With our Nutrition Program, we were able to:

- **REDUCE THE LEVEL OF MALNUTRITION BY 26.3%**
  - In a population of 227 girls, boys and young people.

- **REDUCE ANEMIA IN A GROUP OF 27 PREGNANT WOMEN BY 23%**
  - We established good diets and nutrition to guarantee proper development of the child, as well as quality of life in their early years.

- **PROVIDE 52,655 NUTRITIOUS AND BALANCED BREAKFASTS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS**
  - We improved nutritional education in 61% of young people.

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**Interview with Executive Director Socorro Del Río**

Has the role of parents at Crecemos changed since the beginning? How is it today?

The result of working with mothers and fathers has been gradual. Today there is more participation in the proposed activities that aim to train and sensitize parents on subjects like nutrition at home, the role of mothers and fathers as educators, as well as strengthening affective bonds and communication among family members. Another change is that it has been possible to work on the formative processes with certain households. Some families that had started with significant advances with the children, because of individual intervention, now they feel improvements also at a familial level.

There are now changes in habits (health, hygiene, punctuality), behavior (greater ability to interact and communicate with others, concerning the work of Crecemos, collaboration and integration in activities) and for the expectations of development and life of their children. These families are in an integrated process because their children, like mothers and fathers, benefit from the activities of the Nutrition and Education programs.

What are the plans for next year?

The plan for next year is to strengthen the identity of Crecemos (its mission, vision and objectives), as well as strengthen the
improve academic competence by 78.9%

In a population of boys and girls, who were at social risk, dropping out of school.

enroll 201 children in sport activities

Boys and girls in the community are now part of the program “Las Escuelas Desportivas de la Fundacion Real Madrid”, whose main goal is to prevent involvement in vandalism and delinquency.

Teach computer skills and English to 97 children

70% of the beneficiaries, who wouldn’t have the means to pay for extracurriculum courses, strengthened their knowledge through these programs.

intervention models (Education and Nutrition programs), to maximize the results in the population served. In addition, we are committed to increasing the capacities and professionalization of our team to advance the systemization of processes, research and financial sustainability.

What will be obstacles to overcome next year?
Crecemos DJJO, A.C. considers that one of the obstacles to overcome next year will be the greater competition for the funding of social projects due to the reduction of resources from international corporations and government programs for these types of projects.
In 2016, Crecemos and AVSI-USA had the privilege to launch “The Awakened Heart”, a documentary about the education and nutrition center in Oaxaca, Mexico. “The Awakened Heart” first screening took place in New York on January 14, 2017, as part of the New York Encounter. Then, on January 25, 2017, the movie was shown at the Mexican Cultural Institute. Screenings were followed by a talk-back with Executive Director of Crecemos, Maria del Socorro del Rio.

Co-directed by Giovanni Morricone and Simonetta D’Italia, “The Awakened Heart” was shot entirely over three and a half days in November 2015, in the slums of Oaxaca.

“With this movie, our main purpose is to present an eyewitness account of the life in an extraordinary place, Crecemos, where a dedicated team of employees and volunteers works daily to make a difference in the lives of children and vulnerable young people,” says Simonetta D’Italia.

The Awakened Heart brings viewers into the home of Carlos Avedaño Salas, a 10-year boy and his family whose lives have been transformed through the dedicated service and accompaniment provided by Crecemos staff over the past few years.

“With his heart awakened and his body, mind and soul nourished by his family and the caring Crecemos staff, Carlos has a great chance of making it,” hopes Simonetta.
Since its debut, the documentary has already been accepted in various film festivals, like the Equality Festival and FreeNet World. It has received various awards, such as an Honorable Mention from the 2016 Festigious International Film Festival and the Silver Palm Award at the 2017 Mexico International Film Festival.

During the Oaxaca Film Festival, Eduardo Moreno, director of the Mario Moreno Cantinflas Foundation and nephew of the famous Mexican comic film actor, producer, and screenwriter visited Crecemos, one of the NGOs selected by the Oaxaca Film Festival to be part of their Foundations Night. This year, on Foundations Night, the festival screened Cantinflas' movies and the proceeds went to the chosen NGOs. Mario Moreno Cantinflas Foundation also donated some of the actor's movies to Crecemos.

“It was amazing to realize that despite the fact that Cantinflas is an actor who died almost 20 years ago, young children can still recognize him,” said Crecemos Executive Director Socorro del Río.
The tournament “Crecemos en Paz” (We Grow in Peace), was organized by the organization and individuals of the district of Nochixtlán in order to strengthen ties between the communities and promote peace to foster harmonious coexistence in the district. On June 19, 2016, Asunción Nochixtlán had witnessed acts of violence that divided the communities and became a fundamental factor for the need to raise a flag of peace. It became clear there is a need to start a path towards restoration, reconciliation and solidarity.

SIMILAR TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE REAL MADRID FOUNDATION, WE FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT SPORTS CAN BRING TOWNS TOGETHER. EVERYONE WINS BY SIMPLY ENJOYING THE MOMENT.

The tournament was held in the Magdalena Jaltepec sports center in Oaxaca, a municipality belonging to the Nochixtlán district. Crecemos chose this municipality because it has the facilities needed and it guaranteed the support of both the authorities and the parents’ committee of the Abraham Castellanos Primary School where, at first, there was some unrest.

The event involved teams from four municipalities, one police agency, three public primary schools, a civil society organization and a private soccer school: the Abraham Castellanos de Magdalena Jaltepec Primary School, the Enrique C. Rèbsamen Primary School of the Hidalgo Jaltepec Police Agency, the Francisco I Madero Primary School of San Francisco Chindúa, the Rayados Nochixtlán de Asunción Nochixtlán, and the ESD Crecemos of the Fundación Real Madrid in Oaxaca.

There were two games per day. An exhibition game was held between the ESD Crecemos and Rayados Nochixtlán of category A (6 to 8 years old). After the second day of the tournament, an exhibition of posters made by the teams and different students of the Abraham Castellanos primary school was presented in order to spread the messages of peace for the communities. At the end of the event, the results were announced: there were no losers, all teams won and took back to their communities medals as a symbol of peace and motivation for their efforts. In between games, all the teams shared food while listening to the Children’s Philharmonic Band of the Abraham Castellanos primary school and of the community of Magdalena Jaltepec.

At the end of the awards ceremony, the municipality of Asunción Nochixtlán announced their desire to host the 2nd “Crecemos en Paz” tournament. Parents and teachers commented on the joy of each child as they looked at their medals. Some even took them to school. This shows that often the pressure to win comes from adults, while children, even if they had lost all the matches, were happy to have received a medal.

Activities like this tournament are part of Crecemos program. They help strengthen the social fabric that allows for the break down of the wall of indifference and selfishness that can permeate our communities.
Crecemos
IMPROVING EARLY LITERACY

Through a series of workshops, 18 mothers learned the importance of reading to their children in entertaining and fun ways.

Reading aloud to babies and young children is one of the most effective ways to foster early literacy skills. Unfortunately in Monte Alban, one of the poorest and most violent neighborhoods in Oaxaca, Mexico, parents have very little opportunities to do so. Due to their social and economic situation, most children don’t have access to books when they are very young. Sometimes, the parents themselves have no interest or academic skills to promote reading habits with their children at home. Others don’t have money to buy books, because their wages are barely enough to cover the basic costs of food and housing. As a result, when children start school, they face one of the most frequent problems in Oaxaca: poor reading comprehension.

“Children who live in Monte Alban are exposed to a variety of social risks, including dropping-out from school primarily because they do not have sufficient academic competencies to achieve higher grades. This problem begins with poor reading comprehension,” says Socorro del Rio, Crecemos Executive Director.

To address this need, Crecemos organized in April, 2017, an activity called “Mi Mama es Puro Cuento” (“My Mom is Pure Story”). Through a series of workshops, 18 mothers living in Monte Alban learned the importance of reading to their children in entertaining and fun ways. The main goal was to improve the academic skills of children at Crecemos, the community-based organization strengthening the mother’s role in the education of their children. During the workshops, implemented in partnership with Colectivo Colibrí, mothers learned how to lead storytelling sessions that can encourage reading and strengthen the bond of affection with the children.

Elizabeth Elisa Nogales López, 41 years old and mother of Roberto (15), Andrik (12) and Darina (5) was among the women who attended the series of workshops.

“I never thought reading to young children was so important,” says Elizabeth. “During the workshops, we learned very important skills: how to know when to give emphasis to the voice, how to use different tones, be creative, show them the images in the book, and even how to create our own stories. All of those skills are important to awake the imagination of children and adults.”

To guarantee access to books for young children in the community, Crecemos reorganized a new area in the library that already existed in the Monte Alban center. This area is called “Bebeteca” (“Library for Babies”), and displays a collection of books for babies and young readers. Since April, mothers in the community can loan books for a week.

Now Elizabeth's children can borrow books and read with her before going to bed.

“Now I know how to read to my children and how to awake their interest in reading. Andrik is no longer struggling to read books that have no pictures and with Darina, who is just beginning to learn how to read, I show her the pictures and create different voices for each character. As a result, before she goes to bed, she tells me the stories she created with the same characters.”
Music is a universal language that has great positive effects on the development of children in aiding their cognitive, social, motor, emotional and linguistic development. The violin class serves as a formative proposal allowing children to take advantage of their free time in a positive way, by learning to play an instrument to express their emotions and creativity.

The end of the extracurricular workshops was the ideal scenario for children to be recognized for their great effort, perseverance and dedication during the 2017 school year. Accompanied by their parents and siblings, the children demonstrated the talents learned in the various courses, including violin.

Saturday July 8th was the end of the Extracurricular Workshops in "el Centro Maria de Guadalupe de la Colonia Monte Alban", with the purpose of highlighting the effort, the permanence and academic progress of the children through the demonstration of printed works, exhibits and presentations. The Computer, English, extracurricular support, violin, drawing and painting professors gave a description of the achievements during the work period, as well as a sample of the work. At the end, awards were given to the students who finished the computer workshop and diplomas were given to the most outstanding students for their efforts and consistency.

In 2017, work was done to professionalize the academic activities through a systemized work plan, thus allowing the placement of students in different content levels. With this change, the beneficiaries improved some habits of punctuality and assistance as the interest of staying in the groups increased.

The students developed their skills in English, advanced their basic computer skills, clarified doubts and reinforced content learned at school and developed artistic skills in music, drawing and painting.

Currently the Violin workshop has two working groups, with ten and seven members, both groups rehearse on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:00PM to 4:00PM. The activity is held on an individual basis by working on the improvement of posture and memorization.

Thanks to the generous donations of The Woods Academy, a private school in Maryland, Crecemos could buy 15 new violins and cases.

The work of the advanced violin group is developed from a combination of the Suzuki and Essential methods. The pieces from the Suzuki method have a distinct programming, allowing each student to advance at their own pace, working on technique and tuning. The Essential method enforced work on concentration, memorization and positioning to read the notes.

The children have shown improvement not only in their technique, but nowadays they also have greater self-confidence in their ability to stand before an audience and play their melodies. They also have a better knowledge of classical composers like Mozart, Vivaldi and Beethoven, which introduces them into the universal culture.
In September, 2017, Mexico was hit by three deadly earthquakes leaving 333 people dead and hundreds of houses and buildings totally or partially destroyed. The house that hosts the Center for Community Development Aerogubinos, in Unión Hidalgo, supported by AVSI’s partner Crecemos, was one of them. Since the first earthquake hit the country, on September 7, more than 120 children who normally would go to the center for after-school activities had to change their routines dramatically. To support these children and their families through this difficult moment, AVSI-USA and Crecemos are launching the campaign "Jugando aprendemos" ("We learn while playing").

The main goal is to raise $34,545, which will assist 1,500 children (500 directly and 1,000 indirectly) with integrated support services including balanced and nutritious meals, and educational, artistic and cultural activities.

Your gift of $50 can put 25 healthy meals on their tables and give them peace of mind and hope to start over again.

As of November, 2017
HOW TO HELP

In 2012, in partnership with Fundación Real Madrid CESAL and thanks to the support of the private sector, Crecemos was able to begin working in Unión Hidalgo by opening a soccer school. Alongside sport initiatives, Crecemos launched the Center for Community Development Aerogubinos that carries out a series of activities to give educational and nutrition support to children and youth in the community. Since 2012, the sports and educational center has supported more than 1,500 children.

Unión Hidalgo is a town and municipality in Oaxaca in south-western Mexico. According to recent data, in the municipality of Unión Hidalgo, 54.4% of the population lives in poverty.

The earthquake that hit Mexico on September 7 left seven people dead and injured another 55 in Unión Hidalgo. More than 300 families lost their homes. All that was left of the Center for Community Development Aerogubinos were a few walls, which were evaluated by engineers to be repairable. Humanitarian aid reaching the communities has been constant, but not enough. Since schools were closed, children spend their days at home, fearing a new earthquake. Among these children, 127 would normally go to the Center of Community Development Aerogubinos.

Double the impact of your donation! An anonymous donor is giving AVSI-USA a generous holiday gift by committing to match all donations to our Mexico Earthquake Emergency Relief. All gifts to the campaign “Jugando aprendemos” (“We learn while playing”) will double thanks to the match, so now is the perfect time to give.

To make a donation, go to: https://donorbox.org/mexico-earthquake-relief-september-2017
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