



Change for
Children

A CHANGE FOR CHILDREN PUBLICATION

BUILDING BRIDGES



STORIES THAT INSPIRE
IT IS A SMALL WORLD AFTER ALL

Please share this publication.

CONNECTIONS FUEL CHANGE. PASS IT ON.

Making connections is at the heart of what we do – connecting communities to resources, connecting old friends to new community partners, and forging connections between citizen and state. We see these connections fuel change in communities.

There is possibly nothing quite as satisfying as being part of a movement for change. Seeing something come full circle. Witnessing, from near or afar, an idea, a notion, or simply a spark turn into something bigger. Something better. Something inspiring. Something truly life-changing.

It is said that seeing is believing, and so we are grateful that you believe in the work of Change for Children even without the opportunity to see firsthand the change you are creating and without meeting firsthand the people you are empowering. And though you may not always see results firsthand, we see you.

We see local teachers nurturing global citizens in Canadian classrooms. We see unique Do-It Yourself fundraisers in which creative people use their passion, skills, and gifts here at home to engage, to motivate, and to inspire. We see you filling tables

at fundraisers and making room at your table to engage your own community. We see you following the progress of the projects you support. We see you invested in their outcomes.

Realizing that you change the today, the tomorrow, the world, for others – and that you do it time and time again – is confirmation that we are all connected. Or that we can be.

The connections we make, no matter how seemingly small, and no matter the distance that separates us, they do matter. They resonate. They spread. They are passed along, passed down, and passed forward.

Pass it on. Pay it forward. It is a small world, after all.



Lorraine Swift
Executive Director, Change for Children.

By telling you the stories that inspire us, we celebrate together what is right and good in this world – we celebrate what connects us in this small world of ours.



A SHARED EXPERIENCE

In the remote, rural communities outside Comitancillo, the brigade team stands together with community members. Being eye to eye helps us all see more clearly in the Guatemala highlands.

We travel great distances to attend to communities in great need. We alleviate dental pain. We dispense and prescribe eyeglasses. And we learn.

We learn to open our eyes. To really see. We see small gardens feeding families. We see healthier futures. We learn the value of basic healthcare. And access to it. For one 92-year old man, access to our clinic is on the back of his son, across the miles and over the hills. We learn to do more. With less. With only the most basic of equipment and an abundance of heart, we see almost 1,000 patients. We learn to slow down. Because what's the rush? There is time for one more patient; one more eye exam; one more handshake; one more high five; one more story; one more song. And all too soon, one more one last goodbye.

We learn much from those who continue to smile in the face of adversity; from those who open their hearts to, and trust in, the kindness of strangers; from those whose gratitude for life shines through in even the most brief of encounters. And for this, it is we who are truly indebted.



There are giggles as headphones are distributed. There is awe as screens light up. There is anticipation as content loads. El Calvario - a tiny community high above the clouds in Guatemala's highlands - gets connected!

As the morning fog burns off outside, inside this school with no library and few books, through a local server with a digital library of educational resources and a class-set of tablets, students are transported.

Sitting two-by-two, they become characters in the illustrated stories they read. In small groups, they are eager to complete math equations, captivated by the games that beg further engagement with each right answer. Side-by-side, they research animals never before seen in person – elephants and alligators and giraffes – and take turns bringing them to life for their classmates through the vivid descriptions at their fingertips.

Alberta teachers visiting Guatemala to introduce the technology are improving the reach and quality of education in remote rural areas. Newly equipped with a *Remote Community Hotspot for Education and Learning* and a new confidence instilled by the visiting educators, teachers at El Calvario are well prepared to use technology as a tool for learning, well beyond our stay. There are places to be explored. There are concepts to be contemplated. There are resources to be researched.

There is vast potential in the digital library of paperless pages made possible through your support. It is a small world, after all.



WE ARE ALL CONNECTED. AND

All eyes are on Norma as she stands at the front of her classroom delivering sixth grade lessons in her rural school perched in the hills of Guatemala's western highlands. Now accustomed to being watched intently by her 15 pupils, Norma fondly recalls a time when she was the one looking up – watching, listening, and absorbing the world around her.

At four years old, before she herself was in school, Norma watched her mother. She watched her mother boldly join a sewing machine embroidery women's group facilitated by Change for Children's project partner, AMMID. She watched her mother diligently learn a new skill. She watched her mother sell intricately detailed blouses to earn money for the family. And she watched her mother make Norma's own education a priority.

Twenty years later, Change for Children International Projects Manager, Adrienne, walks into Norma's sixth grade classroom. Watching the familiar presence make her way around the room, Norma recognizes Adrienne as a former international cooperant who worked with AMMID, and for but a moment, feels four years old yet again. It could have been Adrienne's kind eyes, the sound of her voice, or the way she had returned to support her mother's sewing group time and time again, but Norma's recollection was clear. They were connected. Not only by the memory, but by the course her mother had charted for herself and for her children once equipped with a little skill, a little support, and a little self-respect. It is a small world after all.



A SMALL WORLD.



**IT MEANS
A LOT TO
MARITA.**

She is standing under an umbrella the first time we meet Marita. We see no storm clouds in sight, but when she invites us under its shade in the heat of the afternoon, we see the wisdom of her ways. Together, we watch as the first drops of clean drinking water flow from the new water well we have built in the heart of her community.

The next time we visit, months later, is in the shade of Marita's small home. As evidenced by the fabric scraps and loose threads that litter the floor and the row of pins that pierce her apron, her home now doubles as the location of her small business. With her granddaughters afoot, she brings out, one by one, the new dresses she has sewn since we last saw her.

For Marita, a water well in her community means more than a reliable water source. It means independence. It means opportunity. It means that with time and health now on her side, her new seamstress business is thriving. It means quite a lot.

The change drives, the birthday gifts in lieu, the galas, the individual contributions, the monthly giving, the year-end donations – the kindness of Canadians – has remarkably reached Marita, despite all that separates us. Despite miles and circumstance and opportunity; it is a small world, after all.

WITH GREAT PRIVILEGE COMES GREAT RESPONSIBILITY.



**A LITTLE HOSPITALITY AND
A LOT OF HEART LEAVES A
LASTING IMPRESSION .**

The sun set quickly – more quickly than expected – over the tall palm trees lining the banks of the Rio Coco, leaving the group of Canadians making our way to San Andres, Bosawas, completely in the dark. With the sanctity of the Change for Children Field House still over an hour upriver, the boat driver instead moored our dugout canoe to the riverbank below the community of Siminka. Our arrival was unexpected and unplanned, as was the hospitality with which we were received. The community opened up the church, we strung up our hammocks, and hot water and provisions materialized from community members. Though our stay was brief, the community and its residents left a lasting impression.

Elizabeth del Carmen has a knack for leaving lasting impressions. As director of the primary school in Siminka, Elizabeth carefully manages the few resources available and has earned the respect of her colleagues in a culture where leadership roles typically fall to the men. A force in her

own right, she motivates girls to challenge stereotypes and to continue their studies. But, without a secondary school, options to further education beyond primary school have historically been limited in Siminka, especially for girls.

Five years after our Siminka stop-over, it seems that the kind of hospitality offered by those with little to give leaves more than a lasting impression. It leaves a person feeling forever connected to the little community with a big heart. And so, with the support of the Canadian women on that fateful canoe ride five years ago, construction will soon begin on a secondary school in Siminka.

Empowered women empower women. Be it today, tomorrow, or five years later. It is a small world, after all.

TO SPEAK. TO ACT. TO SHARE.



10808-124 Street, 2nd Floor
Edmonton, AB, Canada
T5M-0H3



IN SOLIDARITY - A CRITICAL TIME FOR NICARAGUA

Change for Children has been working in Nicaragua for 42 years. Those involved in Change for Children in the late seventies supported the movement for change in Nicaragua at that time. Today, there is another movement for change – one that is led by young people – by student activists, by women, by people who envision a new path for Nicaragua – one free of corruption. It is inspiring to see Nicaraguans play a protagonist role in reshaping their society, rejecting corruption, and holding their governments accountable for the provision of public services.

We appreciate the support we have received from all of you and that you have continued to keep Change for Children and our partners in your thoughts during this crisis. The long term effects of civil unrest can create divisions within communities and families. Your continued support of projects like ours which work directly with community organizations and structures, plays a critical role in healing and repairing these divisions and encouraging collective action for positive change.

Our water project is focused on empowering communities with the tools necessary to hold governments accountable. It is exactly this kind of project that Nicaragua needs today and in the future on the road to economic recovery. Our partners on the ground in Nicaragua are doing us proud in managing project work during these complicated times.

Change for Children stands in solidarity with the people we work with, the communities we serve, and those advocating respect for human rights.

'TIS THE SEASON

Some recipes are secret.
But, some are meant to be shared.
Recipe for **JOY**.
Recipe for **SUCCESS**.
Recipe for **HAPPINESS**.
Recipe for **KINDNESS**.
Recipe for **PASSION**.
Recipe for **TRADITION**.
Recipe for **CHANGE**.
Change the Present. Change for Children. Pass it on.



Recipe for change. Pass it on.

We are pleased to be one of the not-so-secret ingredients on your list. Please share your passion and this publication liberally!

PLEASE JOIN US! CHANGE FOR CHILDREN'S ANNUAL HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

Friday, December 14, 2018
5pm - 10pm

2nd Floor, 10808 - 124 St
Edmonton

Live music 7pm - 9pm.
Refreshments provided.

Everyone Welcome.

Thank you volunteers, donors, partners, fundraisers, advocates, friends and tireless supporters. Your local support means global change. You are the spirit of Change for Children.

www.changeforchildren.org

CFCA gratefully acknowledges the financial support of:



Global Affairs
Canada

