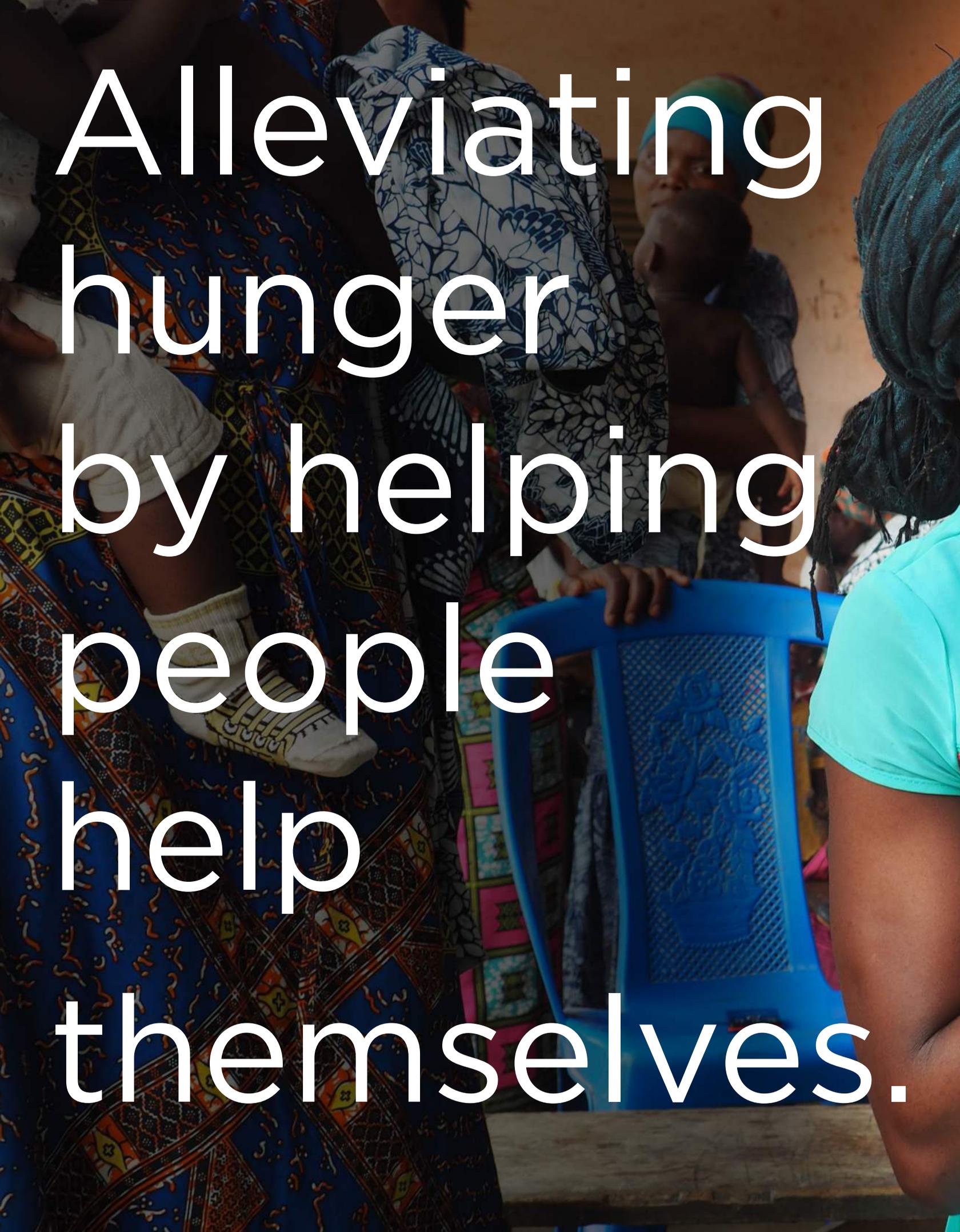


2019 IMPACT REPORT



SELF  HELP

INTERNATIONAL



Alleviating
hunger
by helping
people
help
themselves.



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MESSAGE from the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Friends,

Self-Help International marked many milestones in 2019: 60 years since the organization was founded in Waverly, Iowa, 30 years of working with rural communities in Ghana, and 20 years of working with rural communities in Nicaragua.

Nicaragua Country Director Jorge Campos and Ghana Country Director Benjamin Kusi also celebrated two decades of dedicated service and leadership at Self-Help, and marked the occasion by traveling to Iowa in April where they joined in the celebrations, participated in farm tours, helped educate Iowa's youth and joined many of you in fellowship and conversation.

During one of my first meetings with Jorge many years ago, we were discussing future possibilities and strategy, and I asked him what more Self-Help could or should be doing? He replied as if it was the most obvious thing in the world, "Well, we'd have to ask the people." It wasn't that he didn't know very well the challenges that so many faced through daily collaborations and interactions, but rather reflected a philosophy that those who are most affected must be actively involved in creating the path forward.

Similarly, I recall posing questions to Benjamin early on in my tenure as executive director: with limited resources and more requests from communities for collaboration than we can say yes to, what guided decisions about which communities Self-Help served? Why might the same program have different outcomes from one community to the next? Each time, his response boiled down to leadership: When you can find the right leaders in the community, magic happens. It's incredible what people can do with relatively little when given the opportunity.

We must first listen to those most affected, and partner with local leadership to take action. In the pages that follow, you'll read about the integrated community development programs Self-Help implements in collaboration with these community leaders. The report features some of the impact achieved last year in quantifiable ways, but there is so much more to the story. Behind those numbers are incredible leaders who are mobilizing their neighbors to grow food for local schoolchildren, ensuring their community's water is safe to drink, and investing in the education of the young people in their communities.

Each of Self-Help's programs can stand on its own and make an impact. But "magic" happens when the programs intersect and build upon one another within the community, as exemplified in La Venada in Nicaragua and Kukubuso in Ghana. The leaders featured are creating new paths forward for their communities in partnership with Self-Help.

Whether you're reading this report as one of the community leaders or participants, a board or staff member, technical advisor, or a new or long-time donor, each of us plays a role in achieving this mission of alleviating hunger by helping people help themselves. Thank you for joining us on this journey.

With gratitude,

Nora Tobin, Executive Director

Empowering through training & resources

Self-Help's mission is to alleviate hunger by helping people help themselves. Our locally-hired teams of skilled professionals serve rural communities in Ghana, West Africa, and Nicaragua, Central America, to **improve quality of life with dignity.**



IMPROVING AGRICULTURE

Equipping farmers with training in improved techniques, access to the inputs they need when they need them, and post-harvest storage options so they can maximize yields and better feed their families.



EMPOWERING WOMEN & GIRLS

Supporting girls to stay in school, and offering women financial literacy training and micro-loans to start enterprises and achieve economic self-sufficiency.



FIGHTING MALNUTRITION

Offering students a protein-rich school breakfast to combat hunger, and supporting mothers and newborns in the first 1,000 days to prevent stunting.

Learn more at www.selfhelpinternational.org

Self-Help International • 319-352-4040 • 207 20th St. NW Suite A • Waverly, IA

s to put knowledge into action

Founded by Vern Schield in Waverly, Iowa in 1959, Self-Help initially manufactured and shipped small “Self-Helper” tractors to subsistence farmers in 48 countries. In 1989, in collaboration with Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Dr. Norman Borlaug, Self-Help shifted to sustainable development programs that work with rural families and community leaders to improve lives with dignity. Self-Help prioritizes local staff and expertise, and programs address the hard gaps in development by ensuring that its clients have access to knowledge as well as the resources to put their knowledge into action.



Where we work at a glance



PROMOTING CLEAN WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE

Partnering with communities to access safe drinking water and improve the community's overall health and productivity.

NICARAGUA

Area total: 130,370 sq km
(slightly larger than Pennsylvania)

Population: 6,203,441
(29.6% lives below the poverty line)

Life expectancy at birth: 74.2 years

Climate: tropical in lowlands, cooler in highlands

Language: Spanish (official) 95.3%, Miskito 2.2%, Mestizo of the Caribbean coast 2%, other 0.5%

GHANA

Area total: 238,533 sq km
(slightly smaller than Oregon)

Population: 29,340,248
(24.2% below the poverty line)

Life expectancy at birth: 68.2 years

Land use: 69.1% agriculture land; 21.2% forest; 9.7% other

Language: English is the official. Asante (Twi) 16%; Ewe 14%; Fante 11.6%; more than 7 others making up the rest

Source: CIA World Fact Book 2020

GHANA

IMPROVING AGRICULTURE

Self-Help improves agriculture in Ghana through: the Agriculture and Entrepreneurship Program, which focuses on agricultural extension to individual farmers; and the Graduate Entrepreneurship Program (GEP), which trains college graduates to develop successful agricultural businesses.



7 participants joined the 2019-20 Graduate Entrepreneurship Program cohort, and 2 graduated from the 2018-19 inaugural cohort and started businesses.



266 youth enrolled in Youth Agricultural Clubs that focus on teaching entrepreneurship and good agricultural practices.

EMPOWERING WOMEN & GIRLS

Self-Help empowers women and girls in Ghana by: working with women business owners in the Micro-Credit Program by providing low-interest micro-loans and training sessions in effective business practices; and encouraging teen girls to stay in school through the Teen Girls Club.



680 loans were issued to women in the Micro-Credit Program to enable them to invest in the capacity of their businesses.



150 women on average reached every month with trainings on topics like business, finances, women's health, etc.



400 girls are now enrolled in Teen Girls Clubs across 5 communities, developing literacy and life skills.



2 new communities, Kukuboso and Nkontomire, started Teen Girls Clubs.

FIGHTING MALNUTRITION

Self-Help fights malnutrition through: the Growing Healthy Food, Growing Healthy Children (GHFGHC) Program, which promotes good nutrition among new mothers by providing breastfeeding counseling and teaching about nutritious weaning foods; and the School Feeding Program, which works with farmers and schools in communities to supply a breakfast porridge supplemented with Quality Protein Maize for students.



10 schools offered students a protein-rich breakfast through the School Feeding Program.



156 mothers participated in counseling and training sessions related to breastfeeding, nutrition, and maternal-child health.



2x as many mothers that were in GHFGHC practiced exclusive breastfeeding in the first 6 months compared to mothers outside of the program.

NICARAGUA



412

rural families learned improved farming methods through Self-Help's agricultural extension trainings.



\$23,500

in input loans were issued to farmers for them to invest in their farms.



34

farmers planted biofortified crops in partnership with Self-Help and HarvestPlus to improve nutrition and food security.



124

farmers implemented the "double row" planting technique for maize.

IMPROVING AGRICULTURE

Self-Help improves agriculture in Nicaragua by: conducting agricultural extension to farmers to teach agricultural practices aimed at increasing their yields; and promoting the cultivation of bio-fortified crops (beans and rice) and Quality Protein Maize.



100%

repayment rate on loans issued to women-owned businesses.



\$6,000

in loans were issued to women to enable them to invest in the capacity of their businesses.

EMPOWERING WOMEN

Self-Help empowers women in Nicaragua through the Women's Empowerment Program, which works with women business owners by providing low-interest micro-loans, conducting one-on-one counseling sessions to improve their business practices, and providing training sessions on topics like budgeting, saving money, and business marketing.



386

community leaders were trained on water administration and laws, and the technical maintenance of water chlorinators.



3,600

more Nicaraguans now have access to safe drinking water.



9

more rural communities have improved health and sanitation due to the installation of new community water chlorination systems.

PROMOTING CLEAN WATER

Self-Help promotes clean water in Nicaragua by collaborating with communities on installing CTI-8 water chlorinators in existing community water systems and working with community leadership on community maintenance of the chlorinator system.

UNITED STATES

The 2019 Cedar Valley Nonprofit Awards Luncheon



Nonprofit Business Partner of the Year

Advantage Administrators received an award for Nonprofit Business Partner of the Year for all of their support to Self-Help International over the years. Advantage Administrators is a regular sponsor of Self-Help International events, and their employees and their owner, Bonnie Drenkow, volunteer during Self-Help fundraising events. Advantage Administrators is a Waverly-based business founded in 1987 specializing in administering employee benefit plans.



Keri Kulish Award for Outstanding Student

Graphic Design Intern Delynn Plante received the Keri Kulish Award for Outstanding Student of the Year for her graphic design work with Self-Help International during the 2018–2019 academic year. Delynn interned with Self-Help in the fall of 2018, and the spring and summer of 2019. She was instrumental in designing some of Self-Help’s major print publications, including the quarterly newsletters and the 2018 Impact Report. Delynn graduated in 2020 from the University of Northern Iowa.

Heartland Global Health Significant Impact Award



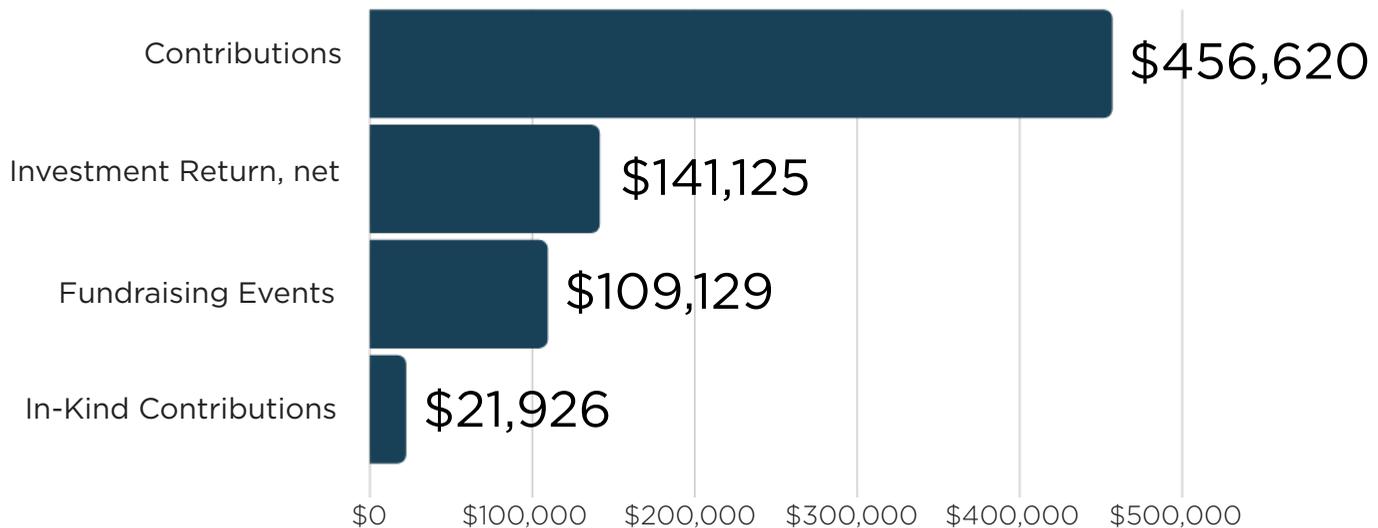
Self-Help Board Member Rev. Dr. Mary Jane Oakland was named the inaugural recipient of the Heartland Global Health Significant Impact for her heartfelt service to improve the lives of people in Iowa, Ghana, Nicaragua, China, Pakistan, and Eswatini (formerly Swaziland).

The award recognizes an Iowa-based global health researcher, practitioner, and/or advocate who has made a significant impact on global health research, practice or policy during his or her career. It is presented by the Heartland Global Health Consortium.

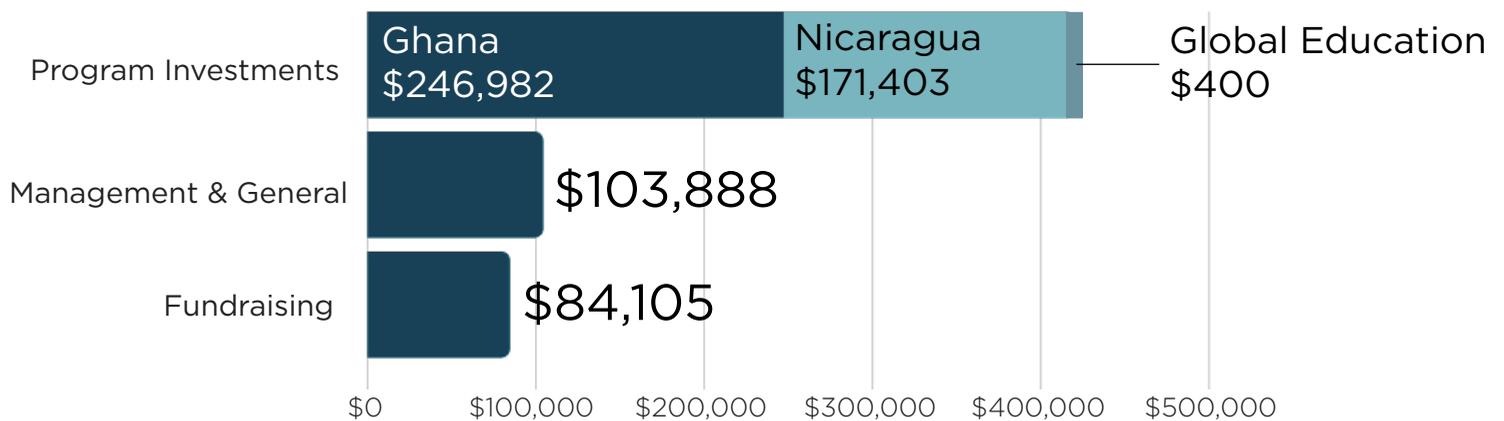
Oakland was nominated by colleagues who have worked with her to build capacity among global health practitioners and improve the lives of the most vulnerable around the world.

FINANCIALS

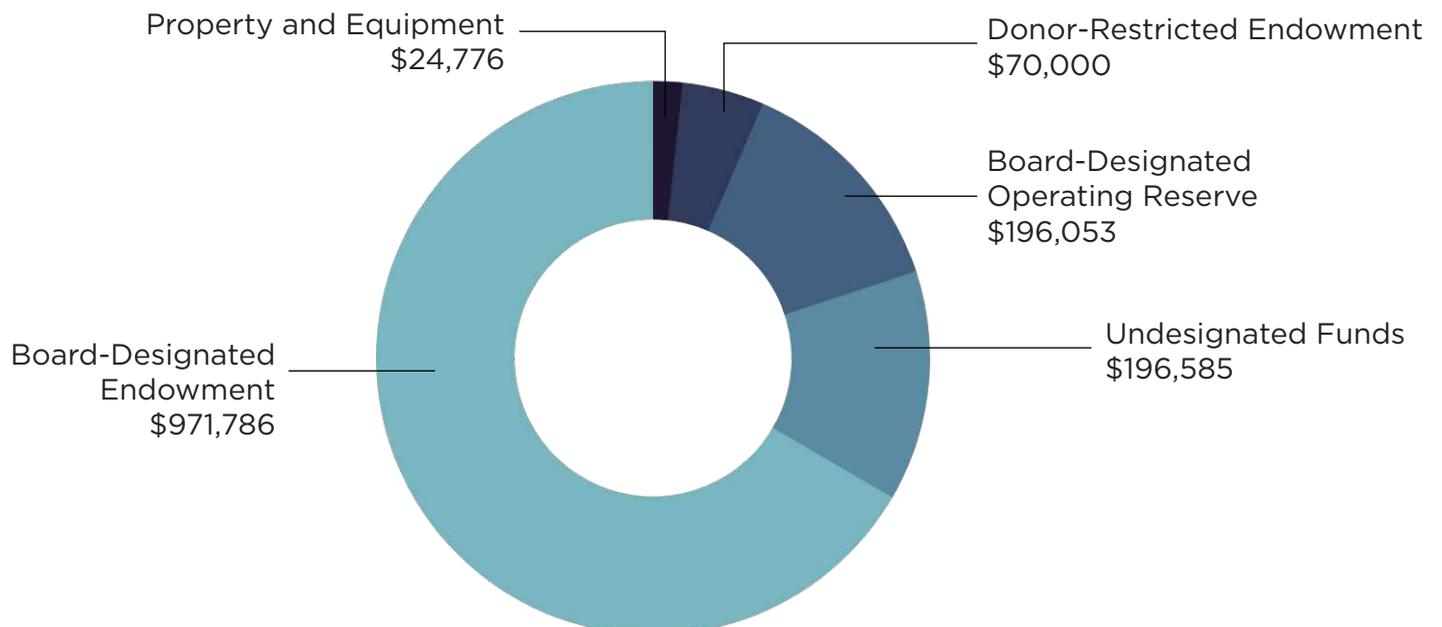
Revenue, Gains, and Other Support



Statement of Functional Expenses



Net Assets



IT'S NOT ABOUT
IT'S ABOUT



THE PROGRAMS, THE PEOPLE.

Alleviating hunger is more than just a nutrition-based approach - it's a holistic approach encompassing the many different ways in which hunger might show up in the lives of rural families.

Alleviating hunger might mean investing in women-owned businesses through micro-loans so that those women can reinvest their incomes into feeding their families (pages 17 and 24). It involves providing a safe space for girls to learn about girls' health issues and leadership skills, all while supporting them staying in school and breaking the cycle of hunger and poverty (page 16).

Alleviating hunger means collaborating with community leadership to install chlorinators into existing water systems to prevent malnutrition caused from waterborne diseases (page 22); and it means working with farmers to feed their communities by promoting nutritious bio-fortified crops and innovating improved agricultural practices to help them increase their yields (page 23).

Finally, alleviating hunger involves direct nutrition-based interventions such as supporting new mothers with antenatal and postnatal counseling and nutrition education (page 19) and collaborating with schools and local farmers to provide a nutritious breakfast porridge to primary school students (page 18).

Each program could stand on its own to make an impact, but the integrated community development approach allows each program to build on one another within a community. This integrated approach is possible because of the collaboration and relationships between Self-Help's teams in Ghana and Nicaragua and local leadership in rural communities.

Self-Help's programs serve dozens of communities in Ghana and Nicaragua. The following pages highlight two communities that partner with Self-Help across every program area: Kukuboso, Ghana and La Venada, Nicaragua. These two communities exemplify how key community leadership and collaboration is in alleviating hunger, and show how communities shape the approaches of Self-Help's Ghana and Nicaragua teams.

Kukubu

A group of women are gathered in a community meeting. In the foreground, a young woman with braided hair is looking towards the left. Behind her, several other women are visible, some wearing colorful headwraps and traditional clothing. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Kukuboso is a small community of about 1,000 people in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Self-Help International began working with the community in 2016 when women from Kukuboso became interested in the micro-credit work that Self-Help was doing with surrounding communities. Community members mostly rely on farming to support their families and grow crops like cocoa, plantains, maize, and cassava. The only way to access the village is via an unpaved road that is dusty in the dry season and usually flooded during the rainy season.

bosco



Empowered Women

Empower Women

Meet two women, Grace and Agatha, who are changing the conversation for women in Kukuboso and who are showing their community just how strong women can be.



GRACE MBAWINI

A young woman defying the odds and dreaming big.

16-year-old Grace Mbawini is an ambitious young woman with a bright vision for her future. She's from a large family, and her parents, both vegetable farmers in Kukuboso, work hard to support Grace and her five siblings. Every day, she attends the local school in her community, Kukuboso D/A Junior High School, and she's constantly redefining what's possible for girls to achieve in her community.

In 2018, Grace found out about Self-Help International's Teen Girls Club from the club coordinators in Kukuboso. Grace didn't hesitate to join when she found out what the Teen Girls Club could offer: tutoring to improve her reading skills; opportunities to organize school events like English competitions; a chance to go on field trips led by Self-Help staff and community club coordinators; lessons on topics like self-esteem, leadership, and girls' health; and hands-on training sessions in skills like embroidery.

For Grace, the organized training sessions and the extra reading lessons have improved her personal life, her self-esteem, and her English skills. Grace now has a better understanding of her

menstrual health. Her interpersonal relationships with her friends, classmates, teachers, and adults in the community have improved. Through skills-based training sessions, Grace has learned how to embroider and sew, which means that she's able to repair her school uniform and clothes if they're torn.

The Teen Girls Club emboldened Grace to push to become the senior prefect at her school, a role that's usually for male students. Grace credits the club for instilling confidence in her that now shapes the respect she has for herself and the personal values she chooses to embrace. Grace wants to be a role model for other girls in the club, and she hopes that being the senior prefect shows girls at her school what's possible for them. Grace is a strong leader in the Teen Girls Club, and she shows up to meetings as an active participant ready to learn. She's humble, kind, hardworking, and does her part in her school, community, and club.

Grace said that she didn't think about furthering her education before she joined the Teen Girls Club. Being a member of the club has opened her eyes to see that there is a future ahead of her and she hopes to keep pushing ahead academically to become a teacher that inspires young women like her.

AGATHA AMPONSAH

A community organizer
improving the lives of women.

Agatha Amponsah is the 53-year-old face of Self-Help International's Micro-Credit Program in Kukuboso and a passionate advocate improving her own life and the lives of the women around her.

In 2015, Agatha was selling slippers. Business was good but Agatha had limited resources and could barely afford to sell more than six pairs of slippers at a time. Agatha was desperate to increase her business' capacity, and she ended up meeting with a family friend who she asked to loan her some money to invest in her business. The man empathized with Agatha's struggle and bought her six more slippers to sell in addition to the six she already had. He also told her about an organization based in the nearby city of Kumasi that was helping rural women in the area by providing micro-loans and business training. The organization was Self-Help International.

At the time, Self-Help was working in the nearby community of Bedabour and the man advised Agatha to go learn more about Self-Help's program. Agatha immediately told her friend, Veronica Asantewaa, about Self-Help and the two women traveled to Bedabour the next day. Agatha and Veronica met with a member of Bedabour's micro-credit program, Vivian Nkrumah, who informed them that Bedabour's next micro-credit group meeting would be the following Friday. Agatha and Veronica returned to Bedabour that Friday and met Victoria Yamson, Self-Help's Empowering Women and Girls Coordinator. Victoria welcomed the two women warmly and said that Self-Help staff could at some point visit Kukuboso to see about setting up a program for the women there.

Agatha and Veronica were determined and eager to set up a group in Kukuboso, so they started following Victoria when she went to other villages in the area. Bedabour, Beposo, Kwamedwaa - wherever Victoria went, Agatha and Veronica were there waiting for her. Victoria finally asked Agatha and Vivian to organize a group of women in Kukuboso that would take part in piloting the micro-credit program in the community. Agatha went from house to house asking women to join the program, but the women were nervous; they had been taken advantage of by predatory lenders too many times and they were wary to trust Self-Help.

Agatha didn't give up and she was able to organize a group of ten women to start the program in Kukuboso. In 2016, Victoria conducted lessons on good business practices and issued the group their first loan of 200 GHS (\$50 USD). Now, in 2019, the micro-credit program serves approximately 50 clients and has 20 prospective clients in Kukuboso because of all of Agatha's hard work. The program has enjoyed considerable success and lives in the community are changing.

For Agatha, growing her small business and increasing her financial security through the micro-credit program has brought joy to her life. Both of her daughters have been able to attend vocational schools in Kumasi. Agatha has been able to secure a shop for her oldest daughter to work and her youngest daughter is still in training. It was Agatha's leadership in introducing the micro-credit program and strong community participation that opened the door for deeper collaboration between Self-Help and the community through the Teen Girls Club and agricultural and nutrition programs.



“I WAS READY TO FOLLOW SELF-HELP TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH BECAUSE I SAW THE HOPE THAT SELF-HELP INSPIRED IN WOMEN IN OTHER COMMUNITIES. I NEEDED SOMETHING TO HOLD ON TO: HOPE FOR ME AND THE REST OF THE WOMEN IN KUKUBOSO.” – AGATHA AMPONSAH

Leaders Feed Their Communities

Kasim and Dora are two community members in Kukuboso pushing to ensure that their families and their communities have access to nutritious food.



KASIM GYAMFI

A leader determined to mobilize his community to feed its children.

Kasim Gyamfi is no stranger to hard work. The 62-year-old farmer and community leader works long days on his five-acre farm planting and tending to cocoa, pineapple, maize, and a variety of vegetables. His income exclusively comes from the work he does on his farm and he uses this income to support his wife and six children.

Kasim serves as the chief's representative in Kukuboso and he has been instrumental in ensuring the successful implementation of Self-Help programming in the community. When Kasim learned about Self-Help's School Feeding Program and the Agricultural and Entrepreneur Development Program in 2019, he told Self-Help staff that he would organize community members and get their support for introducing the two programs to Kukuboso.

Kasim partnered with local school officials to organize the entire community and tell community members what would be expected from them if they

worked with Self-Help. He was key in establishing the School Feeding Program. He secured the land that is now used to plant the Quality Protein Maize (QPM) for the program and he mobilized community members to clear and prep the land for planting the QPM. When the School Feeding Program encountered challenges, Kasim encouraged the community to donate two bags of QPM to the program so that the program could keep running.

Kasim is such an instrumental leader in Kukuboso that the chief of the community decided to let Kasim manage the community's programs in 2020. Kasim donated an acre of his own land to support the School Feeding Program and he continues to organize and motivate community members to tend to the school feeding plots and plant QPM.



DORA OWUSUWAA

A mother who has dedicated herself to helping other mothers in the community.

Dora Owusuwaa (pictured on the left handing out eggs) is 41 years old, a mother to eight children, and a source of inspiration to mothers in Self-Help International's Growing Healthy Food, Growing Healthy Children (GHFGHC) program in Kukuboso.

When GHFGHC started in Kukuboso in 2019, Dora heard about the program through a conversation with a friend and wanted to get involved. During enrollment, Self-Help's

Promoting Good Nutrition (PGN)

staff members asked the women to appoint leaders and the women chose Dora. Dora was determined to be involved and to be a leader and accepted the nomination.

Although Dora lived in a home 5 km (more than 3 miles) from Kukuboso, and usually had to walk the 5 km to the GHFGHC meetings on an unpaved road that sometimes flooded during the rainy season, she did not allow the distance to impede her working to promote good nutrition in the community.

Dora was determined to be involved and to be a leader and she proved that the distance from her home to Kukuboso would not be an impediment to her working to promote good nutrition in the community. She participated in all of the integrated agricultural and nutrition education activities run by Self-Help: farming orange-fleshed sweet potato; preparing and roasting the ingredients for the weaning supplement the mothers feed to their children; organizing the women for education and training; and sharing food supplements with the women.

Dora is known among the mothers as Maame Doe, and serves as one of the community lactation coaches, helping mothers who have questions and concerns about breastfeeding. She also helps settle disputes and solve problems that sometimes arise because she commands so much respect in the community. Dora's leadership and the commitment of dozens of mothers participating in GHFGHC are helping make chronic malnutrition a thing of the past for children of their community.

AT A GLANCE NUTRITION IN GHANA

The Ashanti Region has the highest number of malnourished children in Ghana, estimated at **150,000**. (UNICEF 2015)



In Ghana, almost **1 in 7 children** (13%) under the age of 5 is moderately or severely underweight. (MICS 2017/2018)



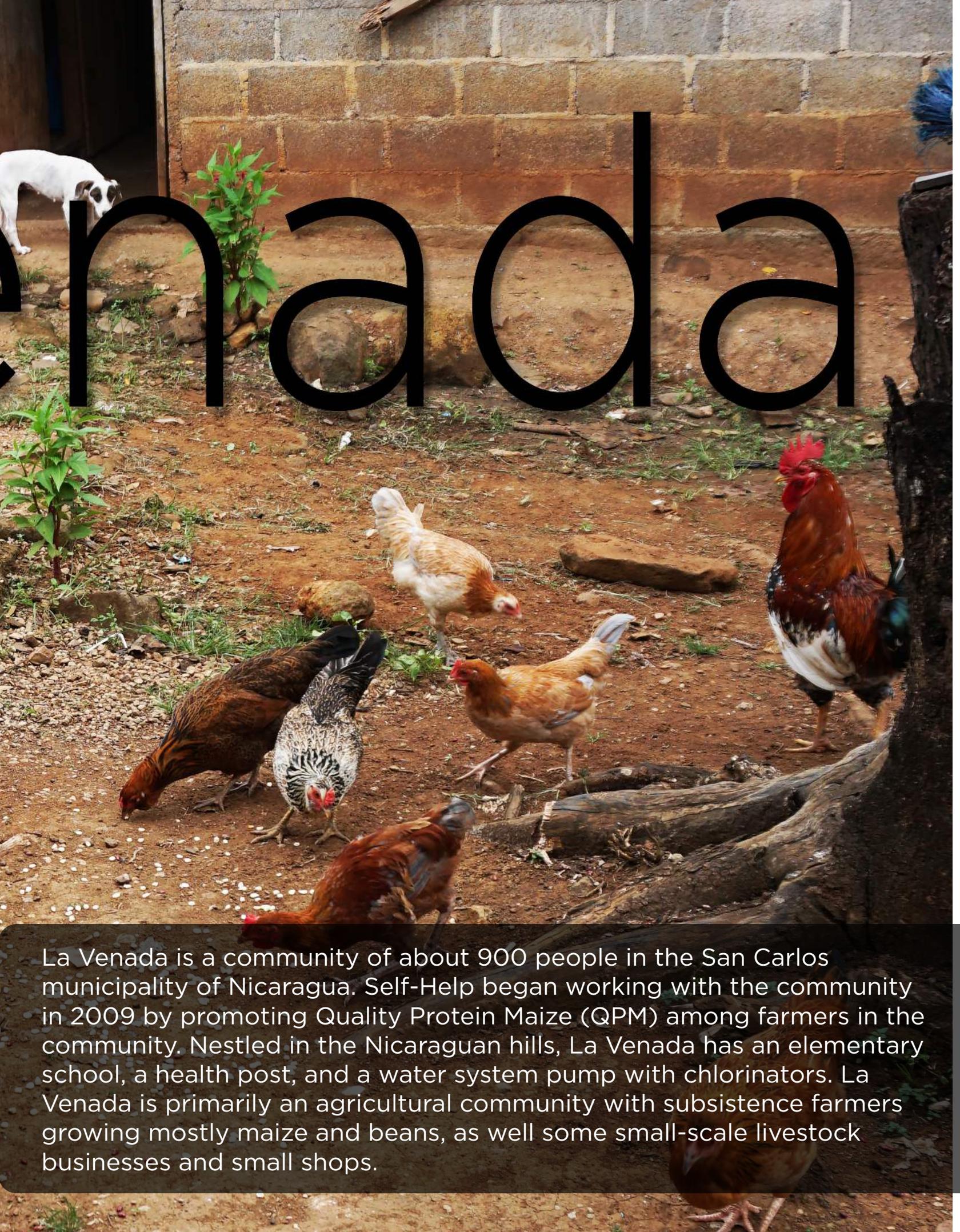
Nearly **1 in 5 children** (25%) under the age of 5 is moderately or severely stunted, which means that malnutrition has negatively impacted their physical and cognitive development. (MICS 2017/2018)



43% of all infants between 0-6 months old are exclusively breastfed even though exclusive breastfeeding is recommended by WHO/UNICEF to prevent infant malnutrition. (MICS 2017/2018)

Lave





La Venada

La Venada is a community of about 900 people in the San Carlos municipality of Nicaragua. Self-Help began working with the community in 2009 by promoting Quality Protein Maize (QPM) among farmers in the community. Nestled in the Nicaraguan hills, La Venada has an elementary school, a health post, and a water system pump with chlorinators. La Venada is primarily an agricultural community with subsistence farmers growing mostly maize and beans, as well some small-scale livestock businesses and small shops.

Leaders Have a Community Vision

Antolín and Silvio are two leaders with a vision for La Venada and believe in improving the lives of everyone in their community.



SILVIO CASTRO

A champion for clean water access in his community.

61-year-old Silvio Castro Villalobos is an acclaimed farmer and community leader who has lived in La Venada for 22 years with his partner and seven adult children. He has a reputation as an active and participatory community member and he has cared about water quality for a long time. His leadership in the water sector began when a non-governmental organization called the Water Sanitation and Community Organization Program (PASOC) contacted him to build the gravity aqueduct in his community in 2001.

Silvio was one of the first community leaders in La Venada to recognize the importance of improving the community's water quality through chlorination and was instrumental in bringing safer drinking water to his community. In 2017, Silvio attended a series of seminars hosted by Self-Help International's Clean Water Program Officer, Orlando Montiel Salas, about the importance of water quality and how the CTI-8 chlorinator could help improve water quality and community health. He invited Orlando to La Venada to test the quality of the community's drinking water.

When Orlando came to test samples of the community's water, he stopped by Silvio's house and left a testing sample for Silvio to monitor. Silvio was able to see the change in the water sample and he was shocked to see the water sample turn dark and smelly. Silvio realized that even though the community's water looked clear to the naked eye, the water sample test revealed that there was actually a lot of contamination.

It was an uphill battle to convince his neighbors who had been drinking raw water for 15 years that chlorination was necessary and that it would be worth it to their health to pay a bit more each month for chlorination. Yet Silvio persisted and convinced the community to begin chlorinating the water. Soon after, community members reported improved health thanks to the safer drinking water. Today, Silvio continues to serve as the president of La Venada's Water and Sanitation Committee (CAPS), which is legally incorporated under Nicaraguan law. Silvio is a strong advocate for his community in both governmental and non-governmental spaces.

In his role as CAPS president, Silvio secures the chlorine tablets (typically from Self-Help), stores them safely, and applies them as needed to the chlorination dispenser in the water distribution basin. He regularly monitors chlorine measurements in the water and adjusts the level of chlorination accordingly to ensure that the entire community has access to safe drinking water.

ANTOLÍN AGUIRRE

A farmer leading the way for agricultural producers.

Antolín Aguirre Lira moved to La Venada at the age of 14 and has spent the past 40 years living there and building his excellent reputation in the community.

After completing his military service, Antolín and his wife had four children - two boys and two girls. He is proud of his childrens' professional accomplishments - one is a nurse in San Carlos, another is an industrial engineer, the third is studying veterinary medicine, and the fourth is just beginning her studies in pharmaceuticals.

Antolín has always worked hard as a farmer to support his family's well-being. He came in contact with Self-Help

International when he was serving as an agricultural leader in La Venada and overseeing a bean seed bank of 56 other farmers. Today, Antolín is a member of Self-Help's closest ally cooperative, *la Cooperativa San Marcos y San Lucas R.L. de Los Chiles*.

As a natural leader with strong community relationships, Antolín partnered with Self-Help and took the lead on organizing 35 farmers to establish demonstration plots. The farmers planted different maize varieties to learn which one adapted best to the local climate and to determine which pests and diseases the INTA-Nutrader variety of quality protein maize (QPM) was susceptible to so they can learn from one another and make more informed decisions about what to plant in the future.

Antolín also serves as a leader of nine rice producers in his community, overseeing their rice bank storage where 1,800 pounds of rice is stored. The rice consists of three varieties - INTA-L9 (rice biofortified with zinc), INTA-San Juan, and INTA-Dorado.

Antolín and the other rice producers have successfully increased the visibility and reputation of rice produced in Río San Juan rice due to their high yields. In fact, they compete nationally with other, more experienced rice producers, and credit their excellent rice production to their good agronomic practices and their years of agricultural experience. Antolín's demonstrated leadership in rice production has made him even more loved in his community.



HOW DO WATER & AGRICULTURE IMPACT HUNGER?

Observational studies have found that increasing access to and use of improved sanitation and improved water sources reduced the risk of stunting in children. (WHO 2015)



At least 70% of all food insecure people live in rural areas - and the majority of those people are dependent on agriculture for their sustenance. (FAO 2005)



Additional nutrients in crops can measurably improve health, micronutrient status, and cognitive and physical abilities. (HarvestPlus 2019)



Biofortification is a food-based approach that improves the nutrient value of the staple foods that rural farming families with limited access to healthier foods often depend on. (HarvestPlus 2020)

Mothers Teach Their Daughters

Maralexia comes from a long tradition of community leadership. As a business owner and an active community member, Maralexia is setting a strong example for her young daughter, Briana.

Maralexia Olivera Rocha has community leadership in her blood. Her parents were some of the original founders of La Venada in 1984. As the community grew, Maralexia's family worked to identify community needs. For example, there was no paved road and people could only get to the community on horseback. Her family recognized the value in the Catholic Church and organized around it and together, the family and church helped bring necessities like paved roads to La Venada. Her family also created networks of basic grains and tubers farmers who harvested and sold their crops together.

Maralexia grew up in an economically impoverished family that valued education, but they were eager to overcome their obstacles. Her parents put her through primary and secondary school but couldn't afford to send her to university. Maralexia managed to put herself through a few years of nursing school but left early to start a family. Today, Maralexia is an entrepreneur and root vegetable producer. Now, she and her husband have two young children and her husband is a smallholder farmer. A single income from farming alone can be difficult to make ends meet and like many rural families, they did not have an oven. Instead, they "baked" over open flames.

When Maralexia found out about Self-Help International's Women Empowerment Program, she became fascinated by the improved ovens that Self-Help was helping install in the home of her farming neighbor, Antolin (see page 23). Maralexia learned of the health benefits and business benefits and solicited a loan from Self-Help to install an improved oven in her home, too. A week after its installation, Maralexia began increasing production of her baked goods and promoting them in the area.

With the new oven, she was able to bake twice a week, increasing production of her sweet bread, simple breads, empanadas, and corn flour buns. Her business has become very successful within her community and her products are in high demand. Maralexia regularly lends the use of her improved oven to other women in the community who bring their goods to Maralexia's home to bake in her oven under safer conditions than an open flame.

Maralexia is just as respected in her community today as her parents were in the 1980s. She is viewed as a leader and advocate for the women in La Venada because of her success in business and her generosity in the community.

WHAT IF
WOMEN AND
GIRLS WERE
EMPOWERED
GLOBALLY?

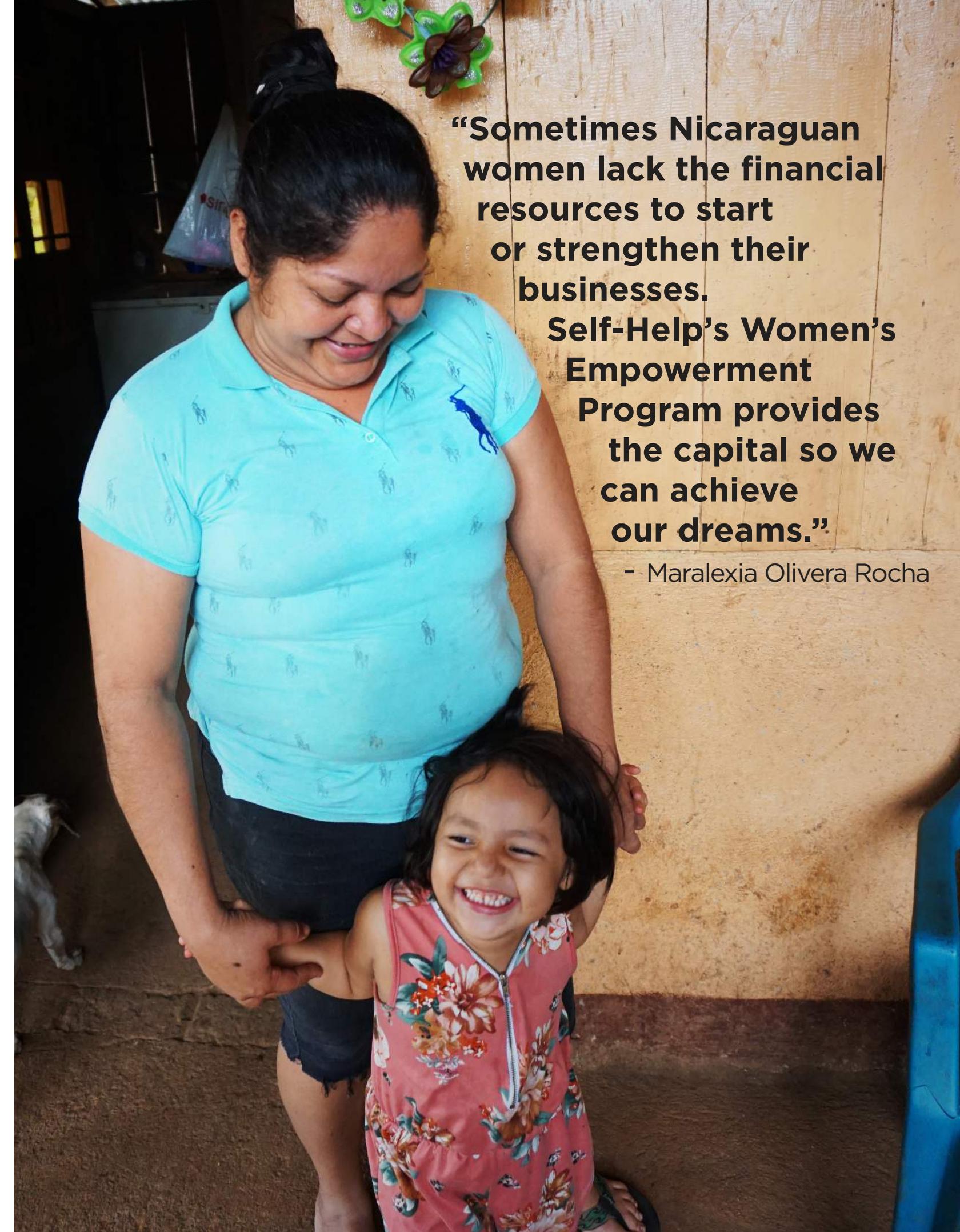
If women in rural communities had the same access to land, technology, financial services, education, and markets as men, the number of hungry people would be reduced by **100 million**. (FAO)



Increasing the share of household income controlled by women tends to increase spending on **children's education and health**. (UN Women)



A girl who receives an education is more likely to postpone marriage, raise a smaller family, have healthier children, and send her own children to school. She has more opportunities to earn an income and to participate in political processes. (Peace Corps)

A woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a light blue polo shirt with a small logo, is smiling and looking down at a young girl. The girl is wearing a pink floral dress and is smiling broadly, showing her teeth. They are standing in front of a light-colored wooden wall. There are some green and brown decorative items hanging on the wall above them. The woman is holding the girl's hands.

“Sometimes Nicaraguan women lack the financial resources to start or strengthen their businesses.

Self-Help’s Women’s Empowerment Program provides the capital so we can achieve our dreams.”

- Maralexia Olivera Rocha



Leave a Legacy WITH SELF-HELP INTERNATIONAL

Your generous ongoing support has allowed Self-Help International to grow and change since it was founded more than 60 years ago. Together, we have worked to alleviate hunger by helping people help themselves.

By naming Self-Help International as a beneficiary in your will or estate plan, you can continue to provide the resources and training for rural communities to alleviate hunger and break the cycle of poverty. Once you've provided for your loved ones, consider leaving a gift that will continue to foster a tradition of empowerment and education throughout all the seasons yet to come.

If you have included Self-Help International in your will or estate plan and your name is not on the list, please let us know so we can honor your wishes and be good stewards of your gift. Contact Nora Tobin, Executive Director, at nora@selfhelpinternational.org or 319-352-4040.

We gratefully acknowledge the following supporters who have included Self-Help International in their wills or estate plans.

**Jim and Judy Fogdall
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Richard and Karlene Neal
David and Mary Jane Oakland
Nora Tobin and David Murphy**

If you have included Self-Help International in your will or estate plan and your name is not on the list, or you are interested in leaving your legacy with Self-Help, please contact Nora Tobin at nora@selfhelpinternational.org or 319-352-4040.

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INVESTORS

Our Circle of Impact is a group of people who donate monthly to Self-Help International. Because of this ongoing support, we can respond flexibly to the needs of the communities we serve. When times are good, we can invest in their success; when they struggle to overcome a challenge, we can give them extra help.

We appreciate the following loyal supporters who are committed to sustainable solutions for alleviating hunger and poverty.

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Average gift size: \$425

Thank you!

to the more than 800 individuals who generously made gifts in 2019 to alleviate hunger by helping people help themselves.

The community impact highlighted in this report would not have been possible without each and every one of you!

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*Self-Help was saddened by the loss of one of our strongest advocates, Joseph Legg, on September 22, 2019. His legacy lives on in the lives touched by the work of Joe and his wife, Esther.

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*these are members of staff that are paired with Self-Help on a short-term basis to complete government-sponsored national service work.



Alleviating hunger by helping people help themselves since 1959.

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