



# Luchando!



**VISION**

We envision disciples making disciples in Nicaragua – impacting families, churches, communities, and businesses.

**MISSION**

We exist to make disciples of Jesus in Nicaragua through clean water, education, and mentorship.



If you ask a rural Nicaraguan how they're doing, they'll often respond with just one word:



## "Luchando."

It means "fighting". A way of expressing they are simply trying to survive.

Back in 2015, Josh and I spoke to an old fisherman on the beach of Salinas Grande. His nickname was "La Sirenita," directly translated to The Little Mermaid. He regaled us with his story of being shipwrecked for three days and three nights in the Pacific Ocean. As he finished, a group of small kids ran through the yard. He quipped that these little ones would grow up to be drunk fishermen like "the rest of us".

It was through La Sirenita's story and flippant comment that **a seed was planted**. Because we deeply believed that these youngsters from Salinas Grande could become far more than drunk fishermen. As part of our community development model through education and mentorship, we prayed these youth would experience the abundant life the Lord speaks of in John 10.

Salinas Grande became our next destination.

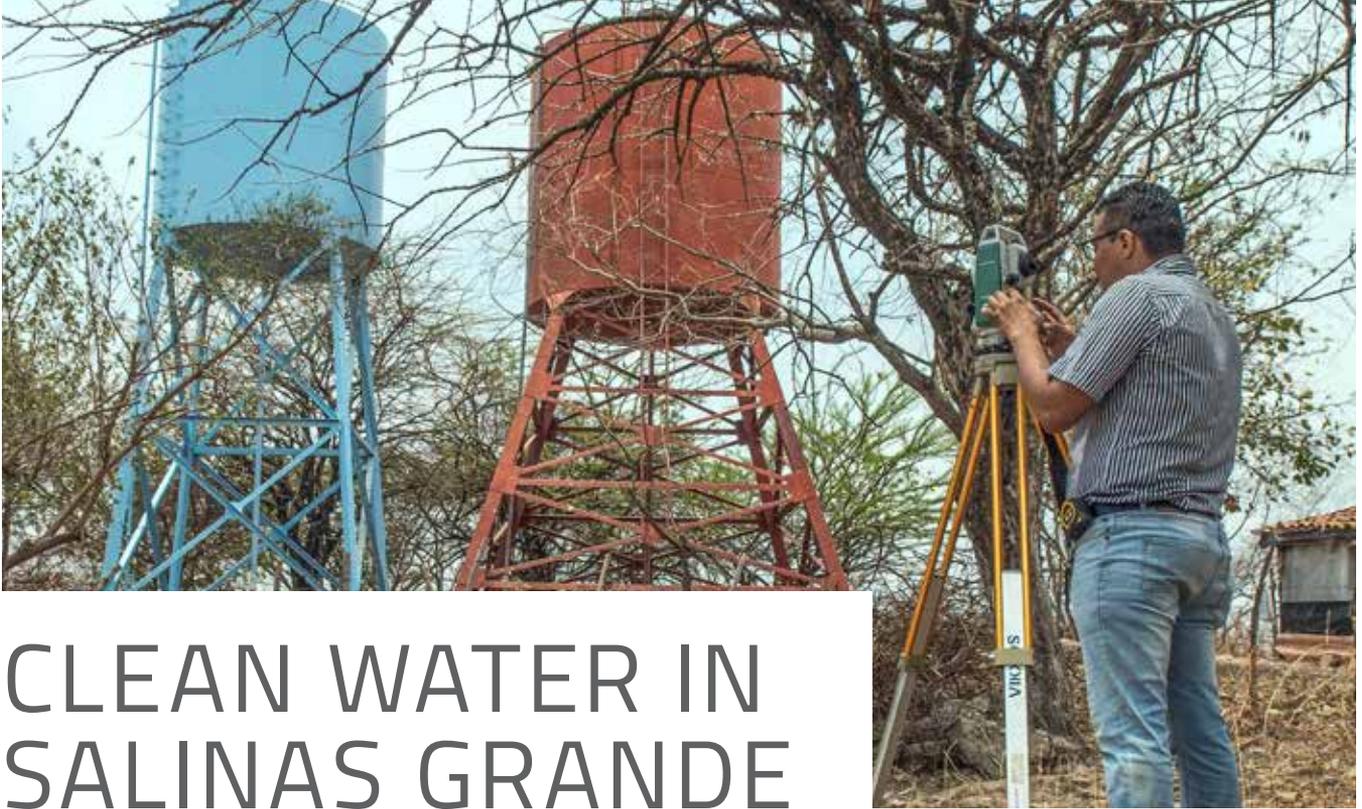
At the time the old fisherman told his story, only two people from this 2,000-person community had advanced beyond high school. Now, there are 19 Salinas Grande students attending University with SuNica scholarships (and 34 students across all our communities)! And over the past six years, there have been more than 150 young people from Salinas engaged in discipleship. As of 2021, there is clean water flowing directly to each home in town (not without a good bit of "luchando"). You can read more in the Salinas Water Project Update on the next page of this report.

The tide is beginning to turn in this old fishing village. The fight to survive is giving way to an expectation to THRIVE.

Friends, this is what your support is doing, not just in Salinas Grande, but throughout the six communities where we serve. We are so grateful for you!

In Jesus,

Alan Wilser, Co-Founder and Director



# CLEAN WATER IN SALINAS GRANDE

## The challenges

For years, the people of Salinas Grande didn't have access to enough water to sustain the 2,000+ people of their community. With only enough clean, accessible water for two hours every other day for the most fortunate, others were forced to walk long distances in order to find water that'd been contaminated from the river. **Being able to find another source of water in addition to the existing one was difficult due to the proximity of the Pacific Ocean.**



## The team

Led by engineer and Water Team Lead, Jose Antonio Flores Perez, this project required the collaboration of 1,000+ people to install the new water pipe. Our Water and Sanitation Committee believed and trusted in God's plan in the midst of difficulties. This was our biggest water project yet!

## The results

In October 2021, we turned on the water in the community! Salinas Grande residents no longer have to leave water in barrels while it grows bacteria for two days. They no longer have to walk several kilometers to wash and carry water to their homes. The transition from collecting polluted river water to having clean water piped directly to homes 24/7 was life-changing. **Now, 440 homes and around 2,000 people use the clean drinking water system daily.**

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY



**Water & Sanitation**



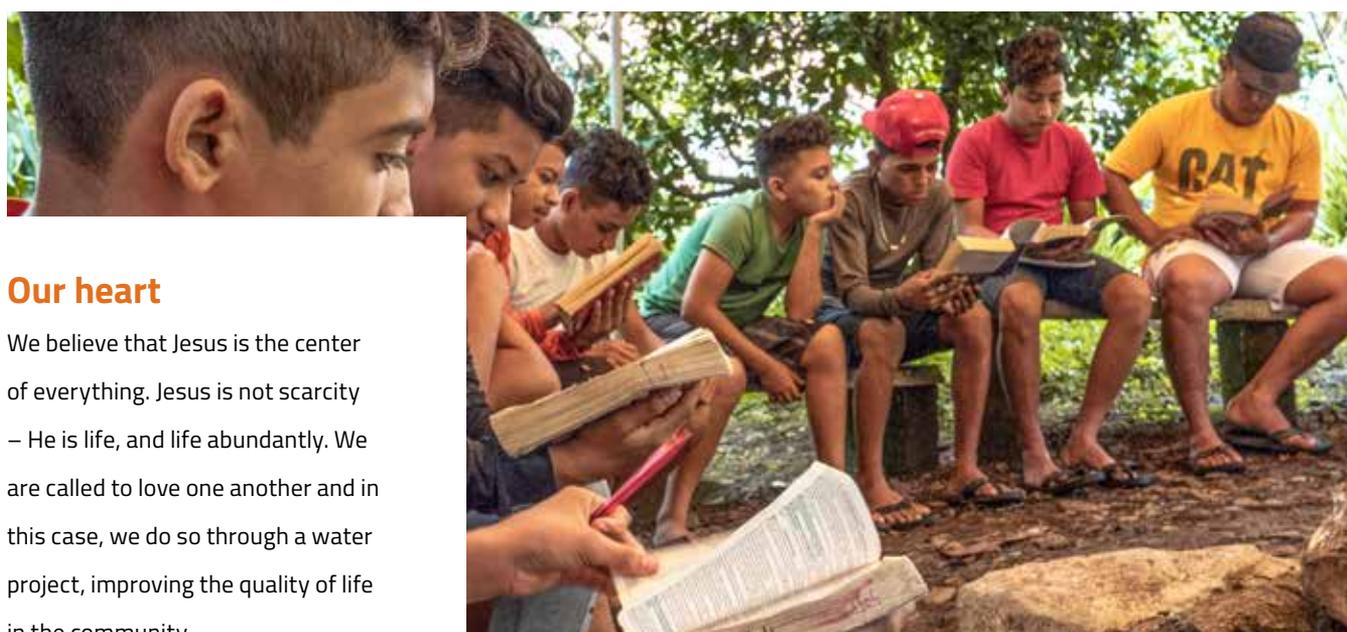
**Education & Mentorship**



**Community Centers**

| COMMUNITY                                | WATER                            | SANITATION           | EDUCATION                                           | MENTORSHIP       | COMMUNITY CENTERS                           |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <b>El Limonal</b>                        | ✓ provided by city of Chinandega | ✓ provided by others | ✓ since 2010                                        | ✓ since 2013     | ✓ completed in 2018                         |
| <b>El Porvenir</b>                       | ✓ completed in 2016              | ✓ completed in 2020  | ✓ since 2019                                        | ✓ since 2017     | ✗ TBD                                       |
| <b>Salinas Grande</b>                    | ✓ completed in Oct. 2021         | ✗ TBD                | ✓ since 2015                                        | ✓ since 2015     | ▶ 100% funded – construction beginning 2022 |
| <b>San Carlos</b>                        | ✓ completed in 2018              | ✗ TBD                | ▶ scholarships for college students – began in 2021 | ✓ since 2020     | ✗ TBD (land purchased by residents)         |
| <b>Los Ranchos</b><br><i>new in 2021</i> | ▶ 70% funded – began Aug. 2021   | ✗ TBD                | ✗ TBD                                               | ✗ TBD            | ✗ TBD                                       |
| <b>La Leona</b><br><i>new in 2021</i>    | ✗ TBD                            | ✗ TBD                | ✗ TBD                                               | ▶ began May 2021 | ✗ TBD                                       |

✓ completed    ▶ in progress    ✗ not started yet



## Our heart

We believe that Jesus is the center of everything. Jesus is not scarcity – He is life, and life abundantly. We are called to love one another and in this case, we do so through a water project, improving the quality of life in the community.

# FROM THE TRASH TO TREASURE



My name is Byron. I'm 19 years old and I live in El Limonal. I'm a volunteer leader in the mentorship program at SuNica. I have nine siblings – three girls and six boys. I was born in El Limonal, and for as long as I can remember I started working here in the trash dump. I'd work alongside my dad and we'd find whatever scraps we could to generate some money for our home.

When I was 10 years old, I heard about SuNica for the first time. I started coming to the community center to play soccer. One day I was invited by the SuNica team to stay longer than just the soccer game – they asked me to be a part of their bible study. At that time, I didn't have a very deep relationship with Jesus. It wasn't something that I really paid much attention to. That's where my life with SuNica started. Becoming more involved with them really helped change my life and my family's life because it was one less expense my parents had once I was sponsored. I continued in the program and when I turned 16, I was invited to be a part of the pre-leadership program.

Since I was a kid, my mom would tell me to not simply get stuck here. Instead, she encouraged me to work hard, to become somebody in life, and to find a good job so that I could support a family one day. By the time I was 14, I stopped coming to work in the dump and started to imagine what life would be like if I actually went to college and studied something of interest. A different kind of life than what you typically see here.

Now, I'm in my second year of college studying social work. I recently celebrated one year of being a leader at SuNica discipling kids. I've been able to grow and take my relationship with Jesus seriously, preach His Word, and share the knowledge of His great love with others. I always wanted to serve, but being involved with SuNica has developed my desire to serve even more! From now on I know that service will be something that marks my life – wherever I go, whatever I do.



*“I’ve been able to grow and take my relationship with Jesus seriously, preach His Word, and share the knowledge of His great love with others.”*



Our staff relationships flourished as we initiated discipleship within our team. We hired two full-time staff members, Hubert and Reynaldo!



We started week-long retreats with the older kids in our program as opposed to weekend stays, allowing us to take discipleship even deeper.



A second tree house was built to provide sleeping destinations in the forest, adding an element of fun and adventure for the kids we serve!

# THE SACRED FOREST



The Sacred Forest originated from the dream of two great Christian leaders of our day, Jim and Sarah Hornsby. Jim founded Young Life Nicaragua in the 1980s and faithfully grew the organization to what it is today. Upon his retirement from Young Life, he purchased a small piece of land initially, and then acquired more land totaling to a 200-acre rainforest preserve. It was there that Jim built a Discipleship Retreat experience which is now called The Sacred Forest. The property has been entrusted to SuNica and has become a prominent feature of our Discipleship experience.

## Pause & Pivot

We experienced major shifts during the pandemic, ultimately pausing most trips in 2020. Standing strong in the belief that God gave us this ministry, we did everything we could to steward it well and keep our kids safe. Thankfully, with protocols put in place to avoid contagion in the forest, we trusted that our kids would follow through with the guidance we gave them. So, after one long year of putting the bulk of our trips on hold, we were able to resume them in full in 2021!

## (Y)OUR IMPACT

**37**

trips total (26 small groups, 11 work retreats)

**11**

retreats from other ministries (Franciscan Friars, and a local church from Matagalpa)

**292**

people impacted by discipleship in the Sacred Forest (142 SuNica students and leaders and 150 people via other retreats)



We established constant leadership on the farm this year which led to stronger communication and organization.



New games were built – seven new activities (including our low ropes course) were added!

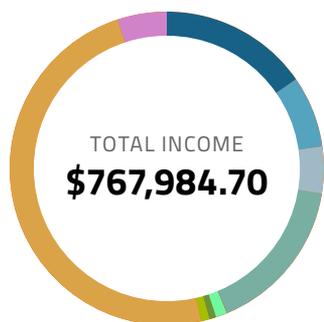


We built a new soccer field for our kids to enjoy.

## 2021 HIGHLIGHTS



# 2021 FINANCIALS



|                                                           | INCOME              | EXPENSES            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>SuNica Based Expenses</b>                              |                     |                     |
| ● Water & Sanitation                                      | \$117,929.66        | \$90,123.40         |
| Salinas Grande Water                                      |                     | \$74,786.00         |
| Los Ranchos Water                                         |                     | \$8,781.21          |
| Miscellaneous                                             |                     | \$6,556.19          |
| ● THRIVE – Education & Discipleship                       | \$56,709.02         | \$122,613.93        |
| ● Staff Support                                           | \$37,080.76         | \$67,198.47         |
| ● El Limonal Center                                       |                     | \$6,898.26          |
| ● Salinas Community Center                                | \$123,894.60        | \$270.66            |
| ● Sacred Forest Fund                                      | \$250.00            | \$22,395.96         |
| ● SuNica Trips                                            | \$9,024.09          | \$3,881.36          |
| ● SF Coffee                                               | \$5,254.85          | \$5,360.27          |
| ● The Curiosity Circle                                    | \$6,715.35          | \$18,085.85         |
| ● General ( <i>Unrestricted</i> )                         | \$371,995.25        | \$100,067.26        |
| <b>Sub-totals</b>                                         | <b>\$728,853.58</b> | <b>\$436,895.42</b> |
| <b>US Based Expenses</b>                                  |                     |                     |
| ● Fundraising                                             |                     | \$63,318.03         |
| ● US Staff ( <i>CEO, Admin, Dev. Director, etc</i> )      | \$39,131.12         | \$108,817.77        |
| ● US Operations ( <i>Rent, Int'l Travel, Accounting</i> ) |                     | \$26,412.80         |
| <b>Sub-totals</b>                                         | <b>\$39,131.12</b>  | <b>\$198,548.60</b> |
| <b>2021 TOTAL</b>                                         | <b>\$767,984.70</b> | <b>\$635,444.02</b> |



SuNica believes in being transparent and straightforward about monies received and spent by the organization. We continue to maintain our commitment to nonprofit transparency and accountability by providing updated data and information to GuideStar, the world's largest source of information on nonprofit organizations.

## 2021 IMPACT

**3,200+**

people now have 24/7 clean water through SuNica Water Projects

**150+**

students and adults joined us for 37 total retreats to the Sacred Forest

**33**

students now attending University with SuNica Scholarships

**35**

staff members (grew from 32 in 2021)



# LOOKING AHEAD

2021 was a BIG YEAR with the completion of the Salinas Grande Water Project and the addition of **two new communities – La Leona and Los Ranchos**. 2022 will bring some exciting projects as we plan to break ground on the **Los Ranchos Water Project** and the **Salinas Community Center** in the same year! Here's what else you can look forward to!



## Trips will continue

Now that travel has opened back up, we're looking forward to welcoming several groups back to Nicaragua to take part in the mission that you're making possible through your generosity!



## The launch of THRIVE!

Our Discipleship & Education Program is expanding to ultimately reach more kids! From now on, we'll refer to the program as THRIVE. We're shifting our service model away from an exclusive focus on child sponsorship and toward an inclusive model focused on every child in each of the communities we serve. Stay tuned for more information!



## Team growth

The expansion of programming in the Limonal Community Center comes with a need to grow our staff in Nicaragua. We're developing more sports leagues, and digging deeper with the parents through parenting workshops and retreats to the Sacred Forest so they can experience what their kids do. Many of our community leaders will step up into larger leadership roles in 2022!



## Sacred Forest

We're excited to grow our Sacred Forest vision in 2022, building on the momentum our team has demonstrated through volunteer work trips. We'll continue working on special projects like building treehouses and developing new hiking trails. Most importantly, we'll continue to provide intentional time to build relationships with Jesus.



# SU|NICA

410 LORD BERKLEY ROAD, RALEIGH, NC 27610

SUNICA.ORG  

© SuNica. All rights reserved. SuNica is a registered 501(c)(3) corporation, Federal Tax ID #27-1232063. All donations are tax deductible.