Crecemos staff distributing food to vulnerable families in Monte Albán, Oaxaca, during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Photo by Roberto Zempoaltecati.
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Three years ago, my family joined the María de Guadalupe Community Center managed by Crecemos. My daughter Lulú started early childhood classes when she was still a baby, and now people are surprised to see how smart she is for her age. I tell them that this is all thanks to the help that Crecemos gave us, because I too, as a mother, learned how to educate my daughters better.

My daughter Carmen takes violin and computer classes. I feel delighted and proud that she can play the violin because, typically, music lessons are very expensive, and we would have never been able to sign her up if Crecemos hadn’t offered them for free. She has also developed computer skills which will help her a lot in high school.

When we joined the center, Lulú had anemia. Crecemos helped us with nutritious food, nutrition monitoring, and visits to a pediatrician. It was a long and painful process for my family, but thanks to Crecemos, my daughter is doing well.

My dream, as a mother, is that my daughters may improve, study, and become good people. I wish for them a very different life from ours. Crecemos is helping us make our dreams come true.

Dulce Martínez.
Mother of Carmen and Lulú, who attend Crecemos

“We have received so much help, I don’t have words to describe how thankful we are.”
A message from the Executive Director María del Socorro del Río Angulo

This report conveys the hope which sustained us during a year marked by fear and uncertainty. We also found hope in the capacity for resilience and transformation in each of us. This year that challenged our freedom and creativity amid the paralyzing scenario of the pandemic.

In this context, it was necessary to redesign our Annual Operational Plan to include a "humanitarian aid plan for COVID-19" and adapt our ongoing projects to a circumstance no one was prepared for.

The emergency response to the 2017 earthquake taught us a crucial lesson that helped us face the COVID-19 pandemic: we cannot respond reactively to challenges. First, we need to understand the needs of families at each stage of the crisis. Only then can we respond in a timely, orderly, and systematic manner. This approach allowed us to optimize our available resources.

We achieved the results presented in this report thanks to the great effort and dedication of a team of collaborators who were always ready to grow and learn and never took a step back. These achievements were also made possible by the commitment of the families, especially mothers and fathers who continued to participate in our programs, despite the considerable effort.

To all our partners: we sincerely thank you for your understanding and trust, because only by being together, can we thrive!

2020 was a year of challenges, but it was also filled with unexpected responses from friends and people eager to help those who faced the crisis in adverse contexts.

2020 also presented opportunities to engage with our partners, such as AVSI, CESAL, and the Real Madrid Foundation, with whom we shared successful experiences despite the adverse effects of the pandemic.

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01.

Crecemos DIJO
Mission
At Crecemos, we support the human development of children, adolescents and their families living in vulnerable situations by implementing comprehensive educational programs, based on the principle of subsidiarity in which people are involved in the construction of the common good.

Vision
To promote community development in vulnerable contexts in which the person is the protagonist of her own development.

Objectives
1. Fight children and adolescent malnutrition in rural and suburban areas of the state of Oaxaca.
2. Increase the education level of children and youth in rural and suburban areas of Oaxaca.
3. Prevent social risks that threaten children and youth in their communities.
4. Empower families to be protagonists of their own development.
2020 “In front of a concrete need, a friendship was born”
On March 23rd, 2020, the Mexican federal government declared the “National Day of Healthy Distance” to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Schools were closed, leaving more than 33 million students at home. Non-essential activities were also suspended in all social and economic sectors.

We conducted a socio-economic survey of 150 families to better understand their employment situation, income, health services, and technological access.

Important data generated:

- 95% of participants held informal jobs
- 90% of participants earned less than 5,000 pesos (USD 250) per month
- 50% of participants did not have essential health services
- 30% of participants had no internet access

“Staying at home” was not an option for many families who could hardly make ends meet. Furthermore, there was a lot of skepticism among the population about the actual existence of the virus. For this reason, at first, we provided cleaning products and carried out an awareness campaign about hygiene care.

Then, we designed the operational plan according to the government’s COVID-19 Traffic Light Monitoring System: green, yellow, orange, and red. We have never stopped working; we simply adapted the activities according to the color-coded system used to alert residents to the risks of COVID-19 and provide guidance on restrictions on certain activities in each of the country’s states.
03.

Results 2020
Nutrition Education Program

Our program aims to improve the nutritional status of girls and boys in the weight, height, and hemoglobin indicators. To seek specific results, we implement the following comprehensive strategies:

**Nutritious diet**

We provided nutritious and balanced meals to our beneficiaries and taught them about nutrition and how to develop healthy habits.

*Results: children’s food intake and eating habits improved through a steady diet of many fruits and vegetables.*

**Nutrition monitoring**

Every four months, we measured the weight, height, and hemoglobin levels of children from 6 months to 15 years old and provided personalized nutritional consultations for malnourished boys and girls.

*Results: Children learned and adapted healthy eating habits and their health indicators improved.*

**Nutrition education**

Through playful and informative workshops for children and their mothers, we promoted nutritious, balanced, and affordable food while raising awareness of malnutrition and its repercussions on health.

*Results: Beneficiaries increased consumption of nutritious food and decreased consumption of unhealthy food.*
### Results 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food packages delivered</td>
<td>1,680</td>
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<tr>
<td>Breakfasts served</td>
<td>30,770</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>1,932</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hours of nutrition education</td>
<td>702</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hygiene and protection kits provided</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height/weight measurements</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hemoglobin tests</td>
<td>625</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Education Support Program

The purpose of the program is to enhance the cognitive skills and abilities of girls, boys and adolescents through the following activities:

**Early Childhood Development**

The project offers early stimulation and psychomotor therapy sessions for children 0 to 5 years old and training sessions for parents and caregivers on healthy parenting habits.

**Result:** Children improved linguistic, cognitive, and emotional skills and parents and caregivers developed the skills needed to help their children learn at home.

**Academic Reinforcement**

To improve the academic level of children and adolescents, we provided computer, reading, and academic reinforcement tutoring sessions which helped children and teenagers acquire greater skills.

**Result:** Children and teenagers improved technological and cognitive skills.
Results 2020

- 620 Participants
- 410 Hours of Academic Reinforcement
- 78 Children participated in the Early Childhood Development program
- 86.8% Of toddlers reached age-appropriate autonomy
- 542 Children and teenagers attended our Academic Reinforcement program
Risk Prevention Program

During the COVID-19 lockdown, the number of domestic violence incidents increased due to stress, loss of work or income, and confinement. Many children were also left alone at home while parents looked for odd jobs to sustain the family.

Crecemos implemented comprehensive educational models to help girls, boys, and adolescents develop resilience in the face of adversities and strengthen their emotional and social skills.

To address these issues, we implemented the following activity:

Arts Education

We offered music and visual arts classes for children six and older that stimulate their creativity and other learning skills, such as attention, memory, and coordination. Class activities included the presentation of the students’ talents to their families. This activity is aimed at increasing their safety and healthy coexistence.

Results: Children and teenagers improved social and emotional skills and spent more hours of quality time with their families.
Results 2020

290 Children participated

384 Hours of art classes

64% Of the participants improved their musical skills

76.4% Of the participants improved their painting skills
One of the main objectives of the sports clubs run by the Real Madrid Foundation is to promote values and contribute to the comprehensive education of children and teenagers, as well as the social inclusion of the most vulnerable. In partnership with the NGO Cesal, we operate two sports clubs in Oaxaca. Most of the girls and boys who attend the clubs live in places where they are exposed to various social risks that threaten their physical and socio-emotional development.
At first, I didn’t believe in the virus, I thought it was a political matter, but then it affected us all. The death of a relative had a tremendous toll on us. This tragedy helped me regain consciousness. Cases increased in our community, as nobody believed that the virus was real. The pandemic hit us financially too. My husband lost his job, and my sales fell. The nutritional package that the Crecemos social sports clubs gave us has helped us all.

Mayra López

Thanks to the social sports club we have learned to eat better and how to include more vegetables and salads in our diet.

The coach would send my daughter videos so she could practice at home. I helped her by recording her practice, and I would then send the videos back to the teacher. This method helped her physically and emotionally. She was a very introverted girl, but thanks to the sports clubs she learned to communicate with others and express herself more freely. My daughter used to express her feelings by crying, but now she is a different girl, more cheerful. I thank the social sports club for supporting my daughter, for giving her that opportunity that we did not have. I also would like to thank Crecemos’ staff because they have been with us during this pandemic.
Results 2020

198
Children participated in the program

1,200
Food donations

1,550
Hours of sports training

557
Height/weight and hemoglobin measurements

180
Hours of nutrition education

200
Hours promoting reading
04.

Partners
Partners

People for development

The Raskob Foundation for Catholic Activities
Fundación Alfredo Harp Helú
Oaxaca
AT&T
AVSI USA
Bimbo
Boca MEXA
Fundación CMR
Coppel Comunidad
demex
Fundación MAPFRE
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