



## **Backgrounder**

### **FRIENDS OF HONDURAN CHILDREN**

Right now, thousands of impoverished, orphaned or abandoned children are struggling for survival in Honduras. The mission of Friends of Honduran Children is simple – improve their quality of life. Meet their basic needs and empower them to break the cycle of deprivation and hardship that controls their lives.

Honduras is widely believed to be the poorest country in Latin America. The combined effects of terrible poverty, AIDS, and the continued devastating aftermath of 1998's Hurricane Mitch have resulted in hunger, sickness and malnutrition for many of Honduras' children. For many it also means violence, prostitution, addiction, child labour, criminal behaviour and possible imprisonment.

Working with long-time Honduran partner Sociedad Amigos de los Niños, Friends rescues these children from a life of poverty and neglect. They're given food, clothing, medical and dental care, and a safe place to live. Most importantly, they're given love and security. When they're safe and thriving, Friends provides an education and life tools, encouraging them to aspire to something better.

Based primarily within city of Tegucigalpa, Sociedad Amigos de los Niños strives to help Honduras' most vulnerable. For more than 40 years, Sociedad founder Sister Maria Rosa Leggol has delivered hope and an opportunity to forge a brighter future through self-pride and self-sustainability. In that time, more than 35,000 children have been rescued, cared for and educated.

Dr. Jim McCallum began working with Sociedad in 1979 in response to his fervent desire to help Sister in her tireless efforts. 26 years later, Friends of Honduran Children is a thriving non-profit, grass roots organization based in Peterborough, Ontario, Canada. Together, Friends and Sociedad have saved thousands of children from the ravaging effects of hopeless poverty.

To do this, Friends relies on the generosity of people who want to make a real difference in the life of a child. Rather than offering band-aid solutions, Friends focuses on sustainable programs like the Child Sponsorship, Peterborough Medical Brigades, Education and Flor Azul Farm School initiatives. By doing this, they offer the children an opportunity to transform themselves from victims of poverty into self-sufficient members of society.

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#### **For further information, contact:**

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