

FIT MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING VISIT

February - March 2023

Change for Children, Nicaragua
FIT Intake 1 and Intake 5 Projects



Fund for Innovation
and Transformation
Fonds pour l'innovation
et la transformation



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Evaluation Methodology

Two projects implemented by Change for Children (CFC) with FIT-funding (Intake 1 and 5) were evaluated in 2023. The evaluation included a review of project documentation and a field visit in February – March, 2023. The evaluation assessed relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and lessons learned. FIT's Gender Evaluation Framework for Innovation (GEFI) was used to assess the ability of the projects to advance gender equality and empower women and girls.

During the field visit, the FIT team met with staff of CFC Nicaragua and Canada, and various project partners, including Indigenous Territorial Government of Miskito Indian Tasbaika Kum and women's leaders, representatives of the Nicaraguan Ministries of Education and of Health, and national implementing partner organizations. Formal and informal meetings were also held with testing participants: teachers, students, forest rangers, traditional medicine practitioners and Indigenous elders. In total, 55 people (31/55 W) participated in key informant interviews and focus groups.

OUTCOMES AND LEARNINGS OF PROJECT 1: TECHNOLOGY AND TRAINING FOR EDUCATION



The Intake 1 Project, **Technology & Training for Quality and Equality**, was implemented from February 2020 to April 2021. **Testing Hypothesis:** Teacher pedagogy in remote indigenous communities will improve as a result of teacher completion of a culturally and linguistically adapted and gender-sensitive MOOC (Massive Open On-Line Course) and improved access to high-quality, culturally, linguistically, and gender-sensitive appropriate teaching and learning materials. The project was implemented in four remote indigenous communities in the BOSAWAS Biosphere in the Northeast of Nicaragua.

The FIT evaluation found that the hypothesis was positively proven, with a high degree of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. The technology was accessible and appropriate. Both teachers and students benefited from the high-quality educational resources on the digital library, particularly those that address common cultural, language and gender barriers. In total, 120 teachers (69/120: 57.5% women) and 2,244 students (1077/2244: 48% girls) participated in the testing and demonstrated significant progress in their ability to utilize technology, to access quality resources including Miskito culture and language materials, and to increase use of SRHR content in their teaching. Teachers reported and demonstrated significantly improved pedagogy strategies in the classroom.

Key learnings from the project include the following:

- **Fostering gender equity with technology** - Technology can not only increase access to quality educational materials and improve learning, but it can also reduce gender barriers experienced by students and teachers with context-specific resources and training in their own communities.
- **Involving local leaders and officials** - Support by local indigenous governments and Ministry of Education officials for teachers must be part of all education projects, particularly given that 50% of the teachers in the region do not have formal pedagogy training and many have not completed secondary level education.
- **Utilizing Context-specific Materials** - Use of local indigenous language in school increased uptake of the new technology by students and teachers, and improved comprehension and learning. Users indicated their great satisfaction with the Miskito language materials in RACHEL, including literature, numeracy and songs.

OUTCOMES AND LEARNINGS FROM PROJECT 2: SUSTAINABILITY BASED ON INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

The Intake 5 Project, **Local Knowledge: Global Goals**, was implemented from May 2022 to May 2023. Testing Hypothesis: If local Indigenous knowledge management, nature-based solutions, and gender-inclusive community planning are prioritized, then Miskito communities of the BOSAWAS, Nicaragua will improve their capacity to sustainably manage the BOSAWAS Biosphere Reserve in order to reduce their vulnerability to climate change. The pilot project tested: 1) the use of a digital community-based mapping program for territorial defense; 2) implementation of herbal medicine gardens and a mechanical rice-processor; and 3) strategies to increase women's participation in local governance and community planning.

The evaluation confirmed the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the project. Forty-two students (66% girls) and 38 forest rangers (all men) were trained to use MAPEO, a digital community mapping platform, and created seven territorial maps which will continue to be developed and used by community members and leaders. The rice-processor reduced women's work from 6-hours of manual labour pounding rice to 20-30 minutes. Approximately 200 families from the seven nucleus communities used the machine to process 170 quintals (1 quintal = 100 pounds) of rice during the project. Seven medicinal plant gardens were established and two regional knowledge exchange events were held with traditional healers. WIMPA, the indigenous women's territorial organization was reactivated and is now an integral part of the local indigenous government; and all local leaders participated in training to improve gender equity and community-based participation in governance.

Key learnings from the project include the following:

- **Localization based on respectful long-term relationships:** The long-term partnership and dedicated relationship between CFC and the local indigenous government and their local partners was critical to the successful implementation of this project and many other projects.
- **Fostering transparency and knowledge-sharing:** All project partners and participants need to maintain transparency throughout the project about what is going well, what needs to be improved, and on-going learnings. This encourages individual participation, fosters a sense of ownership of activities, and motivates community members to take action.
- **Privileging Indigenous knowledge:** The preservation and utilization of Indigenous knowledge has been central to not only the success of the innovation but also to the sustainability of the communities. All partners demonstrated and maintained a clear dedication to environmental protection and climate resilience throughout the project.
- **Ensuring common commitment to gender equality:** Gender equality was a key component necessary for the success of the innovation and was promoted by all partners, men and women alike. The [male] leadership of the local indigenous government was central in getting support from other men in the community and promoting gender equality.



ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

BOSAWAS: UNESCO Cultural Heritage site and Biosphere Reserve in north-central Nicaragua.

CCP: Comprehensive Community Planning.

CFC: Change for Children.

FUNARTE: Foundation Art - a Nicaraguan NGO

GEFI: Gender Evaluation Framework for Innovation.

GES: Gender Equality Strategy

GR: Girl Rising, an international NGO, with a branch office in Guatemala.

GTI: Indigenous Territorial Government .

GTI-MITK: Indigenous Territorial Government of MITK (Miskito Indian Tasbaika Kum).

IGS: In-depth Gender Scan.

ISNAYA: National Center for Traditional Popular Medicine, Nicaragua.

MAPEO: Mapping software program.

MINED: Ministry of Education of Nicaragua.

MINSA: Ministry of Health of Nicaragua.

MOOC: Massive Open On-Line Course.

RACHEL: Remote Area Community Hotspot for Education and Learning - a server that can connect individual devices to a digital library of resources.

URACCAN: Universidad de las Regiones Autónomas de la Costa Caribe Nicaragüense (University of the Autonomous Regions of the Nicaraguan Caribbean Coast).

WIMPA: GTI-MITK Women's Organization.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

01. About the Fund for Innovation and Transformation (FIT)	7
02. Introduction - Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Visit Objective	8
03. FIT Evaluation Methodology	10
04. Scope of Evaluation	11
05. Evaluation Results	12
Technology and Training for Quality and Equality ..	14
Context	14
Relevance	14
Effectiveness	16
Efficiency	17
Impact	18
Sustainability	20
Stories of Change	21
Local Knowledge: Global Goals	22
Context	22
Relevance	23
Effectiveness	24
Efficiency	29
Impact	30
Sustainability	32
Stories of Change	33
06. Conclusions	35
07. Recommendations	35



01. ABOUT THE FUND FOR INNOVATION AND TRANSFORMATION (FIT)

The Fund for Innovation and Transformation (FIT) supports Canadian small and medium-sized organizations (SMOs) testing innovative solutions in partnership with local organizations to advance gender equality and empower women, girls and vulnerable communities in the Global South.

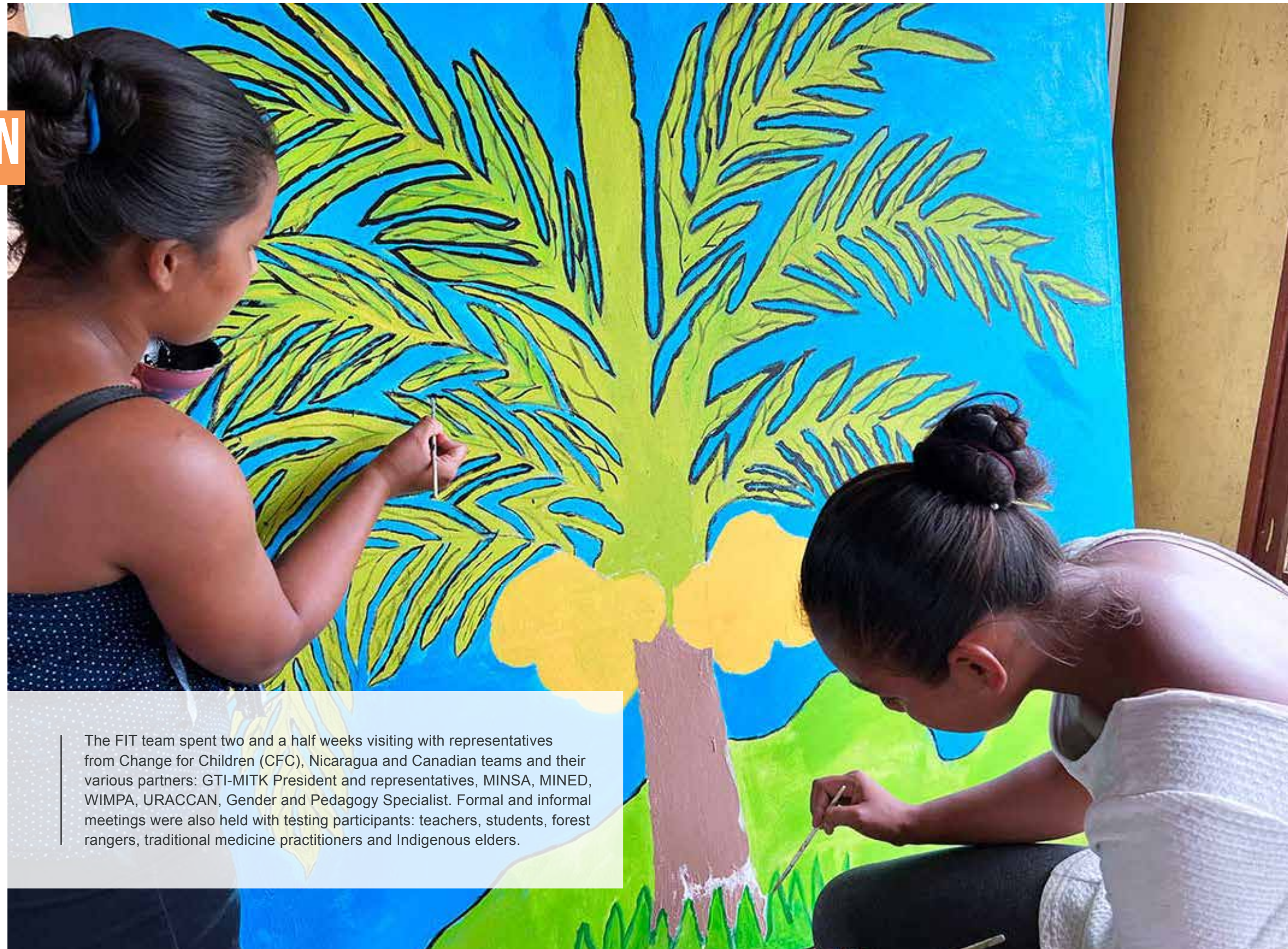
FIT uses the definition of Innovation in International Assistance as defined by Global Affairs Canada. Innovation can be a process, mindset or means (i.e., approach, technology, practices, policies, business models, or behavioural insights) to enable new or improved locally driven solutions. The aim is to achieve better results and to have a greater impact. It benefits and empowers the poorest and most vulnerable, including women and girls.

02. INTRODUCTION

MONITORING EVALUATION AND LEARNING (MEL) VISIT OBJECTIVE

The objective of this monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) visit was to:

- Gain a comprehensive understanding of Change for Children's two FIT-funded testing projects in the remote BOSAWAS Biosphere Reserve in Nicaragua
 - » Intake 1 project, *Technology & Training for Quality and Equality* (\$250,000) implemented between February 2020 to April 2021
 - » Intake 5 projects *Local Knowledge: Global Goals* (\$175,000) implemented between May 2022 to May 2023
- Evaluate testing outcomes, and,
- Provide findings, conclusions and recommendations to draw lessons for future testing design and implementation.



The FIT team spent two and a half weeks visiting with representatives from Change for Children (CFC), Nicaragua and Canadian teams and their various partners: GTI-MITK President and representatives, MINSA, MINED, WIMPA, URACCAN, Gender and Pedagogy Specialist. Formal and informal meetings were also held with testing participants: teachers, students, forest rangers, traditional medicine practitioners and Indigenous elders.

03. FIT EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

As a program funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC) guided by the Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP), FIT's monitoring, evaluation and learning visit was conducted using a participatory feminist approach and followed the OECD DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation, keeping in mind that these were short-term testing projects.

FIT-funded organizations are required to adopt a "Do No Harm" approach which also requires identifying potential environmental risks related to the innovation testing and develop a relevant environmental management plan with mitigation strategies when potential risks are identified. Similarly, the organization must have a relevant

Gender Equality Strategy as part of FIT-testing criteria to ensure that the practical needs and strategic interests of both women and men are considered at all stages of the innovation testing, including plans to address identified gender issues within the innovation communities while working toward the expected gender outcomes.

The evaluation included a review of project reports, budgets and a field visit in February 15 – March 2, 2023. Data were collected through formal and informal key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and stories of change with staff, local partners and project participants. Informal interviews were carried out with staff and project partners in Managua, Estelí, San Andrés, and Matagalpa.

Focus group discussions were carried out with a sample of project participants, including students, teachers, women and marginalized groups, in the following project communities: San Andrés, Tuburus, Pamkawas, and Yakalpanani. Verbal consent was received before all consultations. Translation from Spanish and Miskito to English was provided when necessary.

The evaluation aimed to include a representative sample of stakeholders, facilitate ongoing dialogue and reflection, and encourage collaboration between north-south partners.

Number of participants in evaluation:

- Interview: 8 participants (4W)
- FGD: 42 participants (25W)
- Other Interactions: 5 participants (2W)

04. SCOPE OF EVALUATION

As a short-term testing program aiming to advance gender equality and empower women and girls, the FIT monitoring, evaluation and learning visit was focused on the following key questions:

- **Relevance** of the innovation in the local context
 - » Testing an innovative solution to an existing development or humanitarian challenge
 - » Proving the hypothesis
 - » Participant involvement in the design, testing, reporting and evaluation phases of the testing project
 - » Inclusion of local expertise and partnerships (locally led)
- **Effectiveness** in achieving intended outcomes
 - » Gender Equality Strategy
 - » Environmental sustainability strategy
 - » Ability to pivot and overcome challenges
 - » Risks
 - » Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Policy
- **Efficiency** in how resources are being used
 - » Reach (target number of participants)
 - » Emphasis on local leadership to reach project participants
 - » Budget (efficient use of funds)
- **Impact** what is the level of achievement, what difference is the intervention making
 - » Level of change in the community
 - » Overall progress toward advancing gender and empowering women and girls (GEFI*)
 - » Lessons learned
 - » Stories of change
- **Sustainability** can/will the testing project benefits be sustained and can it be scaled-up and/or replicated in other communities
 - » Innovation success factors
 - » Potential to scale
 - » Knowledge sharing

*FIT's Gender Evaluation Framework for Innovation (GEFI) was developed to assess if and how SMOs/partner's testing projects were able to advance gender equality and empower women and girls, analyzing Access, Agency and Commitment.



05. EVALUATION RESULTS

The innovation testing took place in the Indigenous Territory of Miskitu Indian Tasbaika Kum (GTI-MITK), one of the self-governing Indigenous territories located in the BOSAWAS Reserve, a protected tropical forest in Northeastern Nicaragua. The MITK Indigenous territory consists of 34 communities, with about 14,000 people living in an area just over 900 km². There are seven larger nucleus communities within which the innovation is implemented.

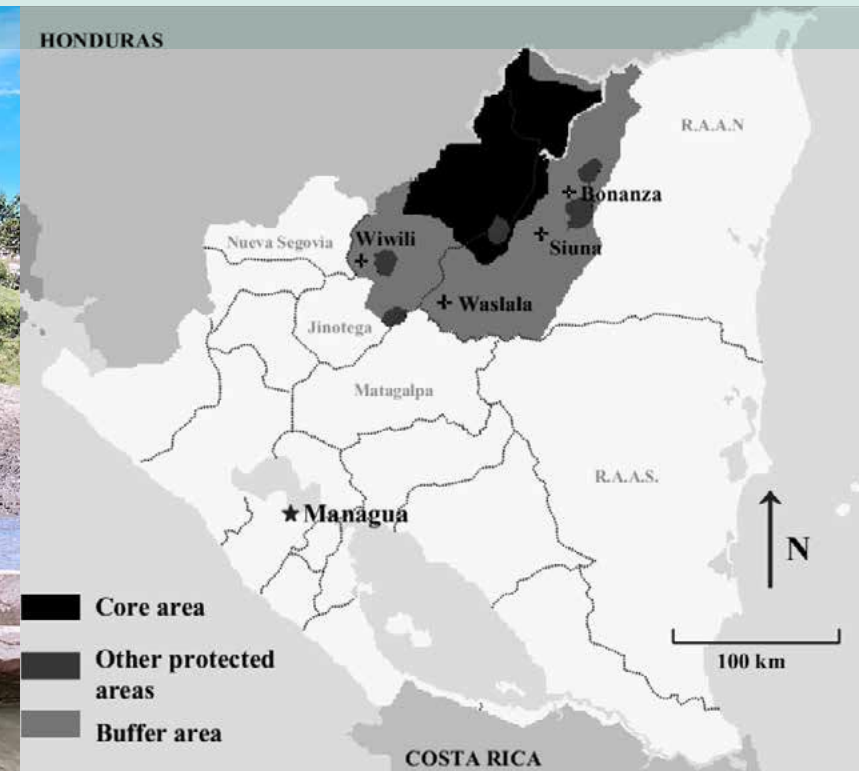


Figure 1: Map of BOSAWAS Reserve Core and Buffer Zones (Source)

The BOSAWAS Biosphere Reserve in North Central Nicaragua was designated a UNESCO biosphere reserve in 1997. At approximately 20,000 km² in size, the tropical forest reserve comprises nearly 15% of Nicaragua's total land area and is the second largest rainforest in the Western Hemisphere, after the Amazon. The stewards of this important ecological reserve are the Miskito and Mayagna peoples.

The BOSAWAS Reserve is divided into two Zones: The Core Zone, which is protected and for the sole use of the Indigenous communities, and the Buffer Zone, in which there are some non-Indigenous settlers living in loosely organized communities (Figure 1).

When UNESCO recognized BOSAWAS as a Biosphere Reserve, it mandated that 60% of the forested land within the reserve be preserved as virgin forest. Unfortunately, since 1997, more than 50% of this forest has been lost due to in-migration of non-Indigenous settler families clearing the forest for pasture and cultivation, and an increase in artisanal mining. The intensifying impacts of climate change make adaptation and mitigation a high priority. Disasters caused by droughts, wildfires, tropical cyclones, and floods have wreaked havoc on people's lives, including the two back-to-back hurricanes that ravaged NE Nicaragua (and the BOSAWAS region) in late 2020.

As forest dwellers, the Miskito and Mayagna peoples are highly dependent on their forest ecosystem and landscapes and are the holders of traditional forest-related knowledge. Traditional knowledge has been shown to be effective in coping with, and adapting to, climate change (Traditional Forest-Related Knowledge, 2012).

Indigenous women are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change in the BOSAWAS. Women have traditional cultural roles as the primary users and managers of natural resources, such as collecting clean water, cultivating food and natural medicines, and feeding their families. They are dependent on the natural environment for the resources to fulfill these roles, and this makes women particularly vulnerable to climate change. By contrast, over the last few decades, Indigenous men have moved away from some of the traditional practices, such as hunting and fishing, and now they increasingly access paid labour opportunities, undertake resource extraction such as artisanal mining and logging, and migrate outside the region for work.

In addition to the impacts on women's traditional roles, climate change can impact transformational processes towards greater gender equitable participation and opportunities, such as in the areas of education. For example, girls are usually removed from school before boys when additional help is needed in the home, particularly when deforestation and climatic disasters impact housing or food supplies. Women and girls can also experience long-term social outcomes of short-term coping responses to the negative impacts of climate change. For example, there is evidence that girls are at greater risk of early marriage in times of weather-related crises, because marriage can often help ease the burden of scarce household resources.

TESTING PROJECT DETAILS

Country: Nicaragua

Project Title: Technology and Training for Quality and Equality Project in Remote Indigenous Communities

Testing Area: BOSAWAS Biosphere Reserve

Target Participants: 120 (W69, M51)

Indirect Participants: 1856 (W947, M909)

Local Partners: GTI-MITK, URACCAN, Servicio de Información Mesoamericano sobre Agricultura Sostenible (SIMAS)

Duration: February 2020 to July 2021

FIT Funding amount: \$250,000

Testing Hypothesis: Teacher pedagogy in remote indigenous communities will improve as a result of teacher completion of a culturally and linguistically adapted and gender-sensitive MOOC (Massive Open On-Line Course) and improved teacher access to high-quality culturally, linguistically, and gender-sensitive appropriate teaching and learning materials.

INTAKE 1 PROJECT: TECHNOLOGY AND TRAINING FOR QUALITY AND EQUALITY

RELEVANCE

The project Technology and Training for Quality and Equality in Education Innovation was funded by FIT in its first intake for the period of February 2020 to July 2021, at the onset of COVID-19. Change for Children along with local partners piloted the use of technology to improve the pedagogical capacities of teachers in order to increase and improve student learning in 4 remote indigenous communities including Aniwas, Pamkawas, San Andrés, and Shiminka in the BOSAWAS Biosphere in the Northeast of Nicaragua. This was the first time that technology was used as a tool to improve education in these indigenous communities which are difficult to access and as a result have few resources. The project sought to address the following challenges:

- **Low capacity for teachers** – The majority of the teachers had little or no formal teacher training. Some teachers only have a grade six education. MOOC would be used as a resource for professional development and provide teachers with off-line training in pedagogy and cultural materials.
- **Lack of educational resources** – The schools in the region are very poorly resourced, and lack textbooks, libraries, and whiteboards. Providing a RACHEL digital library is cost-effective way to provide educational resources to both teachers and students living in remote communities.
- **Absence of culturally and linguistically appropriate or adapted curriculum** – There are little or no culturally and linguistically specific educational materials for the Miskito communities since most of the educational resources exist in Spanish. Having educational material in Miskito language is particularly important for young students since it allows them to better understand the material while transitioning from local Miskito language to national Spanish language.
- **Gender inequality** – Women in BOSAWAS continue to have lower levels of education, limited access to resources, and lower incomes than men, while experiencing high levels of gender-based violence. The project was set to provide participants with sufficient knowledge about gender, which will be translated into a practice that reduces gender inequalities and promote PSEA.



Several stakeholders, including, local partner and government, local experts and participants were involved in the project's design, testing, reporting and evaluation of the testing project. During the site MEL visit we met with a sample of participants:

MEL visit participants: 55 total (31W)

- San Andrés: 6 teachers (4W), 1 head of school (1M)
- Tuburus : 10 teachers (7W), 2 parents (2W)
- Pamkawas: 10 students (6W), 2 parents (1W)
- Shiminka: 3 students (2W), 2 teachers (2W)
- Yakalpanani: 4 forest rangers (4M), 5 students (2W), 2 traditional med practitioners (2W), 1 WIMPA representative (1W)
- Local community leaders: 3 (M)
- Gender representatives (WIMPA): 2 (W)
- National education authorities (Managua): 2 (2M)

Although some of these participants had minor roles in this first project, their shared experiences and contributions during the MEL visit were valuable to better understand the outcomes of the testing project.

The overall assessment of the testing project indicates that the hypothesis of testing was proved. That is, the technology was introduced and helped to improve teachers' pedagogy. Both teachers and students benefited from the digital library with many resources that addresses cultural, language and gender barriers.



EFFECTIVENESS

Gender Equality Strategy:

- A Gender Specialist trained a local Project Pedagogy Specialist who then conducted in-person gender trainings to participants.
- 31 people (39% women) including community leaders were trained on gender equality.
- The results indicated increased knowledge of gender equality among participants and better access to over 100 SRHR educational materials in Miskito and Spanish language uploaded in RACHEL where women can use as needed.
- The project succeeded in reaching the target regarding gender knowledge acquisition among participants as expected from the gender equality strategy plan.



Environmental sustainability strategy:

- There was an environmental plan and outcomes reported addressing tech waste and construction materials and waste. The project included a strong sustainability component related to solar panel installation and maintenance.

Ability to pivot and overcome challenges:

- This first project faced many challenges related to COVID-19 pandemic, including the restrictions that prevented large community workshops and public education campaigns that were originally planned.
- Change for Children with partners managed to continue with the activities by organising workshops in small groups. As a result, the project did not change its schedule and finished on time. No environmental considerations were needed.

Risks:

- No major risks were reported in this project.

Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Policy.

- The project integrated and implemented the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Policy in the testing communities.
- PSEA posters were placed in different locations as way to promote PSEA within the community.



EFFICIENCY

Reach:

- The first project reached 12% (4 out of 34) of communities with the technology. These four communities represent about 25% of the total 14,000 regional population, about 3,500 people.
- San Andrés served as the main center of training for teachers from within and surrounding areas of Miskito community.
- In total, 120 teachers (69/120: 57.5% women) and 2,244 students (1077/2244: 48% girls) who participated in the innovation testing showed great progress.

The following high-level results indicators showed the project's success:

- Number of teachers that showing improved pedagogy by using of technology – 120 teachers (69 women).
- Percentage of students reporting participatory and innovative learning strategies used in their classrooms – 219 students (52% women) were reached.
- Percentage of teachers who use gender or SRHR materials on RACHEL with their students – 74 SRHR and 12 gender materials were made available.
- Number of existing and new culturally and linguistically specific and gender equality curriculum materials developed and added to RACHEL – 27 Miskito materials were included in RACHEL.
- Number of community workshops about SRHR and number of community communications activities on SRHR and the right to education – 3 educational workshops were conducted.
- The project showed great involvement of local leadership in achieving results.

Local partnership:

- Long-term and good partnerships were among the key factors of success for the testing project.
- The local Indigenous government (GTI), the Ministry of Education (MINED), and University of the Autonomous Regions of the Nicaraguan Caribbean Coast (URACCAN) participated actively in this project and provided their full support during the testing of this innovation.
- During the MEL visit, it was clear that Change of Children collaborates with the local partners in transparent ways as they felt part of the project design, execution and evaluation.
- The local community showed strong involvement in the project activities, which strengthened collaboration between local population and the Canadian organisation.

Budget:

- Project received \$250,000 from FIT with \$50,000 contribution by the SMO.
- Details of expenses reported to FIT and the observation of the use of funds in the testing location indicated an appropriate use of funds by the stakeholders.



IMPACT

Level of change in the Community

- At the community level, the project contributed to strengthen the collaboration among men and women, thereby reducing the gender barriers that previously existed.
- Solar powered MOOC system paired with the RACHEL hotspot device was installed at schools in Aniwas, Pamkawas, San Andrés, and Shiminka community.
- Teachers in San Andrés school indicated better knowledge of pedagogy including course planning, concept mapping, homework exercise design, and update access to educational materials, including cultural/ language materials.
- In Tuburus and Pamkawas, for example, students could demonstrate a faster use of RACHEL system to access materials and educational videos. Both female and male students performed equally and were proud of the learning and skills in the use of technology.
- Students from Pamkawas, for example, indicated that they are motivated to come to school every day and enjoy working with RACHEL Chromebook and they see better performance at school. The motivation to come to school translates to lower dropout rates.
- At school, the project has made a significant contribution in strengthening the capacity of teachers and students regarding the use of technology and access to updated information.
- Teachers' pedagogy improvement was demonstrated during the focus group discussion and the user-demonstration of RACHEL .
- Students' performance was also confirmed during the focus group discussion and demonstration of RACHEL use by accessing education materials, including gender and Miskito cultural materials. They indicated that they no longer felt "inferior" in technology knowledge compared to their counterparts who study in modern cities such as Managua.
- Gender awareness was confirmed by participants testifying the improvement of gender knowledge and considerations at the school, workplaces and in the community.
- Students, teachers, and community leaders showed active participation in the project's design and execution.

FIT Gender Evaluation Framework for Innovation (GEFI)

Through their GES, Change for Children and partners were able to make significant progress in a short period of time toward the FIAP action area 2: Human Dignity as well as advancing gender equality and empowering women and girls through the following **Access** and **Agency** strategies:

- Access to equipment and technology
- Access to skills development
- Access to information/awareness
- Improved knowledge/educational attainment
- Training & Improved knowledge and capability on gender (agency)
- Shifting gender norms on [women's] rights (agency).

Additionally, Change for Children's Commitment toward advancing gender equality was demonstrated through the following:

- Dedicating funds in the budget toward gender activities (e.g., hiring gender expert, gender training, etc.)
- In-depth gender scan conducted at the start of testing
- Development of a policy for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)
- Hiring a local gender expert
- Providing gender training to the staff, partners, project participants and other community members
- Collecting gender disaggregated data throughout the project to understand the differential impact of testing activities and outcomes on women, men, boys and girls.

Key lessons learned

- Technology can be used in education for not only increasing knowledge, but also to help reduce gender barriers among students and teachers. For example, both teacher and student direct participants indicated that using RACHEL helped to strengthen the collaboration between girls/women and boys/men while accessing materials, utilizing and sharing resources.
- There is still need for technology devices to cover the needs of students and teachers. Only 15 laptops were distributed in each school, and a laptop for each facilitator. Thus devices needed to be shared among many participants. As such, the devices were limited in covering gaps in knowledge. Nevertheless, it was easy for students to acquire sufficient skills and access the existing devices when they were at school. More devices are needed to support the increasing demand.
- Local governance support for teachers remains important. Given that about 50% (7-8/15) of teachers are lay teachers, GTI and MINED supported the inclusion of all teachers in and outside of the testing communities, regardless of their qualifications, to join other teachers in San Andrés for RACHEL training and access, which helped to improve their capacity in pedagogy.
- Use of local language in education increased participants' uptake of the new technology. Most of users indicated their satisfaction to learn Miskito language materials in RACHEL, including literature, numeracy and songs.

SUSTAINABILITY

Innovation success factors

- Strong partnership between SMO and local partners
- Local government officials supported the project
- Participants involved in project's plan and execution
- Collaboration among all stakeholders
- Better utilization of local skills and expertise
- Appropriate use of resources

POTENTIAL TO SCALE

The project showed great potential to be scaled beyond the testing communities for the following reasons:

- Using solar power, MOOC/RACHEL technology can easily be installed in any school in the community.
- New learners can be supported by participants who already have some level of experience and facilitate peer-to-peer support for RACHEL use.
- Digital library platform requires less space, and it is easier to store devices at school where both teachers and students can access them at any time.
- Building on the existing long-term partnership between Change for Children and the local indigenous government, scaling up the project to new community will require less effort and human resources.
- Technology provides a sustainable opportunity for both students and teachers to access gender and cultural materials that are needed in all communities.
- Knowledge sharing
- The project met with several stakeholders to share lessons
- SMO and local partners participated in FIT community of practice and calls to share experience
- SMO planned to apply for FIT Knowledge Sharing Grant for sharing knowledge with a wider community



STORIES OF CHANGE

A woman teacher shared a story of how gender training changed her husband's perceptions. As teachers, the couple attended the gender training and acquired a better understand of how gender knowledge can be applied at the household level. She indicated that at home she used to be only one to do all the domestic work in addition to her role as a fulltime teacher. Since her husband participated in the gender workshop, he now supports her doing domestic chores. For example, she now found her husband cooking while she is busy doing other work like washing clothes at the river. She found this support helpful as it reduces her workload and allows her to rest.

TESTING PROJECT DETAILS

FIT Intake 5

Country: Nicaragua

Testing Dates: May 2022 to May 2023

Testing Area: BOSAWAS Biosphere Reserve

Target Participants: 1,261 (796W, 465M)

Indirect Participants: 14,000

Local Partners: GTI-MITK, FUNARTE, Girl Rising, University of the Autonomous Regions of the Nicaraguan Caribbean Coast (URACCAN), Nicaragua Ministry of Health (MINSa)

FIT Funding Amount: \$175,000

PROJECT INTAKE 5: LOCAL KNOWLEDGE: GLOBAL GOALS

Partners included the local indigenous government (GTI-MITK), CFC, and two other Central American NGOs. FUNARTE, a Nicaraguan-based NGO, provided administrative functions for the innovation testing, as well as programmatic support for educational aspects of the innovation. Girl Rising (GR), an international organization with a branch office in Guatemala, provided technical consultation and support for the in-depth gender scan (IGS)* and implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy (GES). The University of the Autonomous Regions of the Nicaraguan Caribbean Coast (URACCAN) provided training and support to traditional medicine practitioners.

Testing Hypothesis = If local Indigenous knowledge management, nature-based solutions, and gender inclusive community planning are prioritized, then Miskito communities will improve their capacity to sustainably manage the BOSAWAS Biosphere Reserve in order to reduce their vulnerability to climate change.

** An IGS for the social innovation space aims to understand how gender impacts women, men, girls and boys, and people of all genders in a specific context and helps to ensure that the innovative solution is gender sensitive, responsive and/or transformative. It is a systematic methodology for: 1. examining the differences in roles and norms for women and men, girls and boys (and people of all genders); 2. the different levels of power they hold; and 3. their differing needs, constraints, and opportunities; and the impact of these differences in their lives.*



RELEVANCE

The testing project and expected outcomes were designed in collaboration with project partners, namely with GTI-MITK, and participants based on the needs of their communities and a history of ongoing projects in the area. Participants and partners were involved in all testing phases (design, planning, monitoring, evaluating, and reporting).

Using the following three-pronged approach, Change for Children was able to prove their hypothesis:

1) Territorial mapping: training local students to use MAPEO software to upload Citizen Science (CS) data collected by Indigenous Forest Rangers, as well as Indigenous and local knowledge (ILK) from elders, traditional medicine practitioners (TMPs), and agricultural innovators to track environmental and climate change observations and share information locally and globally.

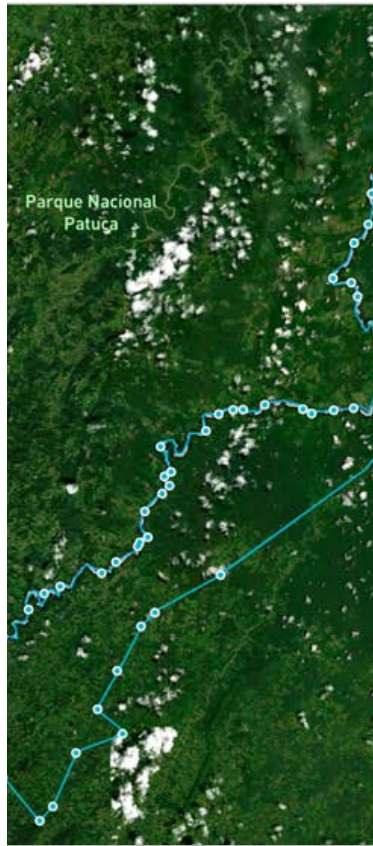
2) Nature-based solutions and sustainable livelihoods: training Indigenous agricultural innovators and natural or traditional medicine practitioners (majority women) to respond to climate change with traditional knowledge, drought-resistant local seed varieties, and medicinal plants.

3) Inclusive gender equitable governance and community planning: confirming the ability of local communities to engage in comprehensive gender-equitable community planning (CCP) by piloting the process in select communities and including public education and engagement campaigns.

The testing project and solutions were innovative as they had never been used in the region. Digital territorial mapping as well as the technology used for the mapping were introduced to BOSAWAS through this project and are also now being used for decision-making in governance and planning for the first time.

A cyclical system of Indigenous knowledge preservation was developed and shared throughout the communities to emphasize nature-based solutions to address climate change. Similarly, sustainable livelihood technology was introduced to the region as a means of reducing women and girls triple burden and to reduce the region's dependency on [expensive] imports.

The election of female community coordinators in each of the 34 communities, where previously there were only male coordinators and representatives, demonstrated clear progress and innovation within the new inclusive gender-equitable local governance structure and Indigenous methodologies of comprehensive community planning. Additionally, the reactivation of the local Indigenous women's organization, WIMPA, and their renewed partnership with the Indigenous government's demonstrated their commitment to gender equitable governance, as well as relevance in leveraging existing governance structures and local expertise. As a result, further inclusion of local expertise, particularly women, reinforced existing strong relationships between Change for Children and their local partners and drove the success of the innovation.



EFFECTIVENESS

Project results, observed in person and reported to FIT, were evaluated based on the testing project's measurement framework and intended outcomes.

Intermediate Outcome 1: Improved, sustainable Indigenous knowledge management system (software system) being utilized for collecting, tracking, exchange and dissemination of gender-balanced citizen science and Indigenous local knowledge (ILK) about environmental conservation and sustainability.

42 students (66% girls) and 38 forest rangers (all men) were successfully trained to utilize MAPEO – a digital mapping tool developed by and for Earth Defender – and more than 80 important territorial sites, geographic and social features, and points of cultural significance have been georeferenced and registered in MAPEO. This data was complemented with oral community knowledge to create basic maps of the communities. Numerous knowledgeable local figures, including forest rangers, healers, traditional medicine practitioners, and religious leaders shared geographic and territorial information which has been collected for uploading on to MAPEO. This will allow Indigenous peoples to preserve their cultural heritage, language, tradition and the natural resources. This not only built the capacity of students and forest rangers to map key locations in their communities, but it also allowed them to improve their knowledge of their communities and pass on generational knowledge to younger population of BOSAWAS.

These results are particularly significant as these are the first detailed digital maps to exist in the communities in BOSAWAS. The digital maps are now being used as a knowledge management system for collecting, tracking, exchanging and disseminating Indigenous local knowledge (ILK) about environmental conservation and sustainability, and being used for decision-making by the GTI-MITK.



Intermediate Outcome 2: Increased use of nature-based solutions to facilitate adaptation, strengthen resilience, and improve self-sufficiency.

Rice processing machinery was introduced to BOSAWAS as a sustainable livelihood strategy as relying on imports can be expensive and women and girls were spending 6 hours a day manually processing rice. With the new technology, rice processing was reduced to 20 to 30 minutes per day, drastically alleviating their domestic workload and freeing up time for other activities and priorities. Most users (70%) are women and girls as they are traditionally responsible for processing and preparing the rice for their families. Training to operate the machinery and take responsibility for operations and maintenance was provided to several community members. At the end of the testing timeframe, approximately 201 families from the seven nucleus communities had utilized the service and processed 170 quintals (1 quintal = 100 pounds) of rice.

Several medicinal plant gardens were initially established in strategic locations in BOSAWAS communities; the first were established in San Andrés at the local Health Centre as per their request, and the second in the yard of the GTI and WIMPA offices. The gardens are surrounded by fences that were built using plastic bottles that were discarded in the communities and are maintained and utilized by traditional healers and mid-wives.

Through various workshops hosted by URACCAN University and ISNAYA (a Nicaraguan organization which supports research and training on medicinal plants), Indigenous healers and midwives gained new knowledge, shared existing knowledge, and increased their capacity on traditional medicine. 14 healers, natural medicinal practitioners and midwives (9 or 64% women) from five communities were trained. Emphasizing the importance of Indigenous knowledge in the project provided the space for participants to create systems for knowledge to be passed down through additional avenues and be better preserved.

Immediate Outcome 3: Improved governance capacity of Miskito leaders to serve as a gender-balanced, sovereign entity by co-creating a draft comprehensive, community-led conservation plan.

Pointing to the relevance of the innovation, the reactivation of WIMPA – the Indigenous women's territorial organization that had been inactive for 10 years – demonstrated an in-depth understanding of the local context and leveraged an existing local governance structure to ensure the integration of gender equality was locally led. Among the most significant achievements of the testing project, 34 women community coordinators were elected as representatives to the regional GTI-MITK and are now included in Indigenous government sessions. This was also testament to the GTI-MITK's commitment to ensuring women's needs, interests and rights are prioritized in planning and decision-making moving forward. As part of a sustainability strategy, young women in the communities are receiving leadership training for the future of WIMPA. WIMPA has been formally registered and legalized to access funding.

The above activities and outcomes resulted in the testing project's ultimate outcome being achieved: *increased capacity of Nicaraguan Miskito communities to use local indigenous knowledge, nature-based solutions, and gender-inclusive community planning to sustainably manage the BOSAWAS biosphere reserve in order to reduce their vulnerability to climate change.*

Testing strategies

Effective strategies were developed using participatory methods and based on the local context. For example, Change for Children's Gender Equality Strategy and Environmental Management Plan/sustainability strategy were used to achieve the project's intended outcomes.

Environmental management plan

Change for Children developed an environmental management plan for its activities at the onset of the project. Potential risks and mitigation measures were identified at that time. No risks or environmental damage occurred during the project. Potential risks were monitored during the visit and remained null.

The importance of preserving and sharing traditional indigenous knowledge was at the core of each project activity stream. Key indigenous community leaders are heavily involved in all project activities and work to ensure that local knowledge is well understood, emphasized throughout the community in health, education, environmental protection, governance and community planning, and passed down to younger generations.



Change for Children, along with local partners and project participants, also undertook activities that support environmental sustainability, for example:

- The packaging of new computers, GPS, mobile phones that is not useful, were returned to Managua for recycling.
- A fence using recycled materials, namely plastic pop bottles, was constructed around the garden in San Andrés, on the local Health Centre property. Abandoned plastic bottles were collected from the river and around the community to prevent plastic waste from reaching the ocean.

- The by-products (husks) from rice threshing are used by the producers themselves to feed small livestock and for compost to improve the organic characteristics of the soil in their gardens and fields.
- The rice processor operates on gasoline which is less polluting than diesel in a reserve area. A 40HP outboard motor consumes 45 gallons of gasoline in a day – the rice plant engine has a 6.5 HP and consumes 1.7 liters of gasoline, using significantly less fuel than importing rice through river transport.

Gender equality strategy

The Gender Equality Strategy (GES) for this testing project was developed based on the issues identified through the in-depth gender scan (IGS) that was completed at the start of the project. 165 (51%w) members of the project team were trained by the local Indigenous gender specialist to ensure the team had the capacity to integrate gender throughout all testing activities.

The five issues that were identified through the IGS were successfully addressed in the project:

1) Challenges to female students working with Forest Rangers and participation in forest monitoring trips: Protocols were established to ensure female participation in forest monitoring trips. The 28 (66%) female students were trained on MAPEO and successfully worked with the Forest Rangers and participated in forest monitoring trips.

2) Undervaluing and underestimating women's knowledge and experience in sustainable production: understanding and respect for women's knowledge and experience was increased through dialogue, knowledge exchanges, videos, and public events lead by the traditional healers and natural medicine practitioners (9 women, 5 men) participating in the testing project. Knowledge was shared in the 7 nucleus communities of BOSAWAS.

3) Social norms against women's participation in public roles: through community meetings, training sessions, and workshops on gender, GBV and division of work with emphasis on the value of women's work, strategies were developed to reduce barriers to women's participation in community activities and governance. Each of the 34 BOSAWAS communities in BOSAWAS elected 1 female and 1 male representative to represent them at the GTI-MITK. This was the first time each community has elected a woman representative. Men and women community leaders participating in the gender workshops reported greater understanding of gender equality benefits and promotion strategies.

4) Logistical barriers to women's Participation in governance and decision-making: GTI-MITK leadership received training and support to develop a plan to reduce barriers to women's participation in governance and decision-making. For example, all women community representatives participated in the year-end GTI-MITK evaluation and planning workshop with support for transportation and per diems. During the FIT MEL visit, additional evaluation and planning workshops were held where women had active leadership and participatory roles.

5) Lack of women's leadership capacity and experience: 15 women from WIMPA (7 representatives and 8 youth leaders) received gender and leadership training and participated in planning workshops for WIMPA's activities. Additionally, the reactivation of WIMPA, the Indigenous women's organization, through this testing project assisted in spearheading the above-mentioned activities and gaining support for gender initiatives throughout the project communities.





Risks and challenges

Maintaining a flexible approach throughout the testing phase allowed Change for Children to overcome challenges and pivot when necessary. Having had to pivot in their first testing project during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic provided learnings that were applied to the second testing project.

For example, relying on local expertise was a more feasible and cost-effective approach than relying on external expertise particularly for a short-term project. Adapting methodologies in gender trainings and workshops to make the sessions more participatory encouraged more participation from men reducing initial pushback and provided a space for women to express themselves. Other pivots related to climate changes such as unexpected rains causing rivers to rise and bridges to flood, or lack of rain preventing smooth river travel.

Other pivots were due to more pressing challenges that pose more serious risks to the people in BOSAWAS:

Risk 1: Illegal Settlers affecting the safety of the Miskito People in BOSAWAS

The most severe risk to not only the success of ongoing projects but more importantly, to the Miskito People in BOSAWAS, remain the illegal settlers. As mentioned in the Context section, more than 50% of the BOSAWAS forest has been lost due to in-migration of non-Indigenous settler families clearing the forest for pasture and cultivation, and an increase in artisanal mining. Many of these illegal settler families are also facing a number of their own livelihood struggles and as a result are becoming increasingly hostile when confronted and/or asked to leave. The Miskito Forest Rangers and Local Police face increasing risks to their personal safety when confronted with illegal settlers when mapping and patrolling the MITK territory. During the MEL visit, a young Policeman was shot and killed while peacefully confronting a family of illegal settlers. This did not pose a threat to foreigners taking part in the visit; however, every one of these incidents continues to increase the risk for members of the MITK Government and puts the lives of Miskito women, men, boys and girls living in BOSAWAS in danger. Although territorial mapping has assisted the community in mapping high-risk areas in BOSAWAS, support of international organizations is needed to mobilize governments, raise awareness and support protection efforts.

Risk 2: COVID-19

While COVID-19 remained a risk at the start testing, it was no longer a risk at the time of the MEL visit. Few COVID-19 cases were reported in the BOSAWAS region. The isolation and low population density of the region appear to have limited the spread of infection. Natural healers and traditional medicine practitioners in BOSAWAS also reported that the use of traditional medicine also contributed to low COVID numbers and deaths in the region.

Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Policy

All innovation project staff read and agreed to Change for Children's PSEA Policy and have received information sessions on how to ensure the safety of all participants during community activities and initiatives. Additionally, the gender training implemented with community leaders and in schools also included sessions on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as other types of abuse.

As part of the project, a poster was developed and posted in all local authority offices, at sites where innovation activities are taking place, and throughout the community, for example, in shops and high walking-traffic areas.

The poster explains types of abuse and provides information of who to contact with concerns or problems. The poster is available in Spanish and Miskito. Additionally, the poster can also be found at the local police office, which also has a police woman in charge of managing reported cases.

No incidents were reported over the duration of the project.



EFFICIENCY

Reach

Through the innovation, Change for Children successfully reached the 1,261 direct target participants (796 women/girls and men/boys). These included: students, forest rangers (all men), traditional healers and natural medicinal practitioners, and elected women community representatives (to join the 34 men community representatives).

Local Leadership

As the innovation was locally led with expertise from BOSAWAS, it allowed project partners to effectively reach their target participants. It was confirmed during the MEL visit that a history of strong partnerships and relationships between partners was key to the success of the innovation. The community demonstrated ownership of the activities and their sustainability.

Budget

Change for Children received \$175,000 from FIT for this project. Funds were spent according to FIT-approved budgets and financial reports were submitted on schedule and approved. Resources were used efficiently for greater impact in communities.

While FIT did not send a finance representative to BOSAWAS and a financial review was not the purpose of the evaluation, it was evident that resources were used effectively and that the funds have made a significant impact in the community. Additionally, Change for Children used a collaborative budgeting approach to ensure transparency and participatory processes between project partners.

IMPACT

Level of Change in the Community

In addition to having achieved the expected ultimate outcome of the testing project in a short timeframe, the MEL visit corroborated the following additional impacts:

- Increased understanding of and respect for local Indigenous knowledge, its importance and preservation.
- Significant interest and demand in increasing individual capacity to manage the local environment and support actions to build community resilience toward climate change.
- Improved knowledge of gender equality within testing communities, beyond target participants, due to increased participation in gender trainings.
- Reduced workload burden for women and girls that were previously spending 6 hours per day manually processing rice to 30 minutes per day using the rice processing machine.
- Access to new skills and technology from the use of MAPEO, as well as the creation of new digital maps now influencing high-level decision-making and planning in the BOSAWAS communities.
- Increased women's participation in an existing institutional structure that now formally ensures women's voice in community governance and planning can ensure the needs and rights of all members of the community will be addressed moving forward.
- Increased recognition and support for the rights of women and girls through shifting norms and beliefs on gender.
- More effective gender-balanced community governance.
- Progress toward advancing gender in various aspects of the communities, and contributions toward empowering women and girls through increased knowledge, skills and capacities.

FIT Gender Evaluation Framework for Innovation (GEFI)

Through their GES, Change for Children and partners were able to make significant progress in a short period of time toward advancing gender equality and empowering women and girls through the following **Access** and **Agency** strategies:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Access to equipment and technology ● Access to mentoring/peers/networks ● Access to skills development ● Access to women's organizations ● Access to participation stipends | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Access to dialogue and sharing ● Access to information ● Engaging men (agency) ● Improved leadership and self-efficacy (agency) ● Improved decision-making power (agency) ● Training & Improved knowledge and capability on gender (agency) ● Shifting gender norms on [women's] rights (agency) ● Shifting norms on SGBV. |
|---|---|



Additionally, Change for Children's **Commitment** toward advancing gender equality was demonstrated through the following:

- Dedicating funds in the budget toward gender activities (e.g., hiring gender expert, gender training, etc.)
- In-depth gender scan conducted at the start of testing
- Development of a gender equality strategy
- Development of a policy for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)
- Hiring a local gender expert
- Providing gender training to the staff, partners, project participants and other community members
- Collecting gender disaggregated data throughout the project to understand the differential impact of testing activities and outcomes on women, men, boys and girls.

Key Lessons Learned

- Participatory and transparent budget processes: allowing testing participants to review and provide feedback on the budget increases trust in leaders and demonstrates good practice for community governance and planning.
- Integrating lessons from previous projects leads to greater impact.
- Local Indigenous gender expertise to facilitate participatory and inclusive community planning training and processes is more cost-effective and contextually relevant than external expertise.
- Environment or land-based innovations typically require more than one year for testing as the seasonal cycles impact timelines. Similarly, some areas are hard to reach at different times of year due to rain or lack thereof.
- Gender capacity building workshops need to be tailored to specific audiences based on different existing levels of knowledge on, exposure to, and previous beliefs on gender (i.e., gender capacity trainings provided to teachers would differ from trainings provided to religious leaders).
- Making sure all project activities have gender components is an important understanding for project partners and for the communities of BOSAWAS as gender is a cross-cutting theme.
- Priority gender themes for the communities can be identified in meetings between WIMPA and GTI-MITK, with community representatives.
- Men's engagement as well as integration of male community leaders, especially from the GTI-MITK leads to more support from the community for gender initiatives.



SUSTAINABILITY

Innovation Success Factors

- **Localization and partnerships:** The projects are being driven by the communities themselves, and there is significant mutual respect between all partners in the south and in the north. The long-term partnership and dedicated relationship between Change for Children and the GTI-MITK Indigenous Government and their local partners is what has driven the success of their projects.
- **Reach and commitment:** Change for Children and their partners are committed to working in hard-to-reach communities. This is possible due to strong local partnerships, dedicated local leadership, as well as long-term relationships.
- **Transparency and knowledge sharing:** All project partners maintain transparency throughout all activities about what is going well, what needs to be improved, and regularly share learnings and knowledge with each other as well as with project participants and communities. This encourages individual participation within projects and fosters a sense of ownership of activities and new developments within the communities.

- **Ability to pivot:** Knowing when to pivot and being flexible through challenges and evolving contexts is necessary for innovation and has allowed for progress in project activities and has fostered continuous development in the communities.
- **Lessons learned:** Change for Children is committed to continuous learning. Lessons from previous projects are shared between projects partners and participants and integrated into ongoing activities to learn from what has and hasn't worked to ensure progress.
- **Preserving Indigenous knowledge:** The preservation of Indigenous knowledge has been central to not only the success of the innovation but also to the sustainability of the communities. All partners demonstrated and maintained a clear dedication to environmental protection and climate resilience throughout the project.
- **Commitment of partners and men to gender equality in the community:** Gender equality was a key component necessary for the success of the innovation and was promoted by all partners, men and women alike. The [male] leadership of the GTI-MITK was also central in getting support from other men in the community and promoting gender equality.



STORIES OF CHANGE

- *“Because of the gender training I’ve received, I can identify instances of violence. I never had training before. Now I can teach my husband and grandkids, and I can pass down knowledge.”*
~ natural medicine practitioner (W)
- *“I treat my patients differently now after the training. For example, I prioritize women with pain knowing it might be more serious [reproductive health].”*
~ natural medicine practitioner (W)
- *“I received training on Mapeo. Now we are adding plants to Mapeo. This will be helpful to know where to go find the plant when we need it for medicine. Sometimes we remember by heart, but sometimes we forget. This will help.”*
~ natural medicine practitioner (W)
- *“All this learning makes me feel young again. I’m sad to see all the threats to our land, but this new knowledge is also uniting us, helping us to preserve our territory, emphasizing which animals are near extinction...”*
~ forest ranger trained on Mapeo (M)
- *“We are very thankful to learn about our land. Before, we were only learning about things outside of our community, outside of our country. Now we are learning about our land, our community, all the villages around that we didn’t know about before, and how to take ownership of our future.”*
~ student trained on Mapeo (W)

Potential to Scale

Having proved the hypothesis will allow Change for Children to scale their project within existing project communities and to other communities.

FIT funding allowed Change for Children to successfully test an innovation focused on local, national and international priorities in the 7 larger nucleus communities within the total 34 communities in BOSAWAS with the ability to pivot, and evolve, when necessary, without having to worry about “failing” in the innovation space.

The MEL visit confirmed that the foundations have been laid to ensure that the benefits of the innovation will be sustained and can effectively be scaled-up to the other communities to achieve wider reach and impact.

Knowledge Sharing

Results, evidence and lessons from this innovation test will be shared with the larger innovation and development sectors. Change for Children already has plans to share knowledge from both testing projects within Nicaragua as well as in Canada. For example, in 2023, Change for Children will:

- 1) share results and learnings related to how Indigenous knowledge contributes to a response to climate change in Miskito communities in Nicaragua with other NGOs and first nations working with global Indigenous communities;
- 2) have a knowledge exchange with Indigenous communities in Canada about how traditional knowledge can contribute to climate change mitigation and recovery and sustainable development; and
- 3) facilitate connections between CFC and indigenous partner organizations/ Canadian First Nations that will open doors to joint applications for climate financing and partnership development between the Miskito peoples of Nicaragua and Canadian Indigenous Peoples /First Nations.



06. CONCLUSION

The Monitoring and Evaluation conducted of CFC’s innovation testing projects in the BOSAWAS communities provided sufficient evidence that the testing hypotheses were proven for both projects, and that the projects demonstrated evidence of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability.

It was interesting to see the results of two FIT projects – one tested at the very beginning of FIT’s development and one in FIT’s final project cycle. The entire partnership (CFC and its many partners) demonstrated learning about testing from one project to another, and also in testing highly complex and locally-led initiatives. The locally driven aspect of the work showed a significant level of respect, a sensitivity to doing no harm and an aptitude for innovation.



FIT would like to thank Change for Children for organizing the MEL visit, and the Indigenous communities for so graciously welcoming and hosting the two FIT team members, Deo and Lisa. It was an privilege to spend time in your territory.

07. RECOMMENDATIONS

Sharing Testing Results:

- It is critical to showcase localization, Indigenous-led testing, and demonstrating impact.
- CFC can contribute to the FIT community of organizations by sharing their experiences as they do more than what they share. An emphasis can be put in public communication.

Capturing Learnings Between Intakes:

- Given CFC’s experience in testing two projects, there is opportunity to capture changes and make improvements of gender integration into testing as well as PSEA implementation.