



## **ING and Happy Hearts Fund formalize their partnership fostering education for children in Mexico and Latin America**

- *Petra Nemcova, Founder and Chairwoman of Happy Hearts Fund; Phillip Caputo, Executive Director of Happy Hearts Fund and Carlos Muriel, President for ING Latin America, signed the partnership agreement.*
- *The Self Sustainable Program has already enabled the construction of a rural school in Tabasco and will initiate the construction of another one this year.*
- *ING employee donations, matched by ING and Happy Hearts Fund, served to build another school in Haiti.*

*Mexico City, June 21, 2010 - ING and the Happy Hearts Fund (HHF) announced today an agreement to continue supporting children's education in Mexico and throughout Latin America with a Program for Self Sustainable Schools. This Program has already enabled building a rural school in Tabasco, which was seriously damaged after the 2007 floods in the area.*

The program serves to build and/or relocate schools that have been seriously damaged by natural disasters and that are located in underprivileged communities, offering seed capital for the schools to create a micro-business that serves to generate profits used to satisfy their educational needs. The program also serves to initiate savings and personal finance courses targeted to the children attending these schools.

Thanks to donations provided by ING Latin America employees, as well as resources provided by ING and Happy Hearts Fund, the Program for Self Sustainable Schools is already a reality in Mexico and Peru and it will soon come to fruition in Haiti. ING does not operate in Haiti.

In Mexico, this program has already moved into Phase II, and a micro business has already been established at the Arcadio Zentella Rural Primary School, located in Ranchería de El Rio, in the Jalpa de Méndez municipality in the state of Tabasco. The school was relocated to an 8,000-meter plot of land, at a site where the school's facilities are free from flooding risk. The school has already been equipped with Internet connection and has a room for special education.

The micro business set up for the Arcadio Zentella school will be a purified water distribution company for "Agua La Victoria" a local brand with over 40 years experience in the market. Agua La Victoria will sell the school purified water at production cost so that the profits generated by water sales go exclusively to the school.

Carlos Muriel, President for ING Latin America said, "through the Self Sustainable Schools Program we are seeking to improve educational conditions for children in underprivileged areas, and particularly those who have suffered due to natural disasters. We had the opportunity to present the first school we collaborated with through this partnership with Happy Hearts Fund last March in Tabasco and now we are setting our sights and focusing our efforts on another Mexican community to help in coming months."

Separately, Petra Nemcova, Founder and Chairwoman of the Happy Hearts Fund said, “we, at Happy Hearts Fund, have carried out a number of projects around the world which focus on rebuilding children’s lives affected by natural disasters. The goal is to create empowerment and independence for children and their communities, which will have a powerful impact on them and on future generations”.

Xavier de Uriarte, Director for ING Afore stated that before the end of the year, ING and HHF will select one more school in Mexico to be supported by the Self Sustaining Schools Program. “We are already analyzing a series of schools that may become part of this program to support children’s education in Mexico,” he said.

It is very important to highlight that with this program ING only seeks to contribute to high quality sustainable education and that under no circumstances does the company benefit financially from it, nor do they offer the program’s beneficiaries any of the company’s financial services.

ING altruistically provides the project the financial resources and the knowledge to make it happen because of the company’s conviction to be a socially responsible corporation and as such, to contribute to better opportunities in Mexico, especially for those who have access to fewer opportunities.

**About Happy Hearts Fund:**

*Happy Hearts Fund (HHF), founded by Petra Nemcova in 2005, is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving children’s lives through educational and sustainable programs in natural disaster areas. Since inception HHF programs have benefited more than 31,000 children and 334,000 community members and the foundation is currently present in 8 countries. HHF is committed to help accomplish the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDG’s). HHF receives specific donations to underwrite all administrative and fundraising expenses allowing all public donations to support the programs.*

**About ING:**

*ING, a global financial services company, recognizes that the firm’s sustainability is closely linked to improving conditions for the society the company is part of. Through the company’s corporate social responsibility, ING develops actions to foster a financial culture, environmental preservation, a love of the arts, respect for diversity, and especially opportunities for children through education. In 2009, 1,700 Mexican children benefited from the actions taken on by ING in collaboration with other institutions such as Christel House, the “Niños Héroe” school in Chalco, Casa de la Amistad, and the Comunidad Crecer Foundation. For a fifth year in a row, ING received the Empresa Socialmente Responsable Endorsement, a recognition offered by Mexico’s Centro Mexicano de la Filantropía (Mexican Philanthropy Center, CEMEFI).*

*ING seeks to contribute to a sustainable, high quality education and under no circumstances will the company offer program beneficiaries any of their financial services. ING altruistically offers economic resources and knowledge because the company has the firm conviction in being socially responsible and as such, in creating greater opportunities for Mexico, especially for those who have fewer resources.*

**Media Contacts**

Mario Maraboto  
Tel. 55 55545419  
mmaraboto@zimat.com.mx

Cecilia Torres  
Tel. 55 5554 5419  
ctorres@zimat.com.mx

Arlene Putterman  
Tel. (USA) 516-780-1531  
arlene@happyheartsfund.org