

## The promise.

Over 15 years ago, when we began working in the community of Francisco Jácome, we made a promise to its residents. To support them in caring for their children...to help provide what they could not. In the years that followed, we became woven into the fabric of the community, and the residents now rely on us as a trusted friend and partner in creating a better living environment for their families.

## The reality.

Our commitment to Francisco Jácome is still strong. But our existing center no longer meets the needs of a growing sponsorship population. Additions to the center over the years have created a space that is cramped and lacks a functional design.

A new, modern center in Francisco Jácome will allow us to serve between 8,000 and 10,000 children and youth in a bright, clean space where we can provide age-appropriate benefits and long-term support.

## A new promise for a new era.

Our community center in Francisco Jácome won't just be a building. It will be a center of hope – where children and their families can gather to share, learn and plan for a better future. Because a Children International community center means so much to an impoverished neighborhood:



## A BETTER HEALTH

Modern medical and dental clinics ensure the children receive quality care. A well-stocked pharmacy means children immediately receive the medicines they need. Feeding programs and hygiene education help ward off illness and malnutrition.



## B SAFETY

Poor neighborhoods can be rough, dangerous places. A secure center provides a caring environment where the children feel safe. They can take part in numerous learning or fun activities – or just come to spend time with friends – instead of being exposed to gang activity and other harmful influences from the streets.



## C LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Libraries provide a comfortable environment for children to learn and study, where adults are available who can help with school assignments. An on-site warehouse and benefit distribution area make it easy for children to receive supplies, shoes and clothing they need to attend school.



## D YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Our centers attract youth and give them plenty of constructive and educational activities to enjoy. Access to computers, leadership training, youth forums, as well as social and life skills help them avoid negative influences and prepare for life as adults.



## “THERE ARE SO MANY NEEDS.”

Margarita Lopez shakes her head hopelessly as she speaks. The sun beats through holes in the roof and the thin split cane walls of her home. It's not easy raising five children after their father abandoned them, but Margarita refuses to give up. So she spends long, grueling days walking the streets of their community, selling snacks and soft drinks for a pittance.

“The biggest need is when the children are sick,” Margarita shares. Her youngest, Alisson, was recently ill, and it appears the infection has spread to her older sister, Viviana. She took Alisson to the public health clinic, but couldn't afford to fill her prescriptions – managing to scrape up enough for only a few pills. Now, there's nothing left to buy medicine for Viviana.

Margarita is also trying desperately to make enough money to keep the older children in school, but it's a losing battle. “Their grades suffer because they don't have the supplies they need,” she laments. “I'm not sure they'll finish school.”

Her face works with emotion as she fights to hold back the tears. “Some days the children go to bed hungry. The only reason the children have clothes is because of the neighbor across the street.” While the neighbor shares items as her children outgrow them, Alisson and two of her siblings still do not own shoes.

When asked how she'd feel if her children could be sponsored and receive benefits at the new center, her response is quick. “It would be great,” she sighs. And despite their struggles, it's clear that her children's success

is her main priority: “I counsel my children, ‘Even if God doesn't give you greatness or riches, study.’”

Sadly, right now, wisdom is about all she is able to provide for them. But as sponsored children at the new center in Francisco Jácome, they can finally receive the opportunity to build on the amazing potential their mother sees in each of them.

