

# CHANGE *for* CHILDREN

ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22



## MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Lorraine Swift

Executive Director, Change for Children

It is my pleasure to share our 2021/22 Annual Report. This year marks my 20<sup>th</sup> with Change for Children, and for twenty years, I have seen this organization evolve. I have seen our priorities shift and refine, our partnerships grow and proliferate, our advocacy produce results, and our impact spread.

Together as a community we have advocated for **rights-based development**, championed the **Sustainable Development Goals**, fostered **climate action**, and strengthened **local ownership** of projects and the **local capacity** to sustain them. We are proud to participate in processes with our provincial and federal government to ensure that small organizations like ours are represented, and that our impact can take root in today's world.

I have watched our water project grow from drilling wells in remote communities to promoting the use of technology to empower water committees and municipalities alike to manage water systems and advocate for their **rights to clean water**. I have witnessed the proliferation of technology education into off-grid communities and seen our education projects mature and blossom in some of Central America's most remote regions.

Partnerships have grown as we more effectively reach the underserved, and new partnerships have sprouted allowing us to support even more diverse initiatives. Relationships with funders and donors have been fortified as we **produce tangible results** in vulnerable communities and share them with our development community and beyond at conferences and through publication, becoming experts in our field.

**Planting seeds** in the hearts and minds of many over the years has been one of my greatest pleasures. It has been my privilege to introduce many Canadians – youth, educators, medical professionals, donors, family and friends – to the global south, fostering **cross-cultural connections** that continue to flourish.

Over the past twenty years, I have happily seen **kindness** spread, take root, and multiply.

And there are more **connections, adventures, and transformations** to come as we support community solutions, nurture equality, and tend to vulnerable people. With your support **we are planting seeds** – and together we continue to see growth in the face of adversity.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michele Jackson • Patrick Kane • Sarah Brackett • Maria DiCastro  
Crystal De Costa • David Fath • Matthew Gusul • Don Hanke  
Andrea Kopylech • Omar Ortiz • Sabrina Feula • Terry Anderson

## OUR TEAM

Lorraine Swift (Executive Director) • Adrienne Wiebe (International Projects Manager)  
Nicole Farn (Communications Manager) • Olivia Krol (Office Manager) • Cecily Mills (Volunteer Extraordinaire)



# CHANGE FOR CHILDREN

HUMAN DIGNITY | HEALTHY COMMUNITIES | GLOBAL JUSTICE

**FORTY - SIX**

Years of impact

**ONE**

Global community

## VISION

In cooperation with the Indigenous peoples of developing countries, Change for Children aims to identify the root causes of poverty and, in the spirit of solidarity, assist in finding long-term solutions.

## MISSION

To build civil society capacity in the global south and in Canada to promote health, human rights and create solutions to poverty through sustainable development.



## WATER: A HUMAN RIGHT

### TECHNOLOGY FOR SUSTAINABLE WATER RESOURCE GOVERNANCE (2017-2022)

#### CLEAN WATER

The promotion of water as a human right is more than drilling water wells (although we do that too!).

It is also engaging communities in the process of planning and building water systems. It is empowering communities to self-govern, organize, and form Water Management Committees. It is placing an emphasis on the empowerment of women as decision-makers, community leaders, and change-makers to ensure long-term sustainability of projects. Change for Children has been working with communities to ensure reliable access to clean water in northwestern Nicaragua since 2002. Twenty years.

#### IN GOOD HANDS

Over the past five years, in a region with a long history of active civic participation and female-driven community organizations, 368 Water Committees in 13 municipalities have been supported, strengthened, and empowered to fully and sustainably realize their right to water through the use of technology and capacity-building strategies.

The voice of women in water management is critical given that the responsibility for water in families often falls on their shoulders. Ensuring women's access to information and increasing the number of women in decision-making roles when it comes to water and sanitation not only makes sense, but also encourages a more gender-equitable division of labour for the management and maintenance of water systems and encourages gender equality in community governance.

#### SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

For sustainability assurance when establishing new water systems, all parties involved — from project staff and local government to the Water Committee and community members — are tasked with responsibilities and contributions. Contributions range from financial to manual labour to in-kind contributions such as gravel, sand, or food. There are no small parts! All parties must fulfill their commitments in the best interests of the community.

The end-of-project sustainability plan has included a new partnership with EOS International whose Circuit Riders — trained water systems technicians — cover many miles on motorcycles to work with Community Water Committees, helping them achieve legal status, providing training in water management, and providing ongoing support of maintenance activities and chlorination testing.

EOS' Circuit Rider program has been expanded to include the communities participating in CFC's project to maintain support beyond project completion.



## WATER IS LIFE.

Clean water means children attend school; it means healthy communities; it means an increase in economic pursuits. Reliable access to clean water means everything to families who do not currently have it.

**1,864**

Members trained on  
368 water committees

**48,117**

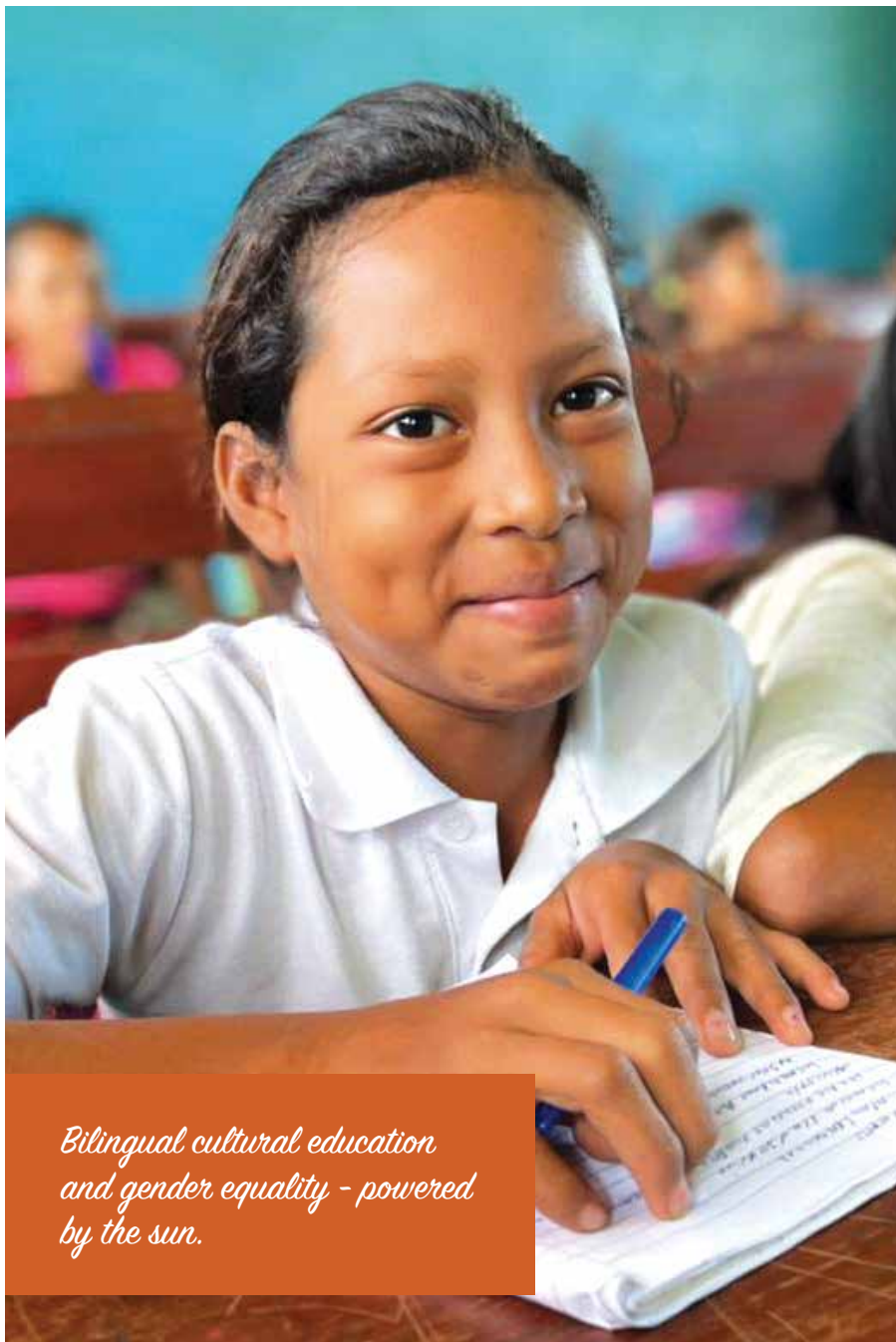
Families served in  
drought-stricken  
communities

**114**

Water systems  
improved through  
infrastructure investment

Our Nicaragua Water Project started in 2002 with the aim of improving access to water for communities in northwestern Nicaragua. Since then, hundreds of community celebrations have been held to mark the inauguration of new water systems, to rejoice the renewal of rehabilitated wells, to acclaim the installation of piping directly to homes, to commemorate connection of reliable solar pumps, and to honour the construction of tanks and towers. Because of your support, more than 400,000 people have been reached with clean water over the past two decades.





*Bilingual cultural education  
and gender equality - powered  
by the sun.*

## MAKING EDUCATION ACCESSIBLE

### TECHNOLOGY FOR IMPROVED LEARNING AND EDUCATION

The proliferation of online learning worldwide has recently seen students with internet access move out of classrooms and into online learning environments. Conversely, in the remote BOSAWAS, Nicaragua, where lack of access makes internet-based learning impossible, digital content has instead entered into the physical classroom. Through content loaded on remote servers, online resources are made available offline to teachers and students equipped with tablets and a remote hotspot.

And while learning tools and programs available on the internet do not always reflect language diversity, the ability to upload tailored content to the remote offline servers in the BOSAWAS means the regular addition of resources in the mother tongue language of Miskito as they are procured by the project team.

Some of the greatest achievements of this project have been igniting imaginations through access to stories and songs and games, and engaging students and elders in the process of recording their own content. Community-curated content added to the solar-powered digital libraries has included oral and visual histories, stories, tales, cultural traditions, adaptations, and traditional medicine practices.

The deployment of solar power in the BOSAWAS has bridged both the energy and the digital divide for off-grid communities. The solar power can now be leveraged for future initiatives, allowing the transmission of Indigenous knowledge and citizen science data collected by local Indigenous peoples to contribute to the worldwide body of data, informing global conservation efforts as well as climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts.

WITH FUNDING FROM:



### IMAGINATION

In addition to educational resources via off-line servers, tablets to access the information, and pedagogical training to teachers in off-grid communities, the project also provided solar power to schools, lighting up classrooms and fueling imaginations!

### CONFIDENCE

98% of participating teachers identified confidence in applying newly acquired skills to plan classes using the digital resources provided and to make use of the new pedagogy strategies introduced by project workshops.

# 3

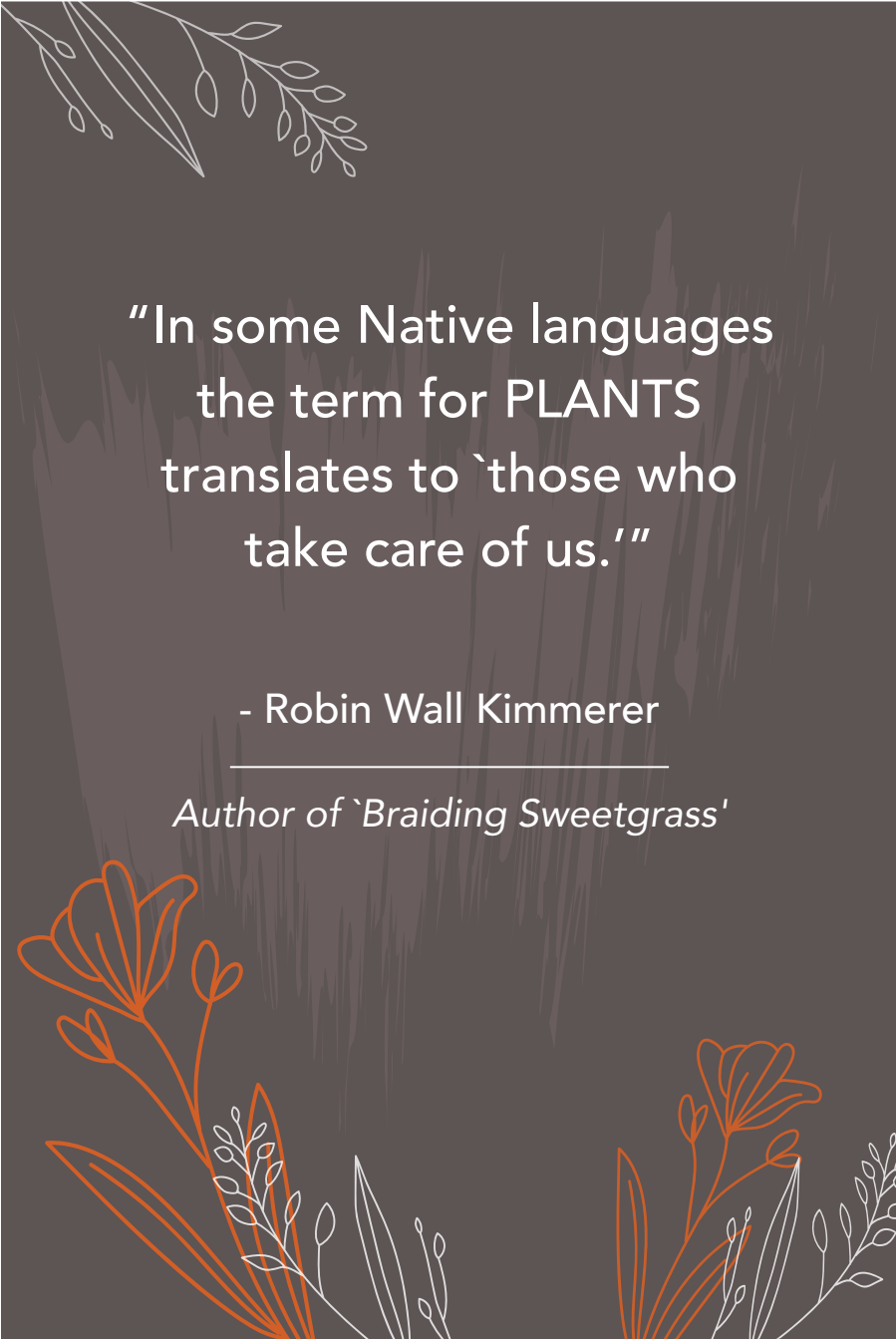
New mobile learning  
labs installed for a total  
of seven in BOSAWAS

# 27

Remote schools  
with access to  
digital libraries

# 2,048

Students with learning  
resources in their  
Miskito Mother-Tongue



"In some Native languages  
the term for PLANTS  
translates to 'those who  
take care of us.'"

- Robin Wall Kimmerer

*Author of 'Braiding Sweetgrass'*

## INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES DECADE

The United Nations declared 2022-2032 the **International Decade of Indigenous Languages** to draw global attention to the critical situation of many indigenous languages and to mobilize stakeholders and resources for their **preservation, revitalization, and promotion**.

Of the 7,000 languages used worldwide, only a few hundred languages have genuinely been given a place in education systems and the public domain, and less than one hundred are used in the digital world. Indigenous languages are particularly vulnerable to extinction because many of them are not taught in school or used in the public sphere.

Change for Children's work promoting **bilingual education** in both Guatemala and Nicaragua has facilitated access to vital **bilingual and bicultural curriculum** materials and improved teachers' ability to give lessons in their native language.

Our new project entitled 'Local Knowledge: Global Goals' runs to mid-2023 and is designed to prioritize local Indigenous knowledge and gender equality to build conservation capacity in order to improve the sustainable management of Nicaragua's BOSAWAS Biosphere Reserve, which is essential to the survival of Indigenous peoples in the face of climate change.









## ART, ENVIRONMENT, EDUCATION, CREATIVITY

There is joy in creating a masterpiece, in squeezing a paintbrush between fingers - some for the first time - in dipping clean bristles into bright colours, and filling a page with the freedom of expression.

Integrating art in classrooms enriches the education experience, reinforcing knowledge, sensitivity, and identity as it relates to self, community, and global activities and concepts. It also provides an opportunity for recreation!

This year, we refreshed our long-time relationship with FUNARTE (an organization that works with youth in rights-based development using art as a means to educate) to add some ART to supplement the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) concepts made available through the curriculum materials pre-loaded on offline servers now available to 27 schools in the BOSAWAS, Nicaragua.

While student workshops encouraged budding artistes to awaken their creative senses, Teacher workshops conveyed the value of inspiring and encouraging student creativity in various capacities and throughout many subject matters to reinforce concepts and promote problem-solving.

Education initiatives in the BOSAWAS are designed to empower youth and prepare them for success in the future knowledge economy by enhancing the capacity of local schools to deliver quality education while also emphasizing the development of 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills — working collaboratively and creatively, learning through hands-on activities.

*Putting the "A" in STEAM  
education. Science, Technology,  
Engineering, ART and Math.*



## COMMUNITY + CREATIVITY

The international development sector, individual supporters and donors, volunteers, colleagues, and staff have all contributed to our vibrant and creative community this year.



## SPUR CHANGE

An enthusiastic proponent of the Global Affairs Canada-funded SPUR Change program, Change for Children has been mentoring youth champions from our partner organizations in Guatemala and Nicaragua for the past several years. This year, we turned the tables and worked with Saskatchewan-based Peter Friedrichsen on linkages between United Nations recognized biosphere Reserves in Canada and those in Nicaragua.

## LITTLE LEARNERS CREATE A RIPPLE

First and Second graders at Bearspaw School learned about the importance of water and the challenges that people in our global community face every day. The students were moved to organize a school-wide Hat Day fundraiser and raised funds for our Water Project while learning just how far ripples of kindness can spread. Special thanks to Mrs. Rogers for inspiring creativity and generosity in her students!

## FALL FUNDRAISER

Our annual Development Dinner fundraiser took the shape of an online campaign/event in 2021. We celebrated the work of Change for Children 'Outside the Lines and Inside the Margins,' educating off-the-grid students, turning on taps to clean water, and energizing classrooms with solar power. Your support was received with great gratitude. Thank you for adding colour to the world!

## PUBLISHED WORKS

CFC's International Projects Manager, Adrienne Wiebe, worked together with Guatemala partner, AMMID, and board member Terry Anderson, to publish the findings of our 'Technology for Improved Education' project in Guatemala in the Journal of Learning for Development. Research Article: *Comparative Advantages of Offline Digital Technology for Remote Indigenous Classrooms in Guatemala (2019-2020)*.

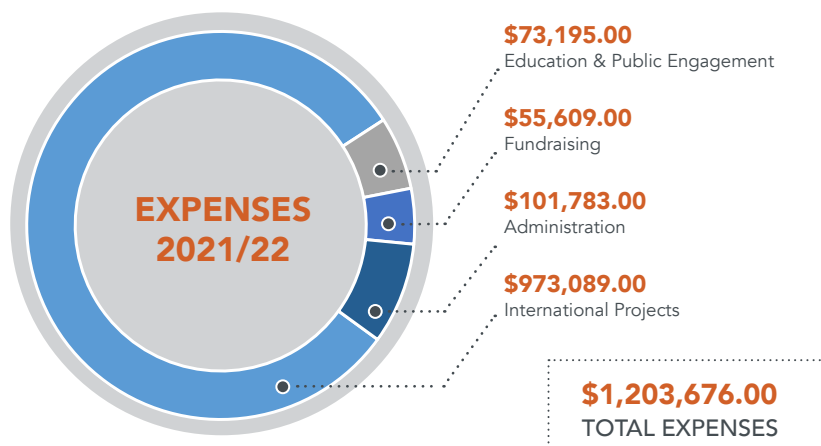
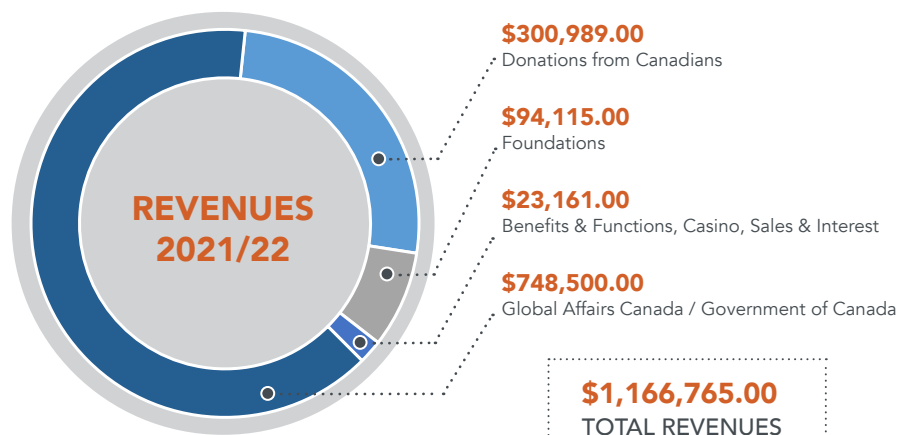
## COMMUNITY SUPPORTERS

A youth-led project supported by the Edmonton Community foundation Young Edmonton Grants program showcased the talent of young local artists. The incredibly gifted and community-minded group of Edmonton youth collaborated to create beautiful art pieces to feature in a collective art gallery (La Libellule) with proceeds from their sale benefitting Change for Children.

## FUN + ART IN BOSAWAS

FUNARTE accompanied our team to the BOSAWAS to add some ART to the STEM activities available through the curriculum materials pre-loaded on offline servers. Art provides students with the opportunity to learn creatively and to apply 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as connection, care, community, and culture!

# FINANCIAL REPORT 2021-2022



Change for Children maintains a balance in project accounts at year-end to facilitate the continuation of multi-year initiatives.



## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Contributing to Change for Children projects opens doors, empowers women, educates students, quenches thirsts, improves food security, reduces malnutrition, advocates for rights, and stimulates economies.

Our work would not be possible without the support of local partners, global partners, and community supporters.



## PLANTING SEEDS

DEVELOPMENT DINNER 2022

**PLEASE JOIN US**

Friday, September 23, 2022  
Chateau Louis Conference Centre

**FOR TICKETS**

[www.changeforchildren.org/plantingseeds](http://www.changeforchildren.org/plantingseeds)



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