



Dear Friends,

Every two weeks, a small group of women gather in the mission house or in the home of Francisca Ordonez (she has difficulty walking) to share their lives, reflect on scripture, and pray. They are vulnerable, single mothers who have been abandoned by the father of their children. In addition to the spiritual and emotional support they receive, Ixcán Ministries provides them with food (100 lbs. of corn per month), and wood for cooking. We have also addressed other basic material needs, such as tinacos (water holding tanks) and latrines. Most recently we decided to provide them with a small two-burner propane gas stove.

The stove idea came to me after seeing their struggle gathering wood (we provide wood for part of the year), lighting wet wood during the rainy season, and the bigger issue of deforestation.

Each member (Vilia, Francisca, Elena, Maria, Cristina) received a stove and an initial tank of propane to get started. Moreover, they had to participate in 'classes' on use and care as they never had been exposed to this type of cooking before. They were afraid to use it.

Now, they smile with gratitude about their stove and how it has changed their lives. Imagine just turning a switch to heat up water quickly for a cup of coffee or to heat up leftovers versus making a fire, the smoke, and the time it takes for just these simple tasks. They are saving their wood now for food, like beans, that take longer to cook. Vilia said, "We (she and two daughters) are happy with our stove! It helps so much to cook things quickly! My daughters know how to use it! We are so grateful! Thank you!" Cristina said, "We, (she and her three teenage daughters) don't know what we would do now without it! It's such a big help! Thank you!"

It was a good idea.

Ixcán Ministries also constructs one simple house a year for a person in need. Last year we helped Elena build her house and this year we are helping Maria. It's a process. The first requirement is that the recipient has to have a legal title to the land on which to build on. Last year we helped defray lawyer costs in order for Maria to obtain hers. Maria is mother of two boys, Alan 11 and Carlos 7 years old, and has been living in a wood house with her



Elena and her stove

two sisters and a nephew who is 20 years old. The nephew is mentally ill and often violent which makes the need for her own living space that more urgent. At this writing her house is moving forward with cement posts and foundation, and tin roofing. Hopefully, she will be in her own home within a few weeks.

For all of these benefits, we ask each woman to do some type of community service which usually involves washing clothes at the river for a person who is ill.

We call this small group of women Las Luchadoras - the 'fighters' who luchar-fight for their survival literally.

Thank you for helping us make the lives of these women and their children a bit more just and sustainable.

May God bless you and yours in these summer months.

Sincerely,



Kathy Snider



Mission Update:

The jungle season of extreme heat has turned to the rainy season. Vilia has received various chemotherapy treatments to diminish the lump in her breast and will hopefully have surgery soon to remove the tumor. The programs of education: scholarships and library, as well as outreach are in place and operative. Kathy will return to the U.S. in June. Our on-site administrator, Javier Gonzalez, will oversee and manage our outreach programs with Carmen Jimenez and our education programs with a local committee.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Ixcán Ministries is a Christian lay mission serving as a ministry of presence with the Maya people in the Ixcán jungle of Guatemala. We act as a bridge between cultures for the exchange of gifts to transform lives and society.

Our programs include- Scholarships, Community Library, Women's Micro-business, Medical, Housing, and Food Assistance, Spiritual and Pastoral Accompaniment, and Promotion of Peace and Justice.

Ixcán Ministries is a 501(c) 3 organization. Your contributions are tax deductible.

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