

RISING COSTS

2023 has proved a challenging year in Honduras, as it has for many people here at home. In the past Cesar would send me a list of projects, with prices, that he would like to tackle during the year. Until recently, prices were stable and estimated costs representative for a period of several months. This year it has not been possible to predict the cost of anything upfront of the final bill arriving, as prices were going up daily. Food, wood, building materials and, of course, transport fuel. When speaking to a group yesterday I could not quote any prices for the things we buy, as I have done in the past, because as I was unsure of the current prices and what they might be by the end of the week. The impact of the escalating prices is that all our financial reserves have been consumed. Cesar and myself now have to tread very carefully to fulfil the essential needs that we prioritise. That is to say, food and education, for the children.

In this circumstance, you may think why are we still building houses, water tanks, etc. Let me explain. We have two sections to our funding; general donations and projects.



- A SPECIAL MEAL AT CHRISTMAS -

Donations that are given to the general fund are used to service the priority and greatest needs. This includes the money we spend on food and education to meet immediate needs and are always ongoing.

We also have funds that come in to be used specifically for, say, a water tank, to buy trees, chickens or build a toilet and septic tank for a family. These monies, by law, must be used on the projects for which they have been given. They are usually longer-term projects, which help communities and families to prosper, enabling many to be in a better position to feed their families and give their children an education and last well into the future.

So, both types of funding are very important.

COMMUNITY WATER TANKS

One such long term project is the provision of another water tank. We built the first in 2021, for villages within the Lenca community at Yarula. This tank has proved life changing to the community. The district is now a most wanted area to live, as water is available for irrigating their small crops in this drought prone region of the country. The ladies are also very happy, as many now enjoy water, on tap, to their homes. The tank supplies water to nearly 10,000 people on a daily basis. What a blessing!

At the end of 2022, I suggested building another water tank but needed specific funding. The response showed that it was something that touched the hearts of many. The result is that a second tank is almost completed, a third tank is being built, with plans for a fourth tank to be built late in 2024. Thank you. We cannot fully appreciate what a gift this is to so many people. Water to drink and water for the crops they need to feed themselves.

Cesar, in blue, at the far side and Santos our builder in orange, are inspecting progress on the second water tank. It is now ready for the lid to be made. As you can see it is very large and has taken a lot of man/woman hours to get to this stage. It will hold 20,000 litres of water. This will be completed as the hotter summer weather approaches and only spring water will be available. Unlike the first tank, which received water from a local reservoir, this tank will be supplied by a local spring some four kilometres away. The tank is built on top of a rock as this is the most stable land to support what will be a very heavy tank. Land movement could cause a leak.



- CESAR AND SANTOS INSPECTING THE WATER TANK -

THE FRUIT OF OUR LABOURS__

Just as we have good and better years for our fruit tree harvest, the same happens in Honduras. This year they have been blessed with abundant fruit from their trees. Luis writes that the fruit trees we planted some years ago have provided so much fruit that they are sharing the produce with neighbouring schools as well as supplying the college dining room that we provision.



- TREES BEARING FRUIT -

The other harvests have also done well. Pastor Felix has produced enough beans to provide for his family needs, for the feeding centre he runs for us and some to give to the community in the village. We continue to give fruit trees to the schools and colleges as they give a large return for the money and a fruit supply for many years into the future. We also give individual trees to families but getting photos back for these is very difficult.

Even this very young tree that we have given to a family is bearing fruit, two oranges.



Over the last five years we have given out large numbers of fruit trees, of various varieties, to the Lenca and Tolupan people. These native tribes are some of the poorest people in Honduras, who live off the land. Many of the Lenca people live in a drought corridor which stretches through several of the Latin American countries. In some years this results in loss of crops due to lack of rain. Trees, however, seem to be better able to withstand many of the climate's rain cycles. The provision of a water supply via the tanks we are building allows small crops to be grown even in drought conditions.

At the time of writing Cesar was planning more fruit tree to be planted in the schools and as part of his annual trip to the Lenca people, where he will also give out fruit trees. Cesar is often involved in the planting of the trees in the Valle schools, as the children are too young and the ground too hard for the children to achieve this task by themselves.

CHANGE OF DIRECTION FOR OUR HOUSE BUILDING

This year we have built seven houses in the Valle area.

I try not to alter the price each year as this can be confusing. Sadly, I have reached the point where the price has to increase. Honduras has been experiencing a dramatic increase in building costs, as in much of the world. The result is that even with savings, a house now costs £5000 to build. This problem has partly been aggravated by the fact that we have increasingly had to use our labour, as well as that supplied by the family, to ensure completion of the house.

Even though Cesar had made all the savings that he could on the build, I felt most potential donors would be put off by the new price. After a long discussion with him we came up with a new plan.

THE NEW PLAN

With the success of the water tank built in Yarula for the Lenca's, Cesar now has confidence in the network needed to build in Yarula. Initially this was difficult, as it is about a seven-hour drive away and he was not in a position to personally supervise the work in the same way he has done in the Valle area.

The plan is to move the focus of the building activity to the Lenca region. We will still have to increase the price to £2,500 so this is what will be offered. The price will still not completely cover the cost of materials, but the mayor is willing to supply some materials. There will be no labour costs as this will all be supplied by the people in the community, who are used to working and farming together.

Many of the Lenca homes are made of bits of wood and metal sheet, some with palm type leaves for roofing. The need is great, and it would be good to build some houses here.

WEAR AND TEAR!

These children have been eating the meal that we provide at this feeding centre on the north coast. They do not have tables because the ones that we sent out



- CHILDREN AT THE FEEDING CENTRE -

many years ago in the containers are no longer usable. The tables had metal legs but wooden tops. Although stored under cover but not indoors, the weather has rotted the wood. This year we have given the funding to buy new wood, varnish, and paint in order to make these tables usable again.

Cesar asked if we could buy paint to redecorate Jenny Smith school. The weather and many hands had taken their toll. We already had money set aside, designated for this purpose. The main paintwork has been completed but the murals will be touched up during their long summer break that stretches from the end of November to the beginning of February. The painters were not looking for extra help from the children!



- A NEW COAT OF PAINT FOR JENNY SMITH SCHOOL -

LENCA VISIT__

This year we have not had the funds to provide a bag of basic foods for families in the villages around the Valle and some poor areas on the edge of the capital. Cesar did say that he wanted, if at all possible, to take food bags to the Lenca and Tolupan people. He wanted to achieve this, as these people have to live off what they can grow. Sadly, the majority of adults and children suffer from malnutrition. They have little opportunity to earn extra money. I saved all the money that came in so that this trip could be made. Cesar and his team of volunteers took 1000 food bags on the long trip to Yarula. This cost £10,000 just for the food bags. He also took juice and a small packet of biscuits for the children who often walk a long way with their mothers. Most will have had nothing to eat.

The food bags were collected from the city on the previous day. This year the food was being carried in what is known as a fruit lorry. It has a tarpaulin sheet for the roof and slits in the side to allow for air to circulate.

REPAIRING THE ROAD

Each year Cesar manages to borrow the use of a suitable lorry to carry the food and team on the long journey. This gives you an idea of how Cesar and the work he does for CH Trust is viewed by local people. The weight of the lorry full of food bags resulted in it sinking in thick mud on the road.



- LOCALS WITH THEIR DIGGING TOOLS -

The local people turned out with whatever tools they had, to dig small ditches to re-channel the water to the side and throw stones into the centre of the road, so that the lorry had solid ground for its wheels to gain traction upon. With the help of ropes, that they brought with them, they managed to get the lorry free. This added an extra half hour onto their trip. The helpers were all rewarded with a bag of food to take home. This is another reason why you do not go on these trips with one vehicle. A second vehicle is always helpful to provide rescue options! Cesar also had to change a tyre on his vehicle before they could leave. In Honduras, you will always see a spare tyre in the back of their vehicles. It could take a day to walk to the nearest garage!



- REPAIRING THE ROAD -

Thank you, Cesar, and all who help. You will see the English flag in many of the photos, as Cesar wants to show that CH trust is providing this help, not the government who would like to take credit.

EDUCATIONAL SPONSORSHIP NEWS

This year, managing sponsorship has proved difficult for us here in England, as children have disappeared from school and e-mailing out to some donor addresses has proved problematic. Having said that, in Honduras it has been a tremendous success. Some of the stories we hear can bring tears to your eyes. The number of people sponsoring a child has decreased over the year, through death and the economic crisis. As another option, we have opened an education account for those who wish to contribute but do not want to be part of the sponsorship scheme, or want to make a one off payment. The economic situation in Honduras is pretty dire, so we want to continue to provide education kits for as many children as possible. These allow a child to access education. The kits contain the exercise books needed for classwork and homework, together with pens, pencils, crayons, glue and scissors. The older children also need geometry sets. Without these basic items a child cannot attend school. The people buying these school items used to buy them from the educational shops, when they were running offers. Now they buy from the markets, where items are cheaper and they can get a discount for bulk buying. So, they are doing all they can to make our money stretch further. CH Trust also needs more money to send. The government are thinking of mandating that the children wear school uniform again. Please pray that this does not happen, as so many parents can barely even provide the exercise books. So many in government have no understanding of how poor people live even though a large proportion of the people of Honduras are poor. We continue to need to provide shoes for many children, so that they can walk to school.

Let us move from the rather depressing news to the delight of what the children are experiencing. We are supplying children in over twenty schools, ranging from San Pedro Sula, Choloma and Coca on the north coast, Valle area, Tegucigalpa and Comayaguela in the centre of the country.



This little girl is called Nadia, who I believe to be aged nine.

She is a fatherless girl, only living with her mother and siblings. The siblings do not study because the mother does not have the funds or work to support them.

This girl decided at an early age to work in a nursery, taking care of plants. The money she has earned has enabled her to buy her own school supplies. When we offered to help with her school supplies, she started crying. Then she said she would keep working to help her other sister to be able to go to school.

From Guanacaste, Valley of Angeles Teacher
To Mrs. Jennifer Cox and friends from England

I am writing to you once again to express my affection and at the same time tell you a little about my life. A few years ago, I received financial support from CH Trust for my service to the community as a volunteer in the special educational program. We managed to take 13 young people to the third cycle (O Level) and now several of them managed to finish high school. Life here is not easy, especially in terms of employment.

Thanks to the financial help that you sent me through Cesar, I was able to finish my university degree. Now I am a secondary education teacher. I am working in an institute in the municipality of Guaimaca, which has many needs. CH Trust has helped with a hen house, sewing items, and equipping a domestic science room. This has greatly impacted the population of the municipality of Guaimaca Colegio. The enrolment of our institute is growing. We have a total of 635 students.

Thank God I have my job, although I have to travel far from my family each week. I travel three hours by bus on Mondays and return on Fridays to work on homework with my oldest daughter, who is in third grade. I'm making every effort to be able to pay for her to attend an English-speaking school since she likes the language. I have a beautiful family, two girls and I am waiting for a boy (Dana, Sofia, Alessandro). They are my reason to continue fighting for a permanent position here near Guanacaste and thus be closer to them.

I will always be grateful to CH Trust and I wish that God multiply blessings towards you all, so that you can continue supporting the educational centres here in our country Honduras, that needs it so much.

A strong hug across the distance. Ana Cecilia Ponce and my lovely family.

My husband: Josue and children Dana, Ana Sofia and Baby Alessandro.

HELP TO IMPROVE SANITATION__

A request for toilets and septic tanks for individual families was received during the year. These are important but expensive items to provide. In rural locations, without sewers and mains drainage to connect to, a toilet is no use without a large septic tank. This requires a deep hole to be dug by the family and friends. This is then checked by the local building inspector, who is a lady, to make sure that it meets the requirements. This then has to be lined with blocks and a roof fitted with a tube to allow gases to escape. The toilet is a small block building with a metal roof and a conventional toilet fitted. There may not be a water supply to the toilet as they use a large amount of water. The more normal way is for a small barrel of water to be placed by the toilet with a small plastic bowl floating on the surface. This you use to flush the pan of the toilet after use. Septic tanks are very expensive to empty, so no paper ever goes down the toilet, even in better homes, or even the hotels or airport facilities. This means it takes longer for the septic tank to fill.



- INSPECTING THE SEPTIC TANK -



- MAKING THE LID -

This is the family who received our first toilet and septic tank. The mortar between the blocks has not yet dried. A door or a curtain may be fitted for privacy. The total cost of the toilet and septic tank is nearly £800.



- FAMILY RECEIVING THE FIRST TOILET AND SEPTIC TANK -

CHRISTMAS APPROACHES!__

The next two calls on our money will be the school Christmas parties and education sponsorship and support.

Parties are always important to children, but these parties are extra special as they come in the middle of their long summer holiday from school. Because the

children are at home, there are more mouths for parents to feed each day. Food is often very scarce at home, especially at the end of the month when the rent is due. So, the parties provide an extra much needed high-quality meal.

Each school or centre is given the same budget per child. However, the ladies in the kitchens have the choice of how the chicken is cooked and garnished. Some cook it with vegetables in a stew type meal, others cook the chicken and serve it with potato salad or green salad. Those with other contacts may have the chicken coated and deep fried. Whatever the choice, it will be a good meal. Rice and tortilla are standard in the Valle area schools. All have a fruit drink and usually a piece of fruit. No food is wasted and any not eaten will be taken home.

These parties are open to the children in the village not just those attending the school. It also includes the very young children, who the mums will bring with them, so they can share in the food provided. When all of the schools have had their parties, over 1000 children in 12 communities will have had a CH Trust dinner. Another 500 will be fed through the feeding centres. This will cost us about £2000.

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF SENDING TO HONDURAS

In the last newsletter I told you that I was celebrating 50 years since I founded CH Trust, previously known as Valle of Angels. This was the start of the work to send aid to children in Honduras. To celebrate, I organised an afternoon tea including the showing of slides charting our history. 108 people came and we raised £1200 towards providing a district children's library, located in one of the Valle schools. Most of the money was used to improve the structure of the large room provided, including lighting and mending of the roof.

The library is very, very popular with primary and college students. It is also a good place to do homework. Many homes do not have a table to work on and can consist of one crowded room for one or more families. This library must feel like heaven. The library is staffed by the head and teachers on a voluntary basis. Each class has an allotted time in the library during the school week. The library is open on a Saturday morning for anyone in the community to use. It is so popular that they are thinking of opening the library on Friday and Saturday afternoons. A great success. Thank you everyone who helped make this happen.



- CHILDREN USING THE NEW LIBRARY ROOM -

MORE FEEDBACK FROM SPONSORED CHILDREN AT PEDRIGAL__

Pastor Felix, at Pedrigal, and Angelica his wife decided to buy rucksacks for the children to carry their new school items to school each day. Many walk long distances and need to keep their books dry in the rainy season. There was no supply of carrier bags available.

A letter from a student.

Dear friends in England. It is a pleasure to be able to write to you and I hope that God fills your life and the lives of your family with abundant blessings.

I am happy to tell you that thanks to God I passed all my subjects in college. It was rather difficult for me because I had to travel in to college every day and I have to find someone to give me a lift. Sometimes I arrive very late as I cannot find any transport to get me there. It is the same when I have to go home and I get back late. All this makes it difficult to complete the work required. I live with my sister and her family because my mum died a long time ago and my dad abandoned me. I have had difficult times because of this, but I pray to God that He will guide me along the right path. Your support has been a great blessing in my life and also in the lives of other children in the school and in the village. I am attending church and have joined the youth group, which is also a blessing in my life.

Many thanks for the help you have given me. I hope that the Lord Jesus Christ pours his many blessings on your family and keeps you and protects you always.

Another story from the Pedrigal Church:

Their mother left the country to try to find work. It all went wrong and she returned. Mother died and father, who could not find work, left the family of five children. The seventeen-year-old would like to go to university but she has to work to feed her brothers and sisters. They all attend our dining room for a meal. They walk a long way to school as they cannot afford transport. Her brother often arrives home late as he has to thumb a lift from passing vehicles. His sister helps him with his homework. They all attend church.

You are giving these children an opportunity to access education, which many would not be able to do without our help. It gives them and their families hope for a better future.

A big thank you and may God bless you as you have blessed these children in so much need in Honduras.

My name is Seidy Fernanda Izaguirre.

I am pleased to be able to write to you and tell you a little about my life and my daily activities.

I am 9 years old and I am in 4th grade and getting to school each day is very difficult as it is a long way from our home. It is a two hour walk every day as the nearest school to the village of Las Playas is Abogada Ana Garcia de Hernandez. There are five of us in my family. My father, Santos, and my mum, Kenia, and my brother and sister Alejandro and Dallesy. We are so grateful to you for the help you have given our family and especially to me as my shoes are so good for walking over the rocks and streams going to and from home. The situation here in Honduras is very difficult as there is no work to be had. My dad works on the land for very little and my mum has no work as there are no job opportunities. Life is hard as we do not have electric light where we live nor any transport to get around. When we are ill we have to walk to the nearest road to get to the hospital. Despite all this. I do want to make progress and finish school and go on to university.

When I grow up, I would like to be a person with qualifications and become an engineer. I would also like to be a ballerina and be able to help improve things for my parents, so they can have a better quality of life.

I say goodbye to you, feeling very happy and grateful for the support you have given

us and I pray that God may bless you and keep you.

DALLESY

She is 4 years old and is in 2nd year of nursery school, so she cannot write at her young age.

It is a long journey to and from school each day which is hard as it takes 2 hours with the nearest school being the Abogado Ana Garcia education centre.

As a mother I feel very grateful to you and I want to thank you for the support you give our daughter. It is of so much benefit to us and we can buy her good shoes to do all the walking to her classes each day. Despite the circumstances, which mean you can see the tiredness in her face, Dallesy gets up very early to get to school. She doesn't have any clear goals but she says she would like to be a teacher and follow that career. We say goodbye with gratitude for your help and pray to God for you as you have a generous heart and dedicate yourselves to people in need.

DUNIA

My name is Dunia Yolibeth Ferrera Salgado. I am 9 years old and live in Las Playas, Valle de Angeles. I am in 3rd grade. We are 4 in our family with my mum and dad and sister. The journey to my school is an hour and a half as the nearest school is the Abogada Ana Garcia de Hernandez education centre. It is sometimes very hard as I get tired but despite this I want to carry on and make my way towards what I want to do. My dad works in agriculture and my mum doesn't work as it is difficult with very few opportunities in our area. I want to make progress and help my family so we can have a better life.

Thank you my friends in CHTrust in England for all the help you give to each one of us in need. Your support is such a blessing for me and I have the shoes I need to make the daily walk to school. Not achieving my dreams would be more pain to me than any suffering now.

SUSAN

There is so much poverty in the country where I live and many young people are not able to finish their studies due to lack of funds because their parents do not have any employment.

Saydi, 13 says that it is the sponsorship which has meant she can continue her studies and it is a great blessing.

TWO NEW HEN HOUSES

Parents of the children attending two small rural primary schools have managed to build hen houses on the school land at Buena Vista and Liquidumbar. These have been stocked with hens by donations from a new, young supporter in England. The children will learn how to care for the hens and collect the eggs. The eggs will be eaten by the children in the dining room. Also, the chickens, when they have stopped laying.

LOOKING FORWARD

None of us know what 2024 will hold but we will continue to make it as good a year as possible for the children we are able to help in Honduras. A third water tank will be built along with houses for the Lenca community. We hope to provide the essentials for children to attend school, as well as celebrating with a Christmas party dinner. We will continue to supply food to our core schools, as well as the monthly donations to our feeding centres.

These plans only came to fruition because of your continuing giving to CH Trust. Similarly, our plans for 2024 can only be realised from your donations. I hope that you like what you have helped to achieve during 2023 and share my vision for the future. A big, big thank you! As the children in Honduras would say, we send you a big hug.

We hope you have a blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year, with good health.

Jenn and everyone at CH Trust.



- HENS AT LIQUIDUMBAR SCHOOL -



- ANNA CECILLIA PONCE (SPONSORSHIP RECIPIENT) -

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 books for children to read in school.

CARD LIST

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

ADMIN

GIFT AID

The Inland Revenue has a scheme called Gift Aid where, if you are a UK taxpayer, CH Trust can claim back 25% on top of the value of your donations/giving. If that’s you, it would be great if you would complete the Gift Aid details on the back page of this newsletter. We will do the rest. Please remember to tell us if you drop out of paying tax.

BANK DETAILS

To (Bank) Name: HSBC	Sort Code: 40-19-37
Account No: 61589865	Account Name: CH TRUST



- CHRISTMAS PARTY -

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.
