



ANUAL REPORT

Foundation Los Niños

2009

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RESPONSIBILITY by the Board

"The end of poverty begins at school!"

For many years Foundation Los Niños has been making education possible for children in Guatemala, who because of their social background and general poverty, have no opportunities within the existing governmental social structures. Therefore, Los Niños has become vital and correctly carries out the ANBI (public interest institutions) predicate.

The project management team in Guatemala consists of two people, who with complete dedication and minimal cost, support a number of educational projects to meet the above objectives.

The Board sees it as a responsibility to think critically with the project about investing in existing and new projects. It justifies the administration of the foundation for the many large and small donors to the foundation. The foundation is wholly dependent on those donations. A fairly steady stream of donations comes from many small monthly donations. Approximately three quarters of the turnover, which is more than 100.000 euro's annually, consist of large single donations from bazaars at schools, birthdays, anniversaries or from the generous hearts of people. In 2009 the Board held three formal board meetings. In these meetings decisions were made on the policy, budget, financial statements and annual reports. This year much emphasis was placed on building the school in Alotenango. The construction schedule, costs and oversight took a lot of our time and attention, not only from the local project management, but also from the chairman and treasurer. Through e-mail traffic and adequate financial statements it was possible to hold the cost down for this construction project, which in total cost 220,000 euro's. This huge investment was financially made possible from 50% of the funds coming from Foundation Children's Projects Guatemala (SKG) and a grant of 25.000 euro's from NCDO.

At the school's opening day in July 2009, a delegation from the Board and one of the Board of SKG were present. This was rightly celebrated.

The Board of the Foundation Los Niños believes that the contributions of the many donors was money well spent and realizes it is completely dependent on the continuation of donations for the achievement of its objectives. The Board believes that in the long run privatization of the projects should be pursued, and that ultimately the Guatemalans will have to take over the implementation and funding. The board credits success of this project not only to the many loyal supporters for their contributions, but especially the project management, all the volunteers and the Guatemalan associates. Without everyone's help all would not have been achieved.

Jan Jongerius, President.

Board Membership Foundation Los Ninos:

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Mrs. E.L.E. Lips-Reijn, Secretary
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Introduction

For Foundation Los Niños, 2009 has been a wonderful year. We have been able to close the year with the construction of a highly functional school in Alotenango. There are 8 classrooms, a computer lab, and a facelift given to the carpentry workshop. A new computer-room was added to Chimachoy, including furniture and computers. We purchased land in San Mateo for the construction of a new educational centre.

Nearly 400 children and youths achieved good academic results from Foundation Los Niños in several areas:

- Support for local school projects:
 - o full support for 161 children at the primary school "Bendición de Dios" in Alotenango (€ 250 per child per year)
 - o Partial support for 54 young people from secondary school "Telesecundaria" in Chimachoy (€ 100 per child per year)
 - o Partial support for 90 children for homework classes "Semilla de Esperanza y Amor" in San Mateo Milpas Altas (€ 40 per child per year)
- Partial or complete scholarships for 83 young people:
 - o 3 grants for private primary school (between 700 and 1000 euro's per child)
 - o 64 scholarships for secondary school (between 60 and 1300 euro's per student)
 - o 15 practical trainings (between 100 and 1500 euro's per student)
 - o 1 university education (1200 euro's)

In addition, we supplied medical assistance through the Medical Fund or our partner organizations in the area.

Our 2009 annual report will reflect Los Niños' support of these different projects both quantitatively and qualitatively.

School Projects

Two thirds of the annual budget of Foundation Los Niños goes to structural support of local educational projects with volunteer support. This includes the primary school "Bendición de Dios" in Alotenango where Los Niños intensively collaborated in relation to the new construction of the building and the "Instituto de Telesecundaria" in Chimachoy. Project "Semilla de Esperanza y Amor" in San Mateo Milpas Altas, was supported mainly by volunteers and Los Niños provided small grants, loans and materials.

1. Bendición de Dios, Alotenango

The construction of the school is a dream Los Niños has finally realized. Due to financial support from the Foundation for children's projects in Guatemala, Foundation (SKG), a beautiful, functional building was erected in July for the use of the children, teachers and administrative staff. We are so proud of this project. It greatly benefits the quality of teaching. The school is fully equipped, including computers. In 2009, 161 primary school pupils and 25 toddlers received their education.

1.1 Cooperation between Bendición de Dios and Los Niños Foundation

The expansion of both Bendición de Dios and Los Niños has positively affected the way of cooperation and communication. Cooperation in that Los Niños gives both financial and organisational/structural assistance. This has led to an educational organization which functions under its own contextual and legal responsibility. The school prepares students for state-recognized certificates. Gradually the Director has found several partners who, together with Los Niños, ensure the financial coverage of the activities of Bendición de Dios (see www.bendiciondedios.org for more info).

The search for the structure which best suits cooperation between the various independent organizations will continue in the new year. Los Niños mainly concentrates on its support to the primary school. For other forms of education the school board of the association Bendición de Dios has found separate funding.

Cooperation with SKG, who besides financially supports the building and also finances half of the financial costs of the primary school, has been a very special experience. Their active participation and creative thinking has led this project to its success.

1.2 Primary education

Even though our teaching staff was reduced by three this year, the remaining teachers have been working to the full satisfaction of the Director. The method of playful learning, introduced a few years ago by the American woman Rebecca Center (sponsor of the kindergarten), has been met with great success and has taken the language education to a qualitatively higher level.

After five years the first group of the "PEAC" (class 1 through 5) has received their primary school certificates. Of these students a small group of 14-16 year olds continues to study at secondary school with a half-scholarship from Los Niños.

Twenty volunteers from Los Niños were deployed to assist the teachers with English classes and sports. They organized the successful "Día de la Basura" (Day of the Waste) to creatively teach children about recycling, sorting, and cleaning. Attention was given to personal hygiene by having them brush their teeth daily, and when available, taking a vitamin pill.

The total cost per child per year for primary school was 250 euro's in 2009 (including books, daily snacks, school celebrations and excursions).

1.3 The carpentry workshop (Carpinteria)

The renovation of the carpentry workshop during the last three months of 2009 was entirely sponsored and co-conducted by volunteer Peter Oudejans and employees of ConstruCasa. The two rooms of the adjacent library were made into one large room and a new roof was added.

Suzan Eleveld, manager of the carpentry project, had to stay in the Netherlands due to illness. This meant Hipolito, the carpentry teacher, had to run the carpentry workshop on his own for the first 6 months. He managed it perfectly.

This year third year-students have assisted with the younger classes. Everybody enjoyed it immensely, and they did a fantastic job. Students did small assignments for others for a small fee. There is a lot of appreciation for Suzan and her team!

1.4 Improving living conditions

Following the parent program conducted in 2008, a research has been done in 2009 on the needs of families and possible programs to help them out. The most appropriate program is "Parenting with Love and Authority" which focuses on the entire family (father, mother and children). This program includes themes like how to deal with love, discipline, respect and humour in raising children. In December, a well thought out plan has been devised for implementation in 2010.

2. Instituto de Telesecundaria, Chimachoy

Director Laura Vasquez has led the project with her dedication, vision and efficient approach. The school had 54 pupils including 10 graduate students. Thanks to her perseverance and conviction, she managed to get the government to pay for a second teacher from August 2009, in addition to her own salary and that of Prof. Luis. Unfortunately, teacher Jose's salary (who has been paid by Los Niños for the last 2 years) could not be covered, because he has another job as a teacher through the government in the afternoon. However, he continued working at the school until the end of 2009, and we are very grateful for his tremendous efforts over the past two years. The new teacher, Juan José, has shown professionalism and a great willingness to cooperate during the last 4 months of 2009, so we can confidently enter the year 2010.

The computer-room, financed by us, was completed and equipped with several computers, furniture and a blackboard. Los Niños also guaranteed 40% of the annual expenses. (This percentage has decreased compared to 2008 due to the increased participation of the government).

3. Semilla de Esperanza y Amor, San Mateo Milpas Altas

The homework project in San Mateo, lead by Lys Flores, has been going well for over two years. It is clearly a project under development and has a limited infrastructure. Los Niños works well with her and is obtaining more insight into how they can help her. This year some 10 volunteers from Los Niños helped Lys and her daughters give more than 90 children homework, English lessons, sports and creative subjects. Because many volunteers and visitors care a lot for this project, a structural flow of funds from private donors has begun. Initially Los Niños operated only as an intermediary between the donors and the project and had no input into funding. Impressed by the activities of Lys Flores and the social benefits, Foundation Los Niños looked into the possibilities of supporting the project more formally.

In September 2009 Lys had to quickly abandon the two rented premises, which resulted in building a roof over the playground of the owned land. To protect the materials from the rain everything was stored in the home of a family. Lys Flores has learned to expand the program with enthusiasm, perseverance and love for the children, despite the obstruction of local authorities. At the end of 2009 we considered whether a new building could fill the need, and we decided to purchase land with financial and substantive support of friends and volunteers. Parents and children have been preparing this land for building an educational centre.

Scholarship fund

Los Niños has chosen to provide scholarships to children who are financially unable to complete their education. This achieves two positive effects: It makes use of existing educational facilities in Guatemala and thus contributes to the Guatemalan infrastructure and more importantly invests in disadvantaged but talented young people. In 2009 we supplied 83 youngsters with scholarships.

Four students from Alotenango with a scholarship from Los Niños have graduated and are now two kindergarten teachers (Sonia and Karla) and two elementary school teachers (Glenda and Gloria) for Dios Bendición. This is very special, because 7 years ago they participated in the Bendición de Dios homework project themselves. This perfectly completes the circle of giving and receiving!

The group of secondary school students in Alotenango who receive half a scholarship from Los Niños is doing well. Ten of them have graduated and their places have been taken by students with a PEAC certificate from Bendición de Dios and a number of public school students.

With regard to the Chimachoy project, one car mechanic, Luis, graduated at the end of 2009 and has found a job in the capital. Six other students, coming from the Telesecundaria, got good results in their practical training and will be continuing next year.

Six students in their third year of secondary education, who have been coached by our partner CasaSito, have finished the year off well. For all of them this means that they are ready to choose professional training for continuance of their studies. The five students from the second year of secondary education are going on to their third year.

The scholarships that have already been provided to a number of individual young people (families Dubon, Montiel and Torre) for primary school, secondary school, vocational training and university, will be continued this year. One student failed to meet the required grade of 70% which means further education will only be partially paid.

Direct small help

Since help to the homeless is performed excellently by Foundation Por Eso (www.poreso.org), Los Niños has only been guarantor for the rent of the room for grandma Teresa and granddaughter Elizabeth and has helped out in a number of emergencies.

Because of the shortage of personnel and material at the Health Post Alotenango, Los Niños has financed the nurse Miriam again. Our medical fund contributed financially to a young girl's heart surgery, the operation of Brandon's ureter, bought a pair of glasses, paid for some funerals, paid for the transportation of a terminally ill father, and paid the doctor's fees and medication for a child with ear problems. A number of established donations have been given for medication and the building of a house.

In the suitcases Los Niños received from the Netherlands, we found sufficient school materials, clothing, shoes, toys and hygiene products. As a result, we have made many families in the projects of Los Niños very happy.

Gracias!

Thanks to great support, we have achieved a lot for the lives of Guatemalan children. But "we" are the ones who should be grateful; as "we" are in the lucky position to be able to help. Even if it is to help just one other person, we can do it together, because together we are strong!