

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023





## Who We Are

Rural Nicaraguans often struggle with extreme economic poverty. Families have faced hurdles for generations with no way out. Rainbow Network exists to help rural communities overcome poverty and build a brighter future. People are being transformed through secure housing, greater health, education and new career opportunities. Our motivation comes from our faith in Jesus Christ, who moves our work forward every day.

## Our Mission

To share in the love of Jesus Christ by partnering with Nicaragua's poorest people in healthcare, education, economic development and housing.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Page 3** Letter From the President

**Page 9** 10 Year Plan

**Page 4** Where We Work

**Page 10** 2023 Impact

**Page 5-7** Our Holistic Approach

**Page 11** Staff and Board of Directors

**Page 8** Marcela's Story

**Page 12** Ways to Give

# FROM THE PRESIDENT

What a great year we had in 2023! For the first time in our organization's history, we graduated multiple communities. In total, 19 communities were declared independent and no longer need our programs in order to thrive. This is a huge accomplishment!

Every donation, prayer, and act of support makes these milestones possible.

**Thank you!**

As we look to the months ahead, we'd like to issue you two challenges.

One - Continue to invite your friends and family to join you in this meaningful mission. We are proud of this work that allows people to overcome poverty, and we know you are too. Our donor retention rate is nearly double the national average, which shows your incredible commitment to our mission. By helping to spread the word, you are growing our Rainbow Network family and helping us expand our reach throughout Nicaragua.

Two - Keep investing in our mission through your prayers, encouragement, and financial gifts. God is doing big things in these communities, and we cannot continue our work without you!

We have many exciting things ahead in 2024, including more community graduations, expanding into a new network, additional opportunities to travel to Nicaragua, and a new, detailed vision that will increase our efficiency and effectiveness with each program. To say we are excited is quite the understatement!

Here's to another amazing year of sharing in Christ's love with each other and with the people of Nicaragua!

Many thanks and blessings,



**Megan Herrera**

President, Rainbow Network



# WHERE WE WORK

When Rainbow Network began in 1995, Nicaragua was recovering from a long civil war and a major earthquake. There were great needs for basic services throughout the country, and very few organizations were there to help.

Today, Nicaragua remains one of the most economically challenged countries in the Western hemisphere. It has ongoing threats of natural disasters, and people continue to lack access to things like clean water and stable housing, especially in the rural communities.



We currently work in 8 regions, which serve an average of 18 communities each. The map above shows these regions, or “networks,” along with the San Ramon network, which achieved self-sustainability and graduated in 2023!

**We will soon begin working in an additional network**, which is in great need of a path out of poverty. We are excited to begin this new chapter & partner with more communities that need us.

# OUR HOLISTIC APPROACH

Each of our programs sets a solid foundation for communities to lift themselves out of poverty and into a new way of life. When combined, these programs create transformation.

## Healthcare

Communities in rural Nicaragua often lack access to clinics and medicine. They have little knowledge about the public healthcare system and prevention of common illnesses.

Rainbow Network brings communities:

- Bi-monthly clinics to provide basic medical consultations and medicines
- Regular access to dental and ultrasound services
- Public health seminars on the causes of illnesses and prevention techniques
- Distribution of anti-parasite medication
- Support services to help patients navigate the public healthcare system for surgeries and special needs
- Healthy meals for children, nursing and pregnant mothers and elderly at nutrition centers
- Training on how to grow a family garden

## Education

Education is undervalued in rural communities. For families who would like to send their child to high school, they lack the funds needed for school supplies and transportation.

Rainbow Network provides:

- School supplies for students
- Afternoon tutoring for primary students
- Scholarships for high school students
- Improved access to technical school and support navigating university opportunities
- An adult literacy program in partnership with the Ministry of Education
- Education to families on the importance of continued schooling

**Wilfredo,**  
2023 high school  
graduate





## Economic Development

Rural Nicaraguans have an entrepreneurial spirit, but they lack opportunities to create something of their own. People often pick up seasonal jobs as they become available, leaving them without adequate income to support their family throughout the year.

Rainbow Network provides entrepreneurs with:

- Education on how to start and operate a sustainable business
- Supplies to start a business
- Training on business budgeting
- Access to technical skill-building
- Ongoing business coaching

## Housing

Families live in unsanitary conditions without access to clean water. Their houses do not offer protection from the heat, storms and disease. Families lack knowledge on land purchasing and construction processes.

Rainbow Network housing projects **change everything**.

- Housing land is purchased with clean titles
- Houses and latrines are built in partnership with family beneficiaries
- Each house has potable water and electrical capabilities
- Families are educated on productive ways to use their house and yard, like starting a business or growing fruits and vegetables



## Faith Development

Community members are full of faith, and it is common for parents to raise their children to know God. We support families in their faith development with additional tools and opportunities.

Rainbow Network provides:

- Bible distributions
- Community devotions
- Education on how to study the Bible
- Encouragement for families to join their local church
- Prayer for families in every season of life
- Local and global partners in faith

## Sustainable Communities

Communities that partner with Rainbow Network learn, grow, and eventually transform into self-sustaining communities. They are equipped to step confidently into the future while trusting in God for all that lies ahead.

### These communities now have:

- Knowledge on the public healthcare system & public education system
- Knowledge and experience cooking nutritious meals
- Gardens with nutritious foods
- A heightened expectation to complete high school
- Sustainable small businesses & entrepreneurs who budget mindfully
- Higher education levels, which increase job opportunities
- Improved sanitation and health
- Safe homes to raise families
- Increased income levels to pay for:
  - Healthcare needs
  - Nutritious foods
  - Education



# Creating Generational Change

Growing up, Marcela's mom struggled to make ends meet with her teaching job. There was no way for her to cover school expenses for her two children while also providing for their basic needs.

Marcela was overjoyed to be able to attend high school thanks to a Rainbow Network scholarship. Throughout her time in the scholarship program, she gained valuable leadership skills from teaching children in the community. Her family and her entire community benefited from medical care provided by Rainbow Network.

When Marcela graduated, she knew that she wanted to attend university. She had dreams of becoming a Systems Engineer. Several years later, this dream was realized and Marcela began her professional career!

Marcela's family was held down by the restraints of poverty for years. It just took **one person** taking hold of new opportunities to change everything.

Her scholarship was the opportunity she needed to change her family's future. The support she received through Rainbow Network provided her with improved health, knowledge to pass on to her daughter, great job opportunities and a solid foundation for a successful future.

Marcela's community, Hato Grande, met the self-sustainability milestones and recently graduated from Rainbow Network! Your generosity was the start of Marcela's story.



"I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength."

-Philippians 4:12-13



# New Framework Provides Fresh Insight On Community Progress



We have developed a new framework that we're excited to share with you!

Building on the sustainability metrics that determine when a community is ready to graduate from Rainbow Network, we have compiled additional metrics to guide communities along their path during their years of partnership with us. This **10 Year Plan** outlines yearly stepping stones in each program to move communities forward in their development and independence.

See an example of this plan at work in our healthcare program:

Patients in our partner communities make contributions toward medicine they receive during medical consultations in our clinics. The chart below shows what percentage of the actual cost of medicine a patient is asked to contribute each year.



This 10 Year Plan will allow us to continually coach communities through the process of becoming self-sustaining and ensure that each step is a celebrated milestone.

This framework also boosts the confidence of families when it is time for their community to graduate. They can walk into independence with an assured sense that they are able provide for their family without the assistance of Rainbow Network - what an empowering realization!

# 2023 By The Numbers

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**19**

Communities became self-sustaining and graduated from Rainbow Network!

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Training given to

**180**

small business owners

**170**

Scholarship students graduated high school

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**15,866**

Medical, dental and ultrasound exams given

**2 M**

Meals served

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# US Team



Megan Herrera  
**President**



Amy Bartlett  
**US National Director**



Christine Williams  
**Marketing and  
Development Coordinator**

*We also have over 40 staff in Nicaragua!*

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# Take A Step Today!

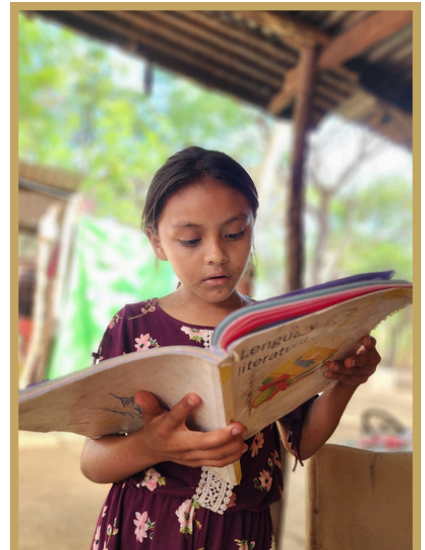
Below are 3 ways that **YOU** can make the biggest impact for rural Nicaraguans right now. Click a box below to give a gift today!



**Support the  
New Network**  
Any Amount



**Healthcare &  
Medicine**  
Starting at \$50



**School Supplies**  
Starting at \$25

**[Click here to connect with us!](#)**

