

JustHope's Role Amidst Nicaraguan Unrest

A JustHope News Special Edition

Dear JustHope Supporter,

At JustHope we use a simple question to help guide our planning, decision-making, and daily tasks: "How does what we are doing 'create global partnerships'?"

As Nicaraguans struggle for their democracy - with huge, peaceful demonstrations, difficult national dialogues, and occasional outbreaks of violence and rage - it's more critical than ever that JustHope intentionally examines our role. What does it mean for those of us in the United States to "create global partnerships" in the midst of Nicaragua's civil unrest and political turmoil? How do we honor our core values of Solidarity, Mutuality, Collaboration, and Sustainability as we accompany our Nicaraguan neighbors in this confusing and painful time? I offer some reflections grounded in JustHope's history and philosophy and invite you to share your thoughts as well.

SOLIDARITY: JustHope defines Solidarity as a mutual commitment to one another's well-being as dreamed and defined by the other.

But... which 'other'? The situation in Nicaragua is very complex, and there are as many interpretations of it as there are Nicaraguans. There is no unified definition of what is happening right now or a cohesive vision for what comes next. So, during this national crisis, JustHope's solidarity must begin with trusting the Nicaraguan people to determine their own future and the path to getting there. Our hope is that we can help share stories and perspectives from the ground, offering different lenses through which the situations can be viewed while encouraging partners to think critically about what they see and hear.

MUTUALITY: At JustHope, Mutuality calls us to work WITH (rather than FOR) our partners, honoring their full integrity.

At this time, mutuality means we must practice listening fully to our partners' stories while resisting the temptation to reduce their context to a simple either/or interpretation. This kind of respectful and mutual accompaniment requires flexibility, humility, trust, patience, self-examination, vigilance, and above all, a constant awareness that we can never fully understand their experience.

COLLABORATION: As a JustHope core value, Collaboration recognizes and affirms that we can accomplish far more together than any of us can accomplish alone.

The work of 'combating global poverty' and 'nurturing sustainable communities' continues even as the political ground in Nicaragua shakes and shifts. Community leaders continue to work with JustHope staff to assess and articulate community needs and deploy available resources. Music lessons and teacher support continue in Chacraseca; microcredit banks are still active in LaFlor. The Model Farm staff are planting seeds and plotting harvests; another new house is being constructed and more green stoves are in process. Partner visits are on hold for now, but together we are still accomplishing a lot!

SUSTAINABILITY: Sustainability at JustHope has many facets, but one of the most important in this uncertain season is the capacity for partnerships between communities to be viable over time.

How can each one of us, wherever we are, help ensure that that the partnership we are part of continues to thrive? How do we assure our partners in Nica that they have not been abandoned? AND, how can each of us help ensure JustHope's presence in Chacraseca and La Flor continues not only during this time of struggle, but for years to come? How might those of us on this side of the borders work together to make sure JustHope staff continue to get paid and community programs and projects continue to function? Our staff is ready and willing to help you find creative ways to stay engaged in our vision and work? Could you host a special fundraiser? Gather new supporters? Make a personal donation? Sustainability takes all of us.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts, ideas, and commitments to the ongoing work of "creating global partnerships that combat global poverty and nurture sustainable development" while the people of Nicaragua struggle for resolution and reconciliation.

In peace & solidarity,

Jennifer Payton, MPA
Executive Director

Give to JustHope's
Sustainability Fund



