



7826 Eastern Avenue, N.W.  
Suite 401  
Washington, DC 20012  
202-829-2466

*an independent not-  
for-profit corporation  
supporting children's  
relief efforts worldwide*

To Friends of the World Child Foundation:

I'll be brief. We are contacting you because periodically, the World Child Foundation is asked to support an *extremely* worthy cause. We are supporting one major project this year, and we are asking for your help.

All of us associated with the World Child Foundation are adoptive parents. We are grateful for the opportunity to fill our lives and our homes with children and the love they bring. You and I know that few children are adopted, and those who do not find permanent homes must find their way in the world with next to nothing. It is a heart-rending problem.

Mi Refugio began as the vision of one woman, Kari Engen. The program provides education, food, clothing, and medical assistance to children and families who live on the Guatemala City garbage dump. More than 1,000 children live on this dump. With their families, they work to scavenge for food, clothing, and building materials for homes. Kari saw a desperate need to improve the lives of these children and she founded Mi Refugio in 1987.

Kari organized a school for the children living on the dump and for children from native Mayan villages surrounding the school property. The school began with 50 students in a rented building next to the dump. With dedication and perseverance, Kari located a larger property in 1995 and increased the capacity of the school to 250 students. Mi Refugio is currently located 15 miles outside Guatemala City. Now in its 15<sup>th</sup> year of operation, the school provides education at the preschool through 6<sup>th</sup>-grade level.

Mi Refugio wants to expand its program to include high school grades. The goal is to build two classrooms each year for the next four years. Each classroom costs only \$7,000, for a total of \$56,000 for this much-needed project. The cost is low and the labor is provided free. All Mi Refugio needs is capital to pay for the building materials.

Our request is simple. As we celebrate this holiday season, think about this program. Every penny of your donation will go directly to construction of classrooms for Mi Refugio's school in Guatemala—a program that has a chance to break the cycle of poverty that traps these children and their families. If you are able to make a contribution, however small or large (\$25, \$50, \$250 – or even more!), please make out your check to World Child Foundation—Mi Refugio School Project and mail it in the enclosed pre-addressed envelope.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions about this project, please feel free to call me at (703) 620-3639.

Sincerely,

*Dennis Light*

Dennis Light  
*Chairman*

P.S. We have enclosed a letter from Beatriz Barbery, a former World Child International staff member who now resides in Bogota, Colombia. She recently visited Mi Refugio and can share her personal observations of the school.

Administrative Office:  
207 Brookes Avenue  
Gaithersburg, MD 20877  
Phone (301) 977-8339  
Fax (301) 977-7483

## Letter from Beatriz Barbery

*former World Child International staff member now residing in Bogota Colombia*

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Dear Friends of World Child Foundation:

When I first met Kari my belief that God sends angels to help the needy on earth was reaffirmed. Kari simply but firmly believes that this is what her life was meant to be. Her happiness and enthusiasm are contagious. Her love for these Guatemalan children and her devotion to their well-being is evident.

Kari started working with these children where they lived, in the Garbage Dump of Guatemala City. Guatemala is a beautiful country, but unfortunately a country plagued with violence and poverty. Kari told me of her desire for the children to get out of the Dumps where the children were spending most of their day. This was not only her desire but also the children's. Kari is an extraordinary person - so happy, so relaxed, so sure of her work with the children in the school.

Kari asked the children to draw pictures of what they would like their school to be. The children drew flowers, lots of space, and many bathrooms. With this in mind, Kari set out to look for a place. By the will of God she found the place where she is now; it was a small miracle because it had been already sold. God meant for Kari to build her school there. Armed with lots of faith, love and determination she began...of course she had no money. Only through the generosity of other angels on earth who cared for these poor abandoned children, and who believed in Kari and her work, was Kari able to raise the funds to build the school.

The school is located about 45 minutes from Guatemala City. To get there you must to ride through unfriendly, winding roads up the hills and down to an oasis lush with trees and vegetation. When I visited with my sister-in-law, what surprised us most were the flowers, the faces of happy children and the faces of happy adults who worked there, all natives of Guatemala in their colorful dresses. For Americans it is an everyday sight to see children laughing and playing in the playground; for those of us who come from the underdeveloped world and know the poverty of these children, it is a rare treat.

We went through all the classrooms where children were working in an atmosphere of happiness and pride in what they were doing. It is hard to imagine these children are picked up at the Dumps at 7 a.m. and brought to this place where they can breathe, not pollution but fresh air. The children are given nourishment appropriate for their age. Kari's school feeds not only their intellect but also their souls. Thanks to Kari they have a chance for a better life.

Kari not only works at the school but also lives there in a very, very modest bungalow without much protection from intruders. During the rainy season it is not easy for Kari, especially when there are no automatic garage doors opened while you are still sitting in the car.

The kitchen is in need of a large stove to cook for all these children. Kari received donations of old school buses from the States to transport the children to and from the Dumps. There is one very old bus that needs a new engine. The school needs that bus desperately. I cannot think of a better place for people to donate any thing they can. I know any money donated here is put to good use. Kari is a miracle worker but she does need people to help. Her needs are many. The engine for the school bus, the stove in the kitchen, in the property there is a pool that could be fixed and used in that hot weather. The land could be cultivated to produce vegetables. The playground could be equipped for the children to play. There are many needs and I can't think of a better project to donate money and time. This project works, and works very well for the benefit of these poor children. I hope you will open your hearts to Mi Refugio and support Kari's efforts to improve the lives of these Guatemalan children.

Saludos,

*Bea*

Bea



*Some of the school teachers. Kari with microphone.*



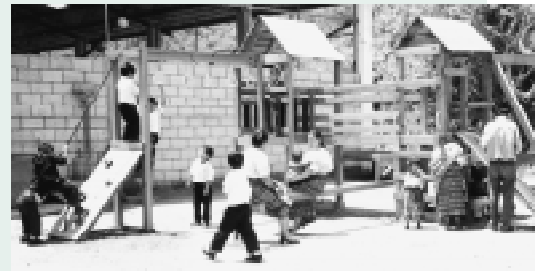
*Main building consists of offices, dining rooms and kitchen.*



*Kari's residence building.*



*Children getting on buses.*



*Playground next to gym.*



*Sixth grade graduating class.*



*Children in gym for closing event of each school day.*



**Yes, I am proud to lend my support to "Mi Refugio" to educate, feed, clothe and provide medical assistance to children and families that live on the Guatemala City garbage dump.**

Enclosed is my gift of \$\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_



*Your gift will help keep us smiling!*

Return this form with your gift in the enclosed envelope. You will receive a tax-deductible receipt. Please make checks payable to:

**World Child Foundation**  
207 Brookes Avenue • Gaithersburg, MD 20877



## More About Mi Refugio

a nondenominational Christian Ministry which provides education, food, clothing and medical assistance to children and their families who live in the Guatemala City garbage dump.

### GUATEMALA

A small country in Central America with a population of 10.5 million, one half of which are descendants of Mayan Indians. Much of the population is poor, with a 50% illiteracy rate. One quarter of the population lives in Guatemala City, with over 1,000 children living in the Guatemala City garbage dump.

### PROGRAM

*Mi Refugio* (My Refuge) is a nondenominational Christian ministry which provides education, food, clothing and medical assistance to children and their families who live in the Guatemala City garbage dump. Mi Refugio also ministers to poor native families in the villages surrounding the San Pedro school property. The ministry provides preschool through high school academic and trade school education that will assist the children to leave a life time on the garbage dump. Children continuing their education beyond high school are also supported. The school has been accredited by the Guatemalan Government and all the teachers are graduates from Guatemalan schools with teaching credentials. Kari Engen is the Executive Director of the ministry, living full time in San Pedro, Guatemala.

### BACKGROUND

The school was started in 1987 by Kari Engen for 50 students in a rented building next to the garbage dump in Zone 7. In 1990, a second building in Zone 3 was rented and the school expanded. The original Zone 7 building was purchased in 1991 and converted into a trade school. In 1995 a 12-acre property, with numerous buildings, was purchased in San Pedro to replace the rented Zone 3 building. The San Pedro property is 15 miles from the Guatemala City garbage dump so the children are bused to the school. The Zone 7 building is now used for nursery and pre-school classes, teacher living quarters and as the bus depot. The school has a current capacity of 250 students.

### NEWSLETTER/MAILING LIST

Kari prepares a quarterly newsletter. We will put your name on our mailing list unless you request that we do not. We never give our mailing list to any other organization.

#### Mi Refugio Student Enrollment by Grade

Grade	Enrollment	Teachers
Preschool	35	Jacqueline, Esther
Kindergarten	32	Marysol, Rosa
First Grade	51	Maricela, Irinea, Sergio Ruth, Milca Blanca
Second Grade	28	Rosario, Ana Victoria
Special Education	4	Oliver
Third Grade	23	Byron, Gregorio
Fourth Grade	18	Virginia
Fifth Grade	8	Victoria
Sixth Grade	14	Mayra Carolina
<b>Total Primary</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>Priscila (Principal)</b>
High School (Grades 1, 2, 3)	11	San Pedro Private High School
Career School (Grades 4, 5, 6)	10	Various schools in Guatemala City
University	2	Colleges in Guatemala City
<b>Total Enrolled Students</b>	<b>236</b>	<i>As of March 2001</i>

*As we Pause to Meditate on those  
Events that have Beset our Nation and the World,  
Despite our Fears and Concerns,  
Let us not Forget the Children.*

Your gift will do so much for needy children and their families.