



Roots of Change Foundation Source de développement

15 Years of bringing hope to people in need

November 2020

Newsletter

Hurricane Iota Devastation in Nicaragua's North

A Plea for Food and Essential Items

The arrival of hurricane Iota, classified as a category 5 storm and the second in just over 2 weeks to hit Nicaragua, has devastated the entire northern part of the country and has placed most of the population at great risk due to lack of clean water, food and shelter.

This area of the country suffers from poor economic conditions and significant weather events which have plagued the northeastern part of Nicaragua for years.

The Roots of Change is seeking disaster relief funding to help people in areas that have been hardest hit by these storms.

As with other disaster relief efforts in the past, donations will be used to purchase food, water and other essential items which will be distributed in the form of hampers to affected areas.

This initiative will be the first under the new 'Foreign Agents' law introduced this fall by the Nicaraguan Government to monitor all funding that is received from outside the country. It will be an opportunity for FUNDACCO to gain recognition in their country by providing much needed aid to their own people.

To learn more about the success of our disaster relief efforts in the past or to make a donation, visit our website at www.rootsofchange.ca

Please consider making a donation to this worthy cause.



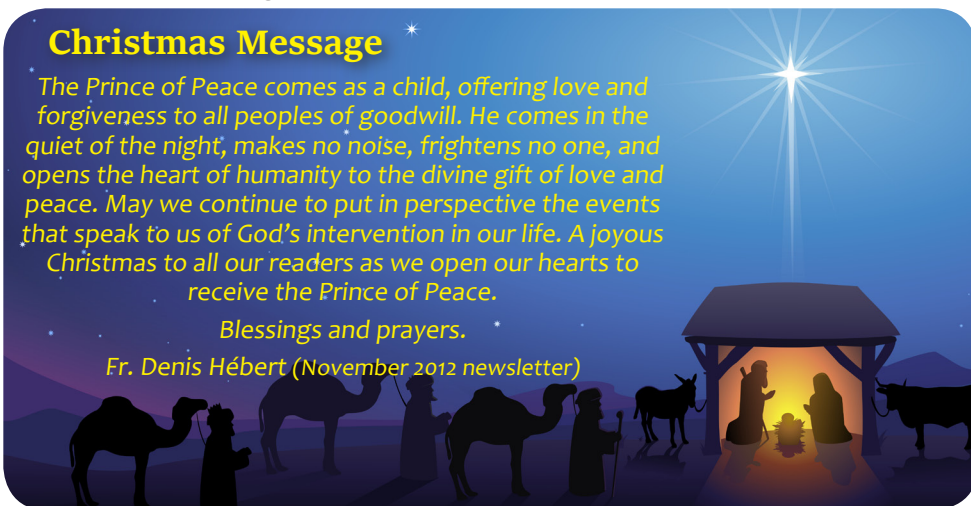
2011 file photo of Achuapa Disaster Relief

Christmas Message

The Prince of Peace comes as a child, offering love and forgiveness to all peoples of goodwill. He comes in the quiet of the night, makes no noise, frightens no one, and opens the heart of humanity to the divine gift of love and peace. May we continue to put in perspective the events that speak to us of God's intervention in our life. A joyous Christmas to all our readers as we open our hearts to receive the Prince of Peace.

Blessings and prayers.

Fr. Denis Hébert (November 2012 newsletter)



Message from the President

In August the San Rafael Arcangel Clinic reopened after closing in May due to the pandemic. A number of safety measures have been implemented to ensure the safety of the staff. The walk-in clinic detected six cases of the virus since reopening with all being referred to a hospital.

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Thank you, thank you!

For many of us, 2020 will be a year that we would just as soon forget!! However, one thing we will NOT forget is the generosity of our donors. When it became obvious that we would have to cancel our major fundraiser for the year, we sent out a special appeal, asking for your help to fulfill the fundraising goal we had set for this event. Your generous actions during this appeal, combined with all the other donations received throughout the year have ensured that our commitment to FUNDACCO for the 2020 budget year will indeed be met.

One of the things we are hearing during these unusual times is that "we're all in this together". We know that Roots of Change donors have believed this and have lived this philosophy for a long time...AND WE THANK YOU!!

Upgrades to Traditional Cooking Methods - Installation of 50 Eco-Stoves

How support from an Alberta donor has improved the lives of many families



The common denominator of families who live in rural communities of Nicaragua is the use of traditional wood burning stoves for cooking. This domestic practice has been passed from generation to generation in response to the poverty that exists in rural areas. Traditional methods of cooking have affected women, who have been exposed to smoke inhalation from an early age, resulting in both respiratory and vision problems. One of the more serious concerns is the effect it has on minors who, through no fault of their own, are exposed to the smoke every day.

The project, originally undertaken to replace 16 traditional stoves in the community of Las Mariitas was made possible by a generous donor from Bonnyville, AB, a long-time supporter of founder Fr. Denis Hébert.

Residents of Las Mariitas learned of the successful implementation of new and improved stoves in 2 other rural communities, made possible by funding from the same donor in Alberta. The benefits of improved health conditions, the reduced need for wood, and the reduction in smoke and soot inside their homes sparked an interest in many of the local families.

A formal request for funding was made to FUNDACCO, and the first organizational meetings were held in February 2019. FUNDACCO visited with each of the families who would become beneficiaries to get to know the families and learn of any conditions to be considered during the execution of the project.

All families were required to attend a series of meetings to learn about the benefits of the stoves as well as training sessions provided by the supplier, where they learned about operating the stove as well as maintenance and cleaning procedures.

The initial project was to provide 16 stoves in Las Mariitas. However with assistance from the international organization Trees, Water & People, and discounts from suppliers, a total of 50 stoves were installed, expanding to include the community of Palo de Reuda, and 5 stoves in Managua.

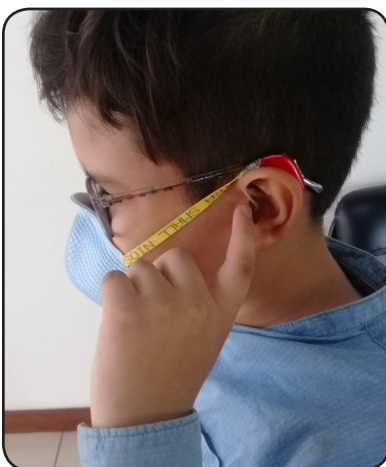
Following the completion of the project, families expressed their joy and gratitude to those who provided the funding as they now enjoy the health benefits and an improvement in their environment.

Word has now spread to other communities, and FUNDACCO has received other requests for similar projects.

For a complete report on this and other projects, please visit our website at www.rootsofchange.ca



Klauss Romero Hearing Aids



Thanks to the generous support of 5 donors who responded to our appeal in the last newsletter, Klauss has now been fitted with new hearing aids. These devices will allow him a better chance at life to learn and to experience sounds we all take for granted. The family expresses their deepest gratitude to the donors who made this possible.

Scholarship Update

In 2019, the Roots of Change Foundation restructured how its Education Programs are funded by the donations it receives. This year marked the first full year in the implementation of the new policy and we are happy to announce that the program continues to be a resounding success.

Donations earmarked for education from a previous year determine the Education Budget for the following year. From this pool of funds, FUNDACCO delivers the program to successful applicants.

For the 2021 academic year, 5 new students will join the program while 2 have completed their studies in 2020 making for a total of 16 beneficiaries in 2021.

All donors who contribute to the program receive a report in January with information on the students including how the Education Budget was disbursed.

Please consider donating to the Scholarship Program, it is the key that will unlock the poverty cycle.

For more information please contact john.schile@rootsofchange.ca

FUNDACCO & Saint Vincent de Paul Join Forces Again

The collaboration between FUNDACCO and the National Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SSVP) in Canada continues with the successful completion of yet another project in Nicaragua.

The small town of San Ramon, located in the northern region of Nicaragua, close to the Honduran border, is a community made up of approximately 500 families with a total population of around 2,800 people.

Many homes in the area are multi-generational due to the extreme poverty in this part of the country. The historical priorities for the people of San Ramon have generally not included their basic sanitary needs. This lack of adequate bathroom facilities has resulted in numerous issues including pollution of the environment, intestinal or bladder disease, and the lack of privacy and subsequent loss of dignity.

Community members came together to formulate a request for assistance and made their presentation to FUNDACCO in association with the Nicaraguan National Council of the SSVP.

Beneficiary families were determined using a process which included assessing their ability to meet the requirements of the project and their level of contribution to the construction process. A mason from the community was selected for the construction of the latrines, and the working committee formed by the group of families coordinated the receipt of materials, and construction activities, including the supervision of the mason.

The budget for the project initially allowed for the construction of 18 latrines. Discounts achieved on construction materials and the latrine components, combined with the labour provided by the beneficiary families resulted in the completion of a total of 22 latrines. The project was completed in a timely manner, in keeping with the predetermined schedule, thanks to the high level of coordination and communication of the community support team and the availability of the family members to work on their latrines.

FUNDACCO extends their many thanks to the SSVP Councils in both Nicaragua and in Canada for their financial assistance, and for their continuing faith in the processes developed by FUNDACCO to ensure the success of these collaborative projects.

To view the complete report on this project and how it was implemented, please visit our website at www.rootsofchange.ca.



15 Years of Bringing Hope to Nicaragua

The Roots of Change Foundation has reached another milestone! In 2020, the Foundation celebrates its 15th Anniversary. It's been a quiet celebration, due to COVID-19, but it is important nonetheless.

In recognition of this milestone, we want to share some statistics with our readers from the past 15 years. Through donations and our fundraisers, \$2,872,830.00 was raised to fund 197 projects which included 79 scholarships ranging from 6 months to 4 years. The amount also included funding for donor sponsored projects as well as the operational costs of our year to year 'Ongoing Programs'.

We have brought hope and improvements to 28 communities located throughout Nicaragua which have made a significant impact in both the health and well-being of thousands of people. All of this would have not been possible if it wasn't for the dedication and efforts of FUNDACCO and their staff. It has been an honour and pleasure to help them accomplish their goals.

Leave a Legacy

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

Planned giving is a great way to maximize your donation. It is a means that allows for sustained funding indefinitely for the people of Nicaragua. Within the program, contributions in any amount over \$25 can be made in a number of ways.

Contributions are invested in 'named funds' that are held and administered by the **Edmonton Community Foundation**. Proceeds from these funds provide yearly income for the Roots of Change Foundation while a portion is reinvested back into the Fund. These investments grow in perpetuity and are an excellent way to capitalize on your donation.

For more information on how you can leave a legacy that will benefit the Nicaraguan people indefinitely visit our website.

Presidents Message - Continued from Page 1

Another significant event this past year was a cancer diagnosis for Maria, FUNDACCO's Project Coordinator. Maria went through some difficult times during her chemotherapy treatments but we are happy to announce that tests early in November have shown that the cancer is gone. She has since returned to work at the job she truly loves and has extended a thank you to all who kept her in their prayers.

As with many organizations today, meetings of the Board are now being held virtually which has allowed for 'Friends of the Foundation' who are located throughout the province to join in. If you are interested in being part of a meeting, contact us and we would be happy to have you join in.

New posts are being added to the website that reflect the work being done with your donations. FUNDACCO continues to supply us with excellent reports on their activities which bring hope to the people.

At our AGM in September (postponed from June due to the pandemic) Rod Valdes became a member of the Board of Directors. Rod brings considerable marketing knowledge to our organization and we welcome him and his experience which will help us in our efforts to continue Father Denis' mission.

The outlook for 2021 will not be good for the Nicaraguan people, FUNDACCO and their staff. Repression in their country has affected the majority of the population and it is anticipated that it will only get worse as they approach the elections in November.

On behalf of the Board I'd like to sincerely thank donors for their continued support which today is needed more than ever. With your donations the Foundation will continue to bring hope to the people of Nicaragua.

Rick LeBlanc - President



The ferry that transports people to the island of Ometepe - the home of Luis' family



NICA Preschool Program
one of our Ongoing year-to-year programs.
Learn more on our website at
www.rootsofchange.ca

For more information www.rootsofchange.ca

Please help by supporting this ministry of hope

2019-20 Board of Directors

Officers:

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

Directors:

Rod Valdes
John Schile
Michel Lapointe
Lloyd Arcand
Charla LeBlanc

Do you have a talent to share?

The Foundation is looking for people with skills in the following areas. Volunteer hours range from a half hour to 3 hours per week.

- **WordPress Designer/Website Maintenance Skills**
- **Blog Writer**
- **Marketing**

If you are interested in learning more about these volunteer positions, please contact Rick LeBlanc at rick.leblanc@rootsofchange.ca

The goal for our 2020 campaign is \$100,000 (US) and the estimated cost of this publication is \$1,300 (printing and mailing costs combined).

PayPal Giving Fund

PayPal Giving Fund Canada provides a method to donate using a credit card 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>