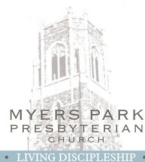




STRENGTHENING THE GETSEMANÍ COMMUNITY



Thrivent
Builds



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Strengthening the Getsemaní Community is a holistic development project that aims to improve the living conditions of families in Getsemaní and surrounding communities. Habitat for Humanity El Salvador is implementing this project in collaboration with community leaders and numerous national and international partners. During the first phase of this project (2010-2012), we built 132 homes! We also made great strides in other areas of community development. Based on a prioritization of ongoing community needs, we have committed to implementing a second phase in order to expand our impact in housing and deepen our work in leadership, health, income generation and education.



Leadership



Ana María Montoya, our Santa Ana Regional Office manager, speaks at the general assembly.

In January, the Getsemaní Board of Directors prepared their 2014 ADESCO work plan, which includes the ongoing canton-wide disaster risk management project. To continue the momentum, community leaders have started meeting with Ahuachapán Civil Protection to plan the next steps needed in establishing a Community Civil Protection Committee. (The national government's Civil Protection agency works with communities across the country to organize their own local response teams, such that they are prepared to take action in the event of an emergency.)

On March 1st, members of 60 families attended Getsemaní's annual general assembly meeting. In addition to providing general project updates and introducing new board members, the ADESCO held an election and selected 15 residents to participate in their newly-established Community Civil Protection Committee. In the coming months, they will receive disaster response training from Civil Protection.

Health



Norma Uto has faithfully taken her baby Ezequiel to the growth monitoring workshops.

Under the leadership of local physician Dr. Edgar Landaverde, we continued offering monthly medical consultations in February and March, attending to a total of 75 patient visits. We also hosted another growth monitoring workshop.

We also took exciting steps as we transition from periodic doctor visits to the establishment of a community-run "Casa de Salud" (health center). Myers Park Presbyterian Church has hired Dr. Landaverde to serve as a part-time medical director for the Getsemaní health center, which means that he will monitor the residents' health using a community mapping technique, attend to patients twice a month (and maintain their health records) and help train the Getsemaní Health Committee.

Dr. Landaverde has been working closely with committee members as they define the guidelines for the health center's long-term administration.

Income Generation

Community entrepreneurs had additional opportunities to participate in cultural exchanges with other organizations. In January, a group of ten women attended a workshop led by USAID and Vital Voices entitled "Female Entrepreneurs Winning in the Game of Business."

In February, several of Getsemaní's entrepreneurial youth met with another group of young entrepreneurs to share best practices regarding their organizational and leadership experience.

INSAFOCOOP continued to provide the Getsemaní Cooperative with ongoing support. In March, an auditor met with cooperative leaders to review their accounting and administrative practices.



First United Methodist Church (FUMC) generously donated two sewing machines to the sewing initiative. In this photo, a GV team from HFH of Dane County (also located in Madison, WI) helps deliver one of FUMC's machines.

Education

On January 15th, we held a general interest meeting to share the results of the 2013 scholarship program, as well as explain the enrollment process for 2014. General interest turned into action as a total of 16 young people began participating, with studies ranging from computer skills (6) and English (7) to nursing (2) and culinary studies (1). One scholarship student, Douglas Rivas, serves as a role model for other youth, demonstrating how these opportunities can create greater access to employment. He completed his English language studies at a nearby institute by passing the "Talk 6" course in March. Habitat El Salvador has hired him as a translator for international teams volunteering in Getsemaní.

A second scholarship student is working in the community too. Consuelo Hernández, who is studying nursing, continued to teach at the *escuelita*, which began yet another school year in February. The 20 children who enrolled have been enhancing their reading/writing, socializing, and motor skills. Occasionally international volunteers would take a break from the job site to help facilitate morning readings and various activities with the little ones.

The ADESCO previously ran the *escuelita* in the community center, but the teacher often had to reorganize the day's schedule in order to accommodate other programs that required use of the facilities. In March, with the parents' consent and the collaboration of the Rumaldo family, the early childhood education program was relocated to a house in the community, where it will have its own designated space.



Consuelo Hernandez leads activities with children in the *escuelita*.

Housing

We completed construction on two homes, bringing our total in Phase II to 34! We also began construction on two more!

A total of **155** international volunteers and **58** national volunteers joined us on the construction site.

Thrivent Builds Worldwide Teams

- Steven Ridenhour
- Loretta Anderson
- Scott Hermann
- Christ Lutheran Church
- Steve Reetz

Global Village Teams

- University of Madison-Wisconsin
- Charlotte Latin School
- First United Methodist Church
- Babson College
- HFH of Dane County
- Steele Creek Presbyterian Church

National Teams

- Getsemaní Youth
- Programa Oportunidades
- Women of Ahuachapán
- ESEN



Pastor Steven Ridenhour blesses the home of the Nájera family.

For more information, please contact:

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