

What a year!

As we look back over the past year we thought we would share with you some of the things that have been achieved in Nicaragua with your help:



Our medical team treated 3,458 patients, 1,260 of whom were children. They gave 207 community healthcare talks enabling their patients to live healthy lives.



The spring building trip team built 13 latrines for families in the village of El Corozal providing them with safe, hygienic sanitation facilities.



We supported three vocational courses run by a church in Managua. 13 students gained skills in car mechanics, 10 in car electrics and 8 in woodworking.



We sponsored the education of 155 children across Nicaragua. In Bluefields 56 children attend primary school, 49 attend secondary school and 13 are at university.



17 families on the island of Ometepe were provided with smoke-free cookers to improve their health.



We supported a feeding programme which provides high-vitamin milk twice a week to up to 40 children.

Heart rending to heart warming



Margaret Storey, SIFT's field worker in Bluefields, shares the story of one of SIFT's sponsored students.

Fourteen year old Kenan is one of the most loving yet one of the most physically abused children that I know here in Bluefields. He lived with his mum and two younger brothers in one of the poorest parts of the community. They had neither water nor electricity, so the whole family was in bed by 5.30pm. Kenan is scarred, both mentally

and bodily, from the beatings he had to endure from his mum – usually for pathetic reasons. One day in July, after being threatened by his mum for being too noisy, he managed to run away. He arrived at the house where I stay with Pastor Ed and his wife Ligia, who is Kenan's head teacher. He stayed with us for two nights and during that time he met with social services. They said he was not to go back to his house and that they would investigate further.

SIFT sponsors three children in a boys' orphanage and I knew there was space for another child, so I spoke with the person who was in charge. She agreed that Kenan could live there. He is still there to date and is very happy. Social services have enrolled his mum on a parenting course and Kenan will go back home for a trial period at some point.

Despite his difficult home life, he is one of the brightest students in his school. His lowest mark in his recent exams was 90% and his average for all of them was 96%! He is the top student in the whole school. This has gained him the opportunity to take an extra course, studying English, at the local university on Saturdays and he wore a student of excellence sash in the recent Independence Day parades.

He won a public speaking competition at his school and went on to represent his school in the regional final which he also won. He is now waiting for the date to travel to the capital Managua and hopefully he will end up as national champion!

It's hard to gloat on this being a success story when I know the sufferings he has endured, but all I can say is that Kenan is the happiest he has ever been!



An answer to prayer



Dave Staley, SIFT's Operations Director, and his wife Heather have been involved with SIFT since 2006. Dave shares a remarkable answer to prayer he heard about on his recent trip to Nicaragua.

Travelling to Nicaragua on a regular basis over the last seven years has given us an insight into the daily struggles of many ordinary Nicaraguans, whether it's for food, shelter, medical care, good education or the need for basic sanitation. We often take for granted the NHS, our educational system, social services, and our good road network. The heart of God is always towards the marginalised and poor, and as followers of Jesus we are his hands and feet in this broken world, seeking to demonstrate his love and compassion. This is what I believe motivates many people to give of their resources and time to become involved in the work of SIFT, caring for those in need.

During our visit this August, Heather had an interesting conversation with a young man. He asked, "What is the purpose of your trip?" Heather briefly outlined SIFT's projects, including helping to support the children at the Hogar de Fe orphanage. He said, "I know that orphanage very well," and proceeded to tell the story of how he and his family came to be involved with the work there.

His mother had a dream; in it she saw her route to work but she was led further to a district she did not know and eventually to a door in a house that she did not recognize. The dream stayed with her so much that she decided to follow the route for real. She eventually found the door from her dream and knocked on it. As she explained her dream to the man who opened the door, tears began to fall down his cheeks. "I have been waiting for you for three months," he said, "God told me you were coming."

The place where the dream had led her was the Hogar de Fe orphanage. The door had been opened by Ramiro, the director of the orphanage. He had been praying for help as recently an organisation had let him know that it would no longer be in a position to support the orphanage financially. This meant that they were unable to provide the same level of help and support for the children at the weekends as they previously had.



Ramiro and his wife Conchita

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The young man went on to explain how his mum now works at the orphanage every weekend and as a family they take the children on trips and give them treats. Incidentally, the name of the orphanage means 'Home of Faith'.

God is at work, we are simply called to be obedient. It's always a joy to visit this orphanage, which SIFT has supported over many years. This is a place that has had a profound impact on hundreds of children, providing a home, education, place of refuge and a foundation for life.

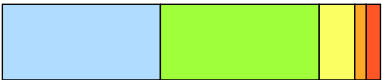
As William Cowper wrote, "God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform." Let's be open to the many different ways God can lead us to be involved in his world.

Annual Report

Thank you to everyone who has supported SIFT over the past year. These charts give an overview of how your money has been used to help the poor of Nicaragua. If you would like a full copy of our Annual Report and Accounts when they are published, please contact us or download them from our website.

Income:

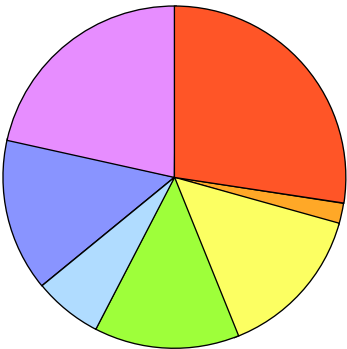
- Regular giving
- One-off gifts
- Gift Aid
- Grants from Trusts
- Fundraising events



Total: £120,989

Expenditure:

- Medical work
- Finca El Rayo housing project
- Education sponsorship
- Orphanage support
- Sanitation projects
- Other charitable work
- Fundraising and governance



Total: £120,163

Please note that this section is based on the un-audited version of SIFT's accounts for 2013-14.

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