



RCA Global Mission

2021 Year in Review



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In 2021, CEPAD began working with a new set of communities (40 in total) over the next five years as they receive training to break the cycle of poverty themselves. After Nicaragua had two hurricanes (ETA and IOTA) hit very close together, many communities experienced destruction and loss. CEPAD implemented an emergency response (the RCA partnered with this work) to help 38 communities we work with rebuild their lives. CEPAD provided seeds for beans, corn, peppers, squash, tomato, cucumber, and other crops to 473 farmers to help them replant their land where they had lost crops. Over 200 families received sheets of zinc to help them repair their roofs, and CEPAD provided a large water filter for 392 families.

My role as a fundraising missionary this past year was to build relationships with RCA churches and explore ways in which they can deepen their partnership with CEPAD. It has been a blessing to meet with mission committees and pastors to share about how God is working in Nicaragua and discover how they can partner with CEPAD. This past fall, I attended a month-long training at MTI (Mission Training International), which has helped prepare me for life in ministry. I will be moving to Nicaragua in January.

Blessings of 2021

In addition to the 40 communities chosen and the hurricane relief efforts, I want to share a brief story from a CEPAD beneficiary and the blessings of Mission Training for me personally.



Concepción's Story: Concepción's dream, ever since she was a child, has been to own her own business to help her family with their economic needs. As a 29-year-old woman, her opinion isn't always respected or valued in her community. However, that hasn't stopped her as she works towards her goals; one of which includes being involved in her community's development to give space for young women, that their ideas and opinions would be respected, and their rights upheld. Through CEPAD's women's empowerment program, Concepción has been able to start her own business. She makes and sells tortillas out of her home. She has learned how to start and manage her growing business through CEPAD's workshops, and now

uses WhatsApp, a social media platform, to help her publicize her tortillas. Concepción shares, "Tortillas are a blessing!" They have allowed her to gain independence and support her family. Concepción is looking forward to more workshops with CEPAD and sharing what she's learned with other women in her community.

As I previously mentioned, I attended MTI (Mission Training International) to help prepare me for long-term success in ministry. I was nervous to go since I was going alone and didn't know anyone else. But after spending

four weeks together, our group made up of other single folks, couples, and families, made some incredible, life-long friendships. Not only did we receive training on cross-cultural living and communication, managing stress and conflict, spiritual vitality, how to deal with the stages of transition, and so much more, but I could build relationships with other missionaries who understand what it's like to leave your country and family to work in ministry overseas. I left feeling so encouraged, empowered, and more prepared for longevity.



Challenges of 2021

The continuing impact of COVID-19 has meant that CEPAD staff have had to be extra careful in working with rural communities and traveling to the countryside. It has also meant seasons of working remotely.

Nicaragua still faces many challenges of climate change. The rainy season has become more sporadic and inconsistent. This has meant an increase in Nicaraguans immigrating to look for work and food insecurity. CEPAD's program in sustainable organic farming is important now more than ever.

I have been stateside fundraising since COVID-19 pulled me from Nicaragua. This has meant connecting with churches and individuals, oftentimes remotely, to share CEPAD's mission and work and invite them to partner with me. I was also working a full-time job, which I was able to leave in August of 2021 to focus on fundraising full-time and work for CEPAD as much as possible from home. It has been difficult to work from home away from the field, so I am looking forward to returning to Nicaragua in January.



Meeting with mission committees from Central Reformed (Sioux Center, IA), First Reformed (Sheldon, IA), and American Reformed (Primghar, IA).

Hopes for 2022

At CEPAD, we're looking forward to continuing training for the forty communities we are currently working with. We are also hopeful that we will be able to welcome visiting groups again, with COVID protocols in place to keep everyone safe.

I'm looking forward to returning long-term to Nicaragua after almost two years away. There have been a lot of changes over the past few years, but it will be so encouraging to be back in person with the CEPAD team.

How We Can Pray

- As I prepare to move to Nicaragua, please pray for a smooth transition and safe travels.
- Continue to pray for the ongoing COVID-19 crisis in Nicaragua, and that vaccines would be available for all ages soon.

- Please pray for the communities that CEPAD is partnering with as they have faced many challenges in 2021 due to COVID-19 and hurricanes.

Additional Needs

The RCA supports one of CEPAD's regional offices, in a city called Pantasma. This office oversees the region and is in charge of working with the seven communities in that area. We are looking for more churches and individuals to help financially support this office. You can give here: www.rca.org/give/CEPAD

Thank You

As a fundraising missionary, I have been able to reach out to churches that may be interested in supporting me. I have been so blessed and honored by the responses I have received, which will allow me to move to Nicaragua in January of 2022 to start working in the field. CEPAD has also been blessed by the interest shown by RCA churches to partner with them and come visit. We are all looking forward to welcoming RCA church groups to Nicaragua and seeing how God continues to work in these relationships.