

Stick with María and Create Sustainable Change!

Give families the agricultural training essential to become savvy farmers

María Estela Us Castro needs your help right now. You read about her and her family on page two. Her kids are growing stronger, and you've helped supply the milk and other food to make that possible, but that's not the whole story.

María and her kids still face so many challenges. Right now, to truly break the cycle of poverty, they desperately need access to a reliable income.

WILL YOU MAKE A GIFT TODAY TO HELP MARIA'S FAMILY BECOME SAVVY FARMERS WITH A RELIABLE INCOME?

A gift of just **\$12.92** will give María and her husband their first day of training as they begin moving from day labor work to subsistence farming to income-producing farming. With your help, they could own their own small agribusiness!

Planting starts in May, so please make a gift today. Your support right now is critical to making agricultural training accessible to as many families as possible.

YOUR GENEROSITY WILL BE AN ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT FOR HOLISTIC, LONG-TERM CHANGE IN THE LIVES OF FAMILIES JUST LIKE MARIA'S.



MARÍA'S FAMILY—AND SO MANY MORE LIKE HERS—ARE READY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEPS OUT OF POVERTY, BUT THEY NEED YOUR HELP!



Land. Hope. Life.

Spring 2021

Special Message

Alberto on crisis and persistence

WHEN WRITTEN IN CHINESE, THE WORD
CRISIS
IS COMPOSED OF TWO CHARACTERS.
ONE REPRESENTS
DANGER 危
AND THE OTHER REPRESENTS
OPPORTUNITY 机
- JOHN F. KENNEDY

How accurate this quote was for Agros last year! 2020 brought unrelenting dangers to the families you serve in Central America. Confinement, fear, and miscommunication hit hard and destroyed livelihoods. The planet reminded us again that climate change is an urgent issue; historic hurricanes battered Agros

villages *twice* in fewer than three weeks.

I must confess that there were times I felt distressed, even discouraged. Still, time and time again, you were there to make a difference for those most in need. If 2020 left something clear, it is how lucky and blessed this ministry is to have *you*.

Now we are persisting in 2021 with high hopes and gratitude. Your service and generosity is benefiting more families than ever. You are transforming lives by bringing health clinics, prenatal care, clean water systems, climate smart agribusinesses, reforestation projects, and opportunities to own land to areas where such projects and opportunities normally do not exist at all.

We move forward with all these projects—and an invigorated confidence—because of you. Thank you!

Alberto Solano
President and Executive Director

Losing Everything

How your generosity restored a tilapia farm

Over many years, Juventino Carranza of Piedra de Horeb, Honduras, worked hard to earn full title to his land and establish a tilapia farm. When Hurricane Eta struck, his losses totaled \$15,000, the equivalent of three years of income.

He said, "It rained for three days without stop... a great rush of water came down on the [tilapia] ponds. I saw how little by little the fish were taken out and brought into the road. There were 5,000 fish. I wanted to grab them in my hands to avoid this, but it was impossible. I felt like I died."

Thanks to God, Juventino's story does not end there. Your support has expanded our hurricane response to include reconstruction. You are helping to rebuild 110 homes, two community centers, and one early learning center. In addition, tilapia farmers like Juventino will see their water systems and tilapia infrastructure fully repaired!



YOUR EMERGENCY SUPPORT IS RESTORING JUVENTINO'S DESTROYED POND (LEFT) WITH CLEAN WATER AND TILAPIA (RIGHT).

Thank you for getting Juventino and so many others back on track after Hurricanes Eta and Iota!

☐ **YES! I want to stick with Maria and families like hers as they journey out of extreme poverty and into sustainable prosperity.**

Enclosed is my gift of:

- ☐ \$12.92, which can give a family their first day of agricultural training
- ☐ \$64.60, which can give a family five days of agricultural training
- ☐ \$193.80, which can give a family fifteen days of agricultural training

Your gift of any amount will be used in the areas of greatest need across Agros communities and programs.

*****Credit card gifts are accepted online at agros.org/donate and over the phone at 206.686.3496.**



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SpringNews21

Milk and More!

How you helped kids escape malnutrition

Every mother wants to see their child grow up healthy and happy, but María Estela Us Castro worried she would never be able to experience this with her babies Domingo and Guadalupe. She said:

“THERE IS SADNESS WHEN WE CANNOT HELP OUR CHILDREN BE HEALTHY AND SEE THEM PLAY HAPPILY WITH SMILES.”

Limited work in their village made it difficult for María and her husband Juan to feed their family. Then, COVID-19 and Hurricanes Eta and Iota hit, and the few jobs available became even scarcer. María’s only child at the time, Domingo, was a little over a year old and suffered from severe chronic malnutrition and respiratory illnesses. María explained, “We were an unprotected family without help to confront poverty or food insecurity.”

Because of your generous support, María and her family have been receiving basic foods like eggs, sugar, oil, rice, and beans, as well as milk and vitamins for her baby. In December, María gave birth to her second child, Guadalupe. During this pregnancy, María was assisted with prenatal care.



BABY SISTER GUADALUPE BENEFITTED FROM BASIC FOODS AND PRENATAL CARE THAT YOU MADE POSSIBLE. THANK YOU!

Domingo’s growth is being closely monitored, and María is happy to share that her son has grown two centimeters in the last two months! With your help, Domingo will be a happy and healthy big brother to his baby sister.

The Power of Prenatal Care

Your gift aided kids and mothers

Zeneyda Diaz has a simple dream for her children: “a safe place to live, so they are not bouncing from one location to another.” Even this simple dream, however, is not easy to achieve in rural Nicaragua, where Zeneyda and her husband José Luis Ramos reside. Living in poverty, it is hard for this couple to access resources that many people here in the US might take for granted. A stable home, basic healthcare, education for the kids, and secure sources of nutritious food are just a few examples.

And yet, your support has helped Zeneyda face these challenges head-on and begin making her dream a reality. You’ve given her kids a healthy start in life!



THANKS TO YOU, ZENEYDA HAS GIVEN HER KIDS JOHARVIN AND ASHLEY A HEALTHY START!

Because of your generosity, when pregnant with both Ashley (6 years) and Joharvin (5 months), Zeneyda received prenatal care at the Agros health clinic in San José, Nicaragua. The clinic is close to her home, giving her easy access to doctors and nurses. She said, “It was important to have the monthly check-ups. They assured me the baby was in good health, and they also prevented complications that could occur during the birth.”

And, this is just one aspect of Agros’ work. Zeneyda and José Luis are receiving other holistic services—like access to land and training in climate smart agriculture—that will help them continue their journey out of poverty and into prosperity. Thank you for making prenatal care and so many other services available to Zeneyda and her family!

Breaking the Cycle of Poverty Begins in Nueva San José

Thank you for welcoming a new family into Agros’ newest village

Last year, Agros identified twenty families in rural Nicaragua, who desperately needed homes. As part of the Village Within a Village initiative, our goal was to connect these families with dignified housing, access to land, and opportunities to practice market-led agriculture in the newest Agros village of Nueva San José, Nicaragua. Mario José Hernandez Blandón and his family are one of those twenty—and thanks to you, they are now comfortably settled in Nueva San José.

Mario said that before coming to join Nueva San José, his family had to sacrifice a lot. Mario, his wife María, and even the kids worked long hours on coffee plantations, but all their hard work seemed to benefit only the plantation. To make sure his family had enough to eat, Mario had to rent and work additional land. He could not find a way to get ahead, and for a while the whole family had to live in a “small shack made of plastic and scrap wood.”



MARIO AND HIS FAMILY IN FRONT OF THEIR NEW HOME, HOUSE #4 IN NUEVA SAN JOSÉ, NICARAGUA.

Thanks to your support, Mario is gaining traction as he works to break the cycle of poverty for his family. Recently, Mario, María, and their children moved into a new home in Nueva San José. Made of cinderblocks, it also has all the basics like potable water and a good, secure roof.

Perhaps even more importantly, the family has their own small plot of land to farm—giving them both food to eat and a source of income. Mario has

already planted jalapeños, passion fruits, and basic grains like beans and corn!

Your generosity means that instead of worried and anxious about his family’s security, Mario can feel “happy, calm, and content” in his new home. He’s already looking ahead to the future when he has full title to the land and something to pass down to his kids.

MARIO SAID HIS DREAM NOW IS TO “PAY OFF THE LAND, HAVE SOMETHING OF HIS OWN, AND ENSURE HIS DAUGHTER CAN STUDY.”

Your gift truly has an amazing impact. Families like Mario’s join Agros villages every year, and each time it happens you create generations of change!

“YOU CROWN THE YEAR WITH YOUR BOUNTY, AND YOUR CARTS OVERFLOW WITH ABUNDANCE.”
PSALM 65:11

Thank You Community Partners!
Your support at the 2020 Tierras de Vida gala delivered hope and opportunity to farming families in rural Latin America



Madison Park Capital Advisors