

## ANNUAL REPORT, 2020

oeser



Dear friends of Oeser and related ministries!

Thank you very much for the support, prayers and words of encouragement that we received from many people during this time.

Due to the pandemic and the extended lockdown in Bolivia, poverty has visibly increased. As many of you know, the majority of the family population we serve are single mothers who have occasional jobs without social benefits. The pandemic caused most of them to lose their jobs. The families where they used to go for cleaning, laundry or gardening have preferred to suspend these services for fear that they would be sources of contagion and also because there were fewer economic resources to hire them.

We have seen them selling what they could on the streets, among other things, taking medicinal herbs off the hillside (which gradually disappeared).

Many corners in the neighbourhoods have been turned into market places. People come and ask for work and it hurts to not to be able to give them anything or not always be able to buy from them. Thanks to the support of many friends, Christians as well as unknown people, it has been possible to deliver food weekly during the months of confinement and later monthly.

The families are very grateful for this: "we were saved, we didn't have anything to eat anymore" were some of the phrases that were often heard.

The joy of the children when they opened the food bags and saw that they contained rice, quinoa, lentils, oil, sugar, noodles, milk, chocolate powder, cookies, toothbrush and other cleaning supplies was overwhelming. It was also possible to help with the payment of rent in some cases and medical



expenses. On a regular basis, 80 families and 100 children received the bags, but many more received them at least once. Going to so many places and visiting families resulted in Mary being infected with the virus. Thank God two days after she tested positive, after a time of prayer, all of her discomfort disappeared and no family member was infected; not even her 87-year-old mother. Later on, lunch was cooked and delivered at Wiñay Kusiy, in order to help single mothers who went out in the mornings to sell or look for work.

When the in-person classes were suspended, it was decided to bring school materials to the children's homes as well.

Distance education was a great

challenge for the teachers at first, but they supported and trained each other. We were surprised to see the classes they gave and the resources they used. Nothing to be envied from other private schools that have more economic resources. Short teaching videos were sent through Whatsapp.

For many families and students it was not easy; some mothers struggled to buy a Smartphone. Children from areas near the school were given the facility to take the school's wifi signal and others were given cards to buy megabytes, so that school lessons would not become exclusive to those who have the resources.

When the situation improved, we asked the teachers, who were willing, to teach

once a week in the school to the children who do not have the technical conditions.



The children in the prison worked on the texts we gave them and we also gave them all the resources they needed. No visits to the prison were allowed, so the food deliveries were made at the door with all the care of disinfection. It is a pity that the children are locked up for so long. We hope that next year they will be allowed to attend classes again.

Adding to the difficulties mentioned was the financial pressure of the project. Since March, the parents' contributions to their children's school education dropped dramatically, which forced agreements with the teachers to reduce their salaries; not all of them had understanding because they were struggling with their situation themselves; however, thank God, all difficulties have somehow been fixed.

Now it's time for a further challenge of covering the scholarships for the children in 2021. It is estimated that due to the difficult economic situation, families will not be able to contribute more than half of what they used to. This forces us to seek greater support so that we do not have to close the ministry.

For this reason we are grateful to be able to consider being part of the sponsorship program by supporting these children who receive a better education in the school and day-care programs; in many cases, they receive tutoring support in the afternoon; the meal service and the library facilities that are provided for them. The parents value a good education for their children, the Christian values they receive and that is why they prefer to contribute to the educational program instead of enrolling them in the public school system. There are students who came from 4th and 5th grade public schools who could not read or write. Parents also tell us that their children show them how to pray and change habits in the family. For many students, school is like their second family and sometimes there is more of a sense of belonging than with their own parents.

In November a former student came to the social worker's office with her partner and her one-year-old daughter; they were considering separating. With tears they both asked God to forgive them for their bad decisions and living apart from Him.

A widowed mother with two children moved to Villa Candelaria from a place 20 kilometres away in order to attend school and the children's centre. Four years ago her husband was run over when she was pregnant with the second child. The mother sought counselling because she was very distressed about her eldest son Steven who stuttered; his difficulty in

pronouncing a word was very marked and he was suffering to communicate.

In addition to the time of discipleship with the mother, it was also shared with the child through the scripture in which Jesus heals the paralytic. We prayed for him and, glory be to God, he has begun to speak without stuttering!

Not only are the mother and the child very happy, but so are we.

Thank you for considering becoming a sponsor so that the children of Villa Candelaria and the children of imprisoned mothers or fathers have a better future.

With US\$ 50 a month, you are able to provide for one child a better school education. For monthly US\$ 100 a child can be attend the day care all day.



#### Thank God for ...:

- the response to the campaign for food and health.
- the support and faithful friends and brothers who supported the work in 2020.

#### Please pray for ...:

- protection for the children, their families, OESER staff and employment opportunities for parents.
- more sponsors and funding for the scholarship fund so that the work can continue.

Thank you for your prayers, your financial support and time. God bless you abundantly,

*The OESER Team*