Food For The Poor is Proud to Partner with TOMS

Food For The Poor is proud to partner with TOMS to provide new shoes to children in some of the most impoverished areas of the Caribbean and Latin America.

Children were so excited at one of the initial shoe distributions in Honduras that they stormed the beach to help unload boxes of TOMS Shoes from boats that had just arrived. Hoisting the boxes on their shoulders and hauling them in wheelbarrows, the children raced to the school, hoping to be first in line.

“One child was so overwhelmed by the newness and cleanness of the shoes that he did not want to put them on,” said Juan Ramon, the Cortes chapter coordinator for Cepudo, Food For The Poor’s Honduras in-country partner. “Eventually, he did put them on, and he was so proud of them.”

Even though it was a Sunday, the children dressed neatly in their school uniforms to receive their new pair of TOMS. TOMS Shoes were distributed at four schools in the poor coastal communities of Puerto Cortes, Honduras. There is no reliable electric or water source in the area, and the only available transportation is by horseback or on foot. Some children do not attend school because they do not have adequate shoes to wear.

In addition, without proper footwear, children’s feet are vulnerable to cuts, injury and soil-transmitted infections. For these reasons, it is especially important that children have shoes to protect their feet.

“In developing countries, something as simple as a pair of new shoes makes a huge difference in the lives of these children,” said Angel Aloma, Food For The Poor’s Executive Director. “The TOMS Shoes that were distributed to these grateful children will continue to play an active role in the children's health, educational attainment, and self-esteem for many years.”

Through TOMS’ One for One®™ movement, new shoes will be distributed to children repeatedly as they grow. A pair of new shoes, in addition to meeting the basic needs of a child, increases their confidence, leading to better opportunities through an increase in the child’s school attendance.

“We have been able to help 100 percent of the students in the area, according to government records,” said Ramon. “This is a historic event for us and for the area. We have never been able to distribute such a large quantity of aid, and reach so many people at the same time. So far we have distributed new pairs of TOMS Shoes to more than 100 selected schools.”

Food For The Poor’s partners help with everything from self-sustaining aquaculture farms to feeding nutritious meals to school children.

Food For The Poor, named by The Chronicle of Philanthropy as the largest international relief and development organization in the nation, does much more than feed millions of the hungry poor in 17 countries of the Caribbean and Latin America. This interdenominational Christian ministry provides emergency relief assistance, clean water, medicines, educational materials, homes, support for orphans and the aged, skills training and micro-enterprise development assistance, with more than 95 percent of all donations going directly to programs that help the poor.

In 2006, American traveler Blake Mycoskie befriended children in a village in Argentina and found they had no shoes to protect their feet. Wanting to help, he created TOMS Shoes, a company that would match every pair of shoes purchased with a pair of new shoes given to a child in need. One for One™. Since then, TOMS has evolved from a shoe company to the One for One company, and is now addressing an entirely new need around the world in addition to shoes through eyewear.