

Dear Friends,

Through the years, you and other investors and churches “sharing God’s heart for orphans,” have come alongside our ministry to support hundreds of children through our partnerships with orphanage homes (known in Nicaragua as Child Protection Centers).

Early on we set ambitious goals for these children to break cycles of poverty through education, English proficiency, computer skills, music and encouragement to surrender their lives to Christ. Your generous investments in the children and these initiatives have reshaped futures and changed countless lives. Thank you.

This letter will bring you up to date regarding some significant recent developments in Nicaragua, which will require us to phase out operations at the four locations we have been supporting at the close of this year. Although we are sorry to end our support at these specific locations, we remain firmly committed to serving the more than 23,000 vulnerable children we are supporting through local Nicaraguan churches. Below is the background for this decision.

MiFamilia (MIFAM) is the government agency in Nicaragua that places children in Child Protection Centers and provides oversight. In 2020 they embraced the UN/UNICEF resolution that stresses children should not be separated from their families solely due to poverty or lack of access to resources. MIFAM reviewed Nicaragua’s Child Protection Centers, including records of all children residing at the centers. They found that the majority of children do not meet their criteria to be in orphanage homes.

MIFAM plans to use a strategy of short-term care for at-risk children with just eight Child Protection Centers that will remain under their supervision. ORPHANNetwork’s home partners, Hogar de Fe and Arms of Love, are two of three centers that will continue to operate under MIFAM and serve children that meet their criteria, for abbreviated periods of time until they can be returned to the care of family members. The other five centers will be for special needs children.

MIFAM never expects a child to be a permanent resident in a Child Protection Center; instead they will always be looking to place them back with family. Through our meetings with MIFAM and our partners, it is evident that MIFAM’s top priority is to keep these children out of institutions.

Our two Verbo partners, Casa Bernabé Veracruz and Puerto Cabezas, ceased operating as Child Protection Centers late last year, and are now operating as independent educational facilities instead. MIFAM has relinquished authority over these facilities and has stopped sending children there. There is now no governmental oversight of these facilities.

Unfortunately, after much discussion and a thorough analysis, we have determined that we can no longer accomplish our mission of breaking cycles of poverty for the children served at these four locations.

So in January, ORPHANetwork's Board of Directors approved the difficult decision to stop working with these four locations, by the end of 2021.

Until then, we are committed to continuing our support at these four locations to give them time to develop and implement their own fundraising strategies to ensure they can accomplish their plans in the future. We will come alongside them and share our expertise to assist them in developing their specific strategies.

In working through this process, our focus will be to ensure continued safety and well being for the 197 children we collectively serve at these locations. We will work with the homes to increase the intensity and focus in English, computers and music for children that are progressing in those areas. Our goal is to give these children the best opportunity to advance this year.

When our partnerships end, we will continue support for adolescents currently in grades 9, 10 and 11 (high school in Nicaragua is 3 years). We are calling these adolescents our Pursuers (of Dreams). They have a dream and we want to support them to grow into healthy, productive adults who are Christ followers. There are a total of 60 adolescents across the four locations that will participate in this program.

Our ORPHANetwork home director and staff psychologist will ensure that each adolescent has a developmental life plan in place, and will support them as they complete high school and move into ORPHANetwork's Transition process. During that time, ORPHANetwork will support them in areas such as advanced English and computers. As the Pursuers complete high school, they will receive continued support and training/education to become successful adults.

We are in the process of working with these partners to develop a process permitting direct financial support to them beginning in 2022, if this is something you wish to do. We will notify you as soon as the plans are finalized. This opportunity will be available for individual investors, churches, child sponsors and general home sponsors.

We deeply love our partners in Nicaragua and the children we serve. It is extremely unfortunate that we can no longer achieve our goals through these particular partnerships due to the change in structure and governance. We are committed to helping each location succeed as our partnerships formally end at the close of this year. Our ORPHANetwork team remains humbled by the blessings that our investors, churches and sponsors have bestowed upon our partner locations through our ministry.

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Going forward, we are hopeful that this decision will enable us to provide even greater focus on our Local Church Initiative strategy, which is designed to break cycles of poverty by establishing a platform of health, nutrition, spiritual growth and education to equip children for future jobs. The Lord continues to go before us as we plan to expand our reach to 10,000 more vulnerable children this year.

We understand that these changes are difficult to understand, so we will discuss the future of our orphanage partnerships during our Virtual Town Hall meeting on February 17th at 1:00 EST. We invite you to join us and share your questions. Of course we will also provide further updates via our email communications.

God's Best,



Dick Anderson
Chief Executive Officer