

Progress in Quyuqyho: At the time of writing Phil Grainger, our founder, has just returned from Paraguay to report that all is well; the Comedor is in full swing, still feeding over 100 children most schooldays; the extended Recalde family is taking an active part in helping to tend the crops; some of the older girls are learning English and have had initial training on how to run the toy library. Finally, most of the family have been introduced to the sewing machine. The OSA house extensions are complete, with facilities for up several guests, shown in the picture, built over what was the terrace on the right-hand side of the building. Some of the rooms can also double up as play areas or classrooms when not in use by volunteers.



The Comedor in use



Food Preparation



Washing Up

Our second group of volunteers arrived recently and they hope to complete the irrigation project and the building of the pig sties and chicken runs, as well as working with the children. The newly appointed Comedor has permanent tiled seats and tables and, recently added, clear plastic blinds which can be rolled down when the weather is wet or windy so that the children can dine in clean and comfortable surroundings.



Work In Progress: During the dry season many of the crops planted died through lack of water. In order to prevent this we are constructing a water tower, fed by a pump from the nearby well. This will provide sufficient pressure to water the nearby crops through a series of underground perforated pipes. In addition, to provide a regular supply of meat and eggs, we are also building four pig sties and several hen houses. The use of brick instead of wood is to keep costs down, as timber is expensive and extremely difficult to work, as it is all



hardwood, not the relatively soft woods like pine which we are used to in the UK.

But they don't look poor! A recent visitor to Quyuqyhó made that very remark, one which has been echoed by many who first encounter the work of OSA and, at first sight, the place appears a picturesque and, some say, idyllic location. By British standards it is a small village with a population of approximately 1300 but with its own school, town hall, medical centre and box-tree-lined roads Quyuqyhó, in Paraguayan terms, is at very least a town. However, the stone-paved roads degrade to familiar red earth at the edge of town and tarmac is not to be found for at least two hours' rough ride preferably in a 4x4, although a regular bus service does make the journey most days. Only a few weeks ago six people were killed on one such journey when a bridge collapsed due to flooding. Thankfully it was a Sunday when few travel. Had it been a weekday the death toll could have been much higher.

The reality for many of the residents is rather different. Even in town, poverty lives cheek by jowl with affluence and many of the children we help live in a very different environment “out in the sticks”

Our photos usually show smiling, well-dressed youngsters, often enjoying themselves, unlike the swollen-bellied images frequently displayed. One reason for this is that the needs of the children of Quyuquyhó are being addressed. They are relatively healthy because supporters of OSA help to provide regular nutritious food and basic medicines to the most needy. They are well-dressed because we provide clothes and shoes or contribute to their education by providing for uniforms and school fees. Rumour has it that most of the children of Quyuquyhó now have underwear provided through OSA. Once it was a different story. And the smiles? - well we like to think that the love and attention they get through the Recalde family are the reasons for them!

That is not to say there are no needs. What rarely shows on the faces of the children is the horror and abuse that some have suffered. Of the 18 girls currently fostered by the Recaldes and supported by OSA, we know that three have been raped. Others have been sexually and physically abused, one with cigarette burns, and several more have suffered at the hands of alcoholic parents. One little boy who visits the Comedor saw his father hang himself. For these children the emotional scars run deep and occasionally show themselves in abnormal or antisocial behaviour. One in particular is suffering badly and we hope to provide some psychological help and counselling. In a rural community this is both difficult and expensive. If you have a heart for this type of support perhaps you would consider donating or sponsoring this work. Please contact us by whatever means is most convenient to you.

Official Recognition: Regular readers will be aware that last year we spent considerable time, effort and money in recognition as an Paraguay. Not only did this a container of gifts of clothes, dozens of useful items from UK, Paraguay which will be also brought our work to the the Department for Children recent surprise visit the satisfied with what they saw, the best work of its kind in proudly put this sign on the side of his house. It reads Children’s Home, “The Bridge”, no doubt a reference to his claim that OSA helps to provide a permanent link “from God to Kids.”



applying for official international charity in result in our ability to host medical supplies and organised by friends of repeated this year, but it attention of the Minister of and Adolescents. In a officials were not only but observed that this was Paraguay! Osvaldo has

And what of the future?: In the short term we are very grateful for the help and support of an English couple, Samantha & Rupert Parsons who are making a valuable contribution to our work. Sam makes regular visits to Quyuquyhó and has been instrumental in the setting up of our Toy Library which we hope will help to expand our work into the surrounding areas. She is also teaching some of the older girls English and offering some valuable pastoral support. Rupert’s skills lie in Accountancy and IT and we have great hopes for the introduction of computer literacy to those in our care.

As numbers of fostered children grow it is becoming apparent that accommodation is an issue. The Recalde household is bursting at the seams and, with legal questions being posed about ownership of their property, we need to make more permanent arrangements. We are drawing up plans for a building which will provide a permanent home for the older girls and give them some privacy and security. At the same time we are looking at buying more land, ideally adjacent to our existing property. This will be a big commitment for a small charity and we will need to raise about £20,000, not a huge amount by UK standards but still a significant amount. We need your continued help.

