



Nuestra Familia

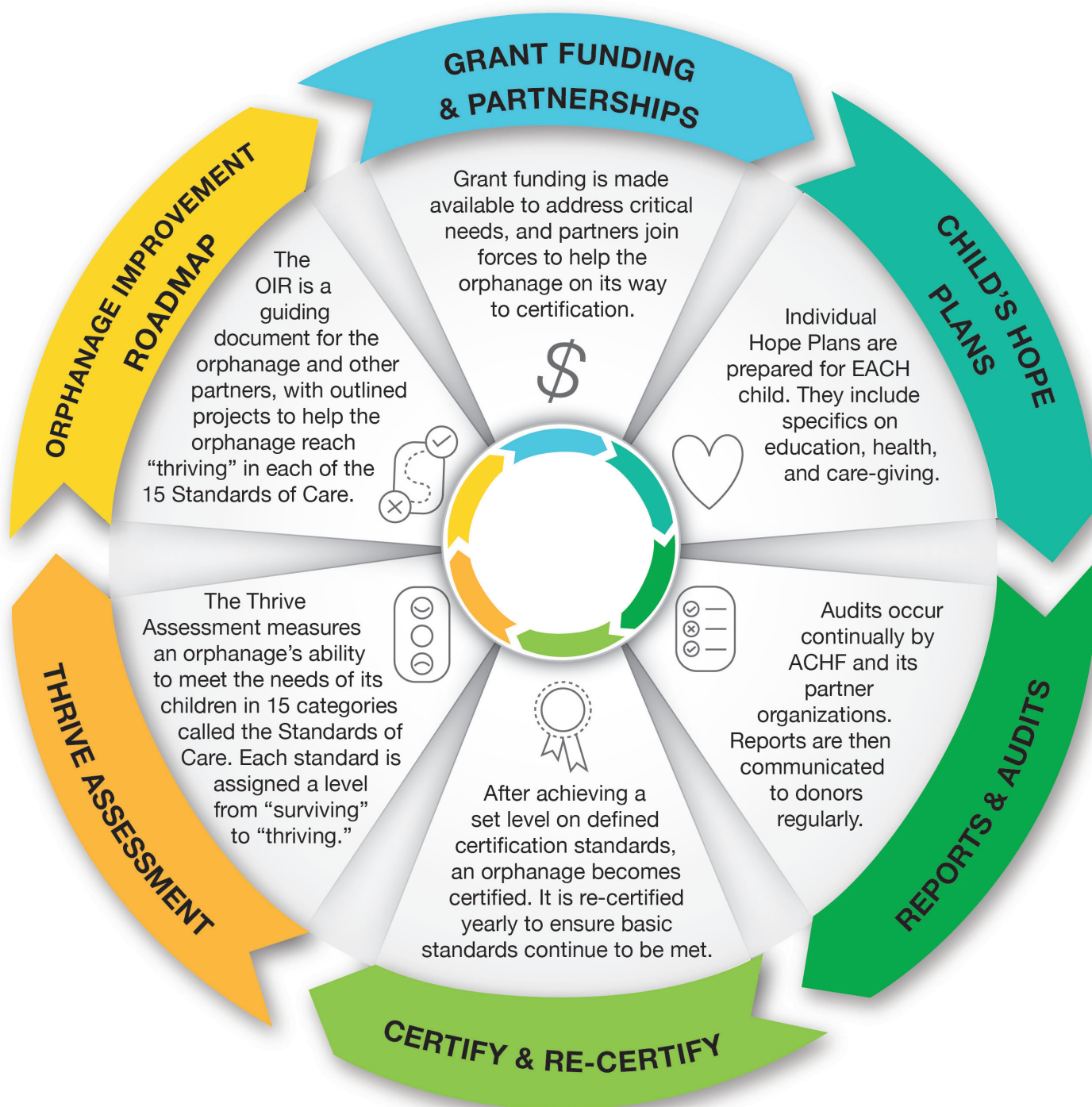
Tijuana

ORPHANAGE IMPROVEMENT ROADMAP

November | 2020



The Thrive Plan



Thrive Plan Agreement

A Child's Hope Foundation (ACHF) has a unique approach to "Lift Orphans from Surviving to Thriving." We are dedicated to programs that offer long-term success. Through vetted relationships and clear priorities, we help connect donors to programs that are already working.

Each Orphanage Improvement Roadmap (OIR) is built with the orphanage leadership after reviewing the results from the Thrive Assessment. In order to provide children with better outcomes, orphanage leadership prioritizes initiatives and works with A Child's Hope Foundation (ACHF) to create a plan for the next six months and beyond. The result is a document that allows donors and other parties to clearly see how they can contribute to improving the environment that will allow orphaned children to thrive.

Achieving certification demonstrates the ability of the Orphanage Leadership to provide a place where children can thrive, heal, and be prepared for a joyful and productive life. For most orphanages, the certification process takes a year. ACHF is deeply committed to our orphanage partners, and we demonstrate that commitment through grants made to help achieve strategic initiatives, coordinating with a network of partners to help address needs, and building strong, ongoing relationships with orphanage leadership to provide support, coaching, expertise, and advocacy.

Orphanages will be recertified annually, using the Thrive Assessment and building a new OIR every six months, while providing regular reports back to ACHF. ACHF then reports back to donors, sharing the orphanage's progress towards their goals. A Child's Hope Foundation works as a partner with orphanage leadership to ensure that improvements are maintained and that children have the best opportunity to thrive.



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Overview of Orphanage

Background

The beginnings of Nuestra Familia (officially known as Casa Hogar Maria Inmaculada, A.C.) go back to 2011, when Noel Diaz, founder of El Sembrador Ministries in Los Angeles, took over the orphanage in Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico; his hometown.

1985 - Father José de Jesús Quezada Martínez opened the shelter and protection to single mothers and mothers with children who did not have a place to live, giving it the name of Casa Hogar Hacienda de la Inmaculada, A.C.

1987 - Mother Virginia Alejandra Oropeza Baez is welcomed in the home by Father Quezada Martínez

2007 - Father José de Jesus Quezada Martínez grants the direction of the house and later the legal representation to Mother Virginia Oropeza Baez and she named it: CASA HOGAR MARIA INMACULADA, A.C.

2011 - Mother Virginia arrives in Los Angeles to speak to Noel Diaz, president and founder of El Sembrador Ministries, Inc. asking him to be responsible for the home. Noel Díaz agrees to take over the direction of the home and all the legal representation of Casa Hogar Maria Inmaculada, A.C., which he calls “Nuestra Familia” (or “Our Family” in English).

Through the years, Nuestra Familia has benefited from both American and Mexican connections, whose combined efforts have led to a partnership between the people of Mexico and the United States to enhance the facilities and services of Nuestra Familia to displaced children of Tijuana. These partnerships have provided for special amenities for children and teens, boys and girls, a soccer field, upgraded utilities, and Christ based primary and secondary education. These connections have allowed the orphanage to continue to function and provide happy childhoods for hundreds of children throughout the years.

Today, Nuestra Familia is home to 42 children and is part of the orphanage community in Tijuana, working together with Mexico’s National System for Integral Family Development (DIF) to provide a safe and nurturing home for children found in unhealthy or dangerous conditions.

Mission

The mission of Nuestra Familia is to raise happy kids through a Christ-centered foundation, providing children everything needed to prepare for a life of meaning and service. This includes housing, nutrition, healthcare, education and providing children the message of hope grounded in the love of God and belief in human dignity. In order to accomplish this special mission, Nuestra Familia offers the children with more than just the basic necessities of life. Our purpose is to take care of their bodies, mind and soul, providing psychological support to help each child to realize his or her full potential, both personally and in society. As a relief charity, our vision is guided with the hope that one day, each child we touch will be able to live independently and contribute to society in a meaningful way, that's why at Nuestra Familia children are more than just residents; they are pearls of great price with whom we are entrusted. Just like any parent, Nuestra Familia wishes for their children to feel confident, safe, and loved.

"[...] Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Matthew 25:40

What Makes Orphanage Unique?

At Nuestra Familia, we believe that all children deserve and should have an opportunity to succeed. What makes us unique as a home is that we treat each one of our children as unique and very special individuals. Our kids have had very difficult histories; they already are warriors and winners having made it this far in life. Our commitment is to walk with and strengthen these little ones, to help them heal and know they deserve love and can also give it. We exist to remind them how strong and capable they truly are!

Our directors, Emma and Juan Villagran, are well loved at our home because of their commitment. They work hard to provide a safe environment and give these children respect, affection, and tremendous love. Nuestra Familia provides each of our children with a unique personal development plan that identifies strengths and opportunity areas, in academic, extracurricular, personal and spiritual spheres. These activities are made possible only through generous donations by our sponsor organizations and individual donors interested in the children's future.

Our facilities include an in-house clinic, upgraded utilities, bathrooms, a dining room, a commercial kitchen, solar panels, HVAC, enhanced security and a Life Safety system (smoke and fire alarms) as well as quality of life enhancements such as a play area for toddlers, a full playground for pre-teen and teens, a soccer field, a computer room, a library/study hall and a Chapel. In addition, each child is provided with school supplies, school uniforms, new shoes, and new clothing of their choosing to mitigate any stigmatization.

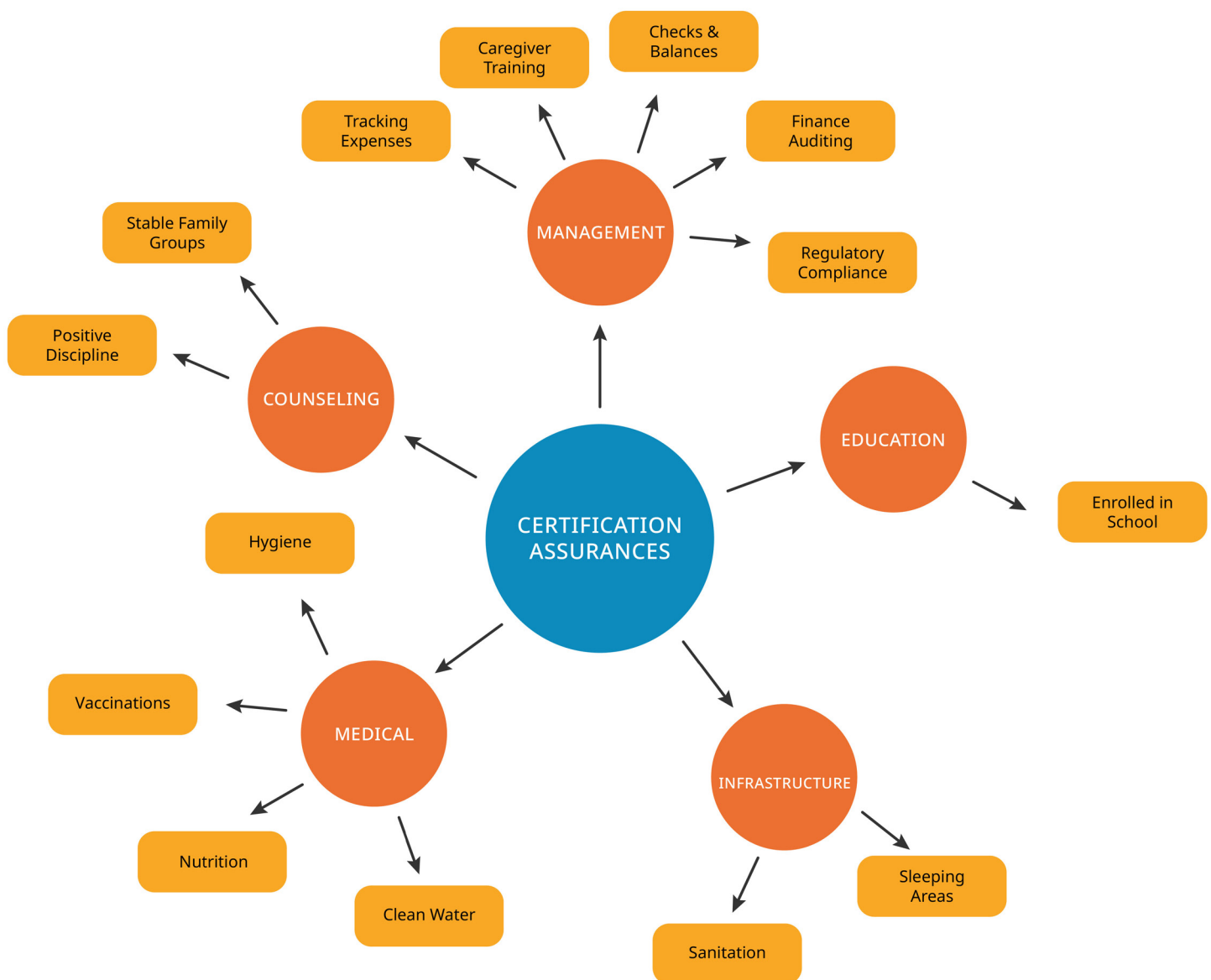
Long-Term Vision

Nuestra Familia hopes to eventually house about 100 children; including housing for those who have transitioned into adulthood but would like a place to stay temporarily while they're at school or looking for their own place. In order to reach this vision, we need to build individual housing for the teen girls and their house parents. The goal is to have the children per household based on their age group on its current campus, as well as expand its services exponentially.



Certification Assurances

The following pages outline the assurances an orphanage must guarantee in order to become ACHF Certified. Certification opens the door to many more opportunities, resources, and partnerships for the orphanage. The goal is for orphanages to be certified within 12-18 months. The certification assurances checklist are questions that are part of the Thrive Assessment and is the baseline that orphanages need to achieve certification.



Certification Assurances Checklist

NUESTRA FAMILIA

This process began on: January 2019

The Certification Assurances are rated on a scale of 1-4, 4 being the best.

CERTIFICATION ASSURANCES		
COMPLETED	CHILD RIGHT	QUESTION
4	Water	Does the home have water that is safe to drink (free from chemicals, bacteria & decaying pipes)?
4	Water	Do children have access to water whenever they would like a drink?
4	Water	Does home have a safe disposal method for sewage and wastewater that does not contaminate the drinking water source?
4	Dignity & Freedom	Do children have access to their own bed? (bed, bedmat, sleeping area)
4	Education	Is every child enrolled and able to attend school 80% + of the time?
4	Stable, Loving Environment	Are consequences for infractions of rules, positive discipline based and appropriate to age? (ex: no time out all day, etc)
3	Right to live with Family	Do house groups live as a stable family group (Do house parents commit to 2+ years of service and staying with kids 5 days or more of the week so they have consistent caregivers)?
4	Right to be Protected from Abuse and Neglect	Has all staff and ancillaries received training on positive discipline techniques and alternatives to corporal punishment?
4	Right to be Protected from Abuse and Neglect	Does the home implement a child protection program/policy that ensures children are not abused (physically, verbally, emotionally, etc.) by house parents?
4	Right to be Protected from Abuse and Neglect	Are caregivers trained every six months in how to recognize/prevent abuse?
4	Equal Opportunities	Do both male and female mentors/adults act as role models and are available for counsel?

CERTIFICATION ASSURANCES

COMPLETED	CHILD RIGHT	QUESTION
4	Nutrition	Do children get the proper amount of caloric intake each day?
4	Nutrition	Is protein provided daily?
4	Healthcare	Are soap and water readily available in a hygienic manner near the dining area, toilet facilities, and nursing area?
4	Healthcare	Do all children receive and have documentation of their vaccinations?
4	Dignity & Freedom	Are children bathed/showered weekly and proper safety precautions taken for infants?
4	Governance & HR	Land and improvements are secured so that they can't be sold for personal gain.
4	Governance & HR	Are house parents given a written document that details their terms of employment and a job description outlining the responsibilities of their position?
3	Governance & HR	Does home comply with all licensing, audit, and governance requirements? (If not fully licensed are you actively working to receive it?)
4	Finance	Do you have a form of tracking your income and expenses?
4	Finance	Are records maintained and available for review?
4	Finance	Do you keep receipts and create a profit and loss statement by month?
4	Finance	Are controls in place and followed to minimize opportunities for misuse of funds? (ex: Is purchase policy in place and followed for procuring non-recurrent/recurrent items?)
3	Finance	Does a qualified accountant validate the books for the organization?



The Thrive Assessment

What is the Thrive Assessment?

The United Nations (UN), an international organization, has worked tirelessly to find ways to promote a better quality of life so that basic needs are met. In 1959, the UN adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which defines children's rights to protection, education, healthcare, shelter, and nutrition.

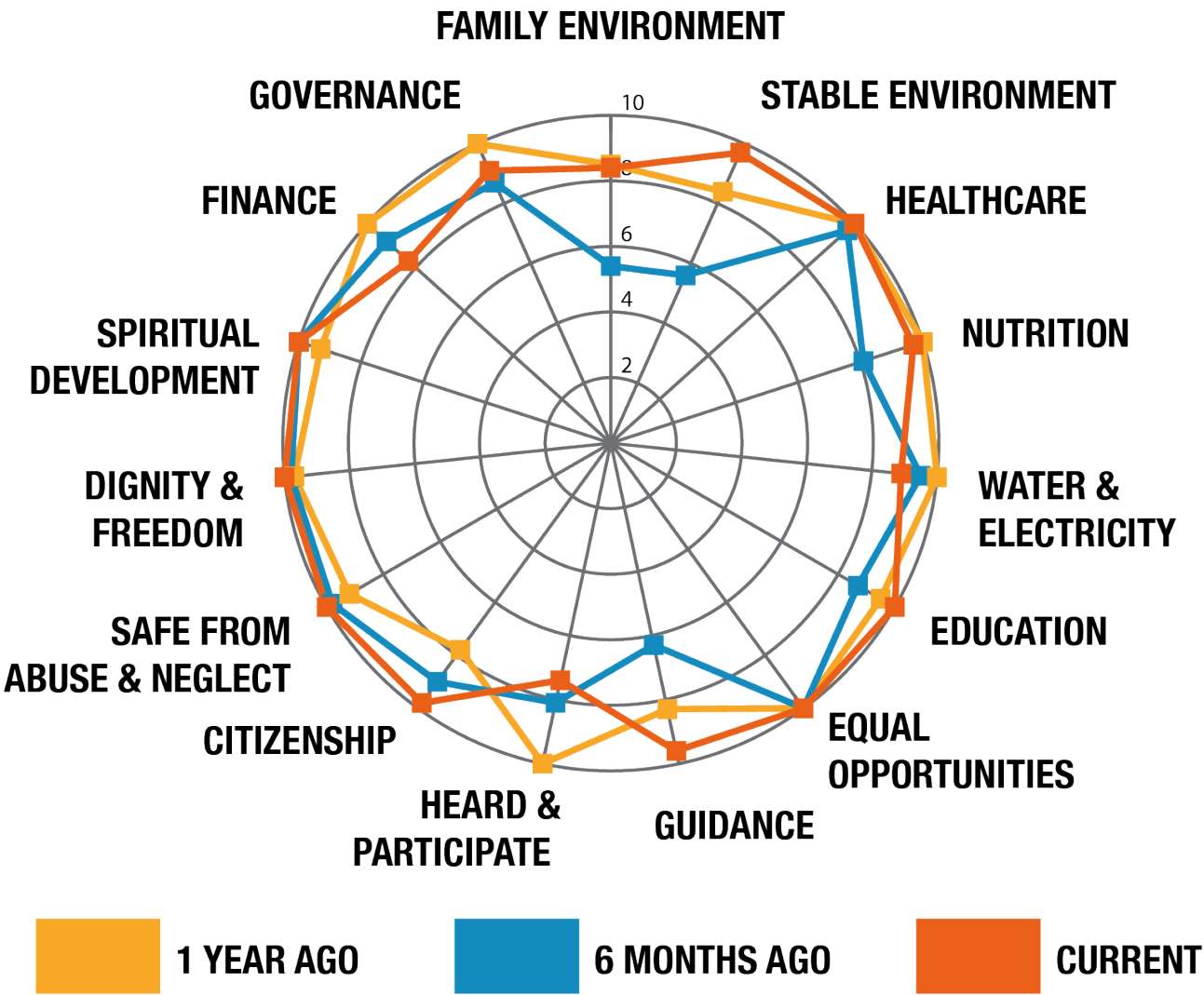
Based on the adopted declaration, The Miracle Foundation (miraclefoundation.org), a family-focused non-profit that provides resources to orphans mostly in India, codified the UN's Rights of the Child and developed a Thrive Scale, which measures how well child care facilities are able to obtain each of the rights to the children in their care. This Thrive Scale not only gives child care facility leaders a picture of how they're doing, but specific and practical steps to improve.

With permission, A Child's Hope Foundation has revised The Thrive Scale to make it adaptable for orphanages. We have codified all 12 Rights, as well as a Finance, Governance, and Human Resource standard, resulting in a total of 15 ACHF standards. These standards ensure that children receive care that truly helps them to thrive, now and in the future.

The Thrive Assessment will be administered every 6 months to chart the progress of each standard. It, along with the Orphanage Improvement Roadmap and individual Child's Hope Plans, will measure and help obtain these rights for each child.



Current Thrive Scale for Orphanage





Right to Live with Family

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Nuestra Familia is at the level of **THRIVING**. The staff work extended shifts and there are dedicated parents who, along with Juan and Emma, provide care and supervision to the 45 children they currently have. With the presence of more adults, children are able to associate daily with their siblings during meals, in general orphanage activities, and during free time. Also, children whose parents or extended family have permission from the DIF (the government authority), under supervision, can receive visits or have phone calls. Training has been provided on issues relevant to the development of children and this has allowed parents to play a better role in daily care. A new section of the facility for the care of children with behavioral problems has also been created, so that they have better care and supervision and can be separated from other houses to give less workload to current house parents.

- ☐ Hire at least 3 married couples to be house parents (estimated salary of \$1200 USD per month, per couple)
- ☐ Certify house parents in informed trauma care with the support of the current therapist



Right to Stable, Loving Nurturing Environment

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Nuestra Familia is at the level of **THRIVING**. Juan, Emma, home parents and therapists are available most of the time to meet with individual children and provide meaningful support and affection. Although more house parents are still needed, having the support of two licensed therapists has helped significantly. They have trained staff on how to show affection, validate emotions, and use appropriate discipline techniques, topics that have helped to improve their emotional interactions with children. In order to maintain the Thriving level, the home will need more parents who are dedicated to building long-term, trusting relationships with the children in their care.

- ☐ Provide funds for family enrichment activities advised by therapists



Right to Healthcare

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Nuestra Familia is at the level of **THRIVING**. They keep medical records for each child and the children receive annual checkups. The children have also received the necessary vaccinations. They have hired a nurse to visit the home on an ongoing basis, care for the children, and check that they take their medications in a timely manner as needed. They help their children with hygiene. Children bathe daily, wash their hands before eating and after using the bathroom, wash their hair daily, and brush their teeth three times a day. They receive regular medical and dental exams and are currently supported by a foundation specializing in general medical and dental care and receive advice from a nutritionist. In order to stay at the Thriving level, the household will need to continue with the fund for medical and mental health emergencies to cover the expenses of approximately \$1500 per year.

- ☐ Fund for medical and mental health emergencies (approximately \$1500 per year)



Right to Nutrition

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Nuestra Familia is at the level of **THRIVING**. Currently, they can feed children three meals a day and the children are getting adequate calories. They have the monthly professional advice of a nutritionist who supervises and monitors the weight and height of the children as well as the menus implemented at home. A chef was hired who has been trained in nutrition, and he prepares food according to the plan indicated by the nutritionist. In order for them to maintain the thriving level, they need \$400 USD to continue implementing the nutritional plan since some months they have been short on funds to be able to cover the feeding needs of all the children according to the nutritional plan.

- ☐ Have extra funds for food estimated at \$400 USD per month



Right to Clean Water and Electrical Power

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Nuestra Familia is at the level of **THRIVING**. They currently have plenty of potable water for all of their needs (drinking, preparing food, washing, etc.) and have electrical wiring and lighting in all their facilities. They have adequate power and electricity in the home and they also have water storage systems in case of outages. They have also installed solar panels that have reduced their monthly electrical energy expenses. To maintain this level, they will need \$1,500 a year for regular electrical maintenance and upgrades.

- ☐ Electrical maintenance and updates (\$1,500 USD per year)



Right to Quality Education

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Nuestra Familia is at the level of **THRIVING**. Children are able to attend school consistently throughout the academic year and all are enrolled in private schools. The children have tutors and most of them perform at or beyond the expectations for their ages and for those children who are slightly behind the rest. They have the support of two psychopedagogists; one of them attends all children in general, and the other generates and executes individual support programs for children with academic lags. All children have English classes and computer workshops as extra class activities. To stay at the Thriving level, they will need to create continuing education or training plans with all children after they graduate from high school.

- ☐ Create continuing education or training plans with all children after they graduate from high school



Right to Equal Opportunity

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Nuestra Familia is at the level of **THRIVING**. The children are able to participate in extracurricular activities and there are proper accommodations in place for children with disabilities or specific needs. To maintain the home at a level of thriving, the home needs continual funding for children to participate in extracurricular activities, such as piano lessons, dance classes, art classes, Italian language classes, baking classes, and soccer.

- ☐ Soccer classes \$110/month (activity for 25 kids)
- ☐ Arts, Baking and Italian Classes \$95 USD per month (Arts 14 kids, Baking Classes 24 kids and Italian 4 kids)
- ☐ Dance classes \$101/month (activity for 11 kids)



Right to Guidance

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Nuestra Familia is at the level of **THRIVING**. Currently the home has trained adults to work with and guide the children. House parents and directors Juan and Emma provide guidance on an ongoing basis. Juan teaches them some basic life skills such as shopping at the supermarket, how to budget for personal expenses, how to use some tools to fix simple problems at home, etc. Emma teaches them how to cope with their emotions and help those less fortunate than they are. With the support of the therapists, the house parents have learned ways to guide the children who, together with Juan and Emma, have built a safe environment in which to talk about their concerns. Therapists provide additional guidance to children. In order to maintain the Thriving level, they will need to implement a plan for the development of life skills and responsible sexual behavior with all children over 13 years old, and also generate education or training plans for work with adolescents over 15 years old to support them in their independence when they complete their time at the orphanage.

- ☐ Create and implement a plan for the development of life skills and responsible sexual behavior with all children over 13 years old
- ☐ Create and implement education plans for work with adolescents over 15 years old
- ☐ Implement Child's Hope Plans



Right to Be Heard & Participate in Decisions that Affect Them

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Nuestra Familia is at the level of **SUSTAINING**. The children at the home are able to make decisions about what they wear or do for free time, have a voice in what they eat, and make suggestions for holiday plans, etc. In order to move from sustaining to thriving, the home needs to model and coach children's committees so they can develop leadership and feel a sense of agency. In order to facilitate this type of initiative, while no funds would need to be used, staff would need templates and trainings by an expert in counseling to teach how to hold these types of meetings.

- ☐ Seek local support with specialists in children's committee development
- ☐ Implement Child's Hope Plans



Right to Be Prepared for Active & Responsible Citizenship

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Nuestra Familia is at a level of **THRIVING**. The children have all been given chores and are expected to carry them out as assigned. They understand the importance of responsibility and the various roles they play in their home. They have been exposed to the greater community, and fulfill various responsibilities at their church as well as in the community. Juan and Emma also take their children to serve others who are less fortunate than themselves on a regular basis.

To continue to maintain the Thriving level, adolescents over 15 years of age need to continue to develop daily life skills that can be learned from a mentor within the home and the support of therapists.

- ☐ No project is needed, this can be done with the support of house parents and therapists



Right to be Protected from Abuse & Neglect

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Nuestra Familia is at the level of **THRIVING**. The staff treat the children well and avoid physical punishment. The local police and government psychologists visit the home regularly and provide training sessions to staff and children. In order to maintain this level, children will need age-appropriate training in appropriate sexual and romantic behavior. The staff would need templates and training from an expert in counseling to teach how to carry out this type of training. This could take place with the support of a local organization specialized in the subject, at an approximate cost of \$300 USD every 6 months.

- ☐ Training from local experts on appropriate sexual and romantic behavior (\$300 every 6 months)
- ☐ Create a fund for ongoing training of staff and team members



Right to Dignity & Freedom

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Nuestra Familia is at the level of **THRIVING**. Children are treated well and are given their right to privacy. In order for them to remain at this level, they must provide more opportunities for children to engage in more activities outside the home. Under regular conditions, these activities have been carried out normally in the home. Due to the global pandemic, they have been suspended to guarantee the health and safety of all and to obey the contagion control measures recommended by the state. However, this following year (if the conditions related to the pandemic allow it), it is desired to resume extracurricular activities for all children. Depending on the age-appropriate activity, the cost will vary. In addition to the cost of the activity, there would also be personnel and transportation costs associated with this. The principal would like a budget to take the children out to eat on their birthdays, as well as long-term volunteers who can help facilitate special outings in small groups. A fund of around \$200 a month would allow them to continue with this type of activity.

- ☐ Activities away from home (\$200 USD per month)



Right to Spiritual Development

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Nuestra Familia is at the level of **THRIVING**. The children are respectful and obedient. They have great role models in Juan and Emma, who provide examples of faith, love, respect and service. Children have spaces to practice prayer if they wish and are taught about God and religion, but are not required to attend church. The home will continue to teach children right from wrong and help them develop an internal moral compass so that they can learn to do what's right.

Finance Standard

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Nuestra Familia is at the level of **SUSTAINING**. The home keeps a record of each child and strives to maintain proper data and documentation. Before arriving at the orphanage, Juan worked professionally as an accountant, which makes it easier for him to keep the books in good condition with the correct verification of their income and expenses and available for review. He meets regularly with the accountant at El Sembrador Ministries (a support organization) who provides additional external supervision, advice and support. Currently the orphanages are improving their administrative practices, such as making annual declarations as indicated by Mexican standards and having their books validated by a certified accountant.

- ☐ No project is needed in this area; Juan and Emma are already working with an accountant and a legal advisor who is guiding them in tax processes and a legal advisor who is guiding them in tax processes

Governance and Human Resource Standard

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Nuestra Familia is on the level of **THRIVING**. There are regular staff meetings, clarity of roles, and documentation of many organizational expectations. The staff have received sufficient training in their duties, but need an ongoing training and training plan to ensure quality. To maintain and stay at this level, the house is developing strategies to provide staff benefits according to the Mexican labor laws that would cost \$64 USD per person per month, for 22 people.

- ☐ Create a fund for the payment of benefits of 22 workers according to Mexican labor laws that includes: Retirement fund, Social Security, Infonavit (savings for housing), Taxes, Christmas bonus and vacation premium. (\$4,592 USD per month)

Strategic Initiatives

SECURING BENEFITS FOR NUESTRA FAMILIA STAFF

PROJECT OWNER	Erendira Trujillo Ramirez
ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE	November 2021
INITIAL ANTICIPATED COST	\$4,592 USD per month
PROJECT SUMMARY	Provide support for the payment of benefits for 22 team members, in accordance with the Mexican labor law, such as retirement fund, Social Security, Infonavit (savings for housing), Taxes, Christmas Bonus and vacation premium.
PROJECT PURPOSE	The purpose of the initiative is to attend to the measures indicated by the Secretary of Labor in Mexico, providing the benefits established by law to all team members, also with it to others that we guarantee that it operates within the law, the staff will be attracted , the percentage of staff turnover will be reduced and a sense of belonging will be generated in the position and as a result we will contribute to a more stable family environment for the children.

Completed Projects

PROJECT TILES

- Computers for at-home learning due to COVID-19

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- Nuestra Familia added an expansion to allow for a more family-styled environment for the house parents and the kids.
- The orphanage hired a licensed therapist who works individually with the children. She also trains the staff to know how to show affection, validation, and use appropriate discipline techniques.



