



Rancho de los Niños

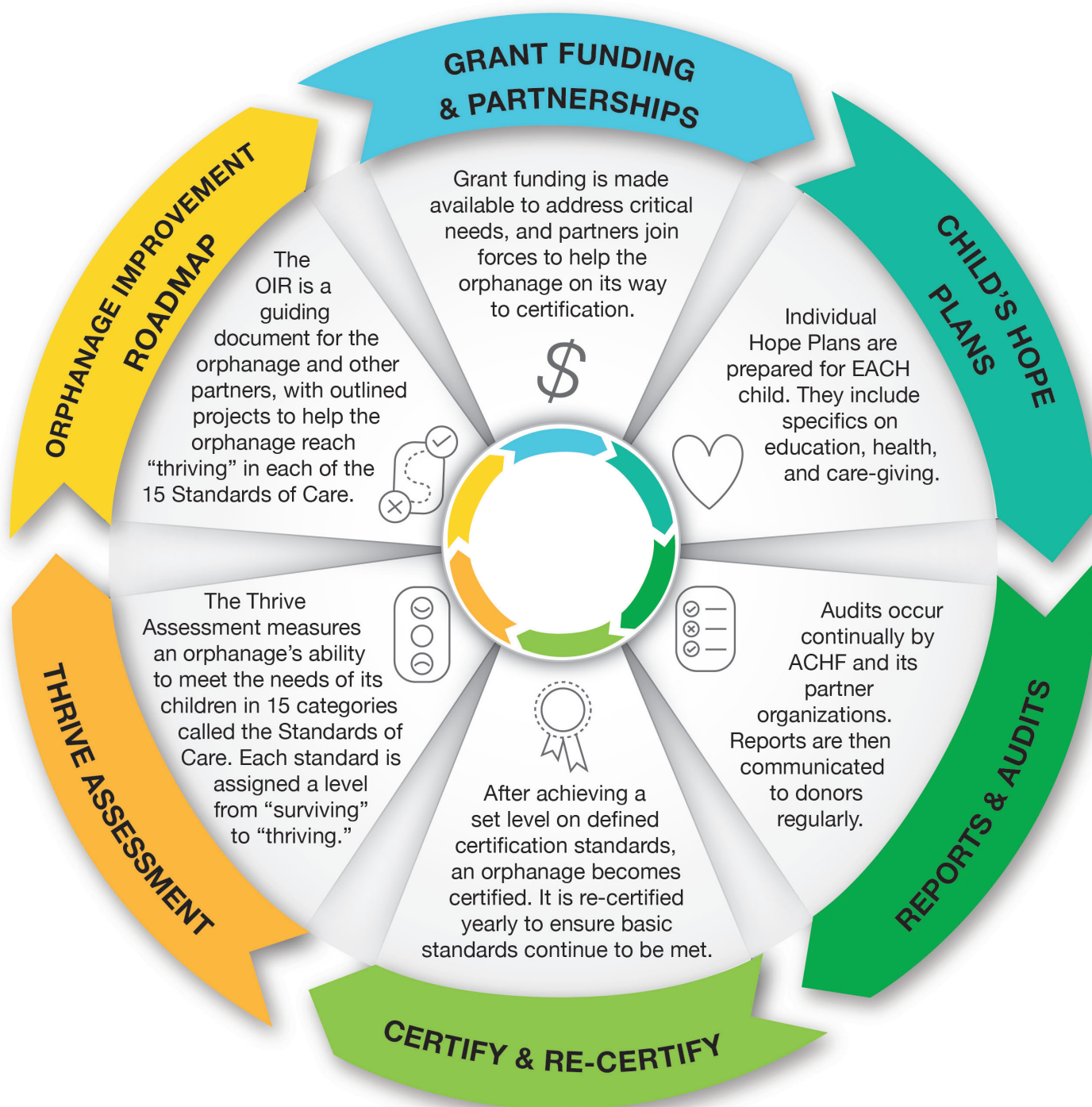
Guadalupe Valle

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 Rancho de los Niños go back to 1968, when Jerry Walkenson, a Christian leader from San Diego, began building churches and orphanages in Baja California. One of these projects was Rancho de los Niños, which from the beginning has been largely staffed by local members of the community.

Through the years, they have benefited from both American and Mexican connections, whose combined efforts have provided for amenities such as underground electricity and plumbing, workable farmland and, of course, facilities for the children. These connections have allowed the orphanage to continue to function and provide happy childhoods for hundreds of children throughout the years.

Today, Rancho de los Niños is part of a larger orphanage community in Baja California, working together with the National System for Integral Family Development (DIF) to provide safe facilities for children in unsuitable conditions.

Mission

The mission of Rancho de los Niños is to provide the foundations for proper development of its children, which are: housing, nutrition, education, and balanced growth. Rancho de los Niños hopes to provide their children with not just the basic necessities, but also the resources needed to realize their full potential, both personally and in society.

At Rancho de los Niños, children are more than just residents— they're a loyal trust. Most of the children entering the home are not orphaned or abandoned, rather they have been removed from their parents by the government due to abuse or neglect. The orphanage directors, Jorge and Ellie Fonseca, work

to ensure that their children feel confident, safe, and loved. They hope that as they become adults, each child will be able to live independently and contribute to society in a meaningful way.

Rancho de los Niños teaches this by providing each of their children unique opportunities for growth, both in academic and extracurricular spheres. Many of these activities are made possible through generous donations by sponsor organizations or by local groups with an interest in the children's future.

What Makes Rancho de los Niños Unique?

At Rancho de los Niños, directors believe that all children should have the opportunity to succeed. They have a unique model, in which they provide a family environment with dorm parents for each group of children. By providing the children with Christian morals, educational opportunities, and parental figures, the staff invites the children to see themselves as individuals who can make a contribution to others.

In each of the five houses, nearly 75 children learn to live and work together with other residents. Each house is watched over by an on-site host family. What also sets Rancho de los Niños apart from other organizations is that they receive all children, regardless of age or need. As a result, they are one of the few homes that provide care for those with special needs as well as infants. They have children from newborns to teenagers transitioning into adulthood.

The directors, Jorge and Ellie Fonseca, also distinguish Rancho de los Niños from other homes. Beside leading the orphanage for the last four years, they were both raised there. During a troubled childhood, Jorge and Ellie found support from the then-serving staff and went on to get college degrees. After their marriage, they lived in Ensenada until recently, when they chose to return to Rancho de los Niños and give back.

Since returning, Jorge and Ellie have improved conditions greatly, increasing the monthly budget, building new facilities, receiving babies, and increasing the number of children at Rancho de los Niños. They have also adopted four of the children and built strong relations with several charitable foundations. Throughout their service, Jorge and Ellie have attributed their success to God. They say that faith is a fundamental part of their work and share that knowledge often.

Long-Term Vision

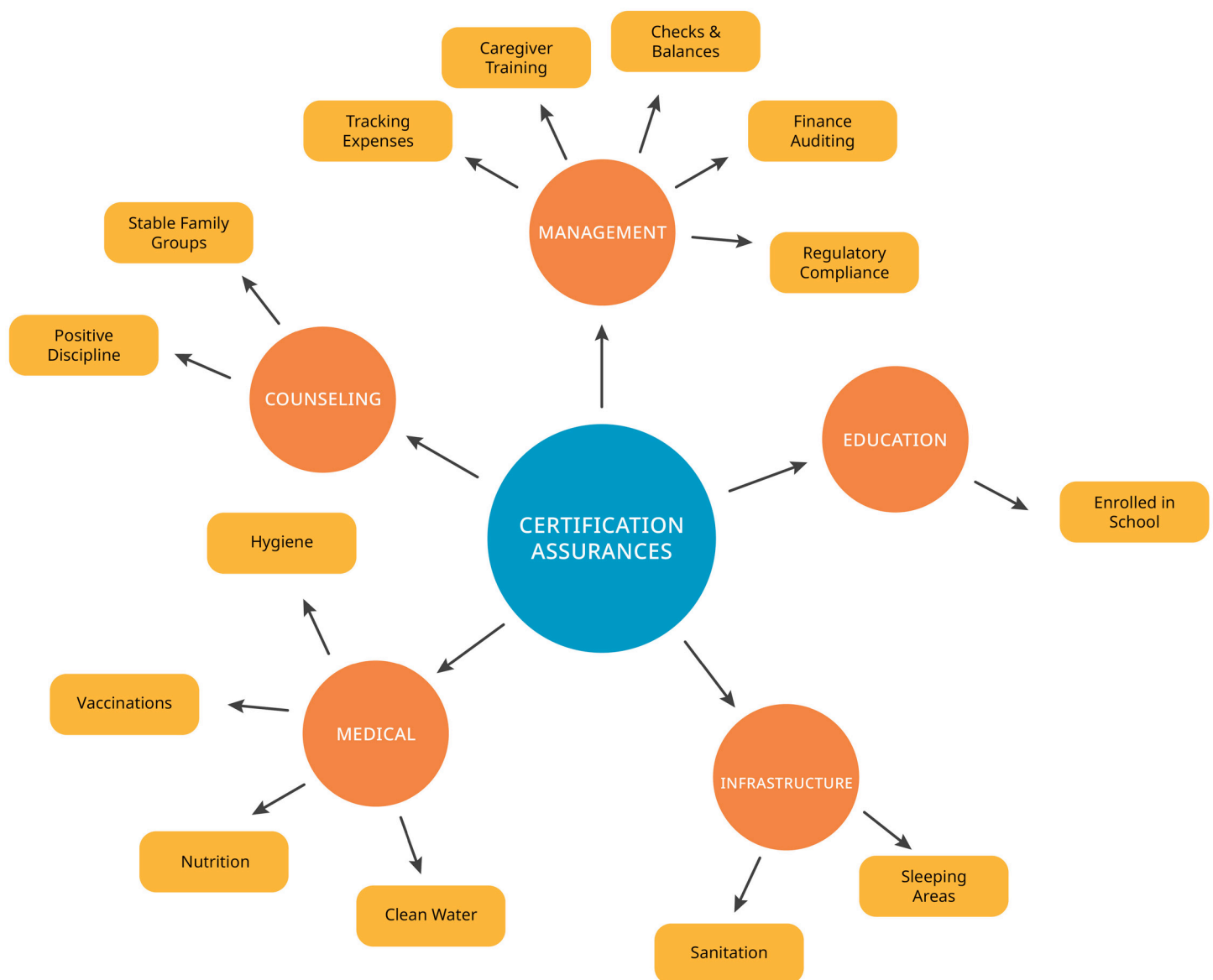
Jorge and Ellie hope to eventually provide a home for 100 children. They also want to provide the opportunity for those who are transitioning into adulthood a place to stay temporarily while they're at college or establishing their careers. Rancho de los Niños hopes to continue to be a home that can provide for infants and children of all ages, including those with special needs.

Rancho de los Niños wants to be a model orphanage in Baja, to inspire and teach how to raise the standard of care for children in all orphanages in the region. They want to create the opportunity for their children to change the negative trajectory of their pasts by providing quality educational support. Their focus is to help elementary, secondary, and high school children overcome illiteracy and perform at grade level so they will be prepared to enter college or technical school according to their interests and abilities. By providing guidance for healthy lifestyles, they hope to help children overcome the trauma that brought them to Rancho and launch them into the larger world so they can thrive as happy, contributing members.



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

RANCHO DE LOS NIÑOS

This process began on: Month day, year

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?
3	Stable, Loving Family	Are consequences for infractions of rules, positive discipline based and appropriate to age? (ex: no time out all day, etc)
4	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?
2	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?
4	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?)
4	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.

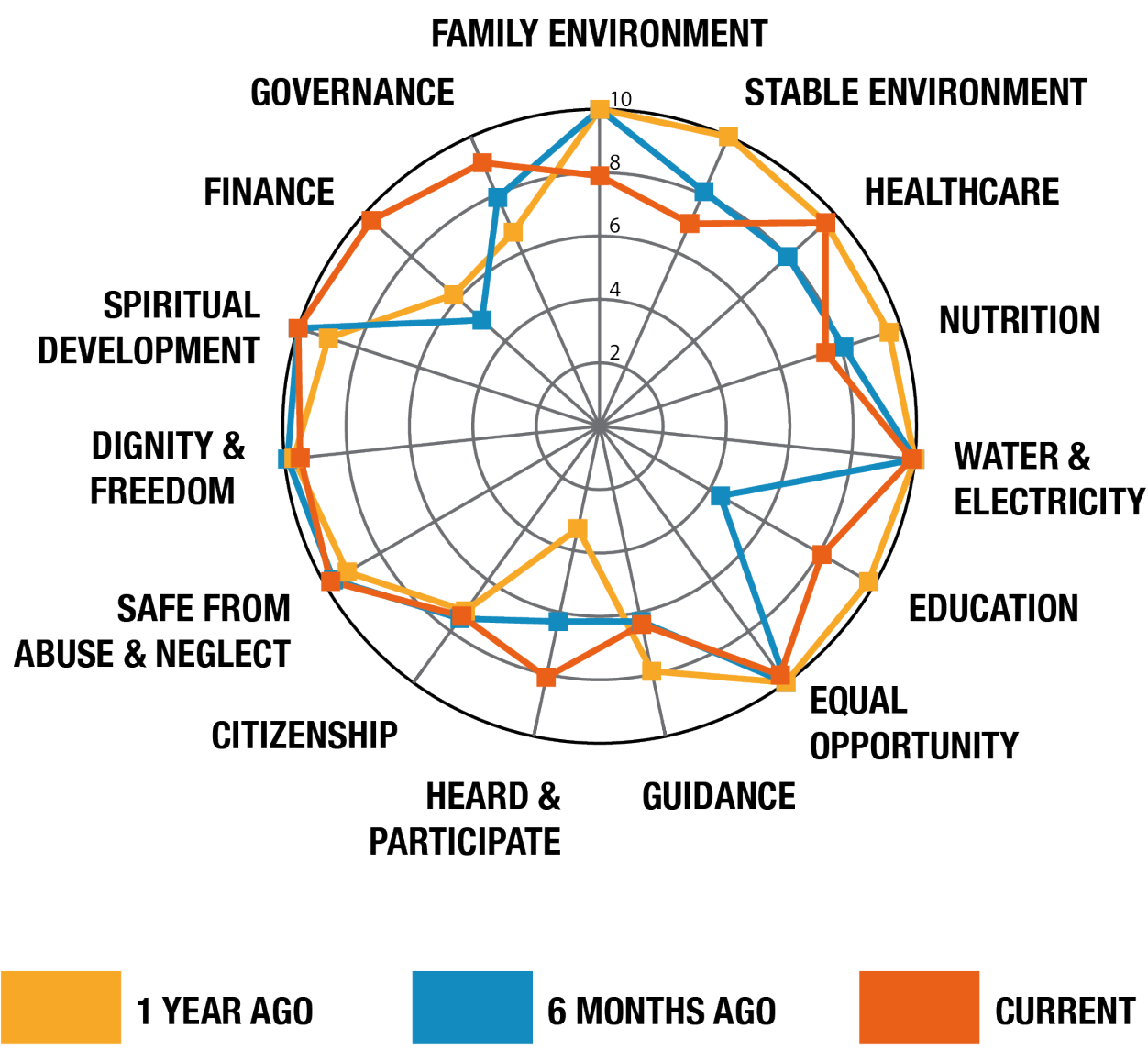
Based on the adopted declaration, The Miracle Foundation (miraclefoundation.org), a family-focused non-profit that provides resources to orphans mostly in India, codified the UN's Rights of the Child and developed a Thrive Scale, which measures how well child care facilities are able to obtain each of 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, Rancho de Los Niños is at the level of **SUSTAINING**. The staff here look after the children and provide them with more than just the basic necessary care. The house parents approach their work as more than just a job-- they know their children and care for them as their own. Each house group lives like a stable family would: under the same roof, sharing meals and downtime together, as well as having shared responsibilities. Children associate daily with their siblings, through both community activities and free time. Children whose parents or extended family have permission by DIF (the local children's safety authority) are able to visit them on a consistent basis.

Parenting is hard, and the job is harder when the children in your care have experienced the levels of trauma that these little ones have. Rancho de los Niños hopes to help support the caregivers to better address these needs by providing trauma informed care training to house parents on a quarterly basis.

- ☐ Provide trauma informed care training to house parents on a quarterly basis



Right to Stable, Loving Nurturing Environment

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Rancho de Los Niños is at the level of **SUSTAINING**. The home has a sufficient number of house parents to watch and care for the children. The house parent-to-child ratio is 2 to 12 or less, so house parents have more time to interact with children in their care. The home also has three licensed therapists on staff to accommodate the many children living at Rancho. This includes one therapist who focuses on working with house parents individually and in a group setting to help them use appropriate discipline techniques as well as show appropriate affection and validation.

Rancho De Los Niños would like their individual homes and family groups to be able to do fun activities that would help them build relationships and camaraderie. There are no funds available for even little things like popcorn on a family movie night, or birthday parties for the kids in the household. Additionally, they would like their house parents to be trained on how to build stronger relationships with the kids in their care. These types of family enrichment activities would cost around \$300 a month total.

- ☐ Provide positive relationship building training to house parents quarterly
- ☐ Provide funds for family enrichment activities (\$300/month total)



Right to Healthcare

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Rancho de Los Niños is at the level of **THRIVING**. They currently have access to medical care and the children receive annual check-ups, as well as receiving the necessary vaccinations they need to stay healthy. The staff also help their children with hygiene. The children wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet, they bathe and brush their teeth daily.

In order to continue improving in this area, Rancho is hoping to be able to provide for the special medical needs that children have outside of their regular annual check-ups. They need to build a healthcare fund for infants' additional care needs, and to address medical emergencies for the older children.

- ☐ Build a healthcare fund for infants and other medical emergencies
- ☐ Infant caregivers need training on early childhood development milestones



Right to Nutrition

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Rancho de Los Niños is at the level of **SUSTAINING**. They are currently able to give kids three meals a day.

They desire to get a more nutritious meal plan in place, however, they have not yet been able to get a nutritionist to look over their meal plan and give professional advice and training to the cooks. They also anticipate they may be unable to follow a new nutritional plan due to lack of funding. In order for them to move from sustaining to thriving, they need to have cooks that are trained on how to implement the nutritional plan. During the next OIR, the nutritionist can counsel on funds needed to maintain the nutritional meal plan and add that as a next step.

- ☐ Have a nutritionist evaluate what changes in diet are needed



Right to Clean Water and Electrical Power

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Rancho de los Niños is at the level of **THRIVING**. They currently have plenty of clean water for all their needs (drinking, food prep, washing, etc.) and they have electrical wiring in place for the children's homes. They have appropriate power and electricity around the home and a water storage system. To keep Rancho at a level of THRIVING, they will need an estimated \$1,500 total per year for maintenance and updates. They also need support to finish their solar panel project (they have the panels, but they need an additional inverter and an expert to install both the panels and inverter.)

- ☐ \$1,500 per year to provide electrical maintenance and updates
- ☐ Additional inverter
- ☐ Expert to install panels and inverter



Right to Quality Education

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Rancho de Los Niños is at the level of **SUSTAINING**. The children are able to attend school consistently throughout the academic year. Due to COVID, schooling has moved online and they are extremely short on devices. In order to move from sustaining to thriving, they will need 20 additional working laptops, 10 tablets for educational games, and 1 desktop per dorm (5 total). Starting in January 2021 there will be 8 postgraduates—4 in technical school and 4 in college. \$800 is needed to cover each student's books for the semester, and they'll also need \$5,750 for tuition, totaling \$6,550.

- ☐ 20 WiFi capable, working laptops
- ☐ 10 tablets for educational games
- ☐ 1 desktop per dorm (5 total)
- ☐ HIGHER EDUCATION FUND: \$800 for books, \$5,750 for tuition
- ☐ Books for a library (Bilingual - Spanish and English)

Right to Equal Opportunity

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Rancho de Los Niños 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. In order to maintain the home at this level, we need to provide maintenance of the playground area and update the equipment. It will cost about \$2,000 to fix the seesaws, build additional park benches and buy new jungle gyms.

- ☐ Updated equipment for the playground: approximately \$2000

Right to Guidance

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Rancho de Los Niños is at the level of **SURVIVING**. Each home has house parents, to whom the children know they can go for help. The house parents and staff at the home are loving and caring. They provide help and guidance when they see a need. They receive training and are implementing what they've learned in their everyday interactions with the children.

In order to move from surviving to sustaining, they need to be able to offer/teach children a variety of life skills such as problem solving, effective communication, coping with emotions, interpersonal relationships, and goal setting. They need to also teach children skills that will help them transition into adulthood. They plan on accomplishing this by having their professional therapist provide training on responsible sexual behavior to the adolescents. They are also piloting Hope Plans for children above the age of 15 on goals for post-graduation, as well as providing them with aptitude testing and career counseling.

- ☐ Training on life skills for responsible sexual behavior
- ☐ Hope Plans for kids ages 15+ on goals for post graduation
- ☐ Aptitude testing and career counseling



Right to Be Heard & Participate in Decisions that Affect Them

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Rancho de Los Niños 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, they have a voice in what they eat, can make suggestions for holiday plans, etc. In order to move from sustaining to thriving, the home needs to provide a bulletin board with protective glass to display weekly menus, upcoming activities and meaningful photos.

- ☐ A bulletin board with protective glass
- ☐ Child's Hope plans



Right to Be Prepared for Active & Responsible Citizenship

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Rancho de Los Niños is at the level of **SUSTAINING**. The children have all been given chores and are expected to carry them out as assigned. They understand the importance of responsibility and the role they play in their home. They have been exposed to the greater community and have been a part of it. In order for them to move from sustaining to thriving, the children need to continue to do their chores and participate in community activities.

- ☐ Means of receiving news (\$20-\$50 a month)
- ☐ The opportunity to give back to their community, i.e. \$15-50 a month to bring food baskets and clothes to those in need



Right to be Protected from Abuse & Neglect

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Rancho de Los Niños is at the level of **THRIVING**. The house parents treat the children well and do not abuse them in any way. The children have completed training sessions to help them understand how to be more responsible and respectful. The home has an anti-bullying policy that is implemented. In order to maintain their status at thriving, they need to make sure training sessions continue to happen annually for abuse prevention.

- ☐ No next steps currently needed



Right to Dignity & Freedom

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Rancho de Los Niños is at the level of **THRIVING**. The children are treated well and have the right to privacy. They also occasionally have the chance to work and earn an allowance (when they clean out the volunteer quarters). In order for them to remain at this level, they need to offer more chances for the youth to do activities away from the home. The older kids need to experience getting outside of the home and participating in life skills activities, such as paying at a restaurant, buying a movie ticket and going grocery shopping. Depending on the age-appropriate activity, the cost would vary. In addition to activity cost, there would be staff and transportation costs associated with this as well. The director would like a budget to take the youth out to eat on their birthday, as well as long term volunteers who can help facilitate specialty outings in small groups. A fund of about \$250 a month would allow these types of activities to begin. (Some of these activities require consultation with DIF.)

- ☐ A fund of about \$250 a month for birthdays and special outings



Right to Spiritual Development

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Rancho de Los Niños is at the level of **THRIVING**. The children are respectful and obedient. They have great role models who provide examples of what they should do. The children are taught about God and about religion, but are not forced to choose any specific religion. The home will continue to teach the children right from wrong and help them develop an internal moral compass, so they can pursue good continually. Donations of instruments, microphones, speakers, projector and or large projector screen for their chapel would enhance their worship services.

- ☐ Instruments, microphones, speakers, projector and or large projector screen for the chapel



Finance Standard

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Rancho de Los Niños is at the level of **THRIVING**. The home has a record of each child and strives to keep proper data and documentation.

- ☐ No next steps currently needed



Governance and Human Resource Standard

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Rancho de Los Niños is at the level of **THRIVING**. The staff have received sufficient training, but will continually learn how to best provide for the children. The staff are properly compensated and they have a balanced schedule that allows for personal time.

- ☐ No next steps currently needed

Strategic Initiative

ONLINE EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

PROJECT OWNER	Erendira
ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE	January 2021
INITIAL ANTICIPATED COST	\$10,000
PROJECT SUMMARY	Computers for the kids
PROJECT PURPOSE	Due to COVID, schooling has moved online and they are extremely short on devices. They need 20 additional working laptops, 10 tablets for educational games, and 1 desktop per dorm (5 total). In January 2021 there will be 8 postgraduates - 4 in technical school and 4 in college. \$800 is needed to cover each student's books for the semester, and they'll also need \$5,750 for tuition, totaling \$6,550.





Completed Projects

PROJECT TILES

- Household Items for orphanage family homes
- Bunkbeds for Teen Girls Home
- Ongoing garbage disposal fees
- Enclosure for dumpsters
- Items for the Baby and Toddler Dorm
- Increased WiFi for teachers for one year

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- Support in creating a budget and maintaining basic bookkeeping records.
- Benefits for staff
- Annual dental exams for each child provided.
- Anesthesiology support to help special needs children receive needed dental care.
- Speech and occupational therapist for kids with special needs



**A CHILD'S
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