foundation (www.gad.ch). This foundation provides the complete logistics, and also donates hundreds of bicycles every year. Additional fields of cooperation with this foundation are being discussed.
CARNAVAL SAN JUAN CAMAGÜYANO

Since 2011 Camaquito also supports the Carnaval San Juan Camagüeyano. Carnaval San Juan Camagüeyano is for the people of Camagüey the biggest and most important culture festival of the year. The first official activities go back to the year 1720. The Carnaval takes place annually from 24th to 29th June. Apart from street processions there are also cultural and social events in the outer districts.

The Fasnacht-Gesellschaft Winterthur (Fakowi) supports this project conceptually.
HEARTFELT THANKS
On behalf of the children and teenagers in Camagüey, Camaquito wishes to thank all people, institutions, firms, organisations, communities, towns, cantons and federal authorities for the support given over the last 10 years. It has only with your help that all these projects could be realized.

At Camaquito we shall continue to secure the success of the projects with commitment, love and strength.

A hearty vote of thanks goes to our Cuban project partners and to the people of Camagüey who help to support all these projects.

Mark Kuster, Founder of Camaquito

Comment:
In this brochure the names of only some donors and sponsors are mentioned. It was impossible for us to mention all. We kindly ask for the understanding of the unmentioned donors and sponsors. Your support is just as important for Camaquito. Every donation contributes towards the success of the work, and we extend our hearty thanks for this – together we are making small dreams of Cuba’s children come true!
We thank Ann-Christine Grootes for the layout of this project summary and Druckerei Wyland Print for printing it.