



CEPAD
COUNCIL OF PROTESTANT
CHURCHES OF NICARAGUA

De la Rotonda El Periodista
200 metros al sur, 100 metros al este
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Our Programs

CEPAD works in partnership with vulnerable communities in Nicaragua to create sustainable, holistic change. We work in 40-50 communities at a time for five year cycles with a focus on agricultural development, leadership training, and faith-based education. The needs and existing resources of each community drive the projects, which ensures long-term success. **In 42 years, CEPAD has helped 4,277 communities achieve economic stability, food security, and family leadership.**

Leadership Development:

- **Community Leaders:** Leaders in the community receive training from CEPAD in leadership and community organization so they can develop new resources and work with the local government to achieve their goals. Leaders create and form a committee that identifies community needs and creates strategies to meet them. In each five year period, we train more than 250 leaders who advocate for infrastructure projects such as road repair, electricity and communal wells. These committee members also serve as leaders in the communities as main points of contact for CEPAD.
- **Youth Leadership:** Children and youth who participate in CEPAD's youth programs learn skills like public speaking, leadership and care for the environment. They play sports, create art and develop self-esteem. The women and older teens who lead these programs in each community receive training to identify children at risk for violence in the home, drug and alcohol use and low school achievements so they can give special attention to those participants.
- **Domestic Violence Protection:** Violence against women is the number one crime in rural Nicaragua. CEPAD teaches women in our partner communities about their rights and gives them tools to escape violent homes and help their friends and family members do the same.
- **Pastoral Leadership Training:** Pastors serve as community leaders in areas without formal government structures. From 2009-2014, we worked with 180 pastors and created 18 pastoral committees. CEPAD provides practical workshops and self-study programs in theology to pastors and their congregations. Pastors, leaders and congregants select topics such as stewardship of creation, domestic violence, self-esteem and working with youth.

Women's Economic Development:

Women contribute economically to some households in rural Nicaragua and many homes are lead by single mothers. CEPAD provides training for women in farming techniques, organizes and funds community banks and teaches other trades, which allows women to provide for themselves and their families.

- **Community Banking:** CEPAD helps women to organize community banks where 7-8 women come together to become financially literate through training and then take out a loan together. By taking out a group loan, there is greater accountability as each member is responsible to pay her piece of the loan on time. These loans are used to invest in women's small businesses. For example, one woman may need the credit to purchase food in bulk to sell it at a higher price in her village to easily repay the loan and make money through her sales.
- **Work Training Centers:** Many women in rural villages have expressed the need to learn new skills they can use to market or make things to sell. In 2015, CEPAD began a new project to give women the opportunity to come together in groups to learn how to make piñatas, jewelry and typical Nicaraguan foods, items which they can market in their communities. Through building community, learning a trade and sharing their experiences, women also boost their self-esteem.
- **Patio Project:** Through this project, CEPAD provides women with financing to purchase pigs and chickens to raise and reproduce in their backyards. The women use these pigs and chickens to sell in their communities to increase their incomes, and they are also eaten so families have access to animal proteins in their diets, something that is often lacking in rural homes.

Food Security and Care for the Environment:

CEPAD works with small farmers to increase food production, improve economies and protect natural resources. We promote organic techniques and train producers with very small farms (usually fewer than five acres) to implement them. We train at least five farmers in each community to make their own fertilizer, diversify crops, avoid chemical pesticides and use water efficiently. Each farmer then teaches five more community members the techniques they learned from CEPAD. In three years, farmers transition from growing only staple crops like beans and corn to producing up to 25 varieties of fruits, vegetables and wood trees.

In family gardens, women receive seeds and training to grow small gardens in their patios to provide their families with nutritious fruits and vegetable to help fight poverty and hunger.

International Partnership and Solidarity: CEPAD facilitates relationships between Nicaraguans and others from around the world through our International Partnership and Solidarity program where groups of adults and youth can visit Nicaragua for a transformative experience. Each group receives orientation on Nicaragua's history and challenges at our Nehemías Delegation Center before visiting one of our rural partner communities to see first-hand CEPAD's work and Nicaraguan life while developing unforgettable relationships. We can tailor a trip to people of any age and work ability with a faith-based focus (Christian) or learning approach (university group). More than 30 groups visit Nicaragua every year.



Self-Sustaining Programs: CEPAD also has two self-sustaining programs.

- **Primary and Secondary Education:** CEPAD runs a primary and secondary school in Leon, Nicaragua, The Marcos Mendieta School. This school provides both regular and weekend classes for students to help them excel and graduate in a country where only a very small percentage of students ever reach the sixth grade. The school has about 200 graduates per year.
- **Radio CEPAD:** offers a daily broadcast of news, sports, interviews, biblical studies and reflections that reach almost the entire Pacific region of Nicaragua. Its programming speaks in favor of the poorest and most vulnerable members of the population and emphasize gender equality, care for the environment, human rights, and community action. The station broadcasts on the AM dial from 5 am to 6 pm and online at www.radiocepad.org.

Refugee Support: CEPAD Partners with the United Nations High Commission on Refugees to provide legal assistance and material support to vulnerable individuals and families in the process of integration. Most refugees come to Nicaragua from our neighboring countries: Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador to escape drug and gang violence. The number of refugees to Nicaragua continues to rise, and CEPAD is proud to support the U.N.'s efforts to provide families with new beginning. This program is exclusively supported by the United Nations.