

IN MINISTRY TO CHILDREN 2020–2021

Chair's report

As for so many countries, 2020 has been a hugely challenging year for IMC and for Colombia. Ongoing issues, including conflict and the Venezuelan migrant crisis, have been exacerbated by the pandemic. The health emergency, lockdowns and restrictions have created an economic crisis too, hitting the poorest hardest. The most vulnerable families, who rely on casual labour to make a living, saw their work dry up overnight. Suddenly, they were suddenly unable to put food on the table. Across the nation, red rags were tied to windows, a traditional sign of protest co-opted to become a signal that the household had no food. More recently, anger over growing inequalities has spilled out into violence on the streets, with allegations of police brutality prompting an international outcry. At the time of writing, Nancy Centeno, our Colombian director, said it was not safe to go outside.

Lockdowns, restrictions and changing needs meant that IMiC had to be flexible and creative in its approach this year. The Fusa dining room has not reopened since its closure in March 2020 due to restrictions: it was with great sadness that we received the news that its director, Carlos Forero, had been made redundant. Yet, IMiC has been able to reach more families through its alternative approaches this year: a total of 388 families or 1,460 people, including 952 children.

- 32 families in Fusa (119 people)
- 321 families in la Guajira (1,220 people)
- 35 families in Bogotá (121 people)

In the previous year (2019-20), IMiC supported 84 families and 249 children. So the numbers of those reached this year have almost quadrupled.

Currently 83% of the families and 86% of the children that the ministry supports are in La Guajira. The proportion of expenditure assigned to each project area, however, does not vary hugely:

- La Guajira 36% of total expenditure
- Fusa 23%
- Bogotá 21%
- Administration 20%

IMiC continued to provide food parcels to the most vulnerable families, in its three project areas: Bogota, Fusa and La Guajira. Distributions of food have increased by 320%, compared with 2019, and the number of people supported with food supplies has increased by 186%. Families have also been taught about nutrition and how to prepare simple, affordable meals.

Helping children with their schoolwork was a large part of IMiC's support this year, including printing out schoolwork set online for families without internet access. The number of children supported in this way this year increased by 257%. Educational support included helping people understand the need for Covid restrictions, including mask-wearing and good hygiene. And it extended to supporting some older IMiC 'boys' through university, including Andres Castro and Willie Gomez.

In August, emergency supplies were sent to La Guajira because winter weather was badly affecting areas where people live in very simple shelters with bare-earth floors. We're delighted to report that the school in El Brasil, renovated largely thanks to our supporters A2O, now has a septic tank and toilet block.

IMiC's livelihoods support programme continued, despite the pandemic. It supported 28 families, 22 in La Guajira and six in Bogotá, to set up and run small businesses to help them provide an income for themselves. These enterprises included market stalls and a bakery. And, at the close of the year, every child received a Christmas gift – all 952 of them.

While plans for the year ahead are still being formulated, amid increasing uncertainty around Covid, IMiC's key focus will remain the same: protecting children and strengthening families, helping to meet their practical and spiritual needs, and building their resilience and independence. Lessons learnt this year are prompting it consider ways in which it can extend its reach to support more families, including reaching out to seven *rancherias* in La Guajira.

Our areas of focus continue to be:

- Food and nutrition, alongside other practical support (eg clothing)
- Spiritual support
- Educational support
- Health and well-being
- Social and recreational activities
- Entrepreneurship and savings schemes
- Environmental care, including recycling and vegetable gardens

As trustees, our focus this year has been on supporting Nancy and developing our digital means of communication and fundraising. We continue to review our policies and practices, with a particular focus on GDPR compliance and child protection.

Our grateful thanks, as ever, go to the team in Colombia, headed up by Nancy, for their tireless hard work. We continue to be in awe of their commitment to seeing transformation in the lives of the most vulnerable children.

We are grateful to all our supporters, many of whom have supported us over decades now and whose generosity has not wavered even during a national emergency here in the UK and Europe (see our Treasurer's Report 2021 for more information). Despite the pandemic, fundraising activity has continued – as Krissy Tapp will explain later – and we extend our grateful thanks to everyone who has made that possible.

We're especially grateful to Life Church Petersfield for their administrative support, to our longstanding newsletter editor, Martin Plowman, and to our patrons Joan and Terry Thraves for their wisdom and support.

Most of all, we thank God, our Heavenly Father, without whom none of this would be possible and who holds all of this in his hands.

Seren Boyd

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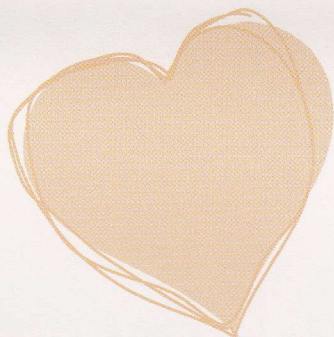
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2020 ACCOUNTS FOR IN MINISTRY TO CHILDREN

Total Income	£85,314.50
Total Expenditure	£82,870.40
Amount transferred from Reserve a/c To General Fund	£ 2,444.10

Funds transferred to Colombia	£78,300.00
Expenditure on financial admin and Communications	£4,570.40

Active Accounts	Credit	Debit
Personnel	£7,153.00	£7,306.00
Child Sponsorship	£8,001.00	£8,382.50
General Fund	£77,602.96	£77,098.14
CIF	£2,420.00	£2,540.00



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To whom it may concern

This is to ascertain that all In Ministry to Children monies (Charity No. 1064690) are monitored and audited by ourselves, Links International Trust. Therefore, the accounts for In Ministry to Children are encompassed in our audit report which we submit to the Charity Commission each year.

Mandy Dukes

Accounts Manager