



Change for
Children

ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24





MESSAGE FROM OUR **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

We wish we could tell you every story of connection of the last year. Every family connected to clean water. Every student connected to education. Every volunteer connected to global community. But there's simply not enough space in the pages for all the stories of transformation your support has set in motion.

This past year has been about time. We have reduced the time women and girls spend collecting water by making safe water more accessible. We have made time more productive by introducing rice threshing machines to reduce domestic labour. We have increased the quality of time spent by students in classrooms by ensuring educational resources are available. We have acknowledged our role in protecting the planet by investing time in climate change education initiatives. We have seen the reward of time being given back as a valuable resource when we build capacity and reduce burdens for men, women, and children alike.

Lorraine Swift
Executive Director, Change for Children

Time has been spent leveraging government and foundation funding with donor dollars and investigating opportunities to collaborate with new local and overseas partners. We have grown in knowledge while also sharing our own lessons learned with the international development community across Canada this year. We addressed audiences at various online and in-person events and conferences, and along with our Nicaraguan guests, shared messages of hope, connection and collaboration with Canadian schools, Canadian Indigenous communities, and Canadian government agencies. We are grateful for the opportunity to foster community and increase our connections locally and globally.

And, we are especially grateful for you! Your connection to Change for Children connects vulnerable people to services, supports, and sustainable solutions. Your commitment and compassion continues to reach hard-to-reach places. You make it possible. Please join us at our Development dinner this fall to be part of cultivating more critical connections that make the world a little more just, communities a lot stronger, and daily lives a little easier for many. Connection happens when we come together.

HUMAN DIGNITY | HEALTHY COMMUNITIES | GLOBAL JUSTICE

OUR VISION

In cooperation with the Indigenous people 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 by supporting projects which lead to self-sufficiency and a more just distribution of the world's resources.

OUR 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.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Justin Rutley • Andrea Kopylech • Terry Anderson
Sarah Brackett • Omar Ortiz • Maria DiCastrì • Don Hanke
Yemurai Bgwoni • Steve Mazerolle • Kimberly Ho



OUR TEAM

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



COMMUNITIES GET CONNECTED.

Since 2019, we have been working to reach classrooms in remote off-grid Indigenous communities in Nicaragua and Guatemala with mobile learning labs consisting of digital libraries, classroom laptops, and solar-power systems to improve accessibility of curriculum materials and maximize learning potential for students in resource-scarce, marginalized areas.

1600

New students and 74 teachers reached in remote Guatemala classrooms this year.

201

Teachers in Bosawás, Nicaragua participated in professional development this year.

27

Schools in Nicaragua and Guatemala equipped with technology since 2019.

In addition to the inclusion of traditional educational resources on off-line digital libraries, our Technology for Education projects make it possible for educators and elders alike to upload tailored content supporting efforts to preserve history, culture, and traditions.

INNOVATIVE EDUCATION

ENHANCED LEARNING IN HARD-TO-REACH PLACES

MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION

More than a simple communication tool, Indigenous languages are closely tied to traditional knowledge systems, health, and well-being—often binding humanity with nature. When languages are lost, also at risk are the valuable resources of traditions, memory, and unique modes of thinking and expression.

Change for Children's Education projects promote multilingual education by providing student and teacher resources in mother tongue languages. Content can be uploaded to offline servers used in remote classrooms, facilitating multilingual education, bridging barriers between home and school, and furthering more inclusive, effective learning. Preserving non-dominant, minority, Indigenous languages is critical to achieving equitable access to education and learning opportunities for all.

CLIMATE CHANGE KNOWLEDGE

Climate change has had a marked impact in the areas we work – altered ecosystems, diminishing water tables, reduced capacity to grow food – and the importance of incorporating climate change and environmental education into school curriculum both in the Global South and in Canada has been identified.

Lesson plans have been developed for teachers in three languages (English, Spanish, and Miskito) with the themes of climate change, forests, and environmental education and have been uploaded to the digital libraries deployed in schools in Nicaragua and Guatemala, and also on our own website for use by Canadian teachers.

Our *Education for Climate Responsiveness* project enables teachers to integrate Climate Change Education in the remote classrooms we have reached with digital libraries. The technology is used to deliver a climate change education massive open online course (MOOC) for educators to better prepare students to recognize, understand, and respond to climate change and its impacts.

PROMOTING INNOVATION

In cooperation with Nicaragua's Ministry of Education and local Indigenous territorial governments, a first-of-its kind collaborative event was held on Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast (July 2023) to share knowledge, successes, and lessons learned as it relates to implementing mother-tongue, solar powered, technology-enabled education programs in remote Indigenous communities.

Attendees included representatives from Indigenous governments and universities from across Nicaragua's central and Atlantic regions, Nicaragua's delegate to UNESCO, and decision-makers from Nicaragua's Ministry of Education.

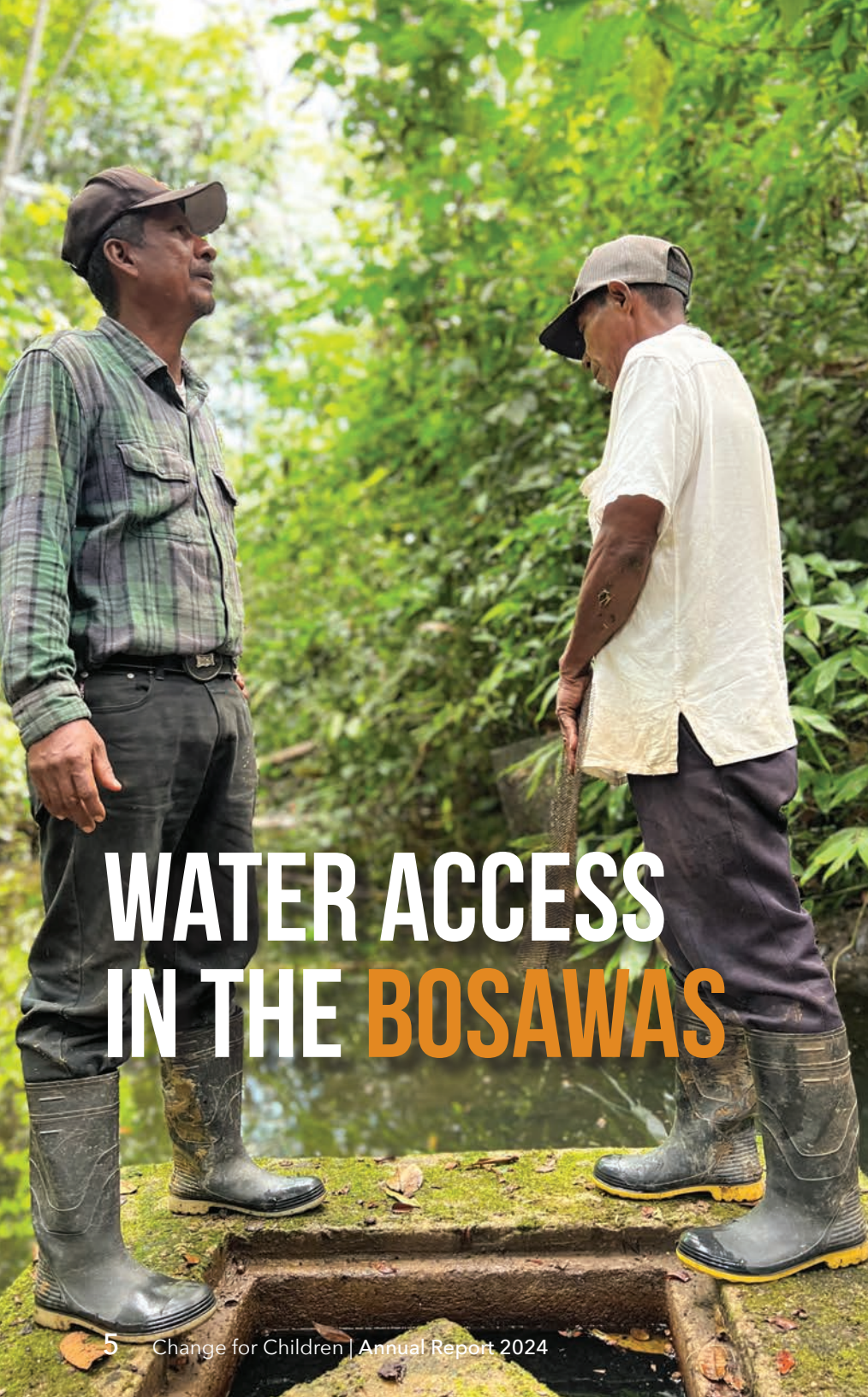
Teachers who have participated in our projects shared their experiences and the strong results that have been achieved in the areas of bilingual education, school attendance, academic performance, gender equality, and sustainability in remote areas with many barriers to education.

The results of the innovations have received widespread attention from the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education, researchers, and Canadian funders, and we look forward to continuing to work with Indigenous governments to further scale the success to extend the reach of education.

GAMES TO FILL GAPS

The inaugural 'Create4Good' challenge led by Change for Children partner *60 million girls* saw enthusiastic McGill students working together in teams to create offline digital games to address the gap in climate education. Change for Children provided mentorship, participating as a speaker and panelist and providing resources for students seeking to better understand the challenges and impacts of climate change on vulnerable communities.

The format was competition-style to create a climate education game prototype, but harnessing the collective creativity and passion of young people felt like a win for the planet. The winning game will ultimately reach a network of more than 700,000 students in the global south including 400 teachers and 8,000 students in the schools of the Alto Wangky region in Bosawás, Nicaragua where we have, and continue to, deploy offline technology for education.



WATER ACCESS IN THE BOSAWAS

One year ago, we shared our goal of improving access to safe sustainable water in the Bosawás, Nicaragua. Community water systems suffered damage during back-to-back hurricanes in 2020, and without means to complete repairs, communities were left reliant on dirty Coco River water to meet their needs.

With the support of the Change for Children community, the solar water system in Pamkawas has been repaired and today features solar panels proudly powering a new pump from which safe water flows first to the rehabilitated community water tank and then, through a distribution network of pipes, to tap stands serving 230 homes and families, a health post, a church, and the local school.

Upriver in San Andres, your support has restored safe drinking water for its riverside residents. With renewed availability of water through the restoration of pipes linking a healthy water source with the village of 2,000 people, women and girls tasked with daily river trips for bucket water collection can now follow a new path.

Further downstream in Walakitang, the community of over 4,000 people that had been without a water system for more than twenty years was all hands on deck to contribute to the very dirty process of securing clean water for the community. A coat of blue paint on the community's rehabilitated water tank signaled the completion of the first phase of the project - bringing water from the source to the tank and to centralized community water taps, restoring consistent and reliable access to a safe water supply.



FROM RATIONS TO RATIONAL SOLUTIONS

Although water continued to flow in Santa Teresa, Nicaragua where Change for Children drilled a well in 2006, the community growth exceeded the capacity of the water system and the storage tank installed many years ago. Water was being rationed to only 2 hours per day. In partnership with community-organized crews and qualified labor, we worked together to install a new tank to serve the growing community 24 hours per day.

A SOLAR SOLUTION

In the San José and San Ramón communities in Nicaragua's dry corridor, the community water system was inoperable because the transformer connecting to commercial energy was damaged. In response, in a joint initiative of the community, the government water department, and Change for Children, a solar power system was built to generate solar power for the pump, and reduce dependence on commercially purchased electricity. The system now provides consistent service for 1,800 people.

HIGH-ALTITUDE WATER STORAGE

Water storage tanks have been distributed to 95 families in San Francisco and Tuichilupe, Guatemala to collect rainwater for domestic use, agricultural production, and animal husbandry in partnership with members of local women's cooperatives. A school water storage installation has also been completed to facilitate handwashing and sanitation.



SAFE-WATER SUPPORT

CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO SAFE WATER SOLUTIONS



GOING THE DISTANCE

While travel outside comfort zones can be challenging, resilience in the communities we visit is ever-present and never ceases to inspire. Brigade travel reminds us that while we are small and the world is big, we are all connected. Though we might try, we cannot truly walk a mile in someone else's shoes. Not really. But, sometimes, putting miles on our own can lead to greater understanding just the same.

Dental team volunteers travelled to Chicaman, Guatemala, a region in which we have recently expanded our technology education initiatives to reach communities with low literacy levels. While we know that when it comes to helping people succeed, dental care is just one piece of a puzzle, we also know that toothaches and infections can result in, at best, sleepless nights and missed school and work days and, at worst, vulnerability to disease that exacerbates life's daily challenges. In Chicaman, we were welcomed with kindness and humbled to be entrusted by strangers. Connecting, and creating a safe space, the team went the extra mile to relieve pain, treat infection, and change the present. (February 2024; 17 participants)

Two teams of Canadian teachers taught into summertime, trading traditional suburban classrooms for hillside schools in rural Guatemala and riverside open-air spaces in Bosawás, Nicaragua. In partnership with the Alberta Teacher's Association, the two teacher brigade teams experienced firsthand the time and effort and challenges associated with education in resource-scarce communities and collaborated with local teachers to enrich student learning. Fostering and witnessing the 'light-bulb' moments when a student catches on to a concept or masters a skill was revealed as motivation for teachers from all countries. (July 2023; 13 participants)



“

In the heart of the jungle, we embarked on an extraordinary journey of education and exploration. Together, students and teachers worked in collaboration, where dedication and passion translated into shared growth of knowledge.”

– Tara Ong Padilla

High School Spanish Teacher, Calgary



BUILDING BRIDGES

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES



The FIT-funded knowledge-sharing tour across Canada made an incredible impact not only on our Nicaraguan guests, Tony Llorente (Change for Children Project Manager), Edda Muller (Pedagogy Specialist), and Alonso Joseph (Secretary, Indigenous Territorial Government of Western Bosawas), but also touched the hearts and minds of the many Canadians with whom they shared time, space, knowledge and experiences.

During visits to Ottawa, Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, and Yellowknife, the trio addressed audiences at conferences, met with MPs in the House of Commons, connected with Canada's first nations communities including the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples, participated in a climate march, and learned about opportunities to work with the Aramat Project at the University of Alberta — a collaborative network of Indigenous Peoples sharing traditional knowledge across the world.

In Canadian schools, our guests met with Indigenous liaisons who shared stories, rituals and insights into how the truth and reconciliation education process is done in Canadian schools. Our guests were impressed with how Indigenous cultures, ways of knowing, and sacred connections to the land are celebrated in Canadian schools.

Tony, Edda, and Alonso returned to their home communities in Nicaragua having shared knowledge with Canada's Indigenous peoples and with new relationships and connections to our global community.

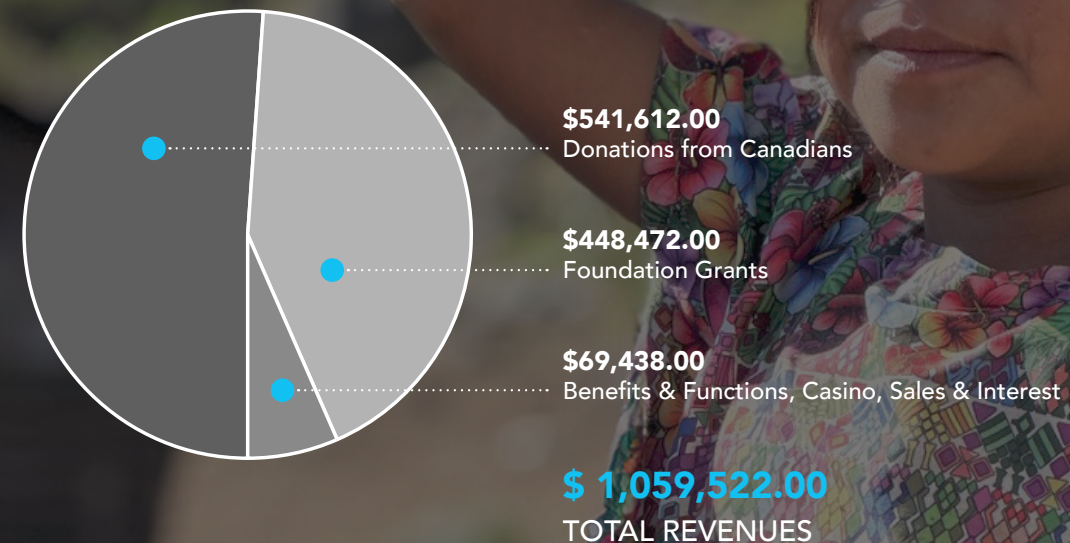


For me, the highlight was presenting to MPs at the meeting in the Speakers Lounge in the House of Commons. We really felt part of the political process and were proud to show the results of our projects that have been financed in part by the Canadian government, along with Change for Children donors."

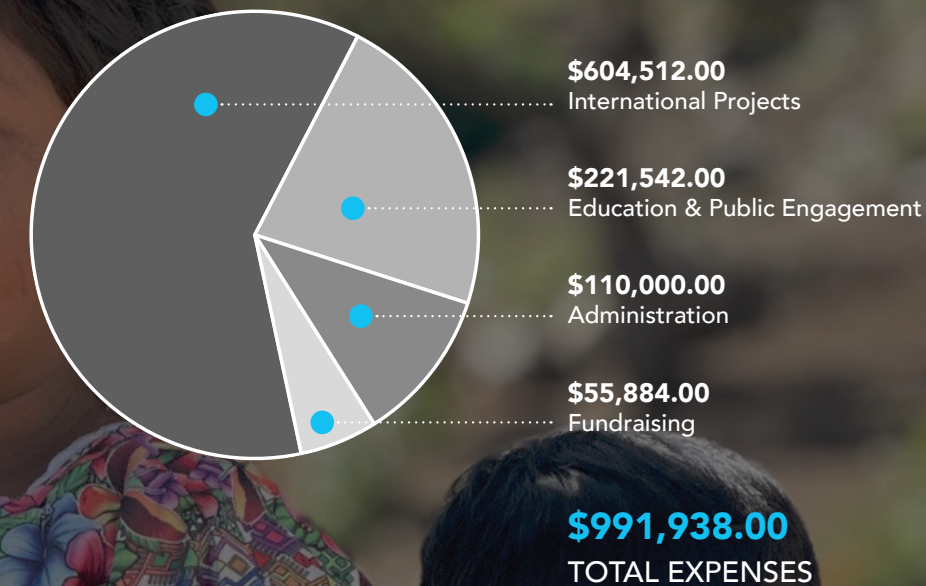
– Tony Llorente

FINANCIAL REPORT

REVENUES 2023/24



EXPENSES 2023/24



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



CONNECTED

DEVELOPMENT DINNER 2024

It's a small world after all.

PLEASE JOIN US

Friday, September 20, 2024
Chateau Louis Conference Centre

FOR TICKETS

change4children.org



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.



CHANGE FOR CHILDREN (CFC)

change4children.org
2nd Floor, 10808-124 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5M 0H3
phone: 780 • 448 • 1505
email: cfca@change4children.org

Registered Charitable Organization No. 11884 9496 RR0001

