

Casa Hogar de la Esperanza

Baja

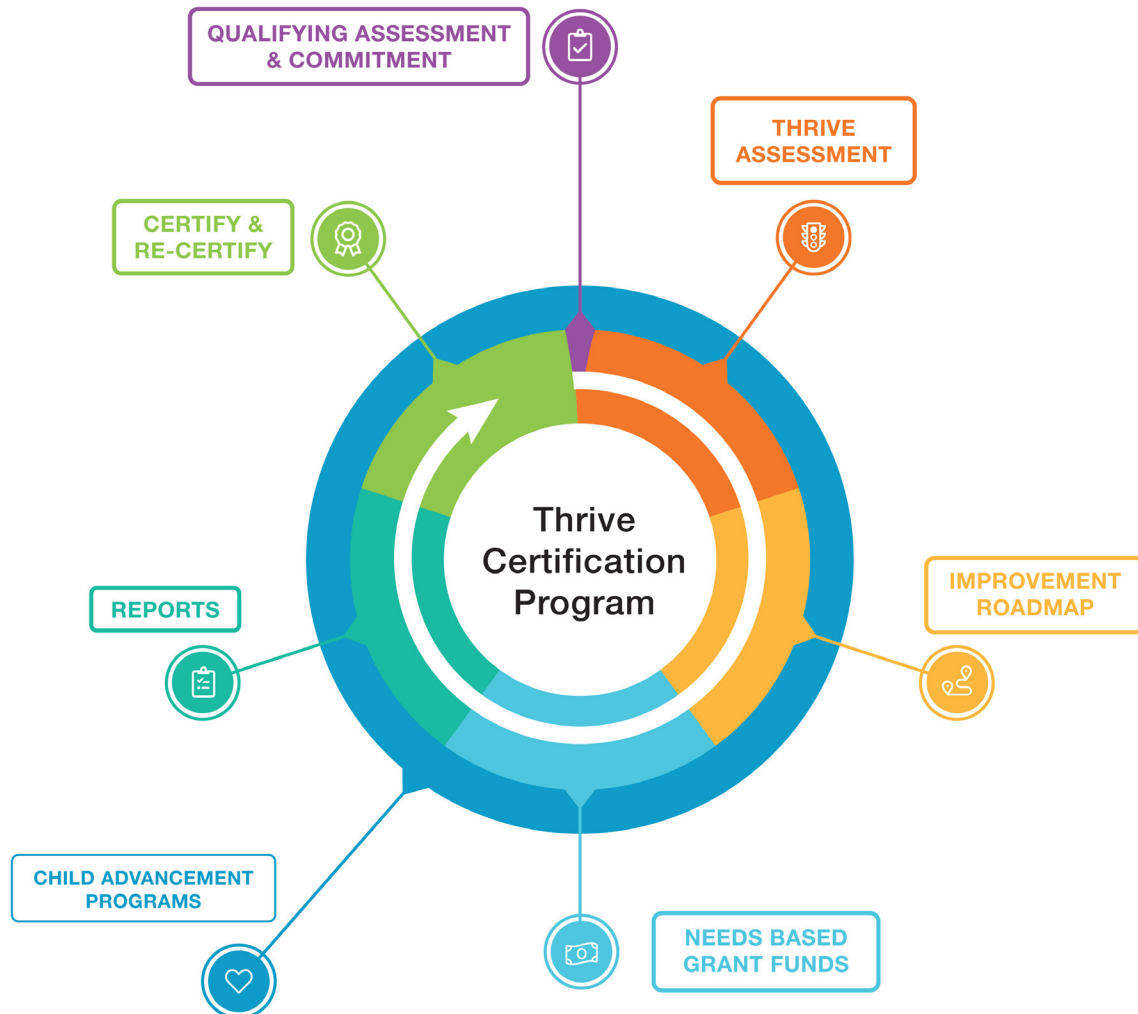


IMPROVEMENT ROADMAP

December | 2022



The Thrive Plan



QUALIFYING ASSESSMENT & COMMITMENT

The Qualifying Assessment is the first step in partnership with an orphanage home. It measures an orphanage's ability to manage, to be transparent, and provide quality care.

This step only occurs once.



IMPROVEMENT ROADMAP

The IR is a guiding document for the orphanage and other partners, with outlined priorities to help the orphanage reach *thriving* in each of the 15 Standards of Care.



CERTIFY & RE-CERTIFY

Certification is achieved through various observations, a financial review, minimum thrive score, access to therapy, and caregiver training. Homes recertify annually to ensure standards continue to be met.



THRIVE ASSESSMENT

The Thrive Assessment measures an orphanage's ability to meet the needs of its children in 15 categories called the Standards of Care, based on the United Nations Rights of a Child. Each standard is assigned a level from "surviving" to "thriving."



NEEDS BASED GRANT FUNDS

Grant funding to address needs and administrative support is made available with the regular completion of the Improvement Roadmap.



CHILD ADVANCEMENT PROGRAMS

Partnering with experts in the areas of Therapy, Education, Caregiver Support, and Family Placement & Mentorship paves the way to implement Child Advancement Programs. These are available based on availability of partners.



REPORTS

Reports and documentation are required of the orphanages and partners we work with so impact can be communicated to donors regularly.



Thrive Plan Agreement

A Child's Hope Foundation (ACHF) has a unique approach to “Lifting 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. Once an initial Thrive Assessment is completed, an Improvement Roadmap (IR) is built with the orphanage leadership after reviewing the results. 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. Following the recommendations of the IR, the home progresses on the road to certification.

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 that achieve certification will be recertified annually as they use the Thrive Assessment and build a new IR every six months, while providing regular reports back to ACHF. ACHF then shares that information with donors, highlighting 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.

Table of Contents

2 OVERVIEW OF ORPHANAGE

2 Background

3 Mission

4 What Makes Orphanage Unique?

5 Long-Term Vision



6 THE THRIVE ASSESSMENT

6 What is the Thrive Assessment?

7 Current Thrive Scale for Orphanage

22 Strategic Initiatives



Overview of Orphanage

Background

Casa Hogar de la Esperanza was founded in the 1950's by Mrs. Maria Castro de Bringas. Along with her husband, they took in children they found on the streets of Tijuana to offer them a home, food, clothing, education, and above all the love of a family.

When the group of children grew, Mrs. Bringas decided to seek the support of others in Tijuana who could provide additional resources to maintain their mission. She contacted the then-wife of the Governor of Baja California, and between the two women, they appealed to the leaders of the State to be granted a space of their own to build an orphanage. Thanks to the commitment of these two women, local leaders approved the grant with land that was seized from a clandestine casino and brothel, located on the road to Rosarito - Ensenada.

On September 24, 1956, the foundation called “La Casa de Bringas” was established in honor of the founder of the orphanage, who formed the first board of directors along with her husband and six highly recognized members of the Tijuana community. Through the efforts of the board, they were officially able to obtain the property title in the institution's name with the State Government of Baja California in September 1975.

By obtaining a larger space for the children, the home was able to provide care for more children, eventually growing to support 100 children. In addition to providing housing, food, and clothing, they provided education and training in areas such as housework, raising chickens, cattle farming, and other industrious activities that also helped provide livelihood for the orphanage itself.

“Mama Bringas,” as the children at the time called her, is remembered for her special way of running the operation of the home, her educational character, and her deep personal commitment to the children as she legally registered with her own last name “Castro” when they came to the home.

By the mid-1980's only three of the original founders of the orphanage remained. Mrs. Bringas was forced to resign due to her health condition. As a result, a Binational Commission was formed to ensure the continued operation of Casa Hogar de la Esperanza, following the vision of "Mamá Bringas."

During this period, Martha Plata, an educator from the Toluca Presbyterian Church, was selected as Director and served from 1975-1986. She was particularly remembered for dressing the children in indigenous costumes when they received visits from donors from the United States.

From 1986 to 1993, Casa Hogar de la Esperanza went through three short periods of interim leadership. During 1986-1989, Jesus Arango and Raquel Cano led the home. For a brief period from 1989-1990 Jorge Peña and Rogelio Valencia were left in charge. Later, Dr. Roberto Saavedra and Martha Bocanegra were in charge as directors from 1991-1993.

It was not until 1993 that teachers Antonio Lara Cardenas and his wife Alejandra Judith Rivera Hernandez took the position of directors. They had begun as employees during the administration of Jesús Arango before assuming leadership. Under their administration, an important achievement was the shift to focus on education as one of the greatest tools for the success of the children. Being trained as teachers, Antonio and Alejandra helped reach local agreements with renowned schools to help ensure quality education was available. These agreements provided a huge benefit for free to the children who lived at the orphanage. During this time, the children also shared fond memories and adventures such as witnessing the filming of two Mexican movies on-site at the orphanage. They also saw visits from national and international celebrities and businessmen as well as the publication of a book with stories and paintings of the children from the orphanage. This book is still on sale online, and profits go directly to the expense account of the orphanage. Later, with the death of Antonio Lara and the retirement of Alejandra Rivera, the baton was passed to the current directors of the orphanage.

Since 2013, the direction of the home has been under the charge of Martin Hernandez and Sarahi Lara. Martin is one of the young people who grew up in the orphanage and his wife Sarahi is the biological daughter of Antonio Lara and Alejandra Rivera. Having both grown up in Casa Hogar de la Esperanza, this young couple has assumed their positions with great commitment and motivation to keep the mission and vision of the home alive. Their objective is to help children adapt as they experience a strong sense of belonging to a family where they are empowered to overcome past trauma in a protected and safe environment. This objective would not be possible without the support of institutions, churches and individuals who faithfully provide financial and material donations as well as their time as volunteers, to help the children feel happy and part of a big family.

Mission

To provide minors with a family environment home that provides resources for Spiritual Education, Shelter, Food, Clothing, Schooling, Mental Health, and Physical Health as well as stimulates them with exemplary role models, thus giving them the necessary tools to integrate into society.

To raise minors to be God-fearing professionals with human values such as Humility, Obedience, Discipline, Honesty, Cleanliness, Responsibility, Peace-loving, Self-Confidence, Respect, and High Professional Ethics.

What Makes This Orphanage Unique?

At Casa Hogar de la Esperanza, we believe that all those children and adolescents who have been trapped in the state system have with us an opportunity to grow and be part of our huge family. Casa Hogar de la Esperanza works with each of these children's life stories, recognizing each one of them with their needs, talents, desires, and dreams, and avoiding being seen as just another child with a file number that identifies him or her.

Throughout Casa de la Esperanza's history of service, the values of education and preparation for life are a priority. Each member of our extended family has the opportunity to explore their talents, abilities, and learning desires with the firm intention of developing to their fullest potential. Then, in the future, with these talents, they can lead productive adult lives that support their livelihood.

Martin and Sarahi are the most important figures for the children, adolescents, and young people who make up this large family. Some of them see Martin and Sarahi as their parents and others see them as older siblings in whom they can find orientation and guidance in the adult life they are just beginning. As the director, Martin is convinced that the process of formation of these children does not end when they legally become adults at the age of 18, but that this process takes longer. Therefore, the young adults are the ones who choose to remain in the home until they achieve the minimum standards of independence and decent housing, resulting in a friendlier and safer transition experience to independent adulthood.



To achieve these independence skills from a young age, the children and adolescents are taught the value of education and work. As a result, in addition to bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchen, dining room, play areas, and soccer field, the home also has a library, music room, computer room, classrooms or study rooms, movie theater, a stage, blacksmith shop, carpentry shop, and mechanics shop. All of these areas are available for children and adolescents to explore their interests.

Long-Term Vision

Martin's long-term vision for Casa de la Esperanza is to have more dormitories to be able to help 30 more children and thus be able to provide care and attention to 80 children in total.

In addition, he visualizes making all the necessary adaptations and constructions to be a self-sustainable space. Some of these projects include: reusing gray water, capturing sunlight with their panels to support all facilities, having production on their farm, and harvesting their own fruits from the garden. It is a goal that this last resource will be enough to support the nutrition of the children of the house and also to be able to share with the community.

Another important thing for Casa Hogar de la Esperanza is that more young people are integrated and complete their professional education or training for work, managing to develop independence skills with the best scenarios to achieve self-sufficiency and benefit society.

Finally, to have more committed and developed caregivers to provide better quality child care to children.

WHAT PIECES OF THE VISION DO YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH IN THE NEXT 2-3 YEARS?

To build a new dormitory to accommodate 10 more girls between 10 and 14 years of age. To be able to provide support to 50 orphaned children. To complete the fruit and citrus garden project at the home.



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 all people's 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.

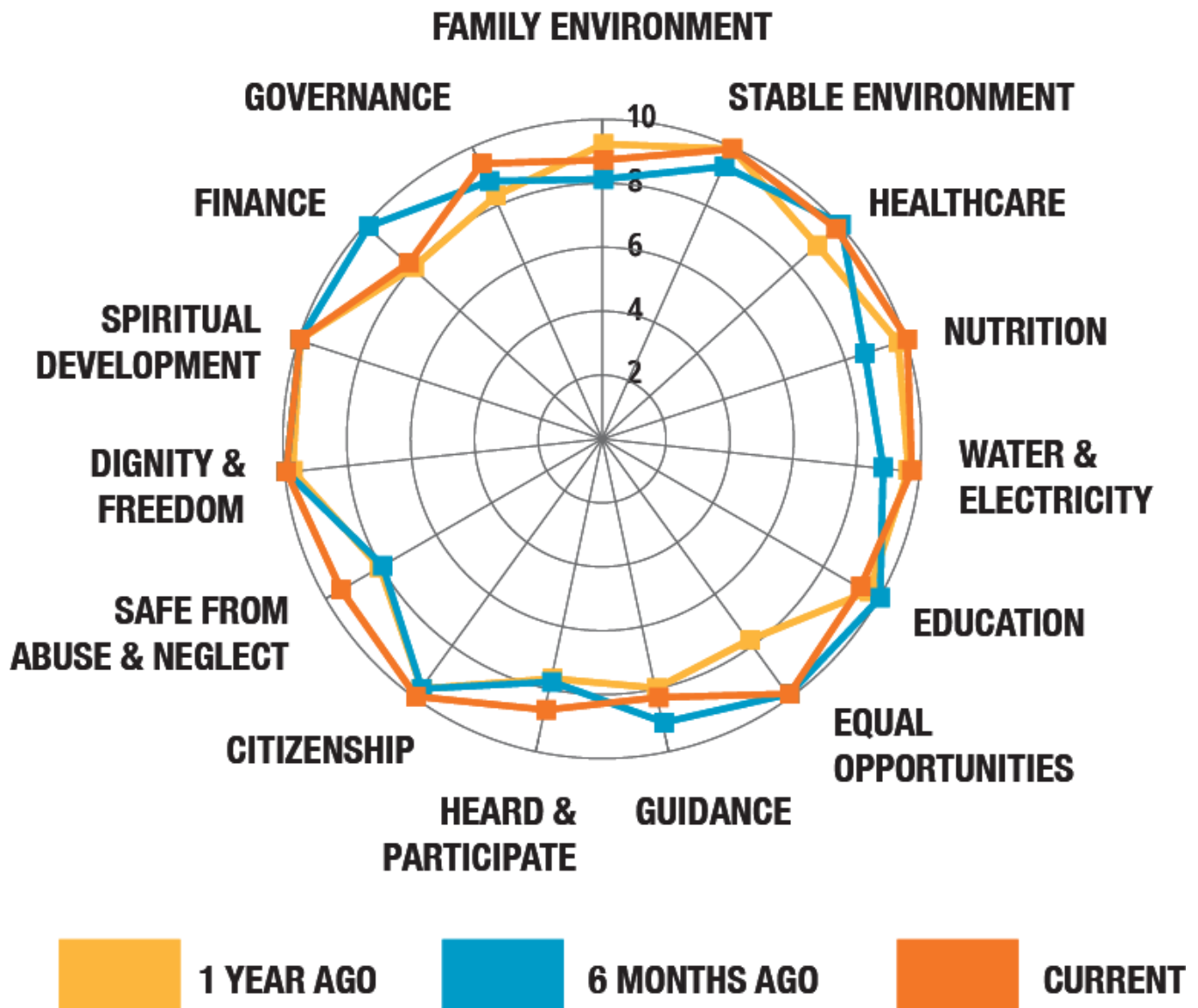
Based on the adopted declaration, The Miracle Foundation (miraclefoundation.org), a family-focused non-profit that provides resources to orphans mostly in India, codified the UN's Rights of the Child and developed a Thrive Scale, which measures how well child care facilities are able to obtain each of the rights for 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 standards, resulting in a total of 15 Rights of the Child used by ACHF. 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

Casa de la Esperanza at the **THRIVING** level. Currently, there are 38 children in different groups separated by age and gender. They try to have a maximum of four children per bedroom, which ensures a dignified and safe space where children can receive immediate attention. The majority of the children who live here are brought by DIF, along with three children who were brought to the home voluntarily and receive sporadic visits from their grandmother. Within Casa de la Esperanza, there are three groups of siblings who are encouraged to play, spend time and eat together to encourage and strengthen family bonds.

In this home there are five caregivers. Most caregivers live on-site, which allows the children consistency with caregivers who stay during the day and look after them during the night. This ensures that every day of the week caregivers provide support, attention, and care so that the children experience a family environment. In order for caregivers to be better prepared to support the children, they are trained every four months by external professionals on trauma-informed care, family traits and values, and the creation of a family environment within the home. Additionally, the home has a plan and processes in place to incorporate, train and evaluate caregivers. The last evaluation that caregivers had was conducted by DIF in 2020. Since that time, caregivers have not been evaluated by a certified specialist to identify if they are quality caregivers. However, Casa de la Esperanza has begun to provide support to caregivers through the professional service of Claudia, a professional psychologist who is working with caregivers to improve their personal and work performance while following up on the evaluations on an ongoing basis.

- ☐ Have a documented plan for the onboarding, training, and evaluation of caregivers.
- ☐ Evaluate caregivers by a certified specialist on the standard of care.
- ☐ Continue frequent training on trauma-informed care, family traits and values, as well as family environment in a group home setting.



Right to a Stable Environment

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Casa de la Esperanza is at the **THRIVING** level. All the children know the rules of the home, which are explained according to their age range and level of understanding. It is worth mentioning that there is greater flexibility in terms of rules with the new children in order to guide them in their adaptation process. Regarding the consequences of rule infractions, positive discipline is used and techniques are applied that contribute to improving and regulating the children's behavior. In some cases, the time-out technique has been applied, as in the case of a girl who receives psychological support. DIF has referred children with special behavioral conditions that require psychiatric treatment to Casa de la Esperanza. Consequently, Director Sarai is very committed to implementing various follow-up alternatives to provide the best possible care for these children.

All staff at Casa de la Esperanza call the children by their first names, however, some of the children call each other non-offensive nicknames as a way to play and bond. The directors meet with caregivers once a month to discuss strategies to guide the children's behavior. Additionally, Claudia provides guidance as a psychologist to help caregivers create a more stable, loving, and nurturing environment. The caregivers work six days a week and rest one day a week. The turnover rate is zero since most of them have been working at the home for several years, which creates a more stable environment for the children. Caregivers play with the children in the yard and encourage them to do their homework. In addition, they have birthday celebrations, Mexican parties, bonfires, movie nights, and soccer games, with Christmas and Mexican Independence being the children's favorite celebrations.

- ☐ Have a specialist engage in dialogue with caregivers about behavioral strategies to effectively teach and discipline children in their care.



Right to Healthcare

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

In this category, Casa de la Esperanza is at the **THRIVING** level. On an annual basis, the children have medical, dental, ophthalmological, and hearing check-ups. Most of these check-ups are performed by volunteers and health institutions that come to the home. Dental services are provided by external professionals who reinforce the habit of brushing their teeth at least twice a day. Currently, only one girl has braces, although it has been determined that there may be more children who require them. All children have their vaccinations, but some of them are missing their immunization records. Each child has a medical record that includes weight, height, medical history, growth sizes, and medical treatment.

Soap is hygienically available in the home near the dining room, toilets, and common areas. Caregivers continually encourage the children to wash their hands, especially after going to the bathroom and before eating, and they also use antibacterial gel before eating. The General Hospital of Tijuana is the medical facility where children are taken in case of emergency. When children show symptoms of a minor illness, they are taken to doctors at nearby pharmacies, and they have an identified pediatrician who can also see them immediately. Adolescent girls are trained in topics related to their menstrual cycles by teacher Alejandra and the caregivers. In addition, they are provided with sufficient feminine hygiene products and keep track of the monthly cycles and products to prevent them from being wasted. Casa Hogar de la Esperanza has an office to attend to the children but does not have a support nurse. Inside this office, there are two small first aid kits and a backpack that is well-equipped and sufficient to attend to everyone in case of an emergency. In this home, adequate measures, training, and treatment plans have been implemented for children with special conditions.

- ☐ Work with public health institutions to complete the vaccination records of children.
- ☐ Find a support nurse to monitor the children's health and provide medication when necessary.



Right to Nutrition

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Casa de la Esperanza is the level of **THRIVING**. In this home, they ensure that children are well nourished and receive the appropriate amount of calories, protein (chicken, meat, egg, or fish), vegetables, and fruit daily. Food is hygienically prepared, appetizing, and tasty. Currently, two nutritionists who are part of the Unity 4 Orphans mission are conducting nutritional assessments for each child to establish general menu plans and personalized menus for children with special needs (underweight), taking into consideration the limitations of available food at the home.

The kitchen, dining, and food storage areas are free of toxic substances and pests. They are fumigated every six months or whenever necessary. The dining room is cleaned regularly after each meal. The kitchen is well-ventilated and is routinely and thoroughly cleaned on a weekly basis. On an annual basis, the cook has been trained in food safety and preparation by a nutritionist. There are some areas of improvement possible in the kitchen such as: to provide all the necessary kitchen utensils for food preparation, ensure the kitchen is kept tidy and clean, and ensure that only authorized personnel remain in the kitchen.

- ☐ Continue with the practice of utilizing the help of nutritionists with the food and menus.
- ☐ Buy additional kitchen utensils.
- ☐ Keep the kitchen tidy and clean with only authorized personnel in the kitchen.



Right to Clean Water and Electricity

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The home is currently at the **THRIVING** level in this category. On a weekly basis or as needed, an outside supplier provides the home with potable water. This water is free of chemicals or bacteria and is stored in a tank that is available in the kitchen area for food preparation as well as drinking when needed. The home has a safe drainage method that does not contaminate the drinking water. Within the home, the director Martin and one of the drivers are in charge of the maintenance of the home. If any specialized work is required, they look for a professional to perform the corresponding work. Additionally, they use a maintenance log that allows them to work on preventive and corrective repairs. Last August, maintenance was performed on the faucets in the sinks and the shower heads in the children's bedrooms. All light bulbs in the home are checked frequently to ensure that they are working properly. Electrical outlets and exposed wires are checked on a regular basis to avoid a hazardous situation. Currently, these checks have yielded that the medical office, camera room, laundry room, shower area, and part of the directors' house need some repairs and painting. The exterior of the home is well-lit to increase the safety of the children. In case of power outages, there are emergency lamps, however, a generator is considered necessary. All of the buildings have emergency lights, fire extinguishers, and drop-down doors.

During the year 2022, Casa de la Esperanza has been inspected by civil protection and firefighters for safety. With respect to the home's Internal Civil Protection Plan, it has already been reviewed and some observations were noted that relate to the new policy of the characteristics that the structural report must have. The home complies with the requirements and codes of the local authorities. It is also worth mentioning that the facilities are safe to withstand various inclement weather conditions.

- ☐ Establish a written annual plan to address property maintenance and address repairs and painting of areas in immediate need (medical office, camera room, laundry room, shower area, and part of the directors' house).
- ☐ Purchase a power generator in case of long-term power outages.
- ☐ Continue with the structural report process.



Right to Quality Education

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Casa de la Esperanza is currently at the **THRIVING** level. The children at this home attend private schools on a regular basis and are enrolled in kindergarten through high school, with two girls who are about to begin their university studies. At the time of this evaluation, two girls were identified who do not attend school. One is a young girl with learning difficulties, and another girl who recently arrived at the home only knows the alphabet. Both are receiving support from the teacher who comes to the home to help them improve their skills. In addition, Director Martin is looking for specialized schools to support both girls. Within the home, there is a computer center where children have access to the internet and 18 computers. To strengthen the children's knowledge and support them in their school learning, every afternoon Monday to Friday they receive tutoring from the teacher, who provides specialized and personalized support to each of the children according to their academic needs. Children 7 years and older are able to articulate the sounds of the alphabet, children 11 years and older are able to read and write at a third-grade level or higher and all children 9 years and older are able to perform basic mathematical operations.

The children who live at Casa de la Esperanza have a variety of age-appropriate books in their language, which are within reach and easy to access. Consequently, they are encouraged to read recreationally and independently of the reading assignments they are given at school. Children are provided with toys and art materials according to their developmental needs, and there is an artist who comes to the home to teach art. Director Sarai analyzes each child's grades and academic progress on a regular basis and follows up on school-related issues. The children have access to computer classes, and the elementary and high school programs have been strengthening these skills since the pandemic. Additionally, they have had volunteers who supported them in learning in these areas. Currently, they have been struggling to transport all the children in the same vehicle both to school and to other places since they do not have insurance or vehicle registration updated.

- ☐ Continue to search for schools so that the girls who require special support can continue their education and receive specialized attention.
- ☐ Continue with the support of the teacher who visits the home to provide specialized and personalized tutoring for each child.
- ☐ Purchase the insurance and renew registration for vehicles to transport all the children to church, school, and other recreational activities. personalized tutoring for each child.

Right to Equal Opportunities

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, the home is at the level of **THRIVING**. All children have the same opportunities to go to school, access counseling, receive tutoring, read books, and participate in extracurricular activities such as art, singing, dance, and sports. Each child has a box to store their personal items, and each house has a closet inside the bathroom where clothes are stored according to gender. Currently, the home does not have a written plan for transition to adulthood that offers adolescents opportunities regardless of gender, disability, or background. However, the home does implement strategies to teach life skills, such as budgeting for personal expenses, shopping, repairs for maintenance of the home, and other other activities that help prepare them for independent living. Young people from the age of 18 are allowed to lead out on activities that support the home and earn an income so that they can begin to plan their expenses and independent living. They are also encouraged to identify what career they would like to study at the technical or university level.

One of the main objectives of the directors of Casa de la Esperanza is that the caregivers are role models available to guide the children. In the event that a caregiver is not a good example, the directors talk to them and guide them to modify their behavior. To support children with physical disabilities, special adaptations are made. For example, with children with vision impairment, the directors purchase glasses for them.

- ☐ Create a written plan for transition to adulthood that provides adolescents with equal opportunities.
- ☐ Implement a training and evaluation plan to determine that caregivers are good role models for children



Right to Guidance

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Casa de la Esperanza is at the **SUSTAINING** level within this category. When new children arrive at the home, they are introduced to their caregivers, shown the space, and explained the rules and the importance of being respectful. All children have the opportunity to receive weekly or biweekly psychological care either inside or outside the home. The psychologist who comes to the home sees as many children as possible, identifies those who are most in need or who are going through a crisis situation, and provides support to the caregivers. Adolescents over the age of 13 have received guidance on sexual behavior from school as well as from the directors of the home and the psychologist. Through middle and high school, they are given aptitude tests and professional counseling to determine their academic abilities and long-term educational goals.

There is constant communication between the directors and the adolescents and they are supported according to what they are studying. At Casa de la Esperanza, young adults draw up their life plan when they turn 18 and it is submitted to DIF. At the moment, there is no documented independent living skills plan, however, activities are carried out with adolescents from the age of 16 to motivate them to lead a more independent life. With common or difficult subjects, as well as self-discovery and self-expression, the directors and the psychologist act as mentors to guide the children. Currently, the home does not have a written profile or job description for when they look for new caregivers. However, leadership are very clear about the characteristics of the staff they require. Caregivers are trained by DIF on how to model, teach and reinforce skills and behaviors with the children.

- ☐ Create a written profile or job description for when they are looking for new caregivers.
- ☐ Develop a documented independent living skills program for adolescents and young adults.
- ☐ Assess caregivers to determine if they are quality mentors for the children by a specialist.



Right to Be Heard and Participate in Decisions

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

In this category, Casa de la Esperanza is at the **THRIVING** level. Children can decide what to do in their free time as long as it is within the rules of the home. They are allowed to participate in menu planning only on special occasions, incorporating their tastes and preferences so that they can enjoy the variety of dishes even more. The weekly menu is not currently available for the children to see. However, the cook has it in writing and the children always come and ask the cook what food will be provided for the meals. To attend to the children's clothes, each child is given five changes of clothes and they can choose the clothes they want to wear each day. Whenever children and caregivers require medical attention, they are given any necessary information along with the opportunity to ask questions prior to administration, thereby avoiding an adverse or traumatic situation.

In this home, the directors keep an individual development plan for some of the children in their care, which is updated on a monthly basis. They also provide opportunities for the children where they are assigned responsibilities and roles that empower them and help them serve as leaders.

- ☐ Have the weekly menu on display for all children to see daily.
- ☐ Implement individual development plans for each child and update them on a monthly basis.
- ☐ Create children's committees to continue strengthening leadership.



Right to Be Prepared for Citizenship

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Currently, Casa de la Esperanza at the **THRIVING** level. Each of the children has a birth certificate that identifies them as Mexican citizens. Children are taught to repair any damages they have caused by making amends. This is achieved through cleaning up or doing extra work to pay for repairs if something of material value was damaged. The children have been taught about ethics and the democratic process through an age-appropriate course provided by the Human Rights Commission. Volunteers Karen and Robin also teach the children about recycling and the importance of cleanliness as part of responsible citizenship. Each child is assigned age-appropriate chores to do each day such as making their bed, cleaning their house, picking up their plate, and cleaning their eating space. The home and all walkways are kept free of trash and debris.

Director Martin is in charge of orienting and guiding adolescents over 15 years of age in obtaining life skills by teaching them activities that will help them to live independently. The children participate in community service by delivering food supplies to those in need. Before the pandemic, they went to hospitals or social security clinics to deliver oatmeal, rice, and milk, and they were also assigned tasks to prepare food, and bring candy or toys. As long as there are available funds and DIF approves, the children have the opportunity to attend school trips and special events outside the home. Major current events are also communicated to the children and all staff in order to keep them informed.

- ☐ Reinforce responsible citizen participation through more workshops and the development of activities within the home.



Right to Be Safe from Abuse & Neglect

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

In this category, the home is currently at the level of **THRIVING**. The location of the home provides a certain level of security in terms of the surrounding community. The neighbors in the surrounding area know the home very well and are always looking out for them. Inside, the home has private facilities for the children to bathe, use the bathroom, and get dressed. The facilities have houses that are separated by gender and age according to government regulations. Each time a new child arrives at the home, they are given a psychological evaluation, which allows them to receive follow up to help them work through their traumas. Casa de la Esperanza has child protection policies that dictate a male staff cannot be alone with a child, as well as policies that ensure children will not be physically, verbally, sexually, emotionally, or psychologically abused by caregivers. In addition, children over the age of 5 have received talks about abuse and age-appropriate reporting methods from Rancho Genesis through its ¡Ya basta! program.

Caregivers have received annual training by DIF on positive discipline techniques and alternatives to corporal punishment, as well as how to identify, prevent and avoid abuse. Additionally, the psychologist who comes to this home provides training and workshops to address these issues because she has extensive experience in sexual abuse. This contributes to a broad vision of what alternatives can be carried out to continue with the training of caregivers. The home has policies and recommendations for visitors and volunteers, but they are only relayed verbally. There is also a process in place for background checks or references on all staff, volunteers, and frequent visitors.

- ☐ Reinforce with caregivers through workshops the child protection policies that ensure children will not be physically, verbally, emotionally, sexually, or psychologically abused.
- ☐ Develop written rules and regulations for visitors and volunteers and post them for public viewing.
- ☐ Implement check-in control procedures at the entrance of the home to increase the safety of the children.



Right to Dignity & Freedom

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Casa de la Esperanza is currently at the **THRIVING** level. Children are bathed daily and have their own bed, towel, toothbrush, clothing, and underwear. In addition, they have sufficient sheets and blankets, which are cleaned at least every two weeks or whenever they are soiled. The children are encouraged to be kind to each other and correct put-downs, unkind comments, or bullying. Workshops from different government agencies, civil groups, and the psychologist have been held with the children to reinforce good behavior. Leadership discusses with children the consequences of rule infractions according to their age and level of understanding. A wide variety of age-appropriate toys and art materials are available for everyone, including stationery for homework.

Children have the opportunity to do additional work at the home to earn some privileges. For example, at the school the children attend, on Fridays they can go without a uniform and wear regular clothes, but they have to pay 10 pesos. For this, the children have to do additional chores at the home if they want to earn the 10 pesos necessary to wear regular clothes at school. Adolescents over the age of 17 have the opportunity to participate in jobs in the community and keep the money they earn. The home has registered safety protocols and training for the children and employees, as well as smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, first aid kits, doors, and a meeting point.

- ☐ Continue to reinforce the knowledge of appropriate behavior through workshops by government authorities, civil groups, and/or the psychologist of the home.



Right to Spiritual Development

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

The home is currently at the **THRIVING** level in this area. The directors have been very diligent in providing spiritual formation to the children. They are great examples and try to show the children the right path through the various teachings. Every Sunday, they congregated in a Christian church, and provide the children with the opportunity to be part of a spiritual community.

Children are free to participate in daily communal prayer or other spiritual rituals. Additionally, the directors try to encourage the children with spiritual guidance to help them heal their emotional wounds. Children attend their Sunday classes when they go to church. Within the home, they have materials and spiritual or religious books available. Each month they purchase their devotionals for the children and adults. The children are offered the opportunity to practice their spiritual learning by praying before each meal. The dining room is their designated place for prayer and meditation.

- ☐ Continue to strengthen the spiritual development of children.



Finance Standard

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

Casa de la Esperanza is currently at the **SUSTAINING** level. In this home, they record income and expenses through an established process. They have a notebook with the breakdown of each expense, which is prepared by Ms. Alejandra (Sarai's mother), in turn, this information is transferred to Dulce (secretary) and recorded in an Excel spreadsheet. These accounting records are available for review at any time. Ms. Alejandra keeps strict control to minimize opportunities for the misuse of funds. Receipts are kept and a profit and loss statement is created on a monthly basis, even though no actual profit is made as they rely on donations. A monthly bank reconciliation is performed to identify what was spent and whether it matches the expenses. Currently, there is an internal division of functions in the home where Director Martin is in charge of most activities relating to the operation of the home and the payment of services, while Mrs. Alejandra is in charge of food and water purchases. There is a very close relationship with the treasurer of the board of directors to check reporting and accountability. For projects more than \$25,000.00 dollars, which are generally construction projects, they look for donors to help finance, and the projects are carried out in phases.

The annual tax returns have been filed in accordance with government requirements and an external accountant supports them in these and some tax matters. At the moment, they do not have an internal accountant to guide them and assess how they are doing with their account. However, Ms. Alejandra has a lot of contact with the treasurer of the board, with whom certain expenses are determined. This also established better financial accountability to the board of directors and ensures the accounting records of the home are validated by the board.

- ☐ Have an internal or external audit of your finances on a monthly basis.
- ☐ Validate the household's books or records by a qualified accountant.
- ☐ Develop detailed plans for your major expenditures over \$25,000 dollars



Governance and Human Resource Standard

SURVIVING

SUSTAINING

THRIVING

In this category, Casa de la Esperanza is at the level of **THRIVING**. The Articles of Incorporation stipulate that ownership and modifications are insured so that they cannot be sold or used for their own benefit. They have an organizational chart that identifies the positions and activities that can be delegated. The home has the licenses, audits, and governance requirements, except for the civil protection program, which has some things needing updated due to a new policy related to structural rules. The board of directors meets at least twice a year. The directors of the home have discussed with their staff the importance of drinking water quality, its relationship to health, and the need for safe drinking water in sufficient quantities for domestic use. Caregivers have had training on attachment and child development, on the importance and ways to facilitate child participation, and have had medical and hygiene training sessions on caring for a sick child, common illnesses, and treatments as emergency measures.

At least once a month, the directors hold ongoing meetings to discuss issues of concern and process improvement with the staff. For her part, Supervisor Zulema is responsible for having one-on-one meetings with the caregivers on a frequent basis. Caregivers are given a written document detailing their terms of employment and a job description outlining their responsibilities. Each staff member has a complete file that includes an employment record with their personal data, as well as a letter explaining the conditions of their children in the children's home, among other personal documents. Casa de la Esperanza also follows a vacation policy for caregivers and all staff.

- ☐ Continue with the professional training of caregivers on attachment and child development, caring for a sick child, and common treatments.

Strategic Initiatives

INSURANCE AND REVALIDATION OF VEHICLE REGISTRATIONS

PROJECT SUMMARY	For this home, it is very important to have a means of transportation to take all the children to school and recreational activities (church on Sundays, group visits to the doctor, psychologist, cultural outings, etc). However, it has not been possible to use the large truck they have due to the need to renew insurance and registration with the Secretary of Planning and Finance of Baja California. This is required in order to use a vehicle on the streets of the city according to Mexican law and transport the children to the different places in a safe and reliable manner.
INITIAL ANTICIPATED COST	\$0 < \$5,000 USA

KITCHEN UTENSILS

PROJECT SUMMARY	The preparation of food for 38 children for breakfast, lunch and dinner involves the constant use of large pots and pans, as well as utensils that have worn out over time. Old utensils can also release toxic plastics or heavy metals that are harmful to health and end up contaminating the food, thereby posing a risk for the individuals at the home, as well as others who may visit the home like volunteers. The purchase of new kitchen utensils is required.
INITIAL ANTICIPATED COST	\$0 < \$5,000 USA

REPAIR AND PAINTING

PROJECT SUMMARY	Since 1956, Casa de la Esperanza has provided care to vulnerable orphaned children. Throughout that time, facilities have expanded. However, some areas that have been present since construction require more frequent preventive and corrective maintenance. Even with the help of service trips, priority has been given to the new construction of other areas that are also of vital importance to the home. As a result, there are areas where little attention has been paid and there is a need to repair and paint them. These areas to be repaired and painted are as follows: the medical office, the camera room, the laundry room, the shower area, and part of the directors' house.
INITIAL ANTICIPATED COST	\$0 < \$5,000 USA



A CHILD'S
HOPE
FOUNDATION