



A Florida Not For Profit 501c3 Corporation

www.MiraclesInAction.org

Project Name: Grant for \$2500 for textbooks and distribution of birthing kits

6 month and final report - September 2009

A. Progress/Accomplishments:

1. Sewing Machines: - to date we have purchased and delivered 12 new sewing machines and 10 used sewing machines to the San Jorge sewing workshop in Guatemala. With the donation of the sewing machines, this project is self-sustaining. After a woman graduates from the sewing classes, they are given a sewing machine as a micro-credit loan. They must pay a fee each month to the workshop, to use this machine until it is "paid off". This part of the project is handled by Sharon Smart of Mayan Families – a US registered 501c3 charity that is located in Guatemala, and established the workshop. The loan money goes back in to the project to pay the salary of the instructor and rent for the workshop space. The women use their machine to make aprons and other sewn items that will be purchased by the local people. They also use them to sew clothes for their families. This project clearly builds self esteem because the women have a trade that earns income, making them more self sufficient. Word has spread and now many more women are signing up to take sewing classes.

2. Story and Text Books – Over the summer Miracles in Action purchased and delivered \$1,000s in books and teacher supplies for our schools. We coordinated a teacher training pilot in Guatemala where four Spanish-speaking Naples, FL teachers, volunteered for OJT (on the job training) in two of our schools. The FL teachers developed a list of books and supplies that are most useful in schools for K-4th grades. Miracles in Action funded these supplies, called "teacher kits", and delivered them to Guatemala. The project was a huge success and our Naples teachers are now fine tuning the program. Future plans include:

- More FL teachers returning next summer for OJT
- Skype internet conference call training, live from Naples to Guatemala
- Develop a teacher resource center so that more teachers can share the books and materials by checking them out, similar to a library.
- Develop a basic teacher kit with lesson plans and written instructions, which has supplies that can be used easily without OJT instruction. This kit is for our remoter schools and new openings of schools, where there is no one to provide instruction to teachers.

Your \$1000 went to purchase books and kit supplies for our schools in Huehuetenango. On Oct. 4th and 5th we are celebrating the opening of two additional schools in this remote area. With your grant funds, will deliver supplies to three of the schools in Huehue. The supplies and books were purchased, and just need to be delivered early Oct.

3. Birthing Kits Distribution – Ruth Humbert, RN recently informed me that her nursing students (local Mayan women and men) who are trained to work in remote villages, and are from those villages... have been distributing lots of the birthing kits. They tell her that the

TBAs (traditional birthing attendants – midwives) love them, and ask for more. Ruth has requested more kits to be delivered to her in Guatemala. This, however, has been a



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challenge, since American Airlines has reduced the number of bags that I am permitted to take on my flights MIA-GUA. The kits are stored in boxes in Miracles in Action's air conditioned storage unit in Naples, and will be safe and clean, until they can be slowly delivered to Guatemala. I have been taking birthing kits to Guatemala since the onset of Zonta members making them and giving them to us to deliver. I will continue to take kits to Guatemala, as I am able. It may take a year or so to get all the kits to Guatemala. Another obstacle in this project is the high costs of transportation to remote villages with rough roads. Not only has the cost of fuel gone up, but the pick up truck which Ruth uses, and is funded by Miracles in Action, has needed costly repairs. The roads are not paved, so wear and tear is tough on the truck. In 2008 we replaced the tires and now the truck is down for transmission and clutch repairs. In 2008 we paid \$2,650 in truck expenses. Zonta's donation of \$500 for transportation was most useful.

B. Funds Expenditures:

\$1000 to purchase sewing machines

\$1000 for books and teacher supplies to teach literacy

\$500 for fuel/transportation of birthing kits

C. How many lives are affected:

- The 22 women who received a sewing machine, are now able to earn an income from home, and the domino effect has led to greater interest for other women to learn to sew.

- The schools receiving books and teacher materials will have long term affect over years. Because this project is ongoing with more schools benefiting from what was started in two schools, it is difficult to measure this impact. The schools in Huehuetenango where your funds were directed have 228 students, with more new students each year.

- We have not kept a count of how many birthing kits have been delivered to date. In 2008, two Zonta Clubs have provided approx. 5,000 kits. I do not know the amounts given to us in 2007 – all of the initial kits are in Guatemala and most likely used. Lives affected are not measureable. But, if a woman dies in childbirth, there is no one to care for her family, so that many people are affected. Infections and death during child birth are common with rural births. I can only comment - Zonta has saved lives from this project.

D. Photos: Included.

Thank you for your support with this grant.

Sincerely,
Penny Rambacher, R.D.
President/Founder