

News from Venezuela

Spring 2020



Dear friends of Centro Madre

I hope this finds you in good health and spirit. Here is an update of our present situation in Venezuela.

Times continue to be difficult for the Venezuelans. Last year we were threatened with military invasion. In March we had a massive black out in 80% of the country as the electrical supply failed due to sabotage and lack of maintenance. Until today, the country did not completely recover from this. Specially outside of Caracas, in the rural areas, life has become very difficult with constant black outs and lack of water supply.

Lack of food (rice, corn flour, oil, sugar etc.) and other essential items were a great concern for several years. People would stand in long lines for hours for a few kilos of food. Yet, at the same time, massive quantities of these scarce items were smuggled out of the country to Colombia and Brazil. Now you can go to any supermarket and the shelves are full again. But the prices are very, very high. Everything is becoming dollarized. And the hyperinflation never stops. For people living on a minimum salary it is a constant nightmare. Everywhere we see people going through the garbage on the street looking for food. The newly announced sanctions will bring more poverty and insecurity. CANTV, the state owned telephone and internet service company, is not able to guarantee communication to all houses. More and more houses are losing their internet and telephone service. In my house, we don't have either one.



Ñame food

The original location of Centro Madre is still being used. The neighbors are cultivating our land, where food (ñame, plantain and lemon) and herbs (kurkuma, ginger, neem leaves,

lemon leaves and medicinal plants) are being produced. The house we have there is now unoccupied as it is too dangerous for us to live there. However, we visit there from



Visiting the neighbors in Barlovento

time to time to supervise the cultivation and to bring it to Caracas for distribution to the most needy. The demand for this produce is so high that the neighbors are now also producing it on their own piece of land.



Centro Prama building

Last year we adopted Centro Prama, a Holistic Health Center for the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of the people of the community. We are giving yoga classes to adults and children to help them deal with the



Yoga classes

constant stress they are living under.

From there, we are doing food distribution twice a week specially to older people that have been very seriously affected by the crisis. In addition to food that is produced in Centro Madre, Barlovento, we have started to receive small donations of food by people who want to help. The Centro Prama building has a small kitchen which by breaking a wall, can be doubled in size, to make an industrial kitchen. We are looking for the finances to do so.



Food distribution

We are able to continue to work in Venezuela during this time of crisis, thanks to your generous support for which we are very grateful.

Much love from Venezuela

Hendrika Renkers

For more information about Hendrika's work in Venezuela please refer to her website www.centromadre.org . If you want to contact her, or support a project, please write to centromadrebartovento@gmail.com .

You can also contact our Dutch organisation: www.centromadre.nl .

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