



Roots of Change Foundation Source de développement

15 Years of bringing hope to people in need



Fall 2021

Newsletter

Sanitary Improvements for San Benito

Thanks to the generous support from Olds/Trochu area donors, 23 families in the community of San Benito have received much needed upgrades to their homes with the installation of new latrines.

Projects like these are significant upgrades to a community and bring with them a number of benefits which include:

- The reduction of infectious and parasitic diseases
- Promote the practice of hygiene standards in the home and community
- Improve the health levels of families affected by the transmission of diseases by consuming contaminated ground water
- Protect the environment by making proper use of latrines
- Actively involve members of beneficiary families in latrine construction work



FUNDACCO has implemented a number of similar projects throughout the country in communities that are considered the poorest of the poor. The beneficiary selection process is done by community members as a whole who know the needs of their neighbors.

Based on funding that was made available through donations, 23 latrines are being installed in this community. Once the beneficiaries have been selected, FUNDACCO interviews and visits each family to determine if they meet the criteria and to ascertain their ability to help in the construction process.

Another significant aspect of these projects is that all activities related to construction are kept within the community (where possible) and allows employment opportunities for those members who have the necessary skills. This includes the forming and pouring of cement components, welding and fabrication of the latrine huts, brick laying and digging of the holes. Beneficiary families and community members as a whole help with the logistics of transporting materials and excavating the locations.

Each latrine is built to a set of specifications that include a 1 meter high concrete block foundation on which a preformed concrete floor is placed. A 2 meter deep hole is then dug to a final depth of 3 meters from ground level.

Continued on page 2



Merry Christmas



The poor of Nicaragua, the FUNDACCO family, and all of us at Roots of Change want to wholeheartedly thank our donors for following their guiding light this past year.

Your generosity has helped many out of hopelessness and has sustained the dreams of countless others.

May God Bless you with the joy of knowing that your gift has made a real difference in someone's life.

May your treasures be stored in heaven where you will one day see the real impact of your donation.

**God Bless you one and all!
Merry Christmas!**

Message from the President

While this past year has been one of constant change and uncertainty due to Covid-19, we've all had to experience some form of compromise and sacrifice. As Christians we are taught to accept the challenges that have been placed in front of us and in spite of how difficult it may be, we must remain strong and positive and know that there will be better days ahead.

This is the message we find ourselves conveying to FUNDACCO often these days as they have been burdened with much more than we have here in Canada.

Continued on page 4

San Benito Latrines *cont. from page 1*



All other components of the hut are made of metal and galvanized sheeting. If you or a group of your friends are interested in helping these poor communities with a much needed upgrade, the cost of one latrine is in the vicinity of \$450 (USD) depending on the location in the country. To make these projects viable, a minimum of 10 latrines would be required.

For further information on this and other community improvement projects, visit our website at www.rootsofchange.ca

Father Denis Hebert - Missionary from the North



Armando Ulloa (left) past President of FUNDACCO and Founder Father Denis

Armando Ulloa, a long time and close friend of Father Denis was President of the FUNDACCO Board of Directors for 7 years resigning from his position in 2017.

Armando and Father were friends long before the formation of FUNDACCO and in 2010, the year when he became President, he penned the poem displayed below about his good friend.

Father Denis Hebert
Your fair complexion with blue eyes
They are the expression of your race
And your dark-hued heart
And your soul of a mixed race
They brought you to us
To give us your life.

You were born in the north
And you came to the south
To understand the people
That don't have a job
That don't have clothes
And lack everything

You came with your story
like the ancient prophets
that denounced the evil
of decadent power
that dictate unjust laws
with decrees of disgrace

You saw us weak
You saw us sad
You observed our reality
And you decided to act
Supporting us
Encouraging us
To be strong
With love towards our neighbor
And you taught us
To fight firmly.

Denis Hebert, you are not holy
but you act with holiness.
You are not a doctrinarian
but your doctrine is to do good.
You don't have a church
but your temple is with the people
For those who do not have a job
For those who do not have clothes
For those who lack everything
You will live forever
Your mission was accomplished
With us from the south.

Armando Ulloa R.

Padre Denis Hebert
Tu tez blanca con ojos azules
Son la expresión de tu raza
Y tu corazón moreno
Y tu alma mestiza
Te trajeron hasta nosotros
Para entregarnos tu vida.

Nacistes en el norte
Y te venistes al sur
Para entender a los hombres
Que les falta un trabajo
Que no tienen vestido
Y carecen de todo

Llegaste con tu historia
como los antiguos profetas
que denunciaron el mal
del poder decadente
que dictan leyes injustas
con decretos de oprobio

Nos vistes débiles
Nos vistes tristes
Nuestra realidad observastes
Y decidistes actuar
Apoyándonos
Animándonos
Para ser fuertes
Con amor al prójimo
Y nos enseñastes
A luchar con firmeza.

Denis Hebert, no eres santo
pero actúas con santidad.
No eres doctrinario
pero tu doctrina es hacer el bien.
No tiene iglesia
pero tu templo está en el pueblo.
Por los que no tienen trabajo
Por los que no tienen vestido
Por los que carecen de todo
Vivirás eternamente
Tu misión fue cumplida
Con nosotros los del sur.

Armando Ulloa R.

El Alto Eco Stove Project - Update



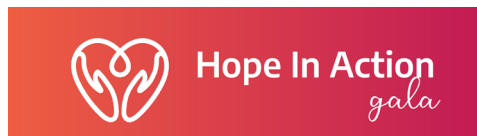
Thanks to the generous support of two donors, a project to replace 25 traditional stoves in the community of El Alto got underway at the beginning of November with procurement of equipment and supplies.

The success of a number of similar projects to improve the health of women and children has prompted a number of communities to make a similar requests to FUNDACCO for Eco Stoves.

With traditional stoves, women and children are subjected to smoke that is in their home throughout the day. Respiratory problems have been prevalent in these poor communities for generations.

Not only are the Eco Stoves a much healthier alternative than the traditional cooking method, they also use considerably less wood to operate which in some areas is becoming a scarce commodity. Firewood can be purchased but many people in these areas of the country cannot afford the cost.

On behalf of the beneficiaries of this project the Board of Directors sincerely thanks these two donors for their support and understanding of how this upgrade will significantly improve the health of many people.



Hope In Action
gala

In early October at the height of the Covid-19 4th wave we had to make the difficult decision to again postpone our gala event.

The new date will be set for early **November 2022**.

Our objective is to fill a large hall with new potential donors drawn by our guest speaker former Edmonton Oiler Georges Laraque.

This event will sensitize a large crowd to the plight of the poor in Nicaragua and the wonderful work that FUNDACCO does to awaken hope for a brighter future.

Please pray for the success of this event and that we will be able to host it without pandemic restrictions.



Georges Laraque

Roots of Change Webinar

Consider a donation that will help the poor in Nicaragua for life

The Roots of Change Foundation will be hosting a webinar in the spring to inform viewers on how they can maximize their donation by contributing to our endowment funds.

Watch for details in our Spring Newsletter and on our website

We Need Your Help to Complete this Project!

El Portillo Water Extraction & Distribution

Over the years FUNDACCO has had success in a number of community projects that have brought water to the doorstep of families thereby eliminating the daily chore of walking distances of up to ½ a kilometer to fetch their supply of water. These projects are a significant improvement to the health and wellbeing of a community.

While FUNDACCO does its best to determine the suitability of a community to receive such an upgrade, there are sometimes unforeseen circumstances that can have an impact on a project.

The water well in El Portillo had been serving the community with a sufficient water supply for years and in communications with community members, there was no reason to question the well and its ability to supply water.

The final step of a water infrastructure and distribution project is to remove the manual hand pump from the well and install a submersible electric pump. During the installation of the pump, a blockage was discovered at a depth of approximately 70 feet. The anticipated placement depth for the pump was 180 feet based on documentation from the original installation of the well indicating a drilled depth of 200 feet.

Although water can be drawn from this shallower depth, there would have been insufficient supply for the new infrastructure installed in the community.

In a subsequent investigation and while talking to community members, it was discovered that during a well cleaning process some years ago a piece of concrete fell into the well which is the likely cause of the blockage.

As a result, the manual pump has been reinstalled to insure the community has water until the well can be repaired.

We are appealing to our supporters for donations to help cover the cost of this unanticipated event. While we have received some response to our plea in the last newsletter, we are still short of what is needed to make the repair.

If you would like to support this cause, please mark your donation with 'El Portillo Water Extraction'.

Community of La Estacion Sanitation Upgrade

Another project funded by the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul



In a recent communication between FUNDACCO and SSVP, FUNDACCO presented a progress report on the installation of 22 latrines in the community of El Estacion and on Tuesday, November 9 of this year, a meeting was held with the families who will be benefiting from the project.

The meeting, organized in collaboration with Luis Betancourt, president of a local conference of the St. Vicente de Paul in Nicaragua, was attended by 20 out of 21 beneficiaries who are enrolled in the project. Two of the latrines will replace the ones currently serving the primary school in the community.

The focus of the meeting was twofold, first was an educational presentation about the proper use and care of the latrines and the health, community, and social welfare benefits of having a clean latrine.

Second was to inform the beneficiaries of the characteristics of the latrines and to organize the activities that will allow for continuity of the project.

As of the printing of this newsletter, the project is close to being complete and a final report is expected before the end of the year.

The RofC once again thanks those Conferences in eastern Canada who continue to support projects of great need in Nicaragua and for their trust in FUNDACCO to insure their donations are being used as intended.

Scholarships Update



During a recent trip to Somotillo in October to visit and administer projects in the area, FUNDACCO had the opportunity to meet with and take a photo of the scholarship beneficiaries in the area.

All are doing well in their studies despite the effects of the pandemic. In person class numbers were reduced to maintain social distancing and not unlike here in Canada and other countries, some of the courses moved to an online format.

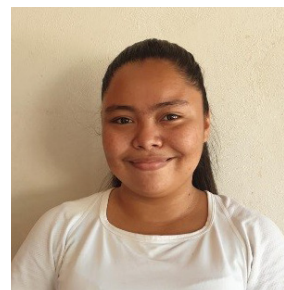
In the face of these hurdles, students are still required to meet their commitment of attendance and grades in order to continue and receive funding from the program.

For the 2022 academic year, 3 new students have met the qualifications to become beneficiaries making a total of 16 for next year.

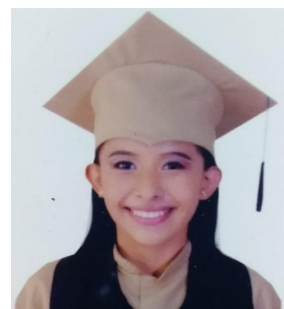
If you would like to learn more about the opportunities our Education Programs bring to these students, please visit our website at www.rootsofchange.ca



Ashlee Paola Cerda
Ashlee is from San Benito-Tipitapa and will be studying Medicine at UNAN University in Managua.



Vielka Lissbeth Centeno Martínez
Vielka is from Villa Nueva-Chinandega and will be studying Public Accounting and Finance at UNAN University in Leon.



Rosa Maribel Escobar González
Rosa is also from San Benito-Tipitapa and will be studying Marketing at UNAN University in Managua.

Message from the President con't from page 1

In Nicaragua, people not only face uncertainty due to the persistence of the effects of the COVID19 pandemic, but also the effects of increased poverty due to the decline in the economy

In the past 4 years, Nicaragua has lost much of the economic gain it made since Father Denis' arrival in the country over 30 years ago and it is for this reason that we must continue to support and bring hope to FUNDACCO and the Nicaraguan people. Please keep these people in your prayers during this holiday season.

As a follow-up to the announcement of my resignation in the Summer Newsletter, I felt it necessary to first and foremost, sincerely thank Vice President David Fréchette for stepping in as interim President until such time we are able to fill this important position and second to share with readers what my involvement will be following my departure at the end of this month.

While I will no longer be tending to duties as President of the organization, I will be supporting David in his new role and will continue to assist the board where I'm able to for at least another year.

My departure will leave a void in some areas of the day-to-day operation of the Foundation, but this creates an opportunity and an opening for those people who would like to contribute to our Mission of Hope.

If you or someone you know would like to be part of the development of our newsletters, website design and/or have experience in marketing we would gladly welcome your help as a volunteer. Volunteering will result in more funding being directed to Nicaragua where it is most needed, rather than to administrative costs should we need to seek outside support for these tasks.

Our board meetings are open to everyone. If you're interesting in learning more about our work and would like to become involved, we would welcome your participation. Feel free to contact any of the board members to request an invitation to our virtual board meetings which are held every second month throughout the year.

As this will be my last communication as President and one who's heart and soul is with the Nicaraguan people, I'd like to first thank the current board for their dedication to our cause and secondly to sincerely thank all of you who continue to support Father Denis' Mission of Hope. The needs in Nicaragua are endless and we as an organization will never be able to fund everything but we strive to continue to support Father's extended family - FUNDACCO, the members of their families, and the communities where FUNDACCO has a presence. Please consider giving a bit more this holiday season.

May you and your family be blessed with joy, happiness and good health this Christmas and in the coming year.

Rick LeBlanc - President



File photo taken during a celebration of Father Denis' 50th anniversary of priesthood in 2008 in the community of San Benito. Luis Enrique Cruz Mora (far right) addresses those in attendance

Watching our Costs!

As a matter of "housekeeping", we have recently undertaken a clean-up of our donor database, resulting in a cost-saving which assures that we are sending every dollar we can to our Nicaragua.

Donors to whom we have been mailing our newsletters but who have not donated in the last 5 years have been flagged and will no longer receive a paper copy as they have in the past. Those who have an email address on file will start to receive the newsletter electronically.

This will result in an annual savings of approximately \$2,500.

For all other donors, if you are currently receiving a paper copy of the newsletter we ask that if you have an email address please provide us with this information so we can deliver your newsletter electronically and continue to reduce our mailing costs.

Please send an email to info@rootsofchange.ca to request this change. We thank you!

For more information www.rootsofchange.ca

Please help by supporting this ministry of hope

2020-21 Board of Directors

Officers:

President - Rick LeBlanc
Vice President - David Fréchette
Secretary - Lucille Damer
Treasurer - Mel Kammerer
Project Administrator - Ken Handford
Donations - Jocelyne Durocher

Directors:

Rod Valdes
John Schile - Scholarships
Michel Lapointe - Delegations
Lloyd Arcand
Charla LeBlanc

Would you like to get involved or have a talent to share?

We are always looking for people who would like to help us in our **Mission of Hope** for the Nicaraguan people.

If interested, contact us at info@rootsofchange.ca to learn more on how to get involved.

The goal for our 2021 campaign is \$100,000 (US).
The estimated cost of printing and mailing this publication is \$1,300.

PayPal Giving Fund

PayPal Giving Fund Canada provides a method to make a credit card donation that eliminates the fees the Foundation would normally be charged which is between 2- 3% of the donation - and every penny counts!

Search for "PayPal Giving Fund" in your browser, click on 'Donate Here' then search for Roots of Change Foundation.

PayPal Giving Fund Canada will provide a Charitable Donation Receipt for your donation and we will be notified once it is processed.

Registered Charity Number 81320 5077 RR0001 ~ Canada Revenue Agency: <http://www.canada.ca/charities-giving>