

NICA

Nicaraguan Initiative for Community Advancement



El Tránsito, Nicaragua

Project Status Report 2006-08



NICARAGUAN INITIATIVE FOR COMMUNITY ADVANCEMENT

Project Status Report 2007

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INTRODUCTION

NICA (Nicaragua Initiative for Community Advancement) was formed in 2006 as a 501(c)(3) organization to serve the needs that were not being adequately met by the Nicaraguan government or other charitable organizations in Nicaragua.

NICA's mission is to cause positive change in small communities in Nicaragua that do not have access to basic necessities we all find necessary to live a productive life in the 21st century. These communities rarely have consistent access to electricity, clean drinking water, telecommunications/Internet, healthcare or education.

NICA implements positive change in five basic areas.

- Education
- Infrastructure
- Healthcare
- Commerce Development
- Community Pride

The first focus of our **education** programs is to provide basic needs such as books, uniforms, and infrastructure like roofs, bathrooms, desks, etc. . . to schools that are under funded. Secondly, we believe that providing the support to learn English and use Microsoft Office as well as understand how to navigate the internet is perhaps the most valuable tool that a child can learn. A naturally curious child will have the world available to him through connectivity to the internet. Also, he will have the ability to learn and develop as part of the larger world that awaits him. These skills will support the development of tourism and outsourcing which are the fastest developing industries in Nicaragua.

Infrastructure is one of the primary and capital intensive projects for all these communities. NICA seeks to work with local governments and private industry to provide, clean water, sewage and septic systems, roads that are crucial for commerce, and telecommunications/ internet connectivity that is necessary for a community to develop properly.

Lack of adequate **healthcare** is a significant problem in rural areas. NICA also provides health education about sexual diseases, pregnancy prevention, and drug and alcohol abuse. Clinics that deliver basic healthcare needs can serve these communities well and provide a way to diagnose more serious problems that need to be served in the larger cities in the country. In addition, there are plans to begin a visiting doctor program so that doctors, dentists and eye care professionals from Nicaragua and other

countries can deliver basic care on a periodic basis through the community clinics. NICA is also working with pharmaceutical distribution companies to provide prescription drugs at a reasonable price.

To promote industry and **commerce**, NICA holds workshops about how to improve productivity, profitability, and money managing tips. In addition, adult reading and basic math classes are being coordinated. NICA carefully assesses the resources of the community and the skills of the people and then seeds promising projects that can develop into job creating endeavors. Simple modern ideas and resources can yield significant results that provide lasting rewards to the community.

Community pride is essential in building morale to continue all the initiatives that NICA begins. Events that help towns to keep their community clean and beautiful are a priority.

NICA – Creating Enduring Change through a Different Approach to Charity

NICA, unlike many charitable organizations, approaches charity as giving someone and opportunity as opposed to simply just giving. The old saying, "Give a man a fish; you have fed him for today. Teach a man to fish; you have fed him for a lifetime" is a saying that all involved with NICA keep uppermost in their thoughts.

In addition, NICA strives to provide resources that benefit the entire community as opposed to select individuals. When it is appropriate to provide a benefit to individuals, NICA requires that individual or their family members to give back to the community in some way. This approach to charity provides leverage in that the resources can go much further. In addition, this approach builds a cycle of prosperity in the community and instills pride in the individual.

Today, many of the religious organizations are providing aid to poor communities both large and small in Nicaragua and are the most active charities in Nicaragua. Many of these organizations have started religious based schools which have become very popular. While NICA applauds the efforts of these organizations, it must be said that there are many people that are disenfranchised by this approach as they may not feel comfortable participating in these religious organizations. NICA has no religious, political or other affiliations that can sometimes divide as opposed to unite a community.

The Founders and NICA Team

Terri J. Marlett, Executive Director



Mrs. Marlett directs the activities of NICA. She recognized the enormous need that was not being served by traditional charities in Nicaragua while spending time there. She spends most of her time in Nicaragua organizing the efforts of NICA and her impact has been solidly felt in El Tránsito (the first community NICA is assisting). She spends approximately 50% of her time in Nicaragua and expects to spend considerable more time there as NICA expands its efforts.

Mrs. Marlett graduated with honors from Loyola Marymount University with a Bachelors Degree in English and then went on to earn her J.D. from the Southwestern University School of Law. Mrs. Marlett and her husband Christopher share their time between their homes in Los Angeles and Nicaragua.

Christopher Anthony Marlett Pasos, Director



Mr. Marlett Pasos is the principal owner and executive officer of MDB Capital Group, LLC which he co-founded in 1997. MDB Capital is an investment banking firm that specializes in financing emerging growth companies in the U.S. He has conceptualized, formed and financed several companies that have each gone on to attain several hundred million dollars in market capitalization. In addition, he has taken several companies public as an investment banker and has provided equity financing to over 50 public companies during his career in the securities industry.

Mr. Marlett also serves as Chairman of PatentVest, Inc. and PatentVest, S.A., which is a business intelligence database that transforms patent information into usable information for business users. Mr. Marlett has led the efforts of MDB Capital Group and PatentVest to establish a business presence in Managua. In the early stages of their development in Nicaragua, MDB and PatentVest employ approximately 40 people in research related positions and expect to substantially grow their respective operations in Nicaragua over the next few years.

Mr. Marlett earned a Bachelors Degree in Business Administration from the University of Southern California. He has a rich family history in Nicaragua as his mother Angela Ascension Pasos Pastora was born in Rivas, Nicaragua. Both the Pasos and Pastora sides of the family have had notable individuals that have shaped the development of Nicaragua. Mr. Marlett is the husband of Terri Marlett.

Aaron A. Grunfeld, Director



Mr. Grunfeld is an attorney with the Los Angeles law firm of Grunfeld & Associates, LLP where he has focused his law practice on securities and corporate matters, including domestic and international transactions. As a counsel to companies and investment bankers since 1971 with national and regional law firms before his latest firm, Grunfeld has been involved in more than 70 registered public offerings of securities, as well as numerous private placements and merger and reorganization transactions.

He has counseled clients on issues relating to enforcement and other regulatory concerns involving the Securities and Exchange Commission, the National Association of Securities Dealers, Inc., the California Department of Corporations and other state regulatory agencies. Mr. Grunfeld also serves on the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Water District. The Metropolitan Water District is a consortium of 26 cities and water districts that provide drinking water to nearly 18 million people in Southern California.

Mr. Grunfeld received his law degree from Columbia University School of Law, where he was a Charles Evans Hughes Fellow and Harlan Fisk Stone Scholar, and earned a bachelor's degree in political science from UCLA. He and his wife, Patricia, live in Los Angeles and have two daughters and two sons.

Gina Castillo, El Tránsito Coordinador



Ms. Castillo is an invaluable asset to NICA’s work in Nicaragua. Ms. Castillo wears many hats as the coordinator in El Tránsito. She supervises projects, collects money to buy diesel for the generator, and is in constant communication with Terri about weekly events in El Tránsito. Additionally, Gina manages a team of volunteers and other part-time employees for NICA.

Gina brings to NICA a range of experience from her colorful work history. She lived in the United States and worked as a nurse in a clinic serving impoverished communities. Her diverse talents include everything from dancing to sewing.

Verónica Reyes, El Tránsito NICA Team Assistant



Ms. Reyes has multiple responsibilities for NICA, and her main focus is fundraising.

Her second focus is assisting Mrs. Marlett and Ms. Castillo with projects in the town.

Angelica Pulido, El Tránsito NICA Team Assistant



Ms. Pulido is a wonderful help to NICA in every aspect because she helps in any area that needs help. Ms. Pulido volunteers more hours a week than she is paid for, she is truly a gem.

Her main focus is assisting Ms. Castillo with projects and tasks in the town. In addition, Ms. Pulido leads weekly NICA meetings and plans art activities for each meeting.

If everything goes as planned, Ms. Pulido is going to teach art classes after school next year at Colegio El Tránsito. She knows how to sew, draw, and paint with water colors.

Luis Espinoza, NICA Volunteer



Mr. Espinoza volunteers approximately 25 hours a week for NICA. He coordinates volunteers from El Tránsito for large projects, teaches English to a group of adults, supervises the water well generator, and maintains and repairs the school's roof that NICA installed in 2006. Additionally, Mr. Espinoza acts on behalf of Mrs. Marlett in her absence to resolve problems and make time sensitive decisions. Luis is in constant communication with Mrs. Marlett to ensure the mission of NICA is advanced.

Mr. Espinoza's full-time job is working for the Marlett family at the Playa Santa Rosa. He has over twelve years of experience working with large capacity generators and similar equipment, managing large residential properties, and growing delicate herbs and vegetables. Mr. Espinoza is fluent in English.

Veronica Estrada, NICA Volunteer



Ms. Estrada is a full-time employee for the Marlett family's beachside home near El Tránsito, and she generously volunteers to assist with NICA's needs each week while she runs errands in Managua for the Marlett family.

In addition, she is in charge of coordinating the menu for NICA events and reporting all the accounting for expenditures in Nicaragua.

Ms. Estrada has over 10 years of experience running large residential properties and preparing all the details for large parties. Ms. Estrada is currently studying English.

1. FUNDRAISING & FINANCES

Fundraising Strategy

NICA's Fundraising Strategy is just beginning to take shape. We have spent the last eighteen months developing and refining our program in El Tránsito, Nicaragua. We have learned a lot through trial and error.

Now that we have a good idea of the needs of the communities and the obstacles that exist in delivering the required aid, we have a much better idea of how much we need to raise to accomplish our mission and how to do it more economically.




In order to begin soliciting for donations in Nicaragua, we need to get non-profit status under Nicaraguan law. We have begun the process to receive status, and we anticipate that we will have status by March of 2008. Once we have our status, a full campaign will commence to target individual donors, businesses and factories, other NGOs, and the US government.

In the United States, we plan to continue soliciting individuals, businesses, other NGOs and the US government. We have had good success on the individual level, and plan to step up our efforts to market our mission better to increase awareness to businesses and NGOs.

The US government has money available for international aid, and to take advantage of these funds, we need to write grant proposals. We are planning to solicit these funds from both Nicaragua and the United States.

We look forward to more fundraising success in the coming years as our organization continues to grow.

Donor Circle 2006-07

Platinum Level		\$20,000 →
Christopher A. Marlett Living Trust	General Fund	
Topix, Inc.	General Fund	
Christopher and Terri Marlett	General Fund	
Robert Lavande	General Fund	
Perry Harris	Sewing Machines	
Gold Level		\$2,500 → \$10,000
Anthony DiBenedetto	General Fund	
JENNIFER KNITS	Knitting Supplies	
Silver Level		→ \$2,500
 PLAYA SANTA ROSA <small>Leasing Officefront Properties</small>	General Fund	
John Divorge	General Fund	
Steve Walker	General Fund	
 cgstudio <small>strategy • design • technology</small>	Website Design	
Cliff Martin	General Fund	
Aaron Grunfeld	Infrastructure Fund	
Jose and Martiza Pastora	General Fund	
 WordDoc <small>writing • editing • proofing</small>	Copy Editing	
Ray Marlett	Education Computer Equipment	
Courtney Waters	Computer Equipment	
David Schaller	General Fund	

Financial Snapshot 2007

We believe this information to be an accurate depiction of our financial status; however, this snapshot has not been audited and is an estimation only. An official report will be available mid 2008.

Donations Received

Cash	\$39,300.00	
In Kind	\$27,500.00	
Professional Services	\$5,000.00	
Stock*	<u>\$2,855,417.09</u>	
Total Donations Received		<u>\$2,927,217.09</u>

Expenses

Administrative	\$11,463.44	
Fundraising	\$500.00	
Education	\$6,029.51	
Infrastructure	\$27,577.79	
Commerce Development	\$6727.68	
Health care	\$818.44	
Community Pride	<u>\$862.39</u>	
Total Expenses		<u>\$53,979.25</u>

Forecasted Available Funds 2008

\$2,873,237.84

* Stock shares will be eligible for sale in July of 2008. The value stated on this financial statement is based on the market value as of December 1, 2007. This value will change as the value of the stock increases or decreases. We are hopeful it continues in an upward trend.

Projected Budget 2008

We have huge ambitions next year for NICA. Our main focus for next year is improving Infrastructure. Once our Infrastructure projects have been completed, we will begin to focus on Commerce Development, which will be our number one priority in 2009.

NICA Projected Budget 2008	
Administrative	\$10,000.00
Fundraising	\$5,000.00
Education	\$5,000.00
Infrastructure	
Internet	\$4,500.00
Roads / Drainage*	\$125,000.00
Public Well Rehab	\$7,500.00
Community Center Structure*	\$25,000.00
Commerce Development	\$15,000.00
Health care	\$1,600.00
Community Pride	<u>\$1,000.00</u>
Total Projected Budget 2008	<u>\$199,600.00</u>

** The timing of these projects may be delayed due to the market value of our stock portfolio. We will know if these projects are feasible for this year when our shares become eligible for sale.*

Fundraising Goals 2008

Our goal with Fundraising for 2008 is to raise at least what we plan to spend. We hope to accomplish this goal by traditional fundraising as well as reinvesting the proceeds from the sale of our donated stock to grow our available funds for 2009.

NICA Fundraising Goals 2008	
Fundraising Goal	\$100,000.00
Investment Earning Goal	<u>\$100,000.00</u>
Total Fundraising 2008	<u>\$200,000.00</u>

2. EDUCATION

Education is Power!

NICA's mission is to empower Nicaragua through community development...

Education is the key component for community development because it ensures a person the ability to take advantage of opportunities that will improve his quality of life. In rural areas the rate of illiteracy is staggering at over fifty percent, and less than fifteen percent of all students graduate from high school. These statistics coupled with a substandard national curriculum has contributed to the reality of extreme poverty in Nicaragua over the past few decades. The quality of education must improve to help eliminate extreme poverty and safeguard the development of rural communities in Nicaragua.

Education Mission

NICA's mission is to improve the school's facility, quality of education, and graduation rates in El Tránsito.

The first focus for education in El Tránsito is to provide basic needs such as materials, books, uniforms, and infrastructure like roofs, bathrooms, and desks to the public school located there. After Colegio El Tránsito has the basic necessities to educate students, our ultimate vision is for it to become a model school for the area with college-ready students who have a good grasp on the English language graduating each year.


El Tránsito has the only high school in the surrounding area and serves 10 primary schools. Our vision is to improve the quality of education in all the surrounding primary schools, so that students continuing at Colegio El Tránsito will be adequately prepared to handle the higher level of education available there. We hope that El Tránsito's high school will become a serious institution, encouraging more students to complete their education to a secondary level.



Education Projects


Past Education Projects

<p>Basic Materials</p> 	<p>January – December 2006 More or less each quarter, NICA donates basic materials to the school. Basic materials include paper, pens, pencils, construction paper, glue, paints, markers, and teachers' supplies.</p>
<p>Roof</p> 	<p>March 2006 During Easter week, families of the students installed the new roof on the three existing buildings because the pre-existing roof was in very bad condition.</p>
<p>Limpiemos El Tránsito</p> 	<p>June 2006 To introduce NICA to El Tránsito, we hosted a party after the town cleaned up the streets. We held a contest for the students who were members of the Ecology Club. We gave out book bags and school supplies for the best posters that were entered in a contest.</p> <p>To enter the party, each person had to bring a bag of trash. Nagarote sent the trash trucks to take all the trash out, and five truck loads were removed!!</p> <p>Once in the party, everything was free. We ate hot dogs and hamburgers and drank Coca Colas. Montana Spring Water donated bottled water too. We danced and talked until midnight.</p>


<p style="text-align: center;">White Board Fundraiser</p> 	<p>August 2006 NICA donated the use of a bbq, located volunteers from the student's families to cook food and serve drinks, as well as all the food and materials for a hot dog fundraiser. NICA also donated hot dogs and refreshments for the entire school. The school raised enough money to buy 3 new white boards.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Attendance Contest</p> 	<p>October / November 2006 To help motivate students to arrive to class on time and every day, NICA sponsored an Attendance Contest. The winner from each grade received a notebook, pen, and pencil. We did the contest for two months, but we discontinued it because the students who attended every day despite the contest were winning.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Graduation 2006</p> 	<p>December 2006 NICA purchased togas for the graduating class of 2006. The school dedicated the graduation ceremony to the Marlett family for the roof and the materials donated throughout the year.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Uniform Contest</p> 	<p>December 2006 Many students are too poor to afford uniforms and are not allowed to attend school without them. NICA would like to give each and every student the opportunity to attend school, so periodically we sponsor contests for any child to participate. Most contests involve teams competing for the cleanest street in town. The team with the cleanest street wins.</p>



<p style="text-align: center;">Books</p> 	<p>January 2007 NICA donated a complete set of books for each student attending high school in 2007. Because the attendance rates were not as expected, there were around 15 sets of books that were stored at the school for future use.</p> <p>During Easter week, around 7 sets of books were stolen. The person responsible has not yet been caught.</p> <p>NICA has made a commitment to Colegio El Tránsito that it will donate books each year as the attendance grows at the high school. To implement this program, we are awaiting approval by the Minister of Education so that the teachers can take full advantage of the new books we donated.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Dictionaries</p>	<p>January 2007 Along with the text books we donated, we also donated a hard back very good dictionary as well as a set of 6 smaller dictionaries for group projects.</p> <p>Sadly, these were stolen during Easter week with the text books. We would love to replace the dictionaries, but the school has not demonstrated a solution to the insufficient security that allowed the theft to happen.</p>

<p>English Language Class</p> 	<p>January 2007</p> <p>As part of the book donation, NICA donated a full set of workbooks and level one English text books under the Super Goal line. We committed each year to add an additional level to the school, so that over the next five years, the school would be offering 5 levels of English.</p> <p>The English teacher was changed half way through the school year, and he never started the text book. His replacement has not started the program with the text book either due to the approval we are missing from the Minster of Education.</p>
<p>Scholarship 2007</p> 	<p>January 2007</p> <p>NICA is very excited to reward hard work and discipline. At the end of the 2006 school year, it was brought to our attention that the number one student did not have the means to attend college. We quickly found a sponsor for her tuition, and NICA covers her transportation and basic materials.</p>
<p>CD Players Extension Cords</p>	<p>March 2007</p> <p>As part of the English program, we donated 3 CD players and extension cords so that they could be used in any class room. There is only power in one building, so the extension cords were required to be able to move the CD players to any classroom.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the 3 CD players and 3 100' extension cords were stolen in the robbery during Easter week.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Adult Education IAP</p>	<p>March 2007 Under our Individual Aid Program, NICA members can propose projects that benefit the community to earn personal necessities that they could not otherwise afford.</p> <p>A group of 8 students from the high school wanted to earn zinc for their families' roofs. Each student picked a location for their class. Most of the students taught an average of 5 adults. The students met with their adult groups 3 days a week and used materials from the Minister of Education. Many adults turned out to learn how to read.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Homework Help IAP</p>	<p>March 2007 As part of the Individual Aid Program, 2 groups of kids from the sixth grade proposed to tutor younger kids after school and offer them help with homework. It was a huge hit, and kids from the private and public schools attended the sessions 3 times a week for 2 hours each day. Each group earned school supplies, and the program went on for 6 months.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Best Student</p> 	<p>July 2007 At the end of each Semester, NICA holds an assembly to distribute an award and a prize to the student who has the best grades for each level. We decided to implement this program as an alternative to the attendance contest that we tried in 2006.</p>

Present Education Projects

<p>Computer Teacher</p>	<p>March 2007 Jamileth Bonia, a Congress woman in Nicaragua, donated two computers to Colegio El Tránsito, and the school needed a teacher for the computers. NICA has been paying a teacher to instruct computer classes since March 2007.</p>
<p>Basic Materials</p> 	<p>January – December 2007 Each semester, NICA is given a supplies list from each school in El Tránsito for materials they are lacking to do the best job possible. We try our best to accommodate everything on the list, and most of the time we meet that goal.</p>
<p>Best Student December 2007</p>	<p>December 2007 At the end of each Semester, NICA holds an assembly to distribute an award and a prize to the student who has the best grades for each level. We decided to implement this program as an alternative to the attendance contest that we tried in 2006.</p>

<p>Graduation 2007</p> 	<p>December 2007</p> <p>Sadly, there will not be a graduating class this year from the high school. There will still be a ceremony this year, but it will only be for those students leaving primary school. NICA donated the material for the girls' skirts and dress shoes for each of the boys.</p>
<p>English Language Class</p> 	<p>January – December 2007</p> <p>NICA made several attempts to get the English program off the ground this year, and sadly all have failed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We hired a teacher to come from Managua once a week to help out the teacher at Colegio El Tránsito, but due to coordination problems that arrangement did not work out. 2. Luis volunteered to assist the teacher at Colegio El Tránsito so that the students would not lose the opportunity to learn English, but due to lack of student interest and consistency on the part of the teacher, that arrangement did not work out either. 3. Finally, Luis attempted to meet with the top five students so that at least those who demonstrated interest would have the opportunity to learn English. Sadly, this attempt did not work out either because the students did not show up to the scheduled meetings. <p>NICA plans to hire a proper English teacher next year to hopefully get everyone on track and the program started. However, this will depend on the Minister of Education approving the program.</p>

<p>CD Player</p>	<p>July 2007 Due to the theft early in 2007, we decided to still make the use of a CD player available to the school. The player is stored at the Marlett family house and has to be requested in advance for use for the day.</p> <p>When the school resolves the problem with security, NICA will feel confident donating more CD players to the school to replace the ones that were stolen.</p>
<p>Teacher Unification</p>	<p>January – December 2007 The teachers at the primary school and the teachers at the secondary school do not work together; they are not unified.</p> <p>The teachers at the primary school work well together and the children are receiving the best education possible under the circumstances.</p> <p>The teachers at the secondary school do not work well together, and are in a constant state of conflict.</p> <p>NICA has been working to help unite and resolve the lack of team playing skills of the teachers at the secondary school. We have made progress, but there is still a lot of work to do to get the teachers on the right track.</p>

Future Education Projects

<p>Student Government</p>	<p>In an effort to get the students more involved in their school and their education process, NICA is going to propose to the PTA and the Teachers that we start a student government.</p> <p>This student government could hold meetings about events they would like to hold throughout the year. An example of events could be: a theatrical production for Christmas or Easter.</p> <p>The student government could propose projects and solicit aid from NICA and other organizations for improvements to courses offered to them.</p> <p>The student government could be in charge of organizing the graduation ceremony each year.</p> <p>Involving the students more in things would spark more interest in completing their education, teach them leadership skills, and how to work together with others.</p>
<p>Parent Teacher Association</p>	<p>The parents of the students are organized in the primary school, but not for the secondary school. NICA is going to hold a meeting with the families of these students to see if we can organize a Parent / Teacher Association [PTA] to get the parents more involved in the education of their children.</p> <p>If the parents were more involved, some behavioral problems might be solved as well as boost attendance.</p>

<p>Security Program</p>	<p>In 2007, the school suffered a huge loss when text books, CD players, extension cords, and dictionaries were stolen from the school. The total monetary loss was around U\$600.00.</p> <p>NICA is going to propose that the parents of the students organize themselves to resolve the lack of security the school has. If 30 families join in, each family could be responsible for the security of the school one day each month. If the families are not agreeable to that idea, then we are going to ask for ideas to resolve the problem.</p>
<p>Graduation 2008</p>	<p>Hopefully in 2008, Colegio El Tránsito is going to have a good sized graduating class. We are anticipating around 5 students or more. NICA will donate the caps, gowns and stoles as well as a photographer to commemorate the occasion.</p> <p>The school currently has 5 gowns that were donated for the graduation of 2006, so if any of those can be reused, we will re use them.</p>
<p>Scholarship 2009</p>	<p>Each year that there is a graduating class from the high school, NICA has pledged to help the best student continue his/her education. Each student will be evaluated for skill level and interests, and a course of study will be chosen based on the results. For example, some students will attend a university in Managua, while others might attend art school to enhance their artistic abilities.</p>

<p>Best Student</p>	<p>At the end of each semester, NICA holds an assembly to distribute an award and a prize to the student who has the best grades from each level.</p> <p>We have seen success with this program because it has motivated students to try harder and to behave better.</p>
<p>Computer Classes</p>	<p>NICA is receiving used computers at an astounding rate. We anticipate having around 20 or so by the end of 2008. At the same time, we are anticipating that the security problem in the town will be resolved. There is an empty classroom at the school, and we would consider putting electricity to run a computer lab there until the one at the community center is up and going.</p>
<p>English Classes</p>	<p>NICA is considering the idea of hiring an English teacher to come to El Tránsito every Saturday to teach classes to anyone in the town who wants to buy the book and attend the class. The book costs around U\$6.00, and up to three people could share one book. We need to discuss this with the Minister of Education to see if they can assist us in locating a teacher.</p>
<p>Attendance Conduct Program</p>	<p>Each graduating class from the primary and secondary school wants a party to commemorate their achievements. To motivate students to attend classes regularly with good behavior, NICA will present a contest to begin at the beginning of the school year. The contest will be based on attendance and conduct records. If the class as a whole scores 90%, NICA will host a party for them. The kids will get to pick all the details.</p>

<p>Adult Education</p>	<p>The illiteracy rate is overwhelming among adults in El Tránsito, and NICA would like to institute a permanent program to help combat the problem. When the community center is built, this program will be top priority. In the mean time, "Si Yo Puedo" is a program sponsored by the Minster of Education in Nicaragua. They provide materials and books if a town can organize itself to manage a program. NICA is going to propose organizing "Si Yo Puedo" in the town at the next town meeting to find out how many people are interested in the project.</p>
<p>Surrounding Primary Schools</p>	<p>After we get the books for the secondary school approved and the program up and running, we are interested to visit the schools that graduate to Colegio El Tránsito. We would like to interview them to find out what their needs are and the level of education they are able to provide. Our future goal would be to have the best school district on the Pacific Coast, which would improve the quality of education for more than 1000 children. This is a long term goal and will take years to develop in conjunction with the Minister of Education.</p>

Education Observations

Coordination with Government Officials

We have had a tough time getting the new books approved by the Minister of Education. The teachers are using the books, but they cannot fully utilize them until they get the approval. Full approval has not been granted. We have set up countless meetings to present the books, but we can't seem to locate the proper official who has the authority to grant the approval. We have been told several times that the approval has been granted, but we have yet to receive written documentation.

We have had a tough time finding officials who have an interest in our future vision for Colegio El Tránsito. We have held several meetings with officials to present our ideas about improving the level of education for El Tránsito, but we have never been contacted for more meetings to discuss implementation.

Town Security

We have experienced some theft of donated materials and books at the school. We have contacted officials for support to find the person responsible for the theft and for help to implement security at the school. Currently, the school is unable to conduct computer classes because the teachers are hiding the two computers donated by Jamileth Bonia at another undisclosed location to protect them from theft.

Resolution

We are confident that if we continue to work with the residents of the town and officials from the government that full participation will result. Our current set backs are small and with time will be resolved. Overall, NICA has had a very successful first 18 months, and we anticipate that success will continue over the coming years.

3. INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure Brings Freedom!

NICA's mission is to empower Nicaragua through community development...

Infrastructure is very important to Nicaraguans living in rural areas because if it exists, more opportunity for employment and education becomes accessible to them. Access to employment and education brings freedom to those living in rural areas because such access brings opportunity and a way out of the confines of poverty.

Nicaragua has two seasons: rainy and dry. During the rainy season, unpaved roads are impassible and people cannot move to and from surrounding larger cities. This is particularly a problem in the case of a medical emergency. It is also a problem for workers and students who commute to school or work as well as for businesses to move products they have for sale.

El Tránsito is a fishing village, and 70% of the people who live there work as fishermen or in the industry. There are two fish markets that run the entire industry. Improving roads and communication would greatly improve the quality of life for many in the town.



Infrastructure Mission


NICA's mission is to improve the town's infrastructure. Currently, it is basically non existent. NICA hopes to install internet access, paved roads, and a drainage system.

NICA is currently working with government officials to get plans drawn for the installation of a drainage system as well as 1500 linear meters of road. Additionally, NICA is talking with several vendors to understand the options for putting in a wireless internet connection for the town.


Infrastructure Projects

Past Infrastructure Projects

<p style="text-align: center;">NICA Member Registration</p> 	<p>December 2006 Residents of El Tránsito turned out to register with NICA at the end of 2006. We collected information about education levels, socio economic status, job skills, and the desires of each individual for their town.</p> <p>To participate in any program with NICA, the person must be registered. Registration is important because it gives us the ability to track a history with each resident who works with NICA. Because funds are limited, we want to make sure that we are helping those most deserving.</p> <p>The database of registrants will also be used to help any NICA member secure employment. Their profile can be printed out and used as a resume. NICA records every project completed and the outcome that resulted with each individual, so that if the individual does not have a reference to secure employment, NICA could be used.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Water Pipe Water Distribution</p> 	<p>May 2007 NICA donated water pipe to the town so that a distribution problem would be resolved for the residents living near the beach on the east side.</p> <p>Since the tubes were donated, the residents receive better pressure and more dependable service.</p>

<p>Clean the Public Well IAP</p> 	<p>March 2007</p> <p>In early 2007, all residents of El Tránsito were forced to use the public well for water because water service had been turned off due to an electrical problem. The public well was polluted with trash and chemicals from women doing laundry there. As a result many children and elderly residents were becoming very ill.</p> <p>To resolve this problem, NICA provided the supplies to residents to clean up the well from the inside out as well as move and restructure the surrounding drainage to the well.</p> <p>After the cleaning and restructure, the well was more sanitary. NICA distributed bleach to any family with young children in order to treat the water to avoid any more sickness.</p>
<p>Road Repair</p>	<p>June 2007</p> <p>As a result of a bad thunderstorm, El Tránsito received rain for 9 days straight in June. The effects of the constant hard rain were that several paved roads suffered damage due to poorly installed drains. NICA in conjunction with the owners of Playa Santa Rosa community worked to repair the road so that access in and out of El Tránsito from Porto Sandino would not be lost.</p> <p>These repairs were not approved by the government as they needed to be done immediately. On a later visit by the mayor, he expressed his gratitude that we acted fast to save some new roads that had suffered extensive damage due to the rains.</p>

Present Infrastructure Projects

<p style="text-align: center;">Generator Water Distribution</p> 	<p>May – December 2007 NICA purchased a generator to lend to the town of El Tránsito while a problem between the well owner and power company was being resolved.</p> <p>NICA collects money to pay for diesel, maintenance, and the labor involved to distribute water. The town has responded very well, and has managed to save enough money to increase service for the dry season.</p>
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Future Infrastructure Projects

<p style="text-align: center;">Paved Roads</p>	<p>NICA has contacted the mayor of Nagarote, and his office has begun work to prepare drawings for 1500 linear meters of roadway in El Tránsito. This will improved transportation for the fishing industry as well as for those commuters who work in Managua. This improvement will elevate property values for those who own property in the area as well as for the permanent residents of the town.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Drainage System</p>	<p>NICA has contacted the mayor of Nagarote, and his office has begun work to prepare a system of drains to eliminate a seasonal flooding problem that plagues the town each rainy season. The drainage system will help keep homes dry, thereby increasing their value.</p>

<p>Community Center</p>	<p>NICA received a donation from Christopher Marlett of two empty lots located in downtown El Tránsito near the fish markets. This is the perfect location to construct a community center.</p> <p>The community center will house a computer center where data entry jobs will be created as well as where computer classes will be conducted. The center will also have classrooms to instruct job training courses. Finally, the sewing co-op will be located there.</p> <p>The community center will be two stories, and on the top floor there will be a huge open air restaurant. There will be wireless internet, good bar food and beer for all the tourists. All profits from the restaurant will be donated back to NICA. The restaurant area will also be used for NICA meetings and town meetings.</p>
<p>Internet Service</p>	<p>NICA has contacted the owners of several internet providers. We anticipate by mid 2008, wireless internet service will be available to the downtown area near the fish markets. This location will provide internet to the public school and the employees of NICA.</p>

Infrastructure Observations

Fundraising

NICA's biggest obstacle is going to be locating the funding to begin implementation of the currently planned projects. The roads and drainage systems will require a large upfront expense with a quarterly maintenance program to keep things in tip top shape. The internet connection will require a minimal upfront expense and a monthly service fee.

NICA received some stock donations in 2007 that will be able to be sold in July of 2008. At that time, we will have a better idea of what extent the projects will be able to be completed and when.

Resolution

Meanwhile, we will continue to fundraise for these projects so that in the event that the stock donations do not yield sufficient funds, we will have an alternative source.

4. HEALTH CARE

Basic Health care is Essential!

NICA's mission is to empower Nicaragua through community development...

Health care is essential to improve the quality of life for Nicaraguans in rural Nicaragua. There are no emergency medical services for people critically injured in an accident. Health care services for everyday ailments is basically non-existent in rural Nicaragua, so that minor afflictions often turn into more serious conditions due to lack of treatment and medications. It is essential that the level of health care improves for residents of rural areas.

Health care Mission

NICA's mission is to improve the quality of health care available to residents in rural Nicaragua. This includes providing medications and professional services to those in need.


We would like to see a full-time medical doctor and dentist to be located in El Tránsito. NICA's goal is to improve the economic situation in El Tránsito so that more can afford to pay for services from a dentist or doctor. If more people can afford to pay for services, a doctor and dentist might locate there for the opportunity to earn a good living.

Health care Projects

Past Health care Projects

<p>Medicine Donation</p> 	<p>March & September 2007 NICA is in contact with several pharmaceutical distribution companies inside Nicaragua. When they have medicines that are about to expire, they contact us to make a donation.</p> <p>Refanic has made two donations to NICA in 2007. The donations were split based on need between the Urgent Care Nurse program that NICA sponsors and the Centro de Salud located in the town. The Centro de Salud and the Urgent Care Nurse program work together to care for residents in the town.</p> <p>NICA donated required medicines to the Urgent Care Program throughout the year as needed.</p>
<p>Nebulizer Donation</p>	<p>February 2007 NICA donated a Nebulizer to El Tránsito. It is located at the Urgent Care Nurse station at El Transfer restaurant. Any resident can use the nebulizer for free. The liquids are available for purchase, and they are sold for cost.</p>
<p>Renovate Centro de Salud</p>	<p>June 2007 NICA donated paint to the Centro de Salud to repaint the interior. NICA repaired the toilet and some electrical problems as well.</p>

Present Health care Projects

<p>Urgent Care Nurse Gina Castillo IAP</p> 	<p>January – December 2007 NICA was so lucky to find a resident in the town who had emergency medical experience and wanted to offer her services to the community. She asked to learn more English in exchange for her services. Currently, NICA is looking for a scholarship for her.</p> <p>Gina Castillo is available 24 hours a day to provide urgent medical services that the Centro de Salud cannot offer. She sews up bad cuts that are part of a being a fisherman, delivers babies, and prepares the dead for burial. She also distributes pain medications and performs injections for those who need the service. If she has the medication or the know how, she is there to help, and the people of El Tránsito are better off for her services.</p>
<p>Clean Health Center IAP</p>	<p>January – December 2007 Under the Individual Aid Program, three women have offered to keep the Centro de Salud in tip top order for the community. In exchange, they have earned construction materials to improve their homes.</p> <p>NICA donates all the cleaning supplies and chemicals they need to keep the clinic as clean as possible.</p>

Future Health care Projects

<p>Urgent Care Nurse IAP</p>	<p>NICA will continue this project as long as there are qualified residents who care to participate in the Individual Aid Program.</p>
<p>Clean Health Center IAP</p>	<p>NICA will continue this project as long as there are residents who care to participate in the Individual Aid Program.</p>
<p>Medicine Donation</p>	<p>NICA is in contact with several pharmaceutical distribution companies inside Nicaragua. When they have medicines that are about to expire, they contact us to make a donation.</p> <p>We anticipate that the companies will continue to donate medicines to us that they can no longer sell. We are also establishing new relationships as well as writing grants for larger donations from other governmental organizations around the world.</p>
<p>Visiting Doctor Program</p>	<p>NICA is currently searching for doctors from around the world who are interested in doing community service work in Nicaragua. We are hopeful to initiate a program where doctors visit two times a year to provide general check-ups, eye exams, and dental cleanings and repair work.</p>

Health care Observations

Medication and Supplies Donation

The need for medication in all of Nicaragua is enormous. There is a public health care system in place to serve the middle class and those who live in poverty. The health care system is too poor to service all those who need medical attention. Often times, there is no medication or supplies available, and the patient needs to purchase them. The problem for patients to purchase medications and supplies is that the poor do not have money.

Many pharmaceutical companies in Nicaragua donate their extra supplies to the government to help alleviate the problem. Just recently, it was reported that several thousand pounds of medications that had expired were thrown away due to mismanagement on the government's part.

Doctor Volunteers

The need for basic health care check-ups for young children is enormous. Many children only see a doctor when there is a serious problem. Often times, it is too late. Nicaragua has a very high rate of malnutrition in children. Additionally, Nicaragua has a very high mortality rate in children under five. Often times, both could be avoided if parents were educated by health care professionals about sanitation and nutrition.

To date, NICA has not located any doctor volunteers interested in donating a weekend or longer to give basic health care check-ups and educational seminars to adults about basic sanitation practices and nutrition.

Medical Equipment

The Health care center in El Tránsito is lacking basic medical equipment. They do not have a scale, a good light for examinations, or reliable refrigeration for medications. In reality, the equipment they do have is so old and in disrepair that they need to

replace everything. New equipment would be a huge improvement for the residents of El Tránsito.

Resolution

NICA is working to develop more relationships with more pharmaceutical companies in order to receive medications that can no longer be sold due to the proximity of the expiration date. We feel smaller NGOs like NICA will do a better job at managing and distributing medications and avoid the type of waste recently reported in the Nicaraguan news.

NICA is working on a campaign to contact more doctors in order to located more volunteers interested in visiting Nicaragua and helping those in rural areas. Any referrals would be greatly appreciated.

NICA has done a survey with the medical staff of the equipment that is the most urgent to replace for the health center and is working to locate those items.

5. COMMERCE DEVELOPMENT

Commerce Development is Opportunity!

NICA's mission is to empower Nicaragua through community development...

Commerce development is opportunity for a new life for those living in rural Nicaragua. Commerce development will be the key to lifting those out of extreme poverty to an acceptable way of living.

Commerce Development Mission

NICA's mission is to improve the commerce opportunity in rural Nicaragua. Our intent is to create jobs in larger rural towns like El Tránsito so that people from surrounding smaller communities will also benefit from the growing economy.

Our belief is that El Tránsito will have a tourist industry, small sewing factory, and farming industry in the near future. Our idea is to clean up the beaches and community of El Tránsito. We have been using our Individual Aid Program to achieve this so far.

Our goal is to create a tourist and farming industry by using the fish remains to fertilize a corn crop that will be used to feed the pigs owned by local residents. Any extra fertilizer or corn can be sold to pay for the workers, and any extra money will go back into the town.

For the small sewing factory, we plan to use some new sewing machines that were donated to us in January of 2007. Due to the security problems in the town, the implementation of this program has been delayed until the community center is constructed. This will be the only way we can ensure the machines or supplies will not be stolen.

Commerce Development Projects

Past Commerce Development Projects

NICA Member Database



December 9 & 10, 2006

NICA volunteers set up a tent and registered anyone who wanted to join NICA's effort to improve the quality of life for those living in El Tránsito. NICA registered approximately 200 residents. NICA now has almost 300 members, of which 100 are actively working in the community.

Present Commerce Development Projects

Individual Aid Program IAP



January – December 2007

[IAP] is the abbreviation for Individual Aid Program. Under other categories in this report, you can find this abbreviation under a project's title. The project was completed under IAP.

Currently, NICA is using this program to clean-up and improve the appearance of the town. The deal that we have with residents is the following:

1. You must be a NICA member
2. Make a proposal of work you want to see done in your town and tell us why El Tránsito is going to benefit.
3. Tell us what you would like to earn for the work you want to do in your town.
4. Propose a team of no more than 8 NICA members.

If NICA agrees with the proposal made, then the team of NICA members will work for the agreed upon time and at the completion of the work as stated in the contract, NICA will pay the team in the benefit requested. NICA does not pay in cash only in items. So far, NICA has paid out over U\$6,500.00 in construction materials, school supplies and other items to residents working under this program.

Projects completed under IAP [#of times]

1. Urgent Care Nurse Program [3]
2. Clean El Tránsito Streets [8]
3. Clean the Public Well [1]
4. Clean the Health Center [2]
5. Clean the Coast [3]
6. Clean El Tránsito School [1]
7. Folklore Dance Classes [1]
8. Adult Education Classes [1]
9. After School Homework Help [2]
10. Reforestation of El Tránsito [2]

* see **2007 IAP contracts** at the end of this report

**NICA Member
Wiki**



September 2007

In order to expand the usage and quality of the database of members we created in December of 2006, we decided to put the data online so that it would be accessible from anywhere in the world by internet. A wiki is a web space where data is stored and approved people can edit and contribute to it. We thought this would help grow our member information.

We would like to use the information in two ways. First, we would like to keep track of who is working for NICA and what they are earning. We would also like to keep track of each person's history with NICA. This is important so that in the future when requests for aid are made, NICA can be secure in its decisions to award aid like scholarships or emergency medical assistance. Second, we would like to help and reward those who are loyal to NICA by offering them a free resume. The data on each member on the Wiki has been set up so that it prints out in resume form. Any NICA member can request a copy of their record to use when applying for a job. Our intent is that this would increase a NICA member's chance of finding employment.

*See **Wiki Example** at the end of this report.

Future Commerce Development Projects

<p>Individual Aid Program</p>	<p>Projects proposed and approved for 2008:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clean the Coast 2. Clean the Streets – 1 3. Clean the Streets – 2 4. Clean the Streets – 3 5. Clean the Health Center 6. Urgent Care Nurse 7. Piano Classes 8. Reforestation of El Tránsito 9. Recycle Program
<p>Circular Resource Program</p>	<p>We would like to see the residents' pigs living in farm pens and being cared for. Right now, many pigs are left to scavenge for food in the streets. Often times, they make huge messes by scattering trash all over the place.</p> <p>To accomplish this, NICA members came up with the idea to encourage people to pin them up by offering 1 free pin to each family. NICA would find the food to feed the animals by growing corn raised with fertilizer made from the fish remains discarded by the fishermen on the beach. By getting the fish remains off the beach, NICA makes the beach more attractive to tourists.</p>
<p>Recycle Program</p>	<p>Recycle Programs are becoming established in Nicaragua, and there is money to be made. NICA proposes to recycle plastics. We are still investigating the return on such a program.</p> <p>We implemented a trial program under IAP to further our investigation.</p>

Sewing Program



As soon as the community center is constructed, we plan to implement a sewing co-op program to create jobs for women in the community. We are currently building relationships with factories in the free zones to get their scraps and left-overs donated to this program. We are hopeful to have enough supplies to get started immediately upon completion of the center in late 2008.

Commerce Development Observations

Research and Development

In order to implement new commerce opportunities in El Tránsito, thorough research needs to be done to ensure that our ideas are well-suited for the area. In addition, we would like a well thought out plan of attack in the implementation of our ideas to ensure success.

Funding

In order to implement the ideas we have for commerce development, basic infrastructure must be installed up front. We have a rough estimate of what is needed to get things started for the farming, sewing and tourism projects we have decided to pursue. We plan to locate funding for these projects once a clear budget and plan of attack has been identified.

Resolution

We are locating graduate students who need a project for their thesis, a requirement for graduation. We have located a few schools and anticipate interviewing potential candidates in the first half of 2008.

We are working to get those start-up costs estimated by venders in the country. Once we have those rough estimates in our hands, we can start preparing our grant proposals. We plan on soliciting the US government, US Aid, and other large NGOs to help fund the initial start-up costs.

6. COMMUNITY PRIDE

Community Pride Unites!

NICA's mission is to empower Nicaragua through community development...


Community Pride unites residents in rural Nicaragua because they begin viewing themselves as part of a community. People are less likely to litter in the streets of a town they are proud to call their own. A proud community is a united one, and a united community is empowered and embraces opportunity.

Community Pride Mission

NICA's mission is to teach people living in the same community to feel proud of the town where they live. We hope to accomplish this by encouraging residents to keep the streets clean under the Individual Aid Program. Another way we hope to accomplish this is by sponsoring the town's baseball team. It is one of the best in the area where they play. Finally, we hope that over time, the old habits of littering the streets will become unpopular and not common place.

Community Pride Projects

Past Community Pride Projects

<p>Let's Clean-up El Tránsito</p> 	<p>June 2006 The first thing that NICA recognized about El Tránsito was its dirty streets. In an effort to clean them up, NICA sponsored a party to introduce itself and to encourage people to clean things up. The admission to the party was a bag filled with trash from the streets of El Tránsito. The party was a huge success, and we danced with the residents of the town until midnight.</p>
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Present Community Pride Projects

<p>NICA Meetings</p> 	<p>January – December 2007</p> <p>NICA divided its members into 4 groups according to age. Each month, each group meets to discuss issues in the town and educational topics. We always offer an art project to reinforce the educational topic of the month.</p>
<p>Trash Cans</p> 	<p>January – December 2007</p> <p>NICA has supplied El Tránsito with twenty-two trash cans in an effort to encourage people not to throw their trash in the streets. We have had success and the residents keep requesting more trash cans. El Tránsito was awarded the blue ribbon award for being a clean town.</p>
<p>El Tránsito Marlins</p> 	<p>May – December 2007</p> <p>In an effort to earn needed supplies for their team, the El Tránsito Marlins offered up their services to NICA anytime, no strings attached. They proved their offer to be genuine when they worked for free for NICA on several occasions and never asked for anything in return. NICA decided that this was a relationship it wanted to encourage and made a commitment to the team to provide uniforms and supplies if they continued to volunteer for El Tránsito.</p> <p>NICA would like to upgrade the baseball field because the Marlins won the regional championship in 2007 and volunteered over 1000 hours of community service to El Tránsito.</p>

<p>Maintain El Tránsito's School's Roof</p> 	<p>January, April, July, December 2007 NICA installed the roof on El Tránsito's school, and made a commitment to the community and the government to maintain it. NICA performs maintenance on the roof each quarter to make sure that it lasts as long as possible.</p>
<p>Maintain El Tránsito's Health Center</p>	<p>July 2007 NICA painted and donated other supplies to the Health Center in an effort to improve the horrible conditions under which residents were being treated. NICA repaired the toilet, light fixtures, and painted the interior. As supplies become available, NICA will continue to perform maintenance projects for the Health Center.</p>

Future Community Pride Projects

<p>NICA Meetings</p>	<p>Monthly meetings keep residents interested in what NICA is doing, and we plan to continue meeting with residents.</p>
<p>Trash Cans</p>	<p>As long as residents continue to request trash cans, NICA will supply them.</p>
<p>El Tránsito Marlins</p>	<p>As long as the El Tránsito Marlins continue to do maintenance and other projects for the town of El Tránsito, NICA will sponsor them.</p>
<p>Maintenance Projects</p>	<p>NICA will do its best to maintain El Tránsito. As resources become available, NICA will perform projects to maintain what infrastructure exists.</p>
<p>Upgrade Marlin's Baseball Field</p>	<p>NICA would like to upgrade the baseball field because the Marlins won the regional championship in 2007 and volunteered over 1000 hours of community service to El Tránsito.</p>

Community Pride Observations

Generational Teachings

It is hard to imagine that littering is a behavior that is still accepted and passed down to each generation. Sadly, it has become part of Latin culture to throw trash outside of your house or where ever it is convenient.

Our goal is to teach residents in rural Nicaragua that their home extends beyond the walls of their house; their home is their country.

Our first focus with this goal is to work on the kids, teaching them that littering is not cool. Our second focus is with adults. We are employing them like crazy under the Individual Aid Program, and the majority of them clean litter to earn the benefits they seek.

Resolution

We are hopeful that from both of these sides, we can teach both children and adults to believe that littering is not a good thing to do. We have communicated to the adults working under the Individual Aid Program that as soon as the streets are clean, NICA will find more challenging and rewarding work for them to do.
