

Report July 2011

Centro Madre, Barlovento, Venezuela

ACTIVITIES CENTRO MADRE

After the flood of November/December 2010, our priority has been to help other people, repair our housing and start recovering from our own agricultural losses.



José and his father are from Agua Clara, a village nearby Centro Madre, that was seriously affected by the flood. José is 20 years old and is handicapped from birth, with no feeling from his waist down. Throughout his young life he has had about 27 operations. He is in need of the use of diapers for the rest of his life, a cost this poor farmer's family can barely sustain, especially after the loss of their crops.

Centro Madre bought for José a supply of diapers for 4 months.



Lely Machado has 5 children and lives from the sales of plantain and passion fruit which she lost due to the flood. Lely has a 7 year old girl called Darling who is mentally handicapped. Darling needs specially adapted clothes.

Centro Madre donated a sewing machine. Now Lely herself is sewing clothes for Darling and her other children.

Three second hand sewing machines were donated to different families.



Vraja is from La Guairita. Due to loss of crops he has to look for work outside his village.

Centro Madre donated a second hand bike. His changes for finding work and providing for his family in this time of crisis are now much better. Two second hand bikes were donated.



This is Marjorie and her younger brother. She is standing in front of what was her house after the flood. She is one of three children of a poor family in the village La Guairita.



After the flood she and her family took the little that was left of their belongings to another place. They had to take it with a wheel barrow as the road was too damaged for other forms of transportation.



Thanks to Centro Madre, Marjorie's family was able to buy a brick house in another village.



As the house needed a lot of fixing before Marjorie's family could move in, the staff of Centro Madre taught the new owners skills such as welding, cementing and carpentry which enabled them to do the fixing themselves.



Food items, sheets, clothes, diapers and cooking utensils were distributed to 45 families.



Centro Madre was flooded during the November floods and suffered agricultural losses. Water didn't enter the house but damage was done to the roof causing much leakage.



A roof was build over the porch around the house. This will protect the house and keep the temperature in the house cooler. Also part of the porch will be used to set up a store to sell our produce and other food items. This will create an income for the project and create jobs. Also a staircase to the roof of the second floor was build. Part of

the construction material needed was donated by the governor of the state of Miranda the rest was bought. We are half way with preparing the kitchen for an official inspection to a get sanitation permit.

Bees: Our biggest loss has been the loss of 20 beehives which provided a part of our yearly income. We were left with 5 bee hives. We recovered about 10 empty bee boxes which the water had left in different places. We stacked those boxes at the back of the house to later use them when we will be ready to divide the 5 beehives. Interestingly enough new bee colonies decided to settle their new homes in these boxes. So now we have 8 hives again. Due to lack of finances it will take us at least a year or two to fully recover. Pure honey is scarce and we were getting a good reputation for purity of our honey.



We have successfully incubated the eggs of the few chickens we have. We got a total of 20 baby chicks. We hope to improve the quantity of chickens to be able to sell 'scharrel eieren'.



The infrastructure of our organic vegetable garden (beds and irrigation system) was not affected by the flood. But we lost all our crops and the quality of the soil has been seriously affected and has lost its organic texture.

We need to add lots of compost but most of the existing cow dung in the area has been washed away with the flood and due to continuous excessive rain for months after the flood we have so far not been able to get cow dung. Nevertheless we were able to harvest different crops such as carrots, lettuce, kale etc.



For the last 2 years we have had the support of CIARA (agricultural institute of the government) who have been sending us agronomists to help us set up our organic vegetable garden. After the flood we have started to plant guayaba/guava with their support. It is a new variety that will give fruits within a year. It can withstand floods very well. It is a very popular fruit in the state of Miranda where we are located, yet very few farmers in the area cultivate it.



We have planted 300 of the new variety plus we planted 100 of the local variety. The agronomists organised a workshop about the new variety and taught us together with some local farmers how to cultivate it.



We have also set up a nursery for this new variety. We hope that the sale of the guava fruits and the guava plants will give us an income.



Melqui is 12 years old. She came to live with us when she was 6. It is a big challenge to raise a spirited "I know it all" teenager.



Usually we do Christmas related activities in about 4 villages but due to the flood this year we did only in one village. With the youth of Madre Vieja we set up a big Christmas stall (typical for this area) With the children of the village we presented a puppet show.

Wilt u meer weten over Hendrika's werk in Barlovento, ga dan naar de website www.centromadre.org en click door naar de verschillende onderdelen. U kunt ook contact opnemen met onze nederlandse organisatie: www.centromadre.nl

Michele Montenegro, secretaris
Nachtegaal 25
1628 DB Hoorn nh
Nederland
06 5580 3337
info@centromadre.nl

Maarten Broekers, penningmeester
0592 300 420
Bankrekening nummer: 41.89.92.800
IBAN: NL02ABNA0418992800
BIC: ABNANL2A
info@centromadre.nl