

ColombiaCare Progress Report - #14– November 2008

ColombiaCare supporters,

The following is the fourteenth ColombiaCare report to its donors and other interested parties. Again, we want to thank you all for your support. With this report and future ones, we want to assure you that your generosity is making a difference!

If you missed a report and/or would like to see the previous reports, you can find them on our home page <http://www.colombiacare.org/>

Projects

This year we were fortunate to continue with several projects we started in previous years. As we mentioned in the previous report, we obtained continuation grants for the Vocational and Home work Clinics projects. These have been very successful.

Vocational Project. This project provides training in two different areas, Carpentry and Welding and Sewing. The target population is composed of young people between the ages of 15 and 20 years old. The third and final group for this training will graduate on December 13, 2008. One of the interesting happenings with the current training is the lower desertion compared to previous years. Two factors contributing to reducing the desertion rate are the improvement in the selection of the candidates as well as training improvement based on feedback from previous participants. As part of the program we are also providing the participants with support to find a job, start their own business or be part of what we call “Productive Units”. Participants in this last group are allowed to use the facilities and the equipment. They collaborate in projects and we provide support in marketing and sale of their products. For instance, we produced a brochure displaying some of the furniture made within the “Units”.



We are also finding more success in the participants' occupation after the training. For example, for the first group that finished the program this year, all but two have found a job, started their own business or participate in the Productive Units. That is, a total of 36 people out of 38 have found an occupation after the training. In addition, the facilities and equipment are been used 100% of the time, whether by our training, other organizations' training or former participants with their business or the Productive Units. That is, we are taking the most advantage of these assets.



HomeWork Clinics. As mentioned in previous reports, this continues to be our “star” project in the community. As a reminder, we have this project in two community centers, which were repaired and conditioned for this program. The program is now impacting 338 children and more than 50 women that participate in various activities working with the children or personal development. The project provides children help with their homework, access to a library, re-enforcement of academic areas in which they need help, arts and crafts, music and dance, and play.



During last summer, as part of the summer camp activities in the Homework Clinics project, we started to improve the surrounding area where one of the local schools is located. These activities included cleaning the area, building outdoor games with old tires, a garden, preventing erosion of the terrain etc. Now with the help of the community and as part of another project we have in the



area, we are making of this beautiful but unfortunately abused area an ecological park where the children can not only play safely but also learn team and community work and protection of the environment.

Since this is an “squatters” area, there is not regulation or planning for disposal of the sweage. Also, the terrain in the back of the school slopes down to a small river. Unfortunately, since this has also been the play ground for the children, the erosion is abysmal. Last year as part of another project we built a retention wall that has helped in controlling the erosion. Now with these activities we hope to be able to recuperate the area.



The enthusiasm of the children is touching. They feel very proud of their efforts and of what they have accomplished.

Difficult times ahead of us

Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, we won't be able to continue with our current grant donors. This will have a mayor impact on the grant-funded projects, Vocational training and Homework Clinics. For 2009 we will be dependant on individual donations and events to obtain our funding. We will continue to seek for other grants but this is very difficult and more so now with the global financial crisis. Again, as in the past, if you can help to open doors for us obtaining grants we would appreciate it very much.

We want to remind you that if you need a proof of donations for your tax returns, please let us know by responding to this e-mail with an address indicating where you would like the certificate to be sent. The IRS only requires a certificate for donations of more than \$250. However, if you prefer to have one for your records, let us know. You can also use, as appropriate, our Employer Identification Number (EIN): 20-0076096 for your tax documents. As we said in the previous report, it is your generosity that re-energizes us and maintains our dream to improve the chances for a better future for some Colombian children. We have seen concrete results and we all should share the pride of our positive impact.

If you don't want to continue to receive our reports, please respond to this e-mail.

ColombiaCare Board of Directors