



**THE RAINBOW NETWORK**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
2022 Comprehensive Report

*A few key points:*

# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Economic Development program is a core pillar of Rainbow Network's holistic approach to combatting extreme poverty in rural Nicaragua. Families learn different skills and business practices so that they may provide for their families and improve their living conditions.

The program involves several stages of development and evaluation so that we may best serve our participants. These stages include:

- Initial evaluation of skills and training period focused on sustainable development
- Provide participants with necessary materials
- Financial advisory and budget education
- Implementation of marketing and advertising in community
- Production and maintenance assistance
- Discussions surrounding innovation and adaptability
- Period of observation to ensure independent success

The objective of this program is to promote and support the sustainable economic development of the families so that they may be independent and successful. We envision communities where each family lives with dignity and is empowered to cultivate their individual talents and interests. Successful economic development ushers in opportunities for education, proper nutrition and food security, and improved healthcare.



# BY THE NUMBERS

The Rainbow Network has revitalized the Economic Program and implemented these changes in 2021. The two main sources of income for this program come from sewing collectives and animal husbandry jobs. Below you will see information regarding job and income specifics as well as the number of current participants.

## SEWING COLLECTIVES

- 17 communities across all of Rainbow Network's nine networks
- 231 entrepreneurs and/or participants
- Las Delicias (La Dalia) has the most participants -- 43 members of Mujeres Luchadoras (Women Fighters)

## SEWING COLLECTIVES (\$)

- Total income of \$874 for 2021
- Top three networks:
  - La Paz Centro: \$295
  - Nagarote: \$200
  - La Dalia: \$184

## ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

- Five communities in five networks
  - Nagarote, La Paz Centro, El Crucero, San Dionisio, San Isidro
  - Three active communities
- 101 entrepreneurs and/or participants
- Currently 50 animals in the program

## ANIMAL HUSBANDRY (\$)

- Total income of \$2,104 for 2021
- Income per network:
  - Nagarote: \$796
  - La Paz Centro: \$1,017
  - El Crucero: \$392

# FACES OF THE PROGRAM



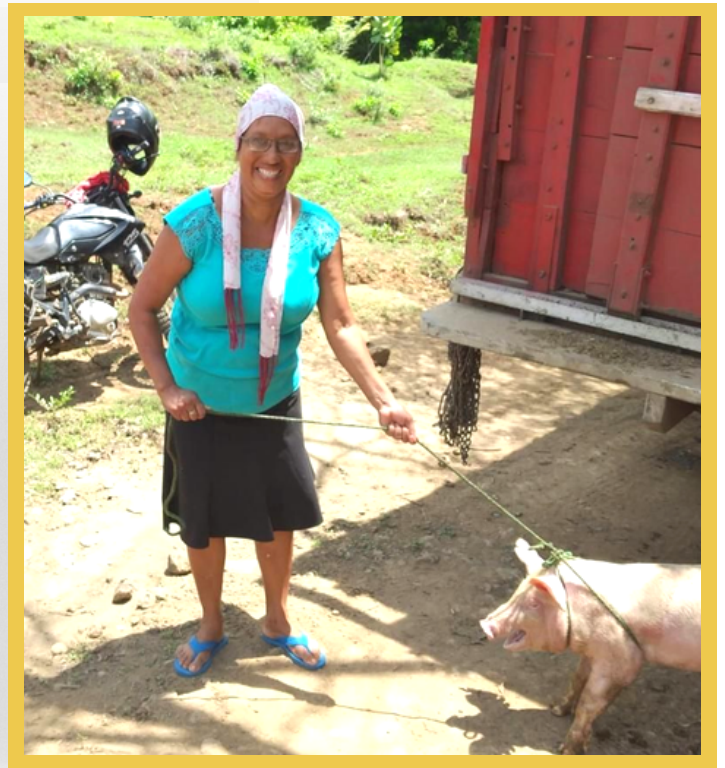
La Virgen, Nagarote  
Sewing Collective



La Sabaneta, La Paz Centro  
Sewing Collective



El Corozo, San Dionisio  
Sewing Collective



Copaltepe, Nagarote  
Animal Husbandry

THE 2020

# PILOT PROGRAM

In October 2020, a pilot experiment began in La Virgen, Nagarote to reactivate the Economic Development program. 18 women joined a sewing collective, where they create various pieces of clothing and other items of interest. They began with zero capital and Rainbow Network delivered the necessary raw materials.

**\$150**

*current cash fund*

**\$57**

*current profit*

DESCRIPTION	UNIT COST (\$)	TOTAL COST (\$)
<b>Training</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>360</b>
<b>Sewing Machines</b>	<b>85.71</b>	<b>342.84</b>
<b>Misc. Boxes</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>108.71</b>	<b>732.84</b>

The group has made over 40 individual purchases of fabrics and clothing items, showing the self-sustaining aspect of the program. The group maintains all logistical and expense information. They established a line of delivery and promotion of their products in their community as well as nearby communities (Candelaria, Las Pilas, and Ojo de Agua).

The collective has named their community's group "Tabitha" and recently recruited two new members, bringing the total participants up to 20. Depending on their projects, the group works anywhere from two to five days per week. The participants contribute to their household's income, which has resulted in improved nutritional statuses and overall better conditions. Their work was featured at the National Fair in December 2021.



# COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHTS

## AN INSIDE LOOK AT THREE PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES:

- Emprendedoras Con Fe (Entrepreneurship with Faith) - *La Sabaneta, La Paz Centro*
  - Dios de Misericordia (God of Mercy) - *El Corozo, San Dionisio*
  - Santa Adalina López Dávila - *Copaltepe, Nagarote*
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## Emprendedoras Con Fe La Sabaneta, La Paz Centro

The sewing group *Emprendedoras Con Fe* was established in April 2021 and consists of 18 members. These women had always had a strong desire to establish financial independence and improve their lives; however, they did not have the resources to do this until they connected with Rainbow Network.

The group was given four sewing machines as well as all of the necessary materials (sewing supplies, fabrics, etc.) to establish their collective. They have worked extremely hard to expand their skillsets and now design, cut, create, and assemble different garments and collections. They also create decorative bags, shower curtains, backpacks, aprons, and more. The collective is led by Elena Rivera, who also works with the group's selected Treasurer and Secretary. The group had their work featured at the National Fair.

**THE INVESTMENT:** The sewing collective's initial startup costs were \$342.84 for all four sewing machines, \$360 for training fees, boxes of fabric for \$60, and eight rolls of fabric for \$40, bringing the total investment to \$802.84. The group currently has a fund of \$151 and products worth approximately \$114. Each individual receives \$40 per month to be used for food and payments for basic services. All of these components contribute to the overall wellbeing and advancement of the group as a whole and of each individual member.

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# Dios de Misericordia

## El Corozo, San Dionisio



There are 20 talented women that make up the sewing group Dios de Misericordia, or God of Mercy in English. When they first gathered together and were establishing their goals for the collective, the women decided that one of the fundamental purposes for the sewing collective was to create a flourishing business and source of income within their own community. The reality for many rural Nicaraguans is that jobs are not easily attainable; many people travel to other communities and, in some cases, across the country in search of work. These women wanted to ensure that they would be able to build a successful business in El Corozo.



The group was formed in April 2021 after the group met with Rainbow Network and began receiving proper training and resources. They immediately began organizing themselves so that they could better control their assets, and also elected a treasurer, secretary, and lead coordinator. Luz Idalia Chavarría currently leads Dios de Misericordia.



The group has continued to advance and now have their own fund, accrue profits which are distributed equally, and have become self-sustaining as they adapt and evolve their collective as they see fit.

One interesting aspect about this group is the exceptional support and camaraderie among the individuals. For example, when member Victoria Laguna had a medical emergency and needed immediate surgery to remove her appendix, the group came together to help her with medical expenses and ensured she had everything she needed before and after treatment. Their business together has helped to establish loyal friendships that improve all aspects of their lives. In addition to this, the group has excelled with their projects as well. They currently create various clothing items for women and children, cushions, curtains, and other items for their community.

**THE INVESTMENT:** The sewing collective's initial startup costs were \$171.42 for two sewing machines, 20 boxes of fabrics for \$60 dollars, and training for \$400, establishing a total investment of \$631.42. Each individual receives approximately \$40 to assist with overall improvements in their lives.

# Santa Adalina López Dávila

## Copaltepe, Nagarote

In Copaltepe, Nagarote, 17 individuals joined Rainbow Network's economic program to obtain the necessary resources and support to establish their own business in animal husbandry. One of these beneficiaries is Santa Adalina López Dávila, a 46-year-old mother of an 11-year-old boy.

Santa has been passionate about Nicaraguan food and cooking for years, especially nacatamales (a Nicaraguan version of tamales). She now has expanded into animal husbandry so she can have meat her her home while also selling pigs to her community, and she received training from The Rainbow Network. She and her family manage all of the accounting and profits.



**THE INVESTMENT:** The cost of the pig was \$142 with monthly supply costs of \$45. Presently, Santa has \$57 in profit. Santa has plans to expand her business, as she is already recognized among her community members for having an outstanding product and business.

## IN SUMMARY...

**331**

*Total number of active participants*

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**1,200+**

*Impacted individuals (family members)*

**21**

*Total number of participating communities*

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**\$21,484**

*Initial investment for reactivated program\**

\*Does not include any administration fees other than hands-on training conducted by staff

*Building within the community and beyond.*

# REPRESENTATION AT THE NATIONAL FAIR

Six businesses involved with the Economic Development program participated in the National Fair of Nicaragua in December 2021: one from Nagarote, one from La Paz Centro, two from Ciudad Sandino and two from El Crucero.

The National Fair is a public program that offers free space to aspiring entrepreneurs across Nicaragua. Over 500 businesses participate in this event, which also offers dancing and recreational activities for visiting families. Visitors will find a variety of products and creations, including crops, dairy, artwork, flowers, honey, clothing, shoes, purses, natural medicines, coffee and more.

Our staff facilitated these connections and supported each group in preparation and practice before the main events. Rainbow Network groups showcased their fashion creations and were able to model their clothing to promote sales. It was a great success for all!



# BRANCHES OF THE PROGRAM

Students and adults across our communities can participate in technical courses within the Economic Development program to learn beneficial skills. The most common fields and courses are haircutting/styling, crafting piñatas for events and celebrations, cooking/baking, and clothing/accessory design.

The Rainbow Network educates individuals on opportunities, makes connections with the tech programs, and ensures individuals attend their courses. There are many benefits to these programs: financial income, growing skillsets, increased confidence, etc. Additionally, these introductory technical programs open the door to technical universities; we expect to see our high school graduates continue with higher education at increased rates.



# GOALS & NEXT STEPS

The 2021 Economic Development investment will serve as a solid foundation for the program's expansion through 2022 and beyond. We expect the program to quickly increase from this point on.

## Goals:

- Expand these same types of businesses to more communities and with more people
- Continue shaping the "pay it forward" structure and mentality
- Help rural families create an easily-managed self-employment source
- Discourage migration, either to cities or neighboring countries

## Measurable Objectives for 2022:

- Establish more sewing co-op groups and expand access to community members
- Build three community bakeries: La Paz Centro, El Crucero, and the north
- Create one motorcycle repair shop
- Create a large community garden to distribute vegetables at each local fair

## In summary...

The Rainbow Network is working to bring sustainable economic opportunities to rural Nicaraguan communities. The people now have access, or will soon gain access to, opportunities and education in baking, agriculture, veterinary science, organic composting, efficient vegetable production, health and beauty, motorcycle repair, creative sewing, basic English, bookkeeping, small business administration, crafts, and others.

This is vital program that is opening the doors to a better future for individuals, families, and entire communities. **Thank you for your continued support and generosity.**





**THANKS FOR  
YOUR SUPPORT!**

