

Water for Walakitang

The BOSAWAS Biosphere Reserve tropical monsoon climate is characterized by distinct wet and dry seasons. Notwithstanding, water for domestic use in this remote region of Nicaragua is still a challenge. Clean water sources are far from the villages, as many of the rivers have been contaminated by illegal mining and cattle raising. And while some villages have historically had water system infrastructure in place, lack of capacity to maintain the systems and extreme weather events that frequently damage the infrastructure have combined to leave many without.



The water system built in the Walakitang village in 2003 was no longer functioning. Community members were consuming water directly from two local rivers, both of which present evidence of extensive contamination. Given its large population of over 4,300 people in over 700 households, it represented the most extreme need in the entire region.

In response, Change for Children first rehabilitated the water system and water tank, followed by the replacement, repair, and installation of pipes to transport water from the tank to the houses, the school, two churches, and a health centre, thus fully rehabilitating a water system that has been inactive for more than 10 years.

In all her six years, Maxi Braidy has not had water at home until now. A turn of the green tap handle now delivers water just outside her family's front door. She drinks it without restraint, she lets it run through her fingers as she washes away the day, and when (she thinks) nobody is looking, she cools herself with wild splashes from small buckets. Big laughter ensues.

Women in Walakitang are experiencing a significant transformation in their lives. They now have access to water in their homes, and the very real realities that access to water brings resonate throughout the community. Says Digna Solomon, "I am overjoyed and grateful to finally have access to water in my house. We use it for drinking, cooking, washing, bathing my daughters, and feeding our household animals. For years, we endured the hardships of water scarcity. I truly feel that a great burden has been lifted off my shoulders".



Millions of women and girls spend hours daily walking to collect water, often contaminated, for their families. Maxi is no longer one of them. To start her day each morning, Maxi turns the little green handle on her family's very own water tap and fills her small water bottle in the flow. She carries it to first grade to quench her thirst at recess. From now on, it is the only water walk she will know.