

Dear Verein Guatemala Zentralamerika Board Members and Friends,

Here comes a little summary of the situation around the volcano Fuego and Vamos Adelante activities :

November 2018:

Now just about all ( a few are staying with friends or family) of the affected people from San Miguel Los Lotes and El Barrio

have been moved from the initial shelters to temporary wooden homes on a big piece of land called La Industria, located very centrally in the town of Escuintla. The land belongs to the municipality and will also be used for the future permanent homes. We visit the families frequently

and most are content and grateful with their new living situation. The temporary school has 25 airy and bright classrooms, which creates a safe ambiance for the children and young adults. Of course , Escuintla is much warmer compared to San

Miguel Los Lotes & El Barrio but most have gotten used to it. Another village feeling has started to grow in the area of La Industria. Cooked food is still being delivered daily. Most women would prefer to cook on their own and some have come up with some creative ideas in an area far enough away from the wooden

houses and set up some temporary gas stoves. It is not big enough though for everybody and there is no communal kitchen yet.

The church facilities seem to be a bit of a conflict. The original suggestion was to share one simple room, giving certain hours to different churches but several were not happy at all with this idea. During our visit we saw a pretty big temporary construction going up, which we first thought was going to be the new communal kitchen area but when asking we were told that this was an evangelical church.

Courses for different type of activities are being offered, medical services and normal life has started to crawl in everywhere.

Most survivors have also received different amounts of money so that they can sustain themselves during this time. This also includes villages not belonging to Zone "Cero". Some villages also received machetes, tools for working the fields. It is a bit hard trying to keep track of everything as not only the government donates but also many international organizations, private initiatives, NGOs, churches.

The big issue is of course the permanent house situation. Surprisingly even here it is a bit difficult trying to find out who is building houses. Of course, there is an official entity, which controls this but again, small private initiatives often do not report that they are helping generously and suddenly one finds out that a family is on a waiting list for two different areas. Efforts are being made to control this better.



A house model was recently presented by the government two weeks ago and it really looks very nice. A week ago a totally different house was presented on a screen to the people of el Barrio, smaller and of different quality. Which type of house finally will turn out to be their new home is yet to be seen. The construction will be divided in four phases, 250 houses in each, 42 -48 square meters, each for 5 people. Supposedly the first construction phase will begin soon.

Due to the terrible tragedy in June, the last months many visitors have come to remote villages in this previously much neglected area around the volcano and have seen the great need of support, such as water, housing, nutrition, infrastructure, etc. Suddenly there is more aid available, water pipes are being repaired and others newly installed, support for some schools is supposed to be increased as well as for small farmers.



During the first week in November the broken water pipes for El Rodeo and Santa Rosa were repaired and replaced and many people from there have now returned from the shelters. La Reyna had access to water all the time. We have again handed out water filters and solar lamps. The people from the village La Trinidad rejected to live in the wooden temporary homes as they want to the government to give them a big farm. They continue to live in shelters.



Vamos Adelante opened up its base in Zapote on November 5<sup>th</sup> and resumed normal activity. We continue to offer a hot meal up in Ceylan for ~ 150 very poor people as the rainy season continues to be hard and much ash comes down. For the same reason we are not giving vacation class in Ceylan, which we normally hold in November and December.

Vamos Adelante will offer plenty more scholarship for the coming year as we suddenly received many more applications, which we assumed was going to happen. Many fathers lost their jobs during the last months and cannot afford to send their children to school any longer.

Just when we thought that life is entering a calmer path the volcano suddenly is acting up again making everybody nervous but that is probably something we have to live with while keeping an attentive eye on Fuego.

On November 19<sup>th</sup> the volcano turned so active again that around 4000 people were evacuated, luckily only for one night but it certainly scared many living s close. Many say that the people living so close to the crater should move away but that is easier said than done as we are talking about ~ 90 000 people, who have their plot of land where to grow their food, have their family roots , well their life up there . Telling them to move is easy, but where are they supposed to get the money from to purchase land? Leaving everything behind and start all over in a country where it is so hard to find a job is not simple and the parents need to continue to feed their family.

The Vamos Adelante team is working hard identifying students eligible for a scholarship 2019 ,and packing school bags filled with basic education material .

## December

The volcano Fuego calmed down somewhat, but remains active and makes sounds we are not very familiar with. Lava flow comes down on certain days but as it is not raining it cools down and stays around half way down the mountain. Ash we feel and see regularly. The work on the major highway continues and it has been open.

An early warning system for quick evacuation has been donated, was installed and is now activated in La Reina, close to El Rodeo. Supposedly 26 more will be donated for the surrounding and affected villages.

The people from the village La Trinidad also moved to the area of La Industria. As many of their temporary houses were lacking electricity Vamos Adelante donated 144 solar lamps.



The housing situation for the people from “Zona Cero”, San Miguel Los Lotes and El Barrio, the two villages, which were declared as not livable any longer is slowly improving for many. They are presently living in temporary houses provided by the government in a central area of Escuintla and received food 3 times a day until December 31, 2018. Most receive Q 3500 monthly, which is about US \$ 470 for ten months to sustain themselves.

A group from Los Lotes rejected the permanent houses and land, which the government has in mind donating to them, claiming the area is too small, 7mx11.50m=2 bedrooms, 1 living room, a small patio and area to park a car. The construction materials have now been improved much compared to the first draft and the house will be built sufficiently strong to eventually support a second floor. The Los Lotes committee suggested to give each family the money estimated for the land and construction instead, which was rejected by the governor. As a matter of fact he stopped the construction for them and all machinery was removed. Negotiations will hopefully continue. The families from El Barrio have a separate committee representing them and they went to the capital approving the houses and land planned to be given to them. Phase one, 60 houses are now being built and will be completed in about 6 months. Phase two, the construction of about another 60 houses will then follow.



Private organizations, churches, individuals are building houses in different locations and Israel donated a big amount for the same purpose, all being donated to Fuego victims.



Here a Vamos Adelante promotor donates some basic kitchen material to Fuego victims.





In the meantime Vamos Adelante handed out close to 900 scholarships and a big basic school bag.



Santa Claus came and made close to 7000 children very happy with beautiful presents.



The students had to try on shoes to tell us their sizes as they will receive a solid shoe for school and a pair of tennis shoes in a month.



January



In January school started and we had to pay school fees for the students, purchased books and other still required material.

We handed out all the shoes to the children and in addition they received a backpack.



We have given out more than 40 scholarships to students from San Miguel Los Lotes.

The people from Los Lotes accepted previous suggested the house model and will receive a house once the construction for El Barrio is completed.



Some students submitted their application late and after careful evaluation we

are accepting more.

More early warning systems have been installed in different villages.







Seit Februar ist Erika wieder munter dabei für 158 Teilnehmer der Olla Nutricional zu kochen, nachdem sie etwas Urlaub hatte. WORLD CENTRAL KITCHEN, die uns sehr während des Desasters im letzten Jahr geholfen haben, bot uns Ende Januar an unsere Helfer der Suppenkueche 2 Tage lang zu trainieren und haben ihnen viele sehr gute Tipps beim intensiven Kochkurs geben können. Ausserdem haben sie uns angeboten uns weiterhin zu helfen und schicken uns nun alle zwei Wochen Huhn, Fleisch, Erdnussbutter, Schinken, damit alle Teilnehmer 2 bis 3 Mal die Woche kräftig Protein essen können. Grossartig diese Ergänzung zu den vielen Lebensmitteln die Ihr kauft –Bohnen, Reis, Pasta, Gemüse, Obst, Vitamingetränk- und ausserdem haben sie uns viele riesige Toepfe und Pfannen dort gelassen, damit wir im Notfall wieder sofort für 1000 Leute kochen können. Fuego ist ja weiterhin recht aktiv und alle rechnen dieses Jahr mit viel Lava, die die Wege und Flüsse sperren wird sobald die Regenzeit anfangen wird. Dann wird es wieder sehr schwierig von A nach B zu kommen und es wird auch wieder mit Evakuierungen gerechnet.

Wir sind Euch extrem dankbar für die Hilfe der Suppenkueche, die weiterhin sehr wichtig für das Dorf ist, wie Ihr sehen könnt. Bienvenidos en abril!!!! Wir freuen uns schon sehr!! Das Vamos Adelante Team

