

NEWSLETTER

CENTRO MADRE

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Editorial

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Migration in Venezuela and the world EDITORIAL

The recent massive emigration is a social phenomenon that is impacting the world and continues to increase. The reasons are varied: political, economic, and now also climatic. Most emigrants leave their homes and families not because they want to, but because they see no other way out.

Migration to seek a better future



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Migration of Juan David, 9 years old

Hendrika Renkers has raised Juan David from birth to nine years old. Juan David's mother Melqui migrated from Venezuela to Colombia in 2020, during the global pandemic, in hopes of finding a better economic future. She settled near the city of Cali, an area still affected by drug trade and its related conflicts. There, Melqui started a family with her new Colombian partner, with whom she has now a two-year-old child. In August 2023 Melqui travelled to Venezuela to pick up her oldest son Juan David and returned with him to Colombia. Since the departure of Juan David to Colombia, Hendrika has travelled to visit Juan David and his family.

Juan David and his family are facing many difficulties



Juan David and Hendrika meet again in Cali, Colombia.

Hendrika was able to witness the difficulties Juan David was having in his new home, adjusting to his new school, the new environment, the cultural change and his stepfather. She also witnessed the violence Melqui and her children are receiving from her Colombian partner and father of the baby. Melqui does not have the support of her family in Venezuela. This environment of violence and economic deprivation has affected Juan David's behaviour in a negative way.

Marco and his family

Before traveling to Colombia to visit Juan David, Hendrika Renkers learned that Marco, who had worked for many years at the Centro Madre farm in Barlovento, was now living in Colombia.

A year ago, Marco had asked Hendrika for permission to cultivate the land of Centro

Marco was forced to migrate with his family to Colombia, near Cali, to work in the sugar cane fields.

Madre. It went well until it started to rain heavily in November 2023. The rains lasted

for many months and affected the crops he had planted with much effort, so Marco was unable to continue farming. Many other farmers in the area, also lost their crops due to flooding.

Marco decided to migrate with his family to Colombia, near Cali, to work in the large sugar cane fields.

During her trip to Colombia, Hendrika visited Marco. Hendrika and Marco were very happy to see each other and were surprised to find themselves in a place so far away from the Centro Madre farm where they worked together for so many years.

Marco expressed with much amazement: *"If someone 10 years ago would have told us that in the year 2024 we would meet in Colombia, near Cali, I would not have believed it!"*

Hendrika visiting Marco and his family in Cali, Colombia.



Heavy rains in Barlovento in 2023 caused crop losses to farmers



Support for small farmers

Centro Madre continues with the donation of tools to small farmers in Barlovento, which consists of a combo of a pair of boots and a machete. Since January of this year, six combos were donated.

Last year, Mr. Angel received a combo of a pair of boots and a machete. During that previous visit in 2023, we learned he knows how to make drums, and that he is a singer and educator of the culture of Barlovento. But because of the economic situation, he does not have the tools to continue to make drums.

Centro Madre went to visit and interview Mr. Angel, exactly on the day that the local school was having an event to honour his work. The school is requesting that Mr. Angel will share his knowledge and experience with the students so that this important part of the culture of Barlovento will be passed on to the next generation.



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Delivery of combo to farmers in Barlovento. Each combo contains a pair of boots and machete.



Thanks to a donation he received from Centro Madre, Mr. Angel now has the necessary tools to continue to make drums and to teach the school students how to make them.

Recognition of Mr. Angel for his work as a drum artisan manufacturer, and disseminator of local culture and traditions.

Reveretto Farm

Despite their hard work, they find it difficult to survive

Reveretto is a family business of the Revere Torrealba family, a family of two adults and two sons. About 14 years ago, the family started a small goat farm on a vacant lot. They now raise goats and other animals. They sell goat's milk, butter, cheese and yoghurt. They are small farmers and in spite of working hard, they find it hard to survive of the sales of their products, especially with two young children. They grow vegetables and roots for domestic consumption and produce eggs from Creole hens.



Due to deterioration, cracks in the cement, the pool was closed for a period of time.

Thanks to a donation from Centro Madre, the pool is up and running again.



Reveretto's small family farm is located in a mountainous area, and transportation to the nearest city is unreliable. For this reason, the system for selling their products is still not efficient or sufficient to support the family.

For this reason, the family decided to look for another more immediate source of income without having to give up farming and dairy production. The house where they live has a small swimming pool and the Reveretto family started to rent the pool to the local villagers.

This generated a small but much needed



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The farm raises goats and produces and sells products derived from goat's milk.



income and provided a solution for the economical needs of the family and the farm. But as the pool was made many years ago, due to deterioration, cracks appeared in the cement and the pool had to close. Thanks to a donation from Centro Madre, the cracks in the cement were fixed and the pool is operative again. The family was relieved and grateful.

Caiza Park

Parque Caiza is a rural mountain area located half an hour outside of Caracas. Mr. Pedro lives there on his own piece of land. Mr. Pedro has known better times, when agriculture gave him a reasonable income. But

Mr. Pedro, Laura and Hendrika decided to join forces in a cooperative manner and cultivate together.

the economic crisis changed all that. Now he is getting older and he finds it difficult to do the agricultural work alone.

On the other hand, Laura is a young woman, mother of two. Ten years ago she started in Caracas a small business of organic herbal teas, naturally sweetened with stevia. Laura's main problem is finding the organic herbal plants with which to make her teas.

Thirdly, Hendrika Renkers, worked for years on the Centro Madre farm, in Barlovento, almost 2 hours east of Caracas. There she processed fresh ginger and turmeric. Hendrika now lives in Caracas, and has nowhere to grow the turmeric and ginger.

These three people (Mr. Pedro, Laura and Hendrika), decided to join forces in a cooperative way and cultivate together. This way Mr. Pedro will have company and Laura and Hendrika will have a piece of land to grow the plants they need for processing.

The first task was to clean the land and prepare it for planting. They also made compost from cow dung. Then they bought the material to make a water tank for an irrigation system. This is still in progress.



From right to left Hendrika, Mr. Pedro, Luis an employee, Laura with her family; after a day's work clearing the land.

Food distribution

Centro Madre continues to support the weekly food distribution program which happens each Wednesday for people in vulnerable conditions. Most of them are elderly people and some of them are homeless.

Every Wednesday, the volunteers distribute 60 hot meals which are served with natural fruit juice. The meals are prepared on Tuesdays with much love by the volunteers.

Volunteers from Centro Madre preparing food on Tuesdays



Julia, Maira, Inés and Mercedes have been volunteers at the Mother Center for years. The photos below are from Wednesday at the delivery and with new lunch boxes and glasses.



The beneficiaries arrive and organize themselves in a line. Each one brings an empty container to be filled with food. Often these containers are of poor quality. Centro Madre obtained a donation of lunch boxes and cups which they donated to the beneficiaries.



Supporting Gerardo Torres

In 2020 Centro Madre supported the starting of the “Prama Bienestar y Salud” project in Caracas. Prama Bienestar y Salud was created by a group of volunteers to provide a variety of services to the community.

Centro Madre's help allowed Gerardo to now earn his own income doing therapies

then he became unemployed.

Thanks to a donation from Centro Madre he was able to take courses in alternative health therapy. Now Gerardo earns an income doing a variety of health therapies.

On the right: Advertisement of Gerardo Torres offering his services as a therapist.

Below: Gerardo Torres doing alternative therapies.



Free medical attention for the poor

Approximately 26 patients have received free medical service

Since January 2024 Centro Madre has offered twice free medical service.

The day consists of an evaluation of the patient to obtain a diagnosis. Depending on the diagnosis, the patient receives a regenerative therapy based on the knowledge of alternative medicine.

Rudith, who is an experienced therapist and nurse, applies therapies such as acupuncture, moxibustion, coupling, among others to the patients.

With the donations of Centro Madre, we were able to pay the nurse for her services. Gerardo Torres offered his services as a volunteer.

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Gerardo Torres, Rudith the nurse and Hendrika

Newsletter Centro Madre

This newsletter was written and published during a critical moment in the country. Centro Madre is doing its work in the midst of the aftermath of a presidential election that unleashed protests, violence in the streets, people killed, property destroyed, hate speech in the social media and families being divided.

As humanity, we must prepare ourselves to face the new challenges we are facing in the world. Centro Madre promotes volunteer work in Venezuela without political, social, religious or ethnic discrimination. It is necessary to create a culture of selfless service without any kind of human division.

The work of Centro Madre is accomplished thanks to material and monetary donations and with the help of volunteers. We thank all of you who participate in any way, selflessly and lovingly.....to make a more just and humane world possible.

Mercedes, Christianne, Mario, Gerardo, Hendrika, Nelson, Maira, Martha.