

Children Of Honduras Trust

Newsletter June 2018

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_UNREST IN HONDURAS ABATES___

The end of 2017 and the beginning of 2018 has been a very unsettled time for the country of Honduras, caused by political disputes. This made Christmas a very difficult time for many with reduced working hours and increased food prices. When you barely have enough money to buy food on a daily basis, increased prices result in hunger for many. The political unrest impacted the work of CH trust by slowing down the implementation of projects, due to disruption to travel and material supplies. Thankfully the situation started to improve at the beginning of February and now is largely back to normal. The Lord is good, so the work of CH Trust is able to continue.

_Homes For The Needy___

I do not often write much about the houses we build because I know that only a few people are in a position to help with these large projects. For this edition of the newsletter I have revised my thoughts on this. What we are achieving is so



- One of the Many New Houses CH Trust has Funded -

wonderful and some of the stories so moving that I felt I wanted to share some of them with you. By the end of this year we should be starting to build our 100th house. Our first house was built at the beginning of 2012 after my last visit to Honduras. When completed, the houses we build are not owned by CH Trust but by the lady or family we have built the house for. Since we cannot afford to purchase land, the families we build for must either own a plot or apply to the council for a small piece of land. As you can imagine the council only give to very deserving cases. We have built on many such pieces of land made available by the council.

Originally our builder built most of the early houses himself. As the price of materials have escalated over the years, Cesar has altered the way we build in order to keep the price down. This keeps them more affordable to people in the UK who wish to help. CH Trust now only provides the materials, the expertise and limited amount of labour. Thus, friends and family do most of the work of digging foundations, moving supplies and building the walls etc. Our own builder is responsible for marking out the site and supervising the build. When we are building on very steep slopes in the mountains, he often needs to seek advice from a civil engineer about how deep to build the retaining wall. Keeping buildings tied to the land is a challenge in the rainy season, when the soil often becomes saturated. The civil engineer he consults works in the capital. He first helped when Cesar and Santos (our builder) needed to understand why an old sturdy house had completely collapsed after heavy rain. He came and gave his advice free of charge as he liked the work we were doing. He has continued to give us free advice ever since.

The current price of a house is £1600. Part of the cost increase is fuelled by the currently unhelpful \$/£ exchange rate. To enable more people to participate we have also put together a building fund scheme which accumulates from smaller donated sums of money. A house can then be built when the amount collected reaches the cost of a house. I call this the 'bit fund' as it is made up of many bits of money. All those who have donated to a build in this way receive information and photos of the house and its occupying family.

Some people ask 'why do we build'? I think the best way to answer this is to share with you some of the stories of people we have helped.

Karen's story

With much respect I am writing to you to tell you about my life. My mother, Martha died exactly at the time of my first birthday, and since then my life has been a disaster. I have a brother called Melvin Salgado, who is 2 years older than me. I am 25 years old today but it has been very difficult for me. I never knew what it was to have a mother and to be able to tell her my problems and listen to her advice. Since she died I have lived with one aunt or another, but never feeling right. I always felt that I was in the way but this is nothing compared to what happened to me when I was 7 years old and my father committed suicide by taking Gramoxon (Paraquat), which is a weed killer. Then my life continued just moving from one aunt to another, until I was 19 years old, when I got together with the father of my daughter Genesis who I feel has been my only light in the darkness. Unfortunately, we separated from her father and now he does not give me any support for the child who is now 16 months old. You can imagine how difficult the situation is for me. For now, I am living with an aunt. Thanks be to God for her life and her husband too, as they are good people who God has placed on my path and who give me wonderful support in the situation that I find myself in. Nowadays I am working as a cleaner, but the wages are very low at 3,500 Lempira (£120) a month and it is only temporary. It is just enough for me to pay a small amount to my aunt for looking after my daughter while I am at work, and for the milk and the nappies. It is my dearest wish that I should be able to have my own house as I feel uncomfortable living with my aunt because she is so willing to help, but only has 2 rooms. One of these is for her 3 children and also my grandmother who is living there. The other room is for her and her husband



- Karen and Her Daughter Genesis -

and clearly as a couple they need their privacy. But because they are helping me, I am living and sleeping in the same room as them. This is uncomfortable for me and I imagine also for them. This is why I am turning to you and praying to God that you might approve a house for me. It is my dream to be able to live peacefully with my daughter and I would love to be able to bring my grandmother with us, as she too is moving from place to place, feeling like a nuisance to them. She has 14 children, but none of them supports her and no-one wants to have her living with them. That is why I would like to take her with us because I love my poor grandmother. Once when I was very little she gave me all the support she could, and I would like to be the one today to help her. This would only be possible thanks to God and to you.

I thank you very, very much for bringing such blessings to so many people. May God continue to bless you so that you might be a blessing to others.

I say goodbye wishing you all the best and saying once more thank you to our friends in England.

Karen Isabel Salgado

Lesbia Ondina Jimenez

My name is Lesbia Ondina Jimenez. I have two children, a boy and a girl. I live with my elderly parents whom I try to provide for. I am a single mum and I have had many difficulties in my life. I had to work to provide for food, rent and medicine for my elderly parents, as well as trying to give my children an education. I dearly wish for my children to have a better life. One of my biggest worries for many years is that we haven't got a home. I have had to rent, very often suffering eviction, as we haven't been able to pay the rent. As I was unable to finish my education, not even primary school, my choice of work is very limited. I try to sell merchandise and clean houses and with the money I have tried to rent a room for all of us to live in. It is very difficult as sometimes we have to go with very little food so we can pay the rent. It is not nice for my parents and my children to sleep on the streets. In my desperation I have turned to God and asked him to help me. I heard about your organisation helping people through Cesar. I went to see him, he told me about the process of applying. I had to wait for a bit because there were others in greater need than myself but I continued to trust in God. After a while I was able to have a home which was built on a piece of land given to my mother by her parents. My parents could not contain their happiness of being able to have a home for all of us as, in their lifetime, they have never been able to build a home themselves. Today I live in a beautiful home, with my children and my parents. I wake up every day and I want to look after them better and provide for my children. I am able to buy food as the 1,600 lemps that I would have had to pay in rent this month I will be able to use to look after my children and parents as well as do things in my home. This has been the best present anyone has ever been able to give us. You have been a great blessing in our lives and may God equally bless yours. Thank you for my beautiful little house. Lesbia.

Five more people safe and blessed.

_CHICKEN HOUSES__

This is a new project instigated by Cesar and implemented by our special village, Guanacaste. In the last newsletter the building was nearing completion. To recap, we are building hen houses connected to schools, built on school land and run by teachers, pupils and a community group. The ladies of Guanacaste put together a ten-year self-sustaining business plan. This was accepted and CH Trust funded the building of our first school hen house. They all helped to start this project. The men and boys built the nesting boxes. CH Trust bought ten chickens and the community did the same. They had their first eggs before the end of term, which went straight into the lunchtime meal. The children were still eating eggs from this hen house after school finished for the long school holidays. This was achieved with the help of the new church, where we were funding food three days a week (prepared by the new church in the village, more about this later).

The school has been selling a portion of the eggs and have already been able to paint the school and are in the process of putting in a toilet for the kinder class from the profits. They are thrilled and are working very hard to make it an even greater success. This then sets the standard for the head teachers of other schools. They all meet once a month and Cesar keeps the competition for excellence going between the schools 'in the nicest possible way.'

The school in the village of El Retiro has benefited from our second hen house. The schools are not picked at random. Cesar has been working with a number of schools over many years. In the past most have received items out of the containers. Through this contact their stewardship has been proven. The parents and committee in El Retiro have been so excited at having a working project both promised and delivered that they have sought to add value to the project themselves. Many organisations promise good things to these poor villages but few deliver on their promises. CH Trust has a reputation for working with transparency and doing what it promises. Cesar has worked very hard to earn this accolade for us in Honduras. Altogether, we have now built three hen houses. Each site found that they had some supplies left over from building their hen house.

Since the sand and gravel are bought by the lorry load, the quantity of blocks and cement are estimated and the wire bought by the roll, it is virtually mandatory to overestimate. Failure to do so can result in greater expense, since delivery charges up into the mountains are expensive and there are no hardware super stores just around the corner.

Retiro's committee and parents decided to build a nursery for the chicks from the left overs of the main build. They also purchased any extra material needed out of their own resources. Jucales, where we built our third hen house, thought this to be a great idea and along with Guanacaste are planning to add this feature to their hen houses. Positive competition can be very good.

The Retiro steering group have opted to buy 100 chicks as starting and breeding stock. I am guessing these are much cheaper than laying hens and will have to be fed for longer before they are mature enough to lay. This suggests that they are finding it easy to feed them from local supplies. It will take about four or five months before they start to lay eggs.

Now the other two hen houses are looking to buy 100 chicks. I was thrilled to hear of the work, enthusiasm and results of these projects. The return on the investment is proving to be able to fund much needed improvements to the school in circumstances where the government provides very little. What they can achieve themselves is much better than just providing the money for these small projects. The long-term aim is to enable the schools to be self-sufficient in food with eggs and with meat and other food bought out of the profit from the sale of eggs.

Guanacaste laid a water supply to the hen house over the Christmas school holidays. This saves the need to hand carry water from the school building. Photographs show them spraying the empty house and laying fresh floor covering. I am not sure what they were spraying against, I guess some nasties that would harm the hens.

A spin off from the project is that the children will also learn the basics of chicken keeping, about the balance of egg production, breeding and the use of older fowls for meat or rearing for meat. In the long term this can lead to hens being kept by families and even the start of small businesses in the future.



- Children Looking at the New Chicks -



- A Newly Built Chicken Shed -

From Juan Ramon Molina School, and the people from El Guanacaste, from the director of the education centre.

We send you our love and hope God may multiply his blessings to each one of you for the generosity you have shown towards us.

We are writing to express our gratitude and our joy at having the chicken project at our school. It is a blessing for all our 83 pupils and the 50 families in our community. With this project, we have managed to reduce the malnutrition suffered by some of our pupils. We plan to build on this project by managing the expansion of the brood of hens and one of our dreams is to add a dining room for the infants. This is our dream now to provide a permanent food supply through the project and to generate income as well as providing nutrition.

We want to express our gratitude to you for choosing us to be entrusted once more and we are happy to work with you towards our goal. We have faith and certainty through our trust in God that the plan will be a success. We say goodbye with big hugs from afar. Hoping to see you soon at our school.



- Showing Off the Eggs Produced by Their Hens -

_THE NEW GUANACASTE CHURCH__

A new church was started in Guanacaste and has been going for nearly two years. It has about 80 families attending. A larger church in Tegucigalpa has helped to finance the building. It is run by one of the elders of the village and a Pastor who was brought up in Guanacaste. They have asked for our help to feed the children. They can provide the venue and cooks but not the money for the food. They were aiming to feed 80-90 children three times a week during December and January (School Holiday). This may drop to once a week in mid-January when the sugar harvest starts to take place and there is employment again for the village.

This village only has employment for three to six months of the year orientated around the sugar harvest and its processing. As it is a poor rural area these lunches will be a great help. The target group is 4 to 11 years but this will be extended to any child in great need. It will be good to see this help go out specifically in the name of the Lord. This is a village that works hard to better their children's lives and have always been very grateful and good stewards of all the help we have provided over the years. Feeding the children is so important over the next two months as school will have finished and the free school lunches that we provide in Guanacaste school will not be available.

Cesar asked if we could provide food for this feeding centre. The last I heard they were feeding 120 children each day they operated. This project has been very successful and we have agreed to continue funding food for the children in need while free lunch at school is not available. It feels good to know that we are providing for some very needy children.

Over the Christmas holidays the eggs that were being laid in the school's chicken house were collected and some fed to the community's children by the ladies cooking in the church. This is a community which really works together. This is what we have always liked about Guanacaste. They do really good things with the help that we provide.

_Relief From Hunger__

Christmas for many in Honduras is another day of trying to fund basic food for the family. Many only have one very small meal each day and some do not even manage that. To help, CH Trust gives out food bags at this time of year in several villages, as well as to three communities of Lencas. The bags are usually given after school term finishes in November for the long 'summer' holiday. One of these is Funez.

Funez is a poor community. Many homes are poor single room houses made from any available free material. If they were in England, we would probably pull them down as they are not worthy of being used as a shed. There is no running water, sanitation or electricity. Water is collected from the local river. Dirty river water is used for drinking and cooking as well as washing. Contaminated water and lack of sufficient food is affecting the health of the children. We provided a bag of basic foods for the families in this community. We work through the schools, as bags are given by name to families in need. The schools know the families and the needs in their community.

What has always amazed me is that it is accepted that you can give to those in need without an outcry from those who would also like what is being given out as they themselves are poor. We first came across this when one single hospital mattress was taken with our delivery of food to a Lenca village. Cesar looked at all the people gathered before him and said `how do we decide who to give it to`. The answer was easy as the people all said give it to that lady as she `needs it most`. This was a thin lady holding a malnourished small child. What a people. We saw the same principle in action in the city when we gave bags of educational supplies to those in most need in the school. This meant only about eight or nine children in each class received an educational bag. The list being created by the teachers. It is very humbling working with these people.

Luis organised food bags for families in Funez through the school and also educational sponsorship. Luis also teaches at Vicente College where we continue to feed about 150 students each lunchtime. Again, it is those in greatest need.

This is a letter from one of his students :-

My name is Allison Fernanda Martinez Espinosa. I am 17 years old. This is my last year of B.T.P. Accounting and Finance at the Vicente Caceres Central Institute. My favourite pastime is reading. For me, books are an escape where one can travel to mysterious and real places, get to know other cultures and ways of life and all of this is possible without paying for an aeroplane ticket. I like to give my full support to social causes, which are fighting for society in general. If we want to have a country which is free of abuse, discrimination and social inequality, we have to give all that is humanly possible.

My ambition is to graduate from college and then to be able to go to university, and from there to become a lawyer to be able to defend the people's rights wherever they are denied or violated.

I live with my parents and 3 siblings. My mother recently graduated in financial

accounting but unfortunately she has become one more of the unemployed in our country just like so many other young people. My father works as a security guard and also studies at the weekends. There are many family expenses, such as food, transport, clothing, education, school things, medicines etc., but no matter what the difficulties we face, whether they be with money or with our health, we remain united in our efforts to achieve a better quality of life and a better future.

I say goodbye, wishing you a happy and prosperous New Year, with much success in both your professional and family life. I thank each one of you for being there to offer hope and support to all the children and young people in different countries in the world. It is a great inspiration for us to fulfil our goals and our dreams and so to change our future. I hope we can count on your support.



- Giving Out Food Bags -

_Keith Plamping Educational Fund__

This fund was set up after the death of Keith in 2014. He was the secretary of CH Trust and was instrumental in setting us up as a registered charity some twenty years after the work was started.

This fund was designed to help children access any level of education anytime during the school year. We discovered that some students could not continue with their education part way through the year as they did not have money for the next manual or the bus fare across the city as it was too far and dangerous to walk. The educational sponsorship scheme focuses on the start of the academic year but is not set up to provide top up or 'emergency' help throughout the year to either sponsored or non-sponsored children. This is where the Plamping Fund steps in.

As we have received more funding, some has also been used at the beginning of the school year to purchase an item of clothing or equipment required for a non-sponsored student to attend school. They need full school uniform, PE kit and all items needed for their lessons, including text books when they graduate to secondary education. Even the primary schools do not supply any paper or pencils needed for lessons.

As with our children here in the UK, the start of a new school year is expensive. In the case of many families, there are normally two or three children in education at the same time during their educational career. This for a poor family is very difficult no matter how they look after and hand down uniform and black shoes.

They find various solutions to this problem but few of them are good. School uniform is very important and is hung up, often on a nail, when they return home. Black shoes are very expensive and are often carried to school to be put on before entering school. The children in rural areas will walk bare foot especially during the rainy season. A pair of shoes would not manage one trip in the mud. This is why they liked our wellington boots for walking and when working the land.

The more drastic solution is to allow each child one year in school and one year off. This means that child A would attend school in 2018 but there would not be enough money for their sibling to attend as well. Come 2019 child B would go to school and child A would miss due to lack of money to buy all the required items need to attend school. This means they have to retain their knowledge without using it for a whole year. Those who have taught early primary know that the school holidays can drain away a lot of teaching in some pupils let alone a whole year. They have to pass the exams at the end of each school year before they can move onto the next class and level. If this is not achieved it is very tempting for the parents to decide that education is an expensive necessity they can live without.

Many parents know that education is the way forward and will do all they can to get their children through primary education which finishes at age around 13 years. Many parents cannot read or write themselves but want the best for their children. These are the people we try to help. The educational fund enables us to help many children into education. As with educational sponsorship money is never given to parents, the items are always bought for the children.

Buying bulk can also get us the best prices and can be bought in the city. I wonder how many children have managed to attend school because of items sent during the Container years or things bought locally with CH Trust funding over the last 46 years?

Jenny Smith, who is responsible for accounting our CH Trust finances and educational all of the sponsorship, was diagnosed with an aggressive cancer during the week before Christmas. As it is important that not one cancerous cell survives, she has started a course of chemotherapy followed by radiotherapy. This will take her up to the start of Autumn. I know that she appreciates the prayers of those who knew of her situation, thank you.

In the short-term Jenny will have difficulty getting the educational sponsorship information out to those involved in our sponsorship scheme. You will be pleased to know that all the money



- School Supplies Ready for Distribution -

was sent out before Christmas. The sponsorship supplies have been bought and the children are part way through their school year. We will try to get your feedback information out to you as soon as possible but please bear with us. The quality may suffer a little compared with previous years as it will be lacking Jenny's magical touch.



- Children Supported by the Keith Plamping Educational Fund -



- Eating at a School Feeding Project -

_Self-Sustaining School Meals__

We continue to feed children in six Valle schools. This takes a lot of our money but I have little to tell you about this more than the obvious. The children are very happy to have a different meal and the mums pleased that their small supply of food will not have to be spread around so many mouths.

Honduras is struggling with the results of climate change, experiencing high temperatures and drought or extremes of rain and flooding. Irregular and inconsistent rainy seasons badly effect the cultivation of crops. Large numbers of families rely on what they can grow to survive. This makes them and, most of all, the children very vulnerable.

They cannot change the weather but the schools are trying to show a better way with the seed projects that they have run for the past two years. They are teaching the children how to prepare the land, plant and grow vegetables. They eat these in school and sell some of the excess. The long term aim is



- Enjoying a Radish Grown at the School -

to introduce vegetables and fruit grown from our trees into their diets, rather than just tortilla red beans and rice which is the Honduran basic diet. Although seen as long term, I do not underestimate what the girls are learning food wise and the knowledge that both boys and girls are gaining with respect to growing and hen rearing. If only a few fly with these ideas, as I know they will, it will eventually spread to others. We are great at copying others. I believe this is how allotments work in England. Cesar is planning a green weekend when the schools will sell some of their excess produce in the Valle village centre. Here a lot of people visit at the weekend and sales should be good, with prices set to sell to the capital's populace. I may have photos and more news by the next newsletter.

The cooking of the food for lunch at the schools, and the now working hen houses, are helping to make the schools a busy hub for the communities. When people work together much can be learnt and achieved.

_EL RETIRO FEEDING CENTRE___

This is the feeding centre attached to the school in the village of El Retiro. It has been running for some years. We used to give them food out of the containers but now we buy food for them. We provide lunch for the children in the school but the group of ladies involved are also providing meals for the preschool children. School starts at the age of six. However, if there are children in great need outside of school they can also get a meal. They also feed those not in primary education. i.e. they feed on need, not age.

We now have four feeding centres that we supply food to on a daily basis. The new one is attached to the church in Guanacaste, there is one at Le Retiro and the other two are church based. One in Pedrigal and the other on the north coast, at Le Ceiba. The latter two feed the children twice a week throughout the year. Again, they are not restricted by age. We do not have school lunch programmes in these areas. Even though we spend a lot of money on food, we are also working on improving lives and promoting self-sufficiency in food production.



- Meal Time at El Retiro -

_Political Unrest__

A general election was held in Honduras at the end of November 2017. It was a count with only two percent difference. The opposition has alleged foul play to some of the proceedings. The current president stood for re-election by changing the constitution of the country, which only allowed a single four-year presidency. The repeal of this element presents a possible path to dictatorship, so many people are not happy. This last happened in 2009, when President Zaleya was shipped out of the country one Sunday morning, for trying to create a dictatorship.

The aftermath of the 2017 election was demonstrations and violence. A curfew was introduced from 6pm to 6am, which restricted a lot of activity and interfered with working hours. The other more problematic result was barricading of many of the roads.

These manned barricades caused several problems. No food could get to the little corner shops, which supply food to the poorest who have to buy day by day. Also petrol was not available. Jeronimo, one of our co-workers, tried to go and buy food for the children that we feed twice a week. He could not get through to buy any. All he managed to get were some red beans which he put into bags and sent home with the children.

The Valle was more affected, as it is so near the capital. Cesar has had to postpone taking a truck of food bags to the Lencas as it was too dangerous to go through the city and he could not make the trip without breaking the curfew. The curfew was lifted over Christmas to allow people to travel to visit their families. These situations tend to increase the level of violence, which then remains high, long after the event.

The inauguration of the new president took place on Saturday 27th January 2018. The opposition called for a general strike on that day. Protests and road blocks had been planned for the whole week. Schools opening was delayed until the beginning of February. The international news stated that one person had been killed. However, local people put the number killed by the police and army at 40. During this period, people local to the Valle could not get to work and small businesses could not get their produce to their customers. Food was difficult to buy, accompanied by rising prices. Now, into March 2018, the country has now largely settled down but prices do not go down as quickly.

The unrest has caused problems with our work and several things have had to be reprogrammed. The Lenca visit, with much needed bags of food, has been delayed by three months. Cesar was very frustrated because he was receiving desperate phone calls from families who needed this small bag of food. Some of the Lenca communities grow flowers for sale in the Capital but could not get them past the blockades. No sale means no food for a very vulnerable people who live with food poverty. Thankfully the Lenca trip has now taken place. The purchasing of the school uniforms for our sponsored children, building supplies for houses and chicken sheds have also been affected. However, things are now slowly returning to normal. We now look forward to a year in which the work of CH Trust can proceed without hindrance and bring benefit to the lives of people who are much less fortunate than ourselves.

_Amazon Smile__

Amazon will make a contribution to your nominated charities each time you make a purchase through the Smile program. CH Trust is now one the charities you can support via Smile. For more details see: https://smile.amazon.co.uk

_GDPR__

I'm sure you have all become aware of the recent introduction of the new GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) regulation over the last few months. We have worked diligently to ensure your personal details such as names and addresses are kept safe and secure. We have never sold and never will sell your details to other organisations.

As we already met most of the requirements for the new law, you are unlikely to see any change in the way we communicate with you. We will continue to keep in touch with you as we already do. And as always, you can contact us whenever you wish to change the way we communicate with you.

_Thank You__

Thank you to everyone that has donated to the work of CH Trust. So whether you donated by cash, cheque, bank transfer, standing order, MyDonate or some other means, your donations are making a real difference to the lives of many people in Honduras. Without your support non of what we do would be possible.

DONATION FORM

Please complete the form below and return with your donation. Please make cheques payable to "CH Trust". Address on the front cover.

I would like to:

- **D** Donate to the General Fund
- □ Sponsor _____ (Number of children) with a full/half sponsorship for the next academic year

I have enclosed £_____

Standing Order Form

Standing Order
I wish to support CH Trust for £
Monthly Quarterly Annually
Starting on \Box / \Box / \Box and thereafter until further notice
To the Manager Bank/Building Society
Address:
Your account details
Name of Account Holder(s):
Your Account No.
Signature(s): Date:
To (Bank) Name: HSBCSort Code:40-19-37Account No:61589865Account Name:CH TRUST



- A Christmas Party in Full Swing -

_Gift Aid Form__

If you are able and willing to grant to us Gift Aid, please complete the authorisation form below and send it with your donation.

I would like Gift Aid to be authorised for:-(please tick all boxes you wish to apply).

Today Back dated for the last four years For the future

I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax each tax year. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1

Signature	Date
Address	Postcode

Please notify the charity if you decide to cancel this declaration or change your name or address or no longer pay sufficient tax.