

EMERGING FROM LOCKDOWN

2022 has been an improving year for many people in Honduras. For example, the schools have now re-opened after two long years of lockdown, during which time the children's education could only proceed by homework. In response, we enabled just under 2000 children to attend the new school year. Also, employment prospects have slightly improved. As a result, some people have been fortunate enough to find paid employment for a few days, here and there, which has allowed them to buy more food.

At the time of writing Honduras has again suffered severe flooding in the north of the country and landslides in the south, affecting Tegucigalpa and the surrounding mountain communities. This is a consequence of the hurricanes that track up to America, often delivering large amounts of rain into Honduras and the surrounding countries. Thankfully, many people managed to reap a satisfactory harvest before the excessive rains arrived.



- FEEDING SOME OF THE MANY HUNGRY CHILDREN -

EDUCATION

Cesar reports that in the Valle de Angeles area about 95% of the children would not be in school this year without the CH Trust provision of exercise books and everything needed for a child to attend school.

One of the schools we support is in a community known as Macuelizo. Cesar has sent this account of some children we are sponsoring at this school.

This is the story of six young children chosen for sponsorship by Cesar, who walk for two hours to get to school and two hours to get back home. Knowing the Valle area, I doubt that much of the two hours will be walking on flat ground.

Cesar writes:-

"We have selected six children out of the 150 school age children in the village of El Macuelizo.

These children live in the hamlets of Las Playas and Corrales. They have to walk two hours to get to their school. It is always a huge sacrifice, as each day they must be accompanied by one of the mothers. She must remain at school to the end of the day waiting for the children to finish their classes.

The children's parents are of limited resources. They dedicate themselves to planting corn and red beans, which only brings in a very modest income. When opportunity presents, they engage in other activities such as caring for and clearing land belonging to others. This helps them support themselves from day to day. Their mothers thank God for the dining room and kitchen that CH Trust has built. This was ready for use in February 2022 at the start of the new school year. CH Trust has also helped provide food for the children at Macuelizo. It is hoped that the school meals will strengthen the children's bodies, enabling them to continue studying. For the children who have to walk long distances it is especially important, because they are often faced with no meal at home due to lack of food.

The mothers are very happy with the educational sponsorship, expressing that it is a great gift and a good help to enable their children to stay in school. The parents do indeed highly value the education of their children."

The school in Macuelizo is a rural school which has expanded greatly over the last few years. In these hard times the dining room we built last year has proved to be a great benefit and has increased the number of children attending.

In previous years some mums have occasionally kept children at home to help with the chores, look after a little one or help in the fields for money. As food is so expensive and work is so difficult to find, the mums are happy for their children to attend school regularly because they know that they will receive food from the dining room. Most really value education but there are always a few who need extra incentives to help their children!

Any child who does not pass the end of year grade examinations will have to repeat the same year again. This is depressing for both pupil and teacher since many will lose their friends who have moved up to the next level.

Understandably, many of the children worry, along with their parents, about whether they will be able to attend their next school year. If the parents cannot afford the necessary school supplies, not only does that prevent the child from going to school for the whole year but, when resuming the following year, they have to remain in their previous grade year. This means that they become separated from most of their friends and peer group who will have moved up a year. So, sponsorship of a child is giving more than just a gift of education, it is also promoting social contact after two years of isolation at home, in circumstances where fear of Covid has prevented children from even playing with the children of their close neighbours. The more children that we can get into school the better!

School attendance across the country will be down this year as parents are not able to buy the exercise books, pens, pencils and glue etc needed by each child to attend school. We have managed to get nearly 2000 children into schools from the poor areas of Honduras, by providing the items needed. This was done by using sponsorship money, the educational fund and some from the general fund. With people's permission we will seek to do the same again this year. These years of education are so valuable to each young person.

The schools are supposed to be open 200 days a year but this year they have only managed 110 days because of a very late start of the school year. To make matters worse, I believe they only started with a three-day week. This has resulted in 800,000 children being a long way behind with their schooling. Many in the rural areas have had no education at all during the last two years, as they did not have the means to access the radio broadcasts or lessons sent on line. The group of primary schools we support were able to send printed homework home for the children as we had supplied them with photocopiers, paper and ink.

The government has suggested that the schools remain open until 22nd December, just for those children who are way behind with their learning and will not pass their grades. School has usually finished by the third week in November for the long 'summer' holiday. This is the driest time of the year. The school term will finish with the end of year grade exams. This year will be particularly difficult for many children, as they have existed for two years on homework rather than class teaching. This is the first year of 'face to face' teaching after the Covid pandemic. It also started late, as the schools were being used to give Covid vaccinations.

The good news is that 'our' schools have enjoyed full attendance every day since school started, except for illness. This has also been encouraged by the food we provide through the dining rooms.

With your fantastic support we have done all we can to help these children with their education over this difficult time.

SCHOOL HEN HOUSES

During the course of the pandemic all the hen houses had to be closed. The stock was eaten early in the lockdown to provide food and avoid the hens being stolen by other hungry people. During the two years that the schools were closed the opportunity has been taken to rethink how the hen houses can be used to the best advantage.

The school year and the restocking of the hen houses got off to a slow start this academic year. As hunger is a continuing reality, any hens are at risk over the long school holiday. Sadly, this is one of the things that has to be taken into consideration.

Two of the schools we have supported for years and need chickens for their dining rooms, cannot benefit from hen houses because the school does not have sufficient ground. They will be helped by receiving a share from the production of other schools.

One of Cesar's key workers is Juan Carlos. He puts many hours of unpaid work into CH Trust and has always helped to collect and participate in the distribution of 1000s of food bags, including trips to the Lenca people.

Juan Carlos, who teaches agriculture at Hector Medina college, has put forward some plans to address the current hen house refurbishment programme.



- RESTOCKING THE HEN HOUSE WITH CHICKS -

So far, five hen houses have been restocked at the following schools: Hector Medina and San Juancito colleges as well as Guanacaste, Retiro, Guaymaca primary schools. (A colegio is equivalent to our secondary school and also offers extra studies for those too old to start primary education but who still need to learn to read and write).

Juan Carlos decided that the best course of action for Hector Medina would be to feed the hens and fatten them up, ready for the table, rather than start up egg production. This is a quick process that takes only six weeks.

Firstly, the abandoned hen houses had to be cleaned out and prepared for the chicks with new bedding and freshly washed feeders and drinkers. The chicks need to be kept warm, so the students attached four bulbs to two crossed pieces of wood and suspended them over the young chicks.

In addition to learning how to rear chicks and vaccinate them, the students were also shown how to prepare them for the kitchen.

When fully fattened, the chickens were prepared for eating in the preparation area in the College. This is a very useful skill, as chicken is the main meat eaten in Honduras. (Honduran corn-fed chicken tastes wonderful!)

The chickens are plucked and the insides removed before they are put in plastic bags and frozen.

The prepared chickens were shared with Guanacaste, Retiro and Sabaneta schools. All but the last school have CH Trust hen houses. The others started the chicks off on earlier dates than Hector Medina and are now collecting eggs from them. When they have finished laying, these chickens will also be prepared for the dining room, to be eaten just before the schools finish for the holidays. They will be shared with the other schools, as Hector Medina has done. In this way meat is being reared by the schools and shared by the school dining rooms. The second-hand fridge freezers which the school kitchen ladies fund raised to buy, are now becoming very useful to store the chickens. Protein into the children's diet is very important and even better when it tastes good. A few chickens are also sold in order to buy new stock and feed. I think this is a wonderful system. Well done Honduras!



- TEACHING THE CHILDREN HOW TO PREPARE A CHICKEN -

Writing about the hen houses has just reminded me that Christmas is not far away!

SPONSORSHIP

How can we help next year? Mick has asked me to remind you that the sponsorship is due as we send the money out before Christmas. Unless we hear differently from those of you who sponsor, we will continue to spread your sponsorship money to as many children as possible. That is unless you have requested to focus on a single child. We will also continue with the Education Fund for any donations to



- LEARNING TO CARE FOR THE CHICKENS -

help buy school kits for other children in need. We will not be buying any school uniforms next year, as the government is not demanding that they be mandatory to attend school. In the interim, the government is trying to think of a single inexpensive item that the children could wear to show they belong to a particular school in the area. We will still need to buy shoes for some children walking a long way to school. The mud tracks among the mountains are heavy on footwear. Last year education packs cost £10 each. No doubt the cost of these will have increased for this year, in concert with everything else. This makes them less accessible for the poor, making it even more important for us to continue to supply for yet another year.

WATER

Water is a big problem in Honduras. The water supply from the main reservoirs is insufficient to meet the needs of the country. Parts of the country experience droughts. Many people who have water supplied to their homes only have it supplied for a few hours once a fortnight or even once a month. Even when the country has experienced heavy rainfall, the water supply is still restricted as too much mud is suspended in the reservoir water, which clogs the processing machinery.

Obtaining permission from the Tegra water authority, to install a water tank connected to their water supply in the Valle area, has proved frustrating and



- FRESH WATER SPRING -



- THE NEW WATER TANK -



- THE TANK WILL PROVIDE CLEAN WATER TO A WHOLE VILLAGE SEVEN DAYS A WEEK. CESAR IS ENVIOUS OF THIS SUPER SUPPLY. -

unproductive in the past. However, the mountain areas are blessed with an abundance of fresh water springs.

On the opposite page is a photo of one such spring, which we tapped to fill a 20,000 litre storage tank. At the time of writing, installation has just been completed.

Before the tank arrived a foundation square had to be built to support the weight of the tank when full of water. This must be very strong. The large tank arrived from San Pedro Sula in the north of the country and then had to be loaded onto a lorry to transport it up the mountain to the village of Macuelizo. It was then man handled again, off the lorry and up the incline to the prepared base. This was achieved using the ancient method of moving heavy objects, rolling the tank along the ground on small tree trunk rollers. Once secured, the tank was then fitted with a water pump.

The residents from the villages in the Macuelizo area of Los Corrales, El Torno, and La Pizarra send a big thank you. They now have water supplied to their homes and villages. What a gift! It is difficult to imagine having to carry all of your water over large distances. We take our water supplies for granted! Consider how much water we use in our homes each day.

HOUSES

We have again built 12 houses this year. Each one provides a new start for a poor family who have previously been homeless or struggling to find the rent for a room. When I talk about a person renting, this is usually just one room. It is not a house. The toilet and the pila have to be shared with the owners at times when they do not want to use them. The children are restricted to where they can go and not to make too much noise, as they need to keep hold of that rental property. Finding somewhere to rent is not easy and eviction routine. Even if a family share an overcrowded house with other families, they will still usually have to pay rent.

Can you begin to imagine how it must feel to be gifted a house by CH Trust. Can you also imagine the pressure put on Cesar, who has to choose twelve mothers with children out of hundreds of requests, because we can only fund and build twelve houses in a year. Indeed, this is only achievable if I receive the funding for twelve houses. They are not built out of general funds.

A photo of a 'CH Trust' house cannot begin to demonstrate what it achieves for those who are lucky enough to receive one. I do know that those who have been

blessed with a house in past years have gone on to improve their lives and those of their children. They have moved from an attitude of poverty and depression to hope for a good future. Growing seeds and fruit trees are now an option. Better food and the stability of education are granted to their children. Our children do not like the uncertainties of moving classes and schools as these put them at the risk of loss of school friend support and unwelcome change to their immediate environment. This is the norm for many poor children. We have now been able to provide a more stable environment for many children which continues, with your help, to increase by about thirty each year.

CRAFT ITEMS GUIAMACA

With gifts made in memory we have equipped several Colleges with much needed equipment that will allow them to run craft, sewing and cooking lessons. Cesar searched out the teachers that would make the best use of our gifts.

We have re-equipped the sewing department in the Colegio at San Juancito with new sewing machines, rolls of material and sewing accessories. They are planning to use these resources to make the aprons, PE blouses and trousers that are needed for college. They hope to sell these to the students, so that more material can be purchased.

There are two colleges at Guaimaca, a town which is situated 2 hours 40 minutes from the Valle. Cesar chose them as being suitable to receive some help from



- FINISHED CRAFT ITEMS -

us. One is the Jose de la Rosa Institute of Technology. The other is the Institute of Santa Lucia. Both Institutes have been given sewing materials, from which they can make saleable craft items. Such items, if made at home, can provide an income to those gifted in this craft. We have also provided a refrigerator and cooker plus other items, so that they can restart their domestic science room. Students are taught good hygiene and the ability to prepare and cook the basic foods common to Honduras. This can aid them in seeking employment in homes and restaurants, as well as improving meals at home.



**- LEARNING TO MAKE CRAFT ITEMS WITH THE
PROVIDED SEWING MACHINES -**

The last of our planned hen houses has finally been built at the Guimaca college. They have had to wait some years due to the pandemic. Better late than never.

FOOD BAGS__

As I write this newsletter, I am receiving the first photos of the 4000 basic food bags that have been bought and given out around the Valle, on the edges of Comayaguela and later to the Lenca and Tolupan. At the start of the year, I had hoped that this would be the first time since the pandemic that they would not be needed. However, the war started by Russia has dashed all of those hopes. Food prices have increased with no increase in employment or wages. Our bags of basic foods are desperately needed by so many families. We are concerned about the situation in our own country. It is sobering to realise that in Honduras there is little work and no benefit system. Their only advantage is that they do not suffer

from cold weather. However, the high cost of fuel is putting up the cost of food and other supplies.



- GIVING OUT FOOD BAGS TO GRATEFUL RECIPIENTS -

CHRISTMAS DINNERS

Our next big event in Honduras is the children's Christmas dinner meals. Last year we provided this for hundreds of children attending the schools we support. These special meals will take place in December or January, depending on the schools and the ladies who will plan and cook the meal. They are all given the same budget per child but have freedom to decide how to cook the chicken. Some get it coated with breadcrumbs, deep fry it and served with potato and green salad. Others will make a stew with the chicken and vegetables. No matter how it is served the children will enjoy a good meal with a tortilla, orange or banana, and a charamusca (frozen drink in the plastic bag). I am sure the children are already looking forward to this meal.

HONDURAS EVENING DVD

We held our annual Honduras Evening in September this year, for the first time since the pandemic. For those in my e-mail address book, I have sent information about the YouTube video that we made on the evening. It is a private publication so you can only find it by using the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-wWa2wKbsjk>

I am aware that many of you do not have the ability to view YouTube or can only do it on a small phone screen. As the evening showed lots of lovely photos of the children and projects, I wanted everyone to have the ability to view them at a good size. My son has managed to make a DVD of the evening, which is available to anyone who would like to see it. There is no charge. Please contact me via mail, phone, or e-mail. The contact details are at the beginning of the newsletter.

THE BENEFIT OF FRUIT TREES

From the start of this year's rainy season, the supply of some 2000 fruit trees has been progressing well. The trees have been planted in schools and colleges in the Valle area.

The trees provide three things. Firstly, children are taught how to plant and tend the trees. This in turn extends to the parents who watch and question how the trees are planted and nurtured.

Secondly and very importantly, when mature, the trees will provide fruit for the children to eat in the school dining room, even in times of drought or other adverse weather conditions. Thirdly, they will eventually provide shade from the hot summer sun. I learnt that fruit will be produced after two years and, with some varieties, after only one year. The yield will increase as the trees grow to maturity.



- GIVING OUT FRUIT TREES -



- A SCHOOL RECEIVING FRUIT TREES -



- LEARNING TO PLANT FRUIT TREES -

In Pedrigal, 200 fruit trees were given out by Pastors Felix and Angelica to needy families. This couple run the Pedrigal feeding centre from their church. Although a good growing area, the people living there are very poor.

As Honduras oscillates between drought and too much rain, fruit trees seem to be very resilient and produce each year.



- GROWING VEGETABLES TO EAT AND SELL FROM SEEDS -

VISITING THE TOLUPAN

Cesar has yet to visit the Lenca or Tolupan communities to deliver the food bags. The delay is due to the heavy rains, causing the mud roads to be very dangerous and the river fords to flood. For his next visit, he requested permission to take a carton of drink and a small packet of biscuits for each child. I agreed, as many will have walked a long way and had to wait with their mothers for our convoy of vehicles to arrive. Many will have had nothing to eat that day. Failure to provide the children with this necessary treat will cause great disappointment. In contrast, not many of our children would feel highly privileged to receive just a drink and some biscuits. Although we are living in different worlds it is good to know that we can help to make a big difference to individual lives in Honduras.

A team of people help Cesar on these visits. Several of them will ride the lorry on top of the stacked food bags! They will give out over 1000 bags to the Lenca people and 300 to the Tolupan people. Cesar usually takes a large number of

fruit trees on these trips. Every tree we can provide will help to hold the soil and give fruit for many years. The tree gift card has provided a tree for so many people in Honduras. At about £2 per tree, it is a great investment into the future.

Whilst waiting for the weather to improve, the team have been delivering just under 2000 food bags to the small villages around the Valle. Felix and Angelica have been giving out 300 food bags in the Pedrigal area and Luis 1000 food bags to the villages on the outskirts of the capital. The food bags contain basic foods such as tortilla flour, rice, red beans, spaghetti, stock cubes and sachets of coffee. The bags cost us about £10 each but would retail at £13. We get a fantastic deal from the lady at the wholesalers who helps all she can.

The prices of food and fuel have increased sharply in Honduras, as they have around the world. There is little available work and so the poor become extremely poor and malnutrition becomes the norm for children and adults. These bags of food mean so much to so many people. It is difficult to imagine their situations. The bags have cost CH Trust a lot of money but Cesar would not have requested them unless he felt they were essential. He makes every penny count.

In 2020 we provided the materials and plans for the Lenca community to build a large water tank holding 20,000 litres of water. This was such a gift to the people who live in the drought corridor which often destroys their crops through lack



- DISTRIBUTING AID TO THE TOLUPAN -

of rain. The Lenca people live exclusively off the land. This tank supplied water to five different communities of Lajas, Yarula, Cipre, Tierra and Colorada. Other Lenca communities watched as the tank was built and saw water flowing into the tanks and nearby homes. I am sure you can guess what I am going to write next. Other nearby communities are asking if they may have a water tank as it improves so many lives and gives them the opportunity to plant small crops even when there is a drought. More people have moved to live and farm near the water tank that we provided.

A water tank will cost about £12,000. If the funds can be raised, the exact cost will be provided nearer the time. I cannot build this out of donations given for the children's food and education. It must be funded from designated gifts. Is this a project that you would like to contribute towards funding? It would provide a long-term improvement in the lives of many families and give them the opportunity to grow crops to support themselves. Most of these people, adults and children, suffer from malnutrition due to lack of food. An estimated 1.5 million Hondurans face hunger at some point each year due the regular, prolonged droughts which affect the food and nutritional security of the most vulnerable communities such as the Lencas.

We try and provide for immediate needs but equally important are long term improvements to education, such as equipping the college cooking and sewing workshops and providing mini libraries. The photocopiers we supplied also proved to be so important to the primary schools during lockdown. Over the years, we have now provided several thousand weather resistant fruit trees to families and schools which will provide fruit to eat and sell. Houses and water tanks are also long-term investments into Honduras.

A MOMENT OF REMINISCENCE

This year, the work in Honduras celebrates its fiftieth anniversary. In the beginning, I became aware of and started to support an orphanage in Honduras. Initially, as an individual, I began by sending out two-pound weight parcels. The work has since grown, progressively, to include a team and many supporters providing the capability and capacity to help thousands of Honduran children and families through those years.

This year seems to have disappeared while I was not watching, so I plan to celebrate our 50 years next year! I will tell you about it in the spring newsletter.

Hot News

While completing this newsletter, we have just been informed that Cesar and his team have managed to arrange a visit to Yarula, home to the Lenca's. They have been ready to make this trip for some time but the heavy rains made the mud roads too dangerous.

Cesar wrote:-

"I want to inform you that we have confirmed the visit to Yarula through its mayor, Bayron Rodriguez, and each of its councillors. They are waiting with great desire and happiness for this great help, which we know is a great blessing."

Cesar, Ada, Jorge, Santos, Adam and Juan Carlos will go on this trip. We will leave at four in the morning (4:00 am) on Friday, arriving in YARULA at 10:00 am in the morning, where one thousand (1000) families, as normal, will be waiting, especially mothers and children of LENCA origin."

Many mums and little ones will have walked a long way to receive these gifts of food and seeds. The aid is only given to the ladies, as it is impossible to know which men belong to which women or which teenager belongs to which family. We can only afford one bag of food per family.

They will take:-

- 1000 bags of food
- 300 fruit trees
- 300 children's cookies (small individual packets which will be eaten straight away, as the majority of children will have had nothing to eat as there is no food in the home).
- 300 juices for children (The juices will also be consumed before going home).
- 2 milk cartons with 24 units each total 48 bags. (These are given to mums with older babies and toddlers).
- Vegetable seeds for sowing chili, tomato, carrot, coriander radish, onion, and cucumber. (These are saleable crops).

CHRISTMAS WISHES

In spite of the challenging national and international situations, can I please take this opportunity to wish everyone a happy and blessed time over Christmas and improving prospects for 2023. God Bless you all.

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:

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

I have enclosed £ _____

GIFT CARDS

I have kept the gift cards at £5 even though, as you have read, this amount does not cover the cost of a complete food bag. We are however getting two and a half trees for five pounds. The card entitled ‘invest in a child’ will be used to buy essential items needed for a child to access education. A ‘Christmas dinner/ party’ card will pay for food for three children. We have a new card, which will provide money to buy food for the four feeding centres that we supply.

CARD LIST

Food for a family in need	Invest in a Child (education)
Fruit Trees	Children’s Christmas/Party Dinner
Seeds	Food for a feeding centre

ADMIN

GIFT AID

If we hold a declaration to claim Gift Aid from you and you are now unable to Gift Aid your donation, because you not paying enough tax, please let us know.

AMAZON SMILE

During the last three months another £29.89 has been raised by those of you who put smile before their Amazon order. It is very easy, with no registration details or lots of forms to fill in, you just choose which charity you would like to support. We are on the list.



- FOOD BAGS READY TO BE DISTRIBUTED IN YARULA -

EMAIL DELIVERY PROBLEMS

We've been experiencing some problems with emails not being delivered. If you've not received an email from us recently and you usually do, please get in touch, the email may have got lost in the post. Please see our website for more tips on making sure you receive our emails. <http://chtrust.org.uk/email>

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	<input type="checkbox"/>
Back dated for the last four years	<input type="checkbox"/>
For the future	<input type="checkbox"/>

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.
