

Impressions of Nicaragua, by Holt Hathaway

What were your impressions of our work in Nicaragua? I feel encouraged by the strength of our relationship. It was obvious to me that there was an immediate familiarity and trust between Robert and our contacts at CEPAD and the main leader of the communities. Most challenges in these communities require long-term and sometimes complex solutions, which can be discouraging for all involved, but that's why building a relationship is fundamental in order to be a part of possible solutions.

Why did you choose to go?

Probably, like most people, I get a lot more out of something by seeing or experiencing it on a personal level. I've been aware of and interested in our partnership in Nicaragua for a long time, but with only a basic understanding. This trip this summer fit in my work and family life schedules, so I took advantage of the opportunity.

What one or two top things did you learn from the trip?

Everyone pitches in, no excuses. Older women in flip-flops, young children, you name it, they jumped in to carry heavy bags of sand and rocks up the hill to help build a preschool. I'd like to think that our own communities will ultimately function the same way when there is a need – to jump in without thanks, recognition, or compensation, just an appreciation that it's what we do for one another.

Anything you want the congregation to know?

First, there were several people in Nicaragua who asked about others from our church who have visited on previous trips, so obviously not just our work and support but the people connected to it are meaningful and leave an impression. Second, the greatest need is for opportunity not hand-outs. Anyone with creative or entrepreneurial ideas, I'm sure we could use some of your creative thinking to benefit these communities.



Young boy helping out.



Preparing food for the workers in a typical home.