

SOMBRILLA

International Development Society



fostering partnerships for community development



Annual Report 2011

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Report from the Chair- submitted by Kirsten van der Meer

Sombrilla has enjoyed a very successful year building strong relationships with our partners in Latin America and building ties to Albertans through our outreach and engagement work. Our volunteers and our Board of Directors have worked very hard to support our vision of fostering partnerships for community development. Together, we are dedicated to the Sombrilla mission of reducing poverty through building self-sustaining communities and enhancing quality of life with our Latin American partners.

We continue to make progress on a very successful partnership with Tierra Colorada school in Guatemala. With project leads, Paul Layte and Nancy Cowle, several new classrooms have been added to the school. Furthermore, school enhancements such as a computer laboratory and in-school water filtration systems are now in place.

The Yurac Yacu project near Huaraz, Peru is also making strides. Construction of the community centre is underway and will be completed over the next two years, with the majority of the work to be finished by this Christmas. Community members are deeply engaged in all stages of this project, including the construction phase.

Throughout the year, Sombrilla has participated in local events to engage with Albertans. We have travelled with our display to the Grant MacEwen NGO fair, Seedy Sunday, Just Christmas, and the Alberta Council for Global Cooperation AGM. In June, we organized a fantastic fundraising concert with De Menor a Mayor which was attended by more than 200 people. We aim to increase our public engagement and outreach to Albertans over the next year.

Finally, our official organization name has been changed from Sombrilla Refugee Support Society to Sombrilla International Development Society to reflect our focus on international development in Latin America. Although refugee support services were in our mandate many years ago, our organization has evolved and this name change better represents what we do now as an organization. As part of the process we have also changed our Vision to “fostering partnerships for community development”, and our Mission Statement to “We partner with Latin American communities and empower them to assert their democratic, economic, cultural, and social rights. We strive to build self-sustaining communities and enhance quality of life by addressing basic needs such as food, security, clean water, health care, and education.”

Many thanks to all of you who made our organization so successful this year!

Sombrilla’s 2010-2011 Board of Directors

Kirsten van der Meer (President)
Richard Heikkila (Vice President)
Tracy Tanasichuk (Treasurer)
Jeff Goldie (Secretary)

Rick Berube, Member
Sarah Cashmore, Member
Stephanie Garcia, Member
Vanessa Kohut (Chair – Projects)
Natashya Shewchuk (Chair- Public Engagement)

Tierra Colorada, Guatemala Projects
Progress Report October '10 to November '11
Prepared by Paul Layte, Project Administrator

Water Filters for Community:

During our travels to Tierra Colorada in Feb '11, we arranged to rent 'work space' adjacent to the school for the filter project for a cost of about \$100/year. Unfortunately, the tools & materials we had acquired during phase 1 of the Water Filter Project [2009] were damaged when the 'bodega' [shed] in which they were stored accidentally caught fire. The damage was extensive since many of the supplies were of wood or plastic construction.

In the new 'work space' we built a metal-cladded 'bodega' and replaced a lot of the tools and supplies. The molds we had manufactured in 2009 required clean-up as a result of the corrosive environment they had been exposed to after the fire. We had a cement pad constructed in February by the crew working on the school construction project. This pad cost an additional \$150.00 [labour & materials]. During our last few days in Tierra Colorada, we poured one filter using the cleaned molds and successfully removed the filter from the mold. We hadn't successfully built a filter using our manufactured molds in 2009. It is our hope that when we return in 2012 to hire some local labour, train them and construct a number of filters for families in Tierra Colorada.

School Construction Project \$50,000:

Actual construction got underway in Aug'10, after school officials & our local agent, Bilma, selected a prime contractor for the project. They received three proposals for the work and selected Arturo, based on experience & project references. Bilma arranged for purchase of materials and also sourced subcontractors to cover window installations, painting, electrical & plumbing.

All construction on the school is done by hand with no heavy equipment. The only machine used is a cement mixer, and this was only used when they did the floor and ceiling construction. There were several rainy months this year that delayed construction. Following completion of the structural construction, we had to hire a certified engineer to carry out an inspection. Without his sign-off, the 'new classrooms' could not be used. This inspection identified a few shortcomings that were addressed during July & August.

Over the next few months finishing work will be completed: - applying a finish to all walls & floors; installing a drainage system for the courtyard on top.



Future: Junior High Program 2012:

We have submitted a proposal to the Guatemala Government [Dept of Education] to commence a 'junior High' Program at Tierra Colorada in 2012. Approvals have been slowed up because of National elections; but, we received verbal approval last week. We expect written confirmation by month's end. I am expecting to fund this project over the next 2 years [about \$15,000/yr] before the Government will take over all costs. Families in the community will contribute \$20Q/month for each student.

Yurac Yacu Project, Peru

Prepared by Sarah Cashmore, Project Manager



This has been a busy and productive year for the Yurac Yacu project. In December our partner, Andean Alliance, opened the first room of the new Yurac Yacu Community Centre and moved the educational programs into this new building.

Meanwhile Sombrilla was fundraising to complete the building of the community centre. With the help of a grant from the Province of Alberta, Community Initiatives Program we were able to start the project and in July the construction process began with the making of adobe blocks.

The construction is going well and the second room, the library/meeting room is expected to be finished by the end of November. There will also be an open air terrace that will provide space for tourism related small businesses. The construction of the community centre has created 25 temporary jobs in the community.

Sombrilla members and supporters have contributed to the Yurac Yacu Education Programs with donations of picture books in Spanish and materials to be used in the classroom. A donation of \$500 to be used for the promotion of literacy in the education programs was received from the Federation of University Women – Calgary North. This money will be put to use this winter in the ongoing literacy programming offered as part of the Yurac Yacu Project.



Sombrilla thanks our major donors for their ongoing support

The Government of Alberta
The Monsignor Irwin International Development Fund
The Ontario English Catholic Teacher's Association

And our local supporters

The 6th Edmonton Scouts
Federation of University Women – Calgary North