

OVERVIEW OF Mexico

Overview of Mexico



Language Spanish

Under-five Mortality Rate: 16 per 1,000 live births. Mexico ranks 107 in the world.

Illiterate population: 6.9 Million

Human Development Index (HDI) for 2012: 0.775 (ranked 61 out of 187, indicating high human development).

21.2 Million: Population with limited access to food of which 44.8% are children, 0-15 years old

Brief History of ChildFund in Mexico

ChildFund came to Mexico: 1948

Number of states/districts etc.: 31 states & 1 federal district—ChildFund programs in 7 states

Number of enrolled children (FY13): 25,344

Number of participants (FY13): 99,212

In the late 1940's ChildFund came to Mexico to work with low income children, and became fully established as an organization in 1973. During the 1980's our local partners, most of them community based organizations, were recognized as either a Civil Association or a Private Assistance Institution, all of them led by parents of enrolled children. After 40 years of work, ChildFund Mexico has been leveraging best practices, strategies on the field, talking to experts in community and child development and taking into account the perspectives of employees and donors, to best reach the most vulnerable children. Nowadays, ChildFund Mexico supports children, families and communities in the most impoverished areas through a local and international sponsorship program, and strong alliances with the private sector.

Brief Program Overview



ChildFund interventions reach children, families and communities through 39 local partners in the states of Chiapas, Hidalgo, México, Michoacán, Oaxaca, Puebla and Veracruz and are based on the following eight programmatic areas:

- **Early Stimulation:** Promotes developmental stimulation in language, motor and sensory skills, and cognitive and socio-emotional advancement.
- **Nutrition Program:** Encourages vulnerable children and their families to maintain a healthy diet in order to avoid malnutrition and its associated health problems.
- **Child Protection:** Protects children from physical and mental violence, abuse, and exploitation, especially sexual abuse.
- **Development of mental skills:** Equipping children with analytical, problem solving and decision making skills.
- **Technology literacy:** Through a fresh and progressive teaching model, children and youth acquire new skills in literacy, critical thinking and teamwork.
- **“Reading to transform” program:** Develops cognitive skills to help lessen problems caused by educational gaps.
- **Productive projects:** Promote self-employment initiatives through specific training to equip youth to fit in, in their communities and generate income.
- **Reproductive Health:** Through a friendly approach, help youth fully exercise their sexual rights in a safe and responsible manner.



2013 Program Achievements

Healthy and secure infants

Early Stimulation: During FY13, we worked with mothers to strengthen the affective bond between them and their children, from pregnancy to the time their child becomes 6 months old. The activities aim to generate positive relations that help infants develop and maximize their skills and capabilities while preventing them from experiencing violence and toxic stress.

Local Capacity Building: We trained 228 local promoters and renovated 17 centers, benefitting 3,061 infants.

Program Quality: ChildFund developed a formal certification model for local promoters.

Health care promotion: During FY13, we monitored the nutritional and health status of children on a regular basis and conducted nutritional orientations for pregnant women and mothers with children younger than 6 years old. Cases of children with health and/or nutrition risk factors were identified and received special attention.

Educated and confident children

Technology literacy: 1,780 girls and boys received training on how to use and apply technical knowledge to develop skills in critical thinking and team work.

Development of mental skills: 1,214 girls and boys developed 91 projects on topics according to their interests. These projects were presented publicly to parents and local authorities.

Communitarian Radio: Through a local radio station in the province of Hidalgo, 51 radio programs were developed by children, according to their interests and broadcasted.

Reading to transform: 1,596 girls and boys across the three life states have developed and maximized skills, such as socialization, group participation, attention, tolerance and oral communication and expression.

Skilled and involved youth

Recognition: In FY13, the Federal Government awarded the National Prize "Amanda Rimoch" to a group of youth enrolled in the Sierra Norte Project Area, in the Puebla province.

The project "Katiadna Operation (Katiadna is a totonac word for



2013 Program Achievements (continued)

Earth, Life, Surroundings) was developed by a 9th grade student, with technical assistance from the staff of the Community Based Organization and achieved third place (nationally). Katiadna Operation aims to build tanks for rain water collection. These tanks will be constructed beside the school and benefit 200 students.

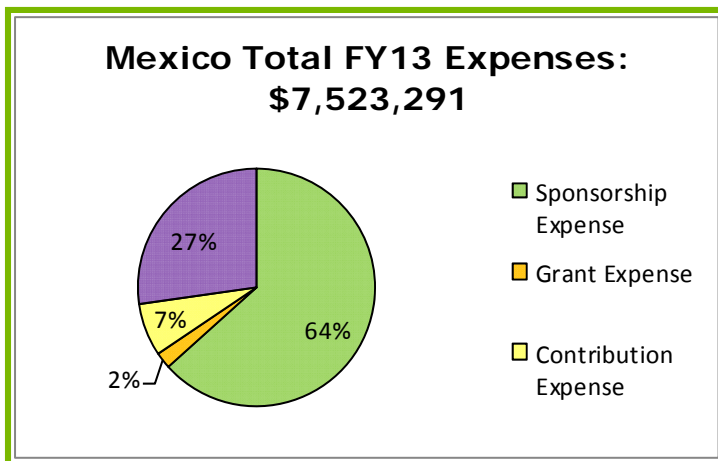
Further, the project also includes solid waste and water management to reduce health problems and raise awareness around taking care of the environment.

Child Protection: Implemented the program "Crecer sin violencia" in four Community Based Organizations benefitting 733 youth.

Civil Society

ChildFund Mexico is coordinating a working group under the national governmental strategy to tackle hunger (*Cruzada contra el Hambre*).

Financial Report



Mexico FY13

Sponsorship Expense	4,766,179	63%
Grant Expense	167,513	2%
Contribution Expense	540,072	7%
Operating Expense	2,049,528	27%
Total Expense	7,523,292	100%

Challenges

In the last ten years, TCO (transnational criminal organizations) activities have spread to most of the territory, with strong impact in the states of Michoacan, Estado de Mexico and Veracruz, where ChildFund Mexico works.

This situation has increased the lack of confidence in public security institutions and has led to the emergence of self-defense groups, and the recruitment of young people in criminal groups, increasing the breakdown in the local social environment.

In other areas, several social and political movements are active, with different levels of acceptance locally and may affect the activities of our local partners either by hindering access to certain communities or polarizing the population.

Why Sponsorship is Important

A relationship that lasts forever

Nayeli Díaz Leon currently is 21 years old and is completing the 5th semester of a degree in Computer Science at the Instituto Tecnológico Superior de Acatlán de Osorio, in the state of Puebla.

Nayeli comes from a family that has very limited resources. Her parents, Leon and Adelaida Rodolfo Martinez work in the field. She has two brothers: Juan Enrique and Luis Angel. In 1999 when she was seven years old, her mother enrolled her with the ChildFund Local Partner, "Niños Acatecos A.C."



Nayeli was one of the first girls enrolled in "Niños Acatecos" and after two years, she received one of the best pieces of news in her life: she had a sponsor.

Since the beginning of the sponsorship, Nayeli and her sponsor have maintained an excellent communication channel through letters where they tell each other interesting stories about their cultures, traditions and their day to day. Furthermore, her sponsor has always been very attentive to send gifts on special dates for Nayeli and has kept record of her performance in school as well as her family life.

A stressful event that definitely marked the relation of Nayeli and her sponsor was Nayeli's parents' divorce. The reason for the breakup was domestic violence caused by physical abuse of Nayeli, her mother and siblings. For that reason Nayeli, who has always been shy and not very sociable became quieter.

Even with the problems Nayeli was experiencing, she continued participating in the programs implemented by the ChildFund Local Partner. This helped her to socialize more, including having more and better communication with her sponsor.

As part of the growth of this relationship, Nayeli shared through her letters to her sponsor that her parents were getting a divorce and that she was living in a very difficult situation. Her sponsor looked for the right words to let Nayeli know that she was not alone, that she could make it and that everything would be fine.

While living through this situation and having the support of her sponsor, Nayeli shared her dreams and plans. She wanted to earn a degree and without hesitation her sponsor provided support and encouraged her to finish her degree, because that was a good way to face life and succeed.

Today, Nayeli continues to receive support from her sponsor's daughter (her sponsor passed away several years ago). Her deceased sponsor's daughter now sponsors Nayeli and the relationship between both families continues to be close and warm.

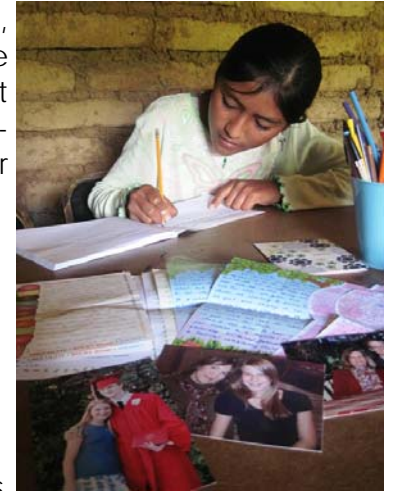
Nayeli is infinitely grateful for her sponsor and all of her family, especially for the encouragement and the knowledge they have shared with her. *"...the love and care of a person that lives in another country has for you, is something you cannot pay with anything"* says Nayeli with tears in her eyes.

Why Sponsorship is Important (continued)

Beautiful Details

Gisela is 13 years old and very shy, but she describes herself as “friendly, respectful, intelligent, honest and affectionate.” She believes that these “qualities are important for any human being and that above all, that we should treat others well.” She thinks these qualities will help her become a kindergarten teacher one day. She also appreciates that her sponsors display the same qualities.

In terms of the family that sponsors Gisela, it is usually the teenage daughter, that writes most frequently to Gisela and she has all of the letters and photos safely tucked away in an envelope that she made and designed just for her sponsor’s letters. The envelope is labeled “Beautiful Details.” Each letter from her sponsor has been folded and refolded so many times that the paper has worn thin around the crease marks. The photos are a little dog-eared at the corners and you can see fingerprints all over the matte finish because they have been held and passed around so many times. These are Gisela’s treasures and she keeps them well guarded.



Her sponsor’s daughter, who was taking Spanish classes in her high school, sometimes wrote in Spanish, which made Gisela smile because then she could read the letters without the usual translation. But since Gisela is learning some English in school, she also likes to try to read the letters in English as well to help her practice...she can pick out words in the letters like mother, father and colors like blue.

The sponsor wrote to Gisela about holidays in the US like Thanksgiving, Halloween and Independence Day as well as daily life topics like school, sports, dancing, pets and weather changes. These are all topics Gisela wrote back about as well ... Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) instead of Halloween, Mexican Independence Day in September instead of the US one in July, the difference between the rainy season and dry season in her community, dancing in the festivals in her community, liking to play basketball and volleyball and her own pets (chickens, pigs and two dogs) etc.

Gisela mentioned *“No matter the topic, the type of stationary or the number of photos in each letter from my sponsor, they all made me happy, gave me a new confidence and a new understanding of a different world of possibilities.”* Most of the time Gisela is reserved and quiet, but when she spoke about her sponsorship experience and her sponsor family, she was all smiles ... This is the transformative power of sponsorship.

