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## Children Of Honduras Trust

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### A GREAT YEAR!\_\_

This year we have felt greatly blessed. The problems encountered with the import of last year's containers appear to have been solved. Our distribution colleagues in Honduras have reported something like 99% success rate in their expected inventory and our shipping/import costs have reduced noticeably relative to last year. The distribution has also gone well. We now have the benefit of many photographs illustrating how the aid has been used. These are posted for your interest on our web site. They are far too numerous to publish in this newsletter!

I hope you enjoy the following articles which, hopefully, give you a taste of the way in which the work of CH Trust is impacting the life of many children in Honduras. We thank you, our supporters and the Lord for the privilege of participating in His work of bringing help and hope to the needy.



- LUNCHTIME AT SCHOOL -

## LOADING DAY, MARCH 2008

As our Loading Day Saturday approached we were greeted with a weather forecast of 23 mile per hour gales and rain! In actuality, the weather turned out to be kind, generally pleasant, with no rain until six o'clock. However, only a few miles away, several places around us experienced heavy showers during the course of the day. The Lord is good!

In spite of a few last minute problems, Loading Day went exceptionally well. On arrival, the previous afternoon, various factors conspired to reduce the loading area between the two sets of vans. Never-the-less, it all worked well. As last year, we packed four forty foot containers, full to the brim, with a variety of different items. This year, we managed to load all the essentials. The items left over could be happily 'returned to stores' until next year. Although it was hard work, everyone enjoyed themselves. The last container doors were finally closed about 6.00pm. As usual, the remaining helpers made a circle around the four containers and a prayer was said for a safe passage before the weary but contented workforce went home. The containers departed from TDG early on Monday morning (10<sup>th</sup> March) for the journey to Honduras.

We were surprised to discover that 151 people signed in during the course of Loading Day. This included 50 young people from Loughborough University, who applied themselves to the task with lots of energy and enthusiasm. This year we also benefited from the attendance of the First Response paramedic team. This was a comfort, since there is always potential for accidents and injury on this kind of occasion. We are grateful that everyone acted responsibly on the day, with only the odd scratch, minor cut or bruised ankle to report. I am also pleased to report that everyone seemed to be impressed by the goodies rustled up by the catering team. Well done.

For various reasons, several key people were missing from the crews inside the containers. This provided an opportunity to try some new people and help develop their packing skills. Container packing is not any easy job. It requires skill and good judgement to achieve the very tight pack that we demand with even distribution of weight around the van. Every piece of fresh air that we send means we have wasted money. In the event, everyone worked together to secure a successful outcome. In every way it was a job well done!

Finally, to everyone else who participated in the Loading Day event, a big thank you. Without your help, the task could not be achieved. Please remember that we

also rely on your help for next year! The date for next year's Loading Day is at the end of the newsletter. I look forward to seeing you there.

### **A WORD FOR THE 'PROCESSING' TEAM**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the team of people that meet together every week throughout the year to help sort and pack the items we send to Honduras. Not only are there things to sort but also buckets to fetch and wash, rubbish to be taken to the tip, cardboard to recycle and lots of other jobs, too many to list. Without this team the containers would not be sent. I am the 'front person' that you know but this work is far too big for one person. It is a team ministry and I would like to thank those who faithfully come each Tuesday and tackle the jobs that need doing on that day. The number varies from week to week but there are usually about twelve people working in the morning and a smaller team in the afternoon. To each one of you, a big thank you. I know the Lord will bless you for the contribution you make to His work.

### **AQUA BOXES**

We have been blessed again, this year, with a large number of Aqua boxes sourced by the Wirksworth Rotary Club. In Honduras, they are very popular and doing a tremendous job. They enable dirty surface or river water to be rendered safe to drink by the use of filters and chlorine tablets. Many parents have noticed the improvement in the health of their children and themselves due to having clean drinking water; a great blessing to everyone who receives them. The demand and need is great, especially in the mountains and in the outskirts of the towns and cities. The Christmas newsletter will devote more coverage to the topic of providing clean water. This issue is angled more towards considering the topic of food shortage during this difficult time.

### **FEEDBACK FROM HONDURAS**

Pastor Pavon (San Pedro Sula) said that 'for the first time ever, every child in his church has clothes and shoes because of our help from England'. "We have allowed their dreams."

Angela Pavon stated that their people eagerly await our annual shipment as it includes pots of Benzoic Acid ointment, used to treat athletes' foot. Two children were now able to wear shoes again, after walking barefoot for a long time because of fungal infection. The lice combs also help the eradication of head lice which causes discomfort and bacterial infection.

The children, living as squatters with their families by the large river in San Pedro Sula, have been enjoying rice pudding, thanks to the milk and rice we sent. Pastor Pavon also says that the older children he had chosen to receive our sponsorship have been spurred on to “super action” by the help they have been given. Their exam results testify to this. I also guess that they are greatly encouraged in their studies by their Pastor, who lectures at the University and can testify that education is the way to a better future. He started in life very poor, in a one parent family, not knowing when his next meal would be and sleeping on a mattress that was often damp because the roof leaked. The room rented by the family was so tiny that the bed could not be relocated.

The general comment from all the Pastors is how pleased the people are to receive help from England and what an impact it is making on their lives and those of their children.

### TELEVISION COVERAGE

We were surprised to learn that the work of CH Trust was featured on Honduran national television. The donations made to the teaching hospital were the subject of a news report. This involved interviews with the chairman of the Pastors Federation, with Pastor Roger Riviera (the Peniel church) and with the head of the Tegucigalpa Teaching Hospital. They told the media about the donations to the Hospital, which had come from England via CH Trust. They also explained that we had been sending aid to help children in Honduras for the past 34 years. The head of the hospital said how grateful they were to receive help with equipment and consumables. He noted that most of the equipment in the hospital was forty years old and no longer repairable. Because of the hundreds of patients seeking help from this free hospital, it also suffered continual shortage of consumable items. A classic case where demand far outstrips what was available. The items we sent were first offered to the Paediatric doctors and then into the general hospital. We managed to send sterilisers, wheelchairs, glucose machines, oxygen masks, catheters, items for intensive care and minor surgery, plasters and dressings etc. Nearly all of these items were to be disposed of and classed as scrap in England. The Hospital estimated that their value to them, in Honduras, was about £57,000. Many items have also been given to smaller clinics throughout Honduras, ranging from the children’s AIDS clinic to small rural clinics around the country.

### WHEELCHAIRS TO THE RESCUE

We did well for wheelchairs this year. There was sufficient to be able to share

them with several other ministries in addition to the clinics and hospitals. The story below came from Ricardo.

This little boy attends school in Naranjal but comes from the village that is on top of the mountain where we live. For years he was brought by a cousin and a friend walking down the mountain for 4 miles. They carried him because his knees and below are paralysed. You can imagine his surprise to have the chair and the whole school celebrated with him. His mother Eusebsa Coello cried when she saw it. The boy's name is Angel Cerrato Coello. His two helpers, for three years, are Marvin Cerrato and Edwin Roberto Ponce Cerrato. I am blessing them all with gift packages for home and school from the containers. Again thanks, as it made someone extremely happy. These gifts are impacting the community. God Bless.

Ricardo Hood



**- THE WHEELCHAIR IS GREAT -**

### **EARLY YEARS SCHOOLING IN GUANACASTE (A VERONICA EXPERIENCE)**

What do you remember about your early years at school? I remember having a whale of a time, playing, colouring, painting, dressing up, nature tables, listening to stories, pretending to be a seed that grows into a flower, making things and learning through playing.

This however was not my experience of how Honduran children in the early years of school are taught. As I have said before, I am not an infant teacher but I have been trained to teach from 5-11 year olds.

I watched two young girls, who had only had basic schooling themselves, try to teach children between 4-7 the same curriculum. This was fairly unimaginative, basic, repetitive and revolved around copying things from a rather inadequate blackboard (green board), the surface of which was so bad that the chalk didn't adhere well to it. The classroom was poorly lit - no electricity. I recall a couple of children in that room seated at the back that had problems seeing the board. It wasn't so much the distance; they actually needed to wear glasses! These young girls wanted to do their best but were ill equipped both in terms of resources and knowledge of how and what to teach.

Watching very young children being given the same thing to do as the older children, which really was inappropriate for them, was so torturous. My original intentions were merely to observe and help. However, it soon turned into 'hands on' direction. I had to be tactful since I didn't want the girls to feel I was judging them or reporting back on what they were doing. Cesar had originally asked me to give them some suggestions. I soon realised that the only role models these girls had was based on their own experiences of school - which was largely copying from a board. The young children needed to be taught how to hold a pencil and just have the experience of making marks before being expected to copy letters exactly. They were taught in such a parrot like fashion that no matter what number you pointed to they said it was number one! They had only learnt to count starting from number one and did not recognise each individual number!

I suggested to the girls that I took the class the next day so they could see some different ways of teaching. They seemed fine with this and were keen for me to carry on over the next few days. I took the classes and they observed. Then I got them to divide the class into different ages, so the younger children worked on things that were more age appropriate. It was obvious that one of the girls was more dynamic and had more ideas than the other. I suggested she work with the older children and the other girl with the younger children. By the end of the first week I loved being in that classroom so much I was contemplating staying locally! Next week the girls would have a go at some of the ideas I had used.

One of the most dramatic experiences in my time at Guanacaste was when I asked the girls to keep hold of the children's books, so that they could assess how

the children were progressing and to inform their planning for the next day. I had planned to buy each child a workbook that was more age appropriate. Well all the children handed in their sole exercise book, except one 5 year old girl who hit the roof at the thought of being parted from her book! Anyone passing by would have assumed she was being tortured. Despite telling her she would get it back the next morning she would not be pacified and left school in floods of tears. The girls looked at me in horror, fearing that we might get a complaint from a parent at the rumpus that had gone on and with a look that said, do you know what you're doing, is it worth this fuss? However, I stuck to my guns. We checked the books and we were able to decide which children needed which book. These were duly bought for the next day.

The following morning the child turned up as calm as a mill pond as though the trauma of the day before had never happened! She was pleased with her new book and the return of her exercise book! I'm pretty sure the next time her book needs to remain in class she will be less distressed.

Can you imagine it? When they have so little, I can understand that the loss of something, which to me seemed so insignificant, was a major event in the life of this child. Her parents had probably instilled in her the value of the exercise book and the sacrifice they made to get it. It pains me, when I teach here in the UK, that children have such little regard for either their own, or school property.

I had a fantastic time teaching in Guanacaste. I was so proud of the girls, just how open they were to take on board new ideas. They were invaluable at helping me teach as I needed them sometimes to help me get ideas across to the children. My Spanish has been learnt at evening classes and is Castilian Spanish. Often the children and some adults speak more colloquially. It was a learning experience for me too! We had a great time and became partners in our efforts to try to make school a really positive experience. For the first time the children were listening to stories, playing games outside, painting and making the walls of their classroom more vibrant and educational.

Since my return to the UK, I have been encouraged to see, in photos sent by Cesar, that this year's children are also benefiting from some of the techniques the girls learnt last year. And the classroom looks great. The smallest things we take for granted can make such a difference there.

I feel the beginning of a child's school life will influence the rest of their time at school. As a teacher, I would love to set them up to be able to take on board all that school has to offer. Education is a way out of poverty. I want all children, especially Honduran children, to be in a position to choose what they would like to do in life, to widen their horizons and help their families and their country from the inside. For me, my commitment to Honduras will always largely be focussed on schools and educators. I am chomping at the bit to get back there and do what I can towards realising this.

## A LETTER FROM THE COMMUNITY OF EL GUANACASTE\_\_

Dear Jennifer, we hope that God bless your life and that of your Family.

The reason of this letter is to tell you that we are the Society of Parents/Heads of Family of Guanacaste, you along with other friends from England, have helped our community a lot. First of all we would like to tell you that it has been a blessing to have professor Cesar in our little village, because thanks to him we have received a better education for our children, because now they are very happy to go to school where they have received notebooks, pencils, colours, puzzles, toys, new blackboards and many other things in school that make us feel very happy. We know that all this help comes from you and it is the first time our community receives any help.

Here in The Guanacaste, we don't have electricity, but some of our families have received the torches (wind up) that you sent us and believe me they are very useful because for many years we have been trying to bring electricity to the village with the government but they have always lied to us, we are very happy with your help because we know that you are truly sincere.

We have received filters and chlorine that we are using correctly, we drink the water with chlorine and our children as well and in all honesty we can see the change in health in our children, because the food, like rice, pasta, meatballs, cereal and the milk are very nice and there is enough food for all our children to eat properly.

Now it is winter, here it rains a lot, but some children and parents also received Wellington boots, they are very useful because with them we can go to the fields to work. Our working day starts very early, at 4 o'clock in the morning, and it finishes at three in the afternoon. Almost everybody works cutting cane and we earn 100 lempira per day, (£3) in our homes there are at least six people living. Our wives take care of the house and they wait for the children to come back from school. A lot of our children also work with us in the afternoon after school; this is the best way to



sustain our family better. We will always carry you in our hearts and appreciate all the work you have done for us, because Cesar has explained to us how hard it is to get all this help and send it here to Honduras.

Our children and all the parents of the Community of Guanacaste would like to tell you that our lives have changed in health, education and in improving the conditions of life and at home.

This letter was written by one of our daughters that lives in the Guanacaste (Cecilia Ponce)

And these are our words, most of us cannot write nor read but this is what we want to tell you from our heart.

GOD BLESS YOU

Society of Parents/ Heads of Family of the Guanacaste

**A Comment from Jennifer:**

This letter from the parents of Guanacaste really encouraged me, as I am sure it does you. Here is a community that has moved forward in their lives due to the things that we sent in the container. This is not a community that just waits with open hands to receive but partners who appreciate any help that they are offered. When we provided food for their children to eat midday at school, the ladies of the village freely offered to cook it. Rice, beans and pasta are not a quick cook for 92 children. Cesar has a team of 43 ladies that cook for the school, without pay, on a rota system. When the school started to plant the seeds that we sent, the parents came to help the children clear the land and prepare the soil.

Writing the letter was not an easy task as none of the adults could read or write. They had to get one of their daughters to scribe for them, more effort than a quick e-mail. By six o'clock in the evening it is dark in Guanacaste and candles have to be used, another expense. It is to this community that we have sent wind-up torches and lamps. They have been such a blessing. I know that other families would like a lamp as well.

This community has never celebrated Christmas as most struggle to put food on the table on a daily basis. Christmas is just another day to work and survive. With your help, I would like to make this year different for them. This idea came

from my concern that the children would be missing their midday school meal throughout the ten week break between terms, which includes Christmas.

The idea has developed into providing a meal for the community, as well as all the children who make up over sixty percent of the village. Can we do this? It will cost just under £240 to cater for about 300 people but I am guessing that, in true Honduras style, there will probably be 400 on the day. You can make an open donation to this project or, alternatively, you can pay £5 for a family to attend the meal. We are also making available Gift cards with a 6 x 4 photograph of some of the children we work with. If you want to pay for a family to attend the celebration, you can do so by sending a Gift card to someone here at home in lieu of a present at Christmas time. All cheques need to be made payable to CH Trust and sent to the address on the front of the newsletter. If we receive more money than is required for this project, the surplus will be spent on food for the most needy of families. I am conscious that the children will not receive a meal at school during December, January and part of February. During this period the schools are closed for the long 'summer' holiday. A long time to go hungry!

We will be providing a substantial nutritious meal, rather than a luxury festive one. The ladies in Guanacaste have priced the food. They will also be cooking and serving it. The village is very excited about it, since they have never done anything like it before. We would greatly appreciate your help to make this a really special occasion for them. The meal will consist of chicken, the whole chicken (insides as well) served with rice, carrots, sweet corn, pataste, flavourings etc. They will make a drink out of local oranges and sugar. The babies and tots will be given a milk based meal. In total, the chicken will cost about £130. This is what will make the meal so special. Meat of any kind is a luxury that few can afford in this village.

## FEEDING PROGRAMMES

In Honduras, many of the people living in the mountains are subsistence farmers. They struggle to survive because they are trying to provide for a family on less than a dollar a day. Several ministries are providing some help through feeding centres. CH Trust is supplying food to several mountain area schools where poverty is great. These meals are enjoyed by the children and appreciated by the mums who do not have to stretch so far their meagre supplies of food for the evening meal. It also motivates the parents and the children to attend school regularly. You may not like lessons but the food is better and more plentiful than at home! It is also a good reason to walk the often long distances to attend class.



**- MAKING THE WALK TO SCHOOL WORTHWHILE -**

Through this year we have fed about 170 children, five days a week, at Guanacaste and Sauce schools. These are located in rural mountain areas. Guanacaste School, in particular, is situated in a very poor rural locality. The village has no electricity nor does the school.

In addition, we have been helping to supply food to two other tiny mountain schools, Sabaneta and Chiqistepe.

Ricardo's food kitchens in rural Naranjal and Pedrigal continue to prosper and increase. The feeding centre he supports at the Tegucigalpa 'Rubbish Dump' church also continues to flourish. Since our visit in September, 2007, the 'dump' church has managed to lay the foundations and put up the walls of their feeding centre. The roof for this building will be expensive as it has to be cast in one piece from concrete and iron bars. This is because they hope to build a church on the second floor as finances permit. For the interim, we have sent them a gazebo and tarpaulins to erect against the sun and the rain until the roof can be built.

In the city, Vincente college teaches 8000 pupils in three shifts, morning, afternoon and evening. It is situated in a poor area of the capital. Many of the pupils come from poor homes where a good meal can be a rarity. Luis is also supplying several other schools in this area with food from our containers.

You may remember that last year we sent out food to feed 150 out of the 400 Vincente college students, deemed by the doctors to be those suffering most from malnutrition. This year we have managed to increase our input to enable 350 of those students to be fed. As the food situation worsens with the increase in world prices, the numbers of students needing help will probably increase to more than 400. However, we have done our best to feed as many as possible in the coming year. In 2009, I will attempt to provide for 450 children in Vincente.

In total, CH Trust now provides about 4000 meals a week during term time. Many other children are also fed on a less regular basis through church Sunday school activities. A snack is often provided after Sunday school, which is generally held in the morning. Some churches provide meals where our input is only a part of what is fed to the children. Our contribution usually helps to give variety with the pasta and also enables more children to be fed.

Last September, John and myself visited Honduras to see how the work was progressing. We visited several of the feeding centres, schools and the college where our food is feeding the children. This ministry is meeting a great need. It really was a privilege to see children eating a good meal from the supplies we have sent out. The provision of food is a particular area that the Lord laid on our hearts during this visit. We were also very impressed by the hard work done to cook and distribute the food to those in most need.

### **\_'DO IT YOURSELF' FOOD BOXES \_**

We anticipate that rising world prices on rice and wheat etc will make it more difficult for many poor Honduran families to eat adequately. As part of our drive to send out a bigger proportion of food in next year's containers, we invite you to help us in a 'hands on' way. Would you like to help us by purchasing a mix of specific foods and packing them into strong wine boxes? The basic requirements are: pasta, rice, sugar (protected within a plastic bag), oats (supermarkets own), red dried kidney beans and tinned tomatoes. They also like tins of tuna, baked beans, spaghetti in sauce and dried or evaporated milk. These are all items that will mix well with rice or pasta and go a long way.

In Honduras, red kidney beans are encountered as 'frijoles'. They are a favourite staple food found even in the poorest homes and are eaten every day. Recently, they have become cheaper in England than in Honduras. This indicates that a basic food is becoming too expensive for poor Hondurans to buy. Since there isn't really a more basic food in Honduras, what can they change to? In reality,

there is no substitute for this ‘cultural’ vegetable. However, we can help them a little by sending dried red kidney beans to some of the poor families.

It is important not to pack “air” and so odd corners can be filled with stock cubes, pencils, etc. **Please do not pack any form of liquid and watch the ‘use by’ dates as any items packed now will not be used until after May 2009.** We specifically ask that wine boxes be used as they are strong, a convenient size for packing on the containers and for carrying home in Honduras. (Empty wine boxes are generally available from your local supermarket). However, any similar size will do. Please buy the cheapest products, as we are aiming for quantity rather than quality named brands.

### GIFT CARDS FOR CHRISTMAS

Would you like to help a needy Honduran Family enjoy having food to eat over Christmas?

Until I became more involved with Honduras, I believed that the low wages prevalent in developing countries were also accompanied by low food prices. This I have found to be wrong. Yes, food prices are lower but not in proportion to the low wages.

The cost of rice everywhere is rising with the world market. I am advised that the cost of rice, red kidney beans and sugar in Honduras has doubled in the last three months. Their cooking oil costs twice as much as it does here in the UK and is of inferior quality. It is not difficult to foresee that this is going to cause great problems for the many families who live on an average of \$1-2 per day. Why are the wages so low? Many people’s income comes from agriculture, which is low paid and intermittent. It is unusual to find work that offers more than three days employment a week, as well as being seasonal.

Dina, one of our contact people in Honduras, reported back the following message:

*“Yes, the food prices are increasing every week but the rains have been good this season and the ‘out of city’ plantations are beautiful. Corn is now mainly being grown to produce bio fuel. We hope they leave some to produce “tortillas” too. As you know, this is the “bread” that we eat every day. Not only food is increasing but also public transportation and all things dependant on petroleum prices. Really, we have to pray and save all what we can. Here some businesses and government bodies are inviting people to save electric energy and to seed the land with food, all kinds of food, to create little family farms.”*

When food prices rise in England, we can compensate by changing what we eat. Many families in Honduras spend about 80% of their income on the very basic foods. When prices rise by 40%, they go hungry. In such circumstances there is no money for anything else, such as children's clothes or medication. This is bad news as well as their reality. At least we have the opportunity to help some of these unfortunate families.

We cannot get any food into Honduras before the next containers, at the end of April 2009 but, in the meantime, we can send out money to purchase food locally for the very needy over the Christmas period. To help fund this initiative, we are producing for sale, A5 Christmas Gift cards with a 6 x 4 photo on the front which can be purchased for a unit cost of £5. Each card will fund the cost of a basic food package, assembled locally in Honduras, that will feed a needy family for several days. The card will read:

*.....has purchased this gift from CH Trust on your behalf.*

*Like the rest of the world, the people in Honduras are subject to the current rising food prices. Most families rely on the morning school meal to help supplement their child's diet, which at the best of times is often meagre and inadequate. During the long Christmas holiday's (from November- February) when the children are not at school, the families are under increased pressure to try to ensure their child will receive one meal every day.*

Your gift has purchased the following food for a family:

<i>4lb. Rice</i>	<i>4lb. maize</i>
<i>2lb dried red kidney beans</i>	<i>2lb sugar and five small packets of coffee</i>

*This will last a family of four for 2-3 days.*

**The Gift Cards are available now.** (Please do not leave it too late ordering as we need to get the money out to Honduras).

### **SEEDS TO HARVEST!**

Last year we asked for vegetable seeds. These have been a great success. We were also given a large amount by a seed company and were thus able to give to all the ministries we supply. Seeds have been given to several schools for the students to grow. At Guanacaste the parents have helped the children to clear the land, plant the seeds and give advice on the growing of the different crops.

We sent over a trial pack of green runner beans to see how they would grow in Honduras. They grew well and were allowed to grow until they would grow no more. They removed the beans and stated that they were the sweetest beans that they had ever eaten. I didn't feel that there was any point in explaining how we eat runner beans in England. The Hondurans like their frijolies (beans) their way and have no plans to change!

At El Ceibon, in northern Honduras, the people had never eaten vegetables until we sent in the seeds. Fruit and vegetables in this area are very expensive. Now, they have been able to eat the vegetables that they have grown themselves. They have also been able to bring some to the church in Choloma. They even had some to sell. The money they made was used to buy water from the tanker wagons, which again is expensive. When there is no rain water to collect, their only other cheap option is the dirty river water. Growing the vegetables spared them, at this time, from having to drink from the river.



**- SELF-GROWN SEEDS WILL SOON BE ON THE MENU -**

## CHILD EDUCATIONAL SPONSORSHIP SCHEMES

The sponsorship scheme continues to do well with over 200 children sponsored for education. We are enabling increasing numbers of children to access school through this scheme who would never have been able to attend school due to lack of parental finance. In other cases, we pay for the uniform of one child in the family and the parents manage to pay for the other members. A large number of the parents cannot read or write but many do value education as a way forward out of poverty. If there is barely finance to feed your children, a school uniform and school supplies never get past the wish list. As you have read, the boy who received the wheelchair was carried by his friends four miles to school each day. The children at Guanacaste will wait for two hours at the school gate hoping that the teacher will arrive. Guanacaste have now helped to solve the problem of the arrival of the teacher. They phone to ask the problem. If the old motor bike has broken down they will send help to walk the teacher and bike to the top of the mountain. If the road is impassable because of mud slips due to the rains, they will send a donkey down for the teacher to ride. The community does everything it can to unite teacher and pupils. Our £50 sponsorship for a year, or £25 half sponsorship, is allowing many to move towards their goal of education and graduation from primary education after six years of schooling. The graduation from 6<sup>th</sup> grade is a very important diploma in Honduras and one that many aspire to. Glenda who grew up at the orphanage often relates how she longed to go to school but economically it had been impossible. When she did receive the opportunity to attend school, she worked so hard that she was top of the class every year in her primary education. We are helping such children.

This is a letter to Spondon Guides who sponsor a child who goes to Sauce school:

*My name is Arlin Cerrato Juares and I am 10 years old. I am in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade of the Juan Lindo Saravanda school. My father is called Elvin Lindo Saravanda and he works in agriculture. My mother is called Dora Patricia Cerrato and she works as a cleaner. Everything you sent to me was very nice, thank you for everything. I am happy with everything you sent me.*

*I am poor and live in La Loma del Sulla in the Valle de Angeles. I work sowing maize and kidney bean seeds. My parents earn very little. I walk a long way to get to school. I am very thankful for everything. May God bless you today and always. Sometimes apart from this other job, I work cleaning and caring for a garden, they give me 50*



Lempiras (£1.50) a day. When I go to school I search for work so that I can help my mother”

### Translations from letters

“Dearest Friends of England. I, Maryori, am very thankful for your help and this time I received a letter, and the things you sent me were of great help for me and my brothers and sisters. Jarmin Alejandar Salgado, who is 5, Dayana Zicent Salgado, 7 years old and Joseph Alexander Salgado. All of us are in school.

I write to you with all of my heart that you will continue helping my mother, she is a single mother and washes and irons for a living. Sometimes she cannot give us things we need because we have no money. I am very thankful because you have sent me lots of nice things, like shampoo. Before we had to wash our hair in soap but now we can use shampoo. The clothes are really pretty as well, I’ve never had anything like this before. I hope for your help next year. I also wish for my younger sisters as well. If you could send something for my mother Diana as well, she would be very thankful. I also need you, since you are the people God has placed in our paths, like a brilliant light and a hope for us here in Honduras. We are a family of little money and we live in a house that is unfinished. With your help I’d like to live in a nice house that is well looked after by us. With the help of you and of God I can be put on the right path.

I’ll tell you my story. I am in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, my sister Jasmin is in the first grade, Dayana is in the second grade and my brother is in Kinder. Thank you for everything you have done. May God always look after you. I will be here in Honduras praying for you. Thank you again. See you soon. Goodbye  
Maryori

I really want to do well at school, it is my dream to graduate, sometimes I think this will be difficult because my mum earns so little. With your help I’m going to be ahead. Thank you for giving me the joy of wearing new shoes, clothes, socks and to be able to write in new exercise books.

### Here is another extract:

“My name is Carlos Eduardo Salgado Flores. I am 12 years old and am in 1st grade of the Valle de Angeles State School. I only go on Saturdays and Sundays, on the days of the week I work with the cattle - cleaning the ground, they pay me 40 Lempira daily for this (£1.20). I help my mother with the food and if there are any wages left over it goes towards school. My mother is called Cefanna Flores, she

is 50 years old, she cannot work because of her arm. My father is called Isabell Colindres, he is 56 and works nights caring for a house and they pay him very little. I have a twin called Melvin Gervany Flores, he is at school in Sauce, in the 6th grade. I have 8 brothers and sisters, our names are Cristina 25 years, Jose 23, Santos 21, Victor 19, Reina 17, Karla 15, Carlos 12 (me) and Melvin 12.

We are very poor and sometimes we are not able to eat and a lot of the time I only eat once a day. As my father earns so little it is impossible for him to help us in terms of school or college, for this reason I had to find work which is why I only go to school at the weekends. I am very happy for the help I receive since many of the things are going to help me for school. I give you thanks for this help and to my sponsors and to all of you.

May the Lord bless you today and always .

### FOCUS ON SCHOOLS

This coming year I want to focus a little more on schools, particularly those in the poor rural areas and the state colleges educating the 13-18 year olds. Many of the rural mountain schools are difficult to reach and often involve a lot of walking up unmade mountain tracks. These schools seem to get forgotten. The very limited supplies available tend to be distributed to the more visible schools that are nearer the larger villages and towns. It is the 'forgotten' schools that we are trying to reach with Spanish reading books, pictures, wall posters and most importantly, food supplies. Basic school supplies such as paper, pencils and pens are also needed to allow the children to access school. We administer a sponsorship scheme to help some families with school uniform, which is compulsory for school attendance, and the other essentials needed.

There is so little in their classrooms that it is difficult to know where to start with a wish list. Obviously they need basic items, like posters, sugar paper, marker pens, white board pens, blackboards, white boards, white board pens, chalk, paper, exercise books and jotters. They also need equipment for the more specialised lessons.

For science, test tubes, beakers, magnets, prisms, lenses, laboratory weighing machines for chemicals;

Microscopes, prepared slides, basic electronics material, etc.

Craft resources such as artist paint brushes, embroidery silks, large hole needles and other sewing needs etc

Football make for great playtimes!

Modest resources such as these can facilitate exciting lessons for children only used to chalk and talk.

### ITEMS STILL MUCH IN DEMAND

Umbrellas are used against the rain and the strong sunshine enjoyed most days.

Torches - The wind-up ones are a great success in Guanacaste and other mountain areas that have no electrical supply and no funding for batteries. I also sent three wind-up lamps, which they are thrilled with and want to thank us personally for sending them. I think this is another much needed item for next year. They cost about £10. Please check that they work if you send us one. The quality of these devices varies and needs to be checked before sending to Honduras.

‘Tilly’ type paraffin pressure lamps would also be excellent for this area. However, the dual fuel type that can be used with Coleman fuel are not suitable, as they clog over time when used without this special fuel, which is not available in Honduras. We hope to buy some in Honduras that are specifically suited to their needs. Also Calor gas stoves (as used by scouts and guides).

Children’s shoes are still a priority. Black is needed for school, any colour for ordinary wear, ‘wellies’ and walking type boots for the hills or working in the fields during the rainy season.

The wellingtons have proved very popular in the mountain areas where they work the land. The constant rain during the rainy season creates deep mud, which has to be negotiated when walking to school and for general living. The mud destroys precious shoes. Can we provide more wellingtons? The small children also like to play in the puddles!

Children’s clothes are still a large part of our shipment. You might have thought about all those new pants and socks that we ask for each year. I have now got lots of pictures of children holding up their new underwear! If there is not room in this newsletter for one of these pictures, look on the web site <http://www.chtrust.org.uk> where I have posted a new selection of photos.

**School supplies** – As noted earlier, basic notebooks like reporter’s pads or similar. Pens, pencils, rubbers, sharpeners, geometry kits, glue sticks. All are needed by every child who attends school. Parents have really appreciated these items being provided for their children as it releases more of their money for food. The note books are particularly expensive in Honduras and many are needed for each school year. Since the school provides nothing, the children also need to have books for both school and homework.

### **Posters and Pictures**

We have been asked for posters and pictures to put on the walls of the classroom. The teachers have no access or funding for these. I mentioned the fact that they would be in English. I was told that they stick Spanish over the text.

**Gardening Tools** are now being sought, not only by the people, but also by schools. We are now supplying seeds so that they can learn to grow food for themselves.

**Children’s clothes** are still the largest category of goods that we send and we want this to continue. However, no hats, gloves, coats or lined boots. It is a hot country.

### **Cereals**

Breakfast cereal is wanted, to put with the milk we send. This provides a quick nutritious snack for children, especially where there are no facilities to provide a cooked meal. Again we are looking for quantity not quality. Stores own brands are often the cheapest. Cornflakes, rice crispies, etc. Quantity, not named brands.

### **Muslin nappies**

Muslin nappies are needed for the bags that are made up for the maternity hospital. These are given to the new mums in the hospital that caters for the very poor. Many of these mums do not have anything to take the children home in or any of the other basic baby items. These bags have proved a great blessing.

### **Jam pans or large saucepans**

We are asked for large catering saucepans by those cooking for large numbers of children. These are difficult to get and very expensive to buy. However, they do seem to be able to cook with our jam pans. Are there any in the cupboards that want a new home? Mine went to Honduras several years ago and is still doing great service.

## **Medical Laboratory - Microscope needed**

**Dental equipment**, lamp, suction equipment. Chair, basic instruments and amalgam mixer.

## **Wheelchairs and Stretchers**

Chicken feeders and water dispensers. Chicken wire. (Needed for school project).

## **School Uniform**

The state school uniform colour is dark blue sweatshirts, jumpers and skirts and dark grey or black trousers. They also wear white shirts, short or long sleeve, like our children. Any of these items would be very welcome and also the black shoes. If we can provide any of these items, new or second hand, we allow more children to access primary education. Without uniform they cannot go to school. Many parents never went to school and as a result cannot read or write. It would be good to improve this situation with the coming generation of children. We can help to do this.



**- WE HAVE WALKED MILES WITHOUT SHOES -**

## **Money**

Yes, we collect money as well. This year could be a challenge financially as our two major financial commitments are food and transport. As I am sure you all know, these two items have increased greatly over the last few months. With four containers to send and more and more children not getting sufficient food to eat it is indeed a challenge but to cut down when the need is so great does not seem an option. I am grateful for all the financial support you give that allows me to do so much for so many children in Honduras each year.

I am sometimes asked how the work is financed. We have no supporting church organisation that underwrites our work. The Lord is our sole guarantor. All cheques for donations and Sponsorship should be made payable to C H Trust. Payments can also be made directly into our HSBC account.

## **FUND RAISING**

Beyond my engagements to show slides and speak about the work, I am not permitted time to be engaged in fund raising. So a big thank you to those who have raised money for us, or promoted our interest in churches or groups. Without finance we could not send our containers or buy the things needed. A big thank you, also, to those who send money by post or directly through the banking system.

One way we do raise money, locally, is by recycling old shoes, clothes, bedding, curtains etc. Since January, this year, we have raised £1215.20.

For those of you who 'surf the net' another source of funds comes to us from the 'Everyclick' search engine. Every time you use it, it earns us a donation. The details are below:

I search the web and raise money for my favourite charity, Children of Honduras Trust, with Everyclick. <http://www.everyclick.com> Search engine.

## **REDUCTION FOR NEXT YEAR**

Due to having a significant amount of boxes and buckets left over this year we need to be more selective of what we collect to send out in the coming year. If we continue to have a large surplus, year on year, we will get to the point when we run out of storage and everything will grind to a halt. This is not sensible, so we are only receiving the more essential items. This means that we will not be sending any furniture except school tables and stacking chairs. No large or ride

on toys. Can you keep your sewing material for one more year please until we clear our backlog? The same applies to bedding; if it can be saved for a bit longer it would be helpful, as these are items that were held back from last year and will need to be sent in 2009. Crockery is also something we will have to miss this year, except for the plastic items that are needed for the feeding centres.

No bikes, no adult clothes and shoes, no pushchairs or prams. No computers or monitors. No large toys (like kitchens), no large cuddly toys (bigger than 12 inches). We have sent sufficient over the last two years to meet the current need.

**DATES FOR NEXT YEAR**

**Packing week and last delivery dates**

February 7<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> 2009 (not Sunday)

**Loading shipping date**

March 14<sup>th</sup> 2009



**- SUPPLIES FOR A FAMILY LIVING IN A HOUSE MADE OF RICE SACKS -**



**- CH TRUST FASHION SHOW -**



**- PACKETS OF SEEDS AND OTHER HELP FOR THIS FAMILY -**