

Fall 2013—Colombia  
Education Brings Hope



## News

In March, the neighborhood of El Progreso faced an unexpected situation. Squatters invaded nearby land creating disorder and violence. Included in this move to vacant land were several families whose children are from the program. They now live in very precarious conditions with little infrastructure or basic utilities. It is hoped that change will work out to be beneficial.

## Update

The El Progreso program has an agreement with another institution so that children who graduate from El Progreso can continue their studies at no cost, as long as they maintain their grades. Now the programs have expanded the agreement so that students in their last year of high school volunteer in the classrooms of the El Progreso program. This brings about learning for all.

## Keeping them together

Karen Natalia Guzmán lives with her mother María Sacramento Munevar. Although Maria works long days, there is often not enough money to support her household.

Natalia's health is worrisome. Three months ago she weighed 18 kilos and measured 1.35 meters. Now she weighs 21 kilos but is the same height. The doctor says she should weigh 26 kilos and measure 1.4 meters. A warning has been given that if Maria does not increase Natalia's weight and height, the situation will be reported to the welfare office. This would likely result in her being taken away. Neither wants that to happen.

It was because of this that Maria came to this program. She says, "I want to thank you for providing adequate nutrition for my daughter each day of school, the vitamins that strengthen her body, as well as for the educational agreement since it would have been impossible for me to pay for school." Natalia also says, "I feel happy because you are helping us. We live alone and don't always have enough to eat. Thanks and may God bless you."

Natalia's gift: intelligence

Favourite activity: amusement parks (very seldom)

Favourite pastime: crafts and natural arts



Natalia and her mother Maria in their home in El Progreso.



Precarious housing in the land invasion.

**Thank you for your support**

Call toll-free: 877-684-1181 (Canada); 888-563-4676 (U.S.)

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A program of Mennonite Central Committee

