

SHEAF/ESPIGA Foundation affirms the concept of integrated development. We fund agencies which implement the practical components of integrated development in poor communities. Specific activities undertaken in a community must fit together to promote consciousness-raising, self-respect, and transformation of the individuals. Foundation officers also support a holistic model of development, the integration of education, work and spiritual development. All have enjoyed extensive work in pastoral ministry, social work and /or administration. All have visited projects in Nicaragua and some have had extensive overseas service, particularly in Central America. Two were born in neighbouring El Salvador. They are dedicated to real and meaningful development in Central America. Having begun work in Nicaragua, **SHEAF/ESPIGA** hopes to expand gradually to other countries in Central America.

Current Projects

Health Projects

Medical Clinic Siksayari, Rio-Coco (East Coast)

SHEAF/ESPIGA supplies a remote clinic in



Siksayari with medicines and medical supplies. The Siksayari community has a medical building, a nurse, and at

times a doctor provided by the government. The isolated communities on the Rio Coco can only be reached by making a 10 to 12 hour journey by boat.

Medical Clinic Managua

SHEAF/ESPIGA supports this clinic which provides



medical services to marginalized and indigenous people in the capital as well as others in need. The clinic is run by three dedicated staff: a nurse, a

pharmacist and an administrator. The clinic is open three days a week when medical doctors are available.

Mental and Emotional Well Being

SHEAF/ESPIGA provides support for **The Institute for Promotion of Humanity (INPRHU)** which works with traumatized families and children. Children who have been physically or sexually abused are provided with individual or group counselling. Family counselling is provided as well. Children may come to a facility in Managua or counsellors will travel to other communities to



provide help. Currently, much help is needed in the Masaya area where the cottage

industry of knitting hammocks for tourists has been wiped out. In 2018 a socio-political crisis largely destroyed tourism in Masaya. Now COVID and a hurricane has deepened and prolonged the pain. Besides therapy, families needed basic food supplies, masks and sanitizers.

Agricultural Projects

Cocoa Project (Boaco Area)

SHEAF/ESPIGA supports twenty-four families who have received official title to land they had cultivated for 10 years. A local land bank had loaned this land to them with the promise that after 10 years of cultivating vegetables and basic grains they would receive legal title. With legal title in place, the farmers asked for funding to cultivate a perennial crop, cocoa. A cocoa plant takes 3 years to produce and has a lifespan of 25



years. The project has been ongoing for three years and the farmers have realized their first harvests.

Munching on cocoa seeds.

Cocoa Production in Siksayari

SHEAF/ESPIGA has funded a cocoa project in Siksayari at the request of the local committee. Cocoa plants were planted among bananas, avocados and basic grains. Ten families are part of the initial pilot project which is akin to an agroforestry system Other families will be gradually added to this project. Families grow



enough food for themselves and sell excess at local markets.

Preparing beds for cocoa plants

The Siksayari community expects the profits from cocoa sold on the national and international market will exceed those from selling basic grains.

Macadamia/Cocoa Project (Matagalpa Area)

SHEAF/ESPIGA encouraged the planting of macadamia trees several years ago. This project aims to increase crop diversity by introducing an alternative crop to coffee. Farmers originally planted 20 macadamia trees on their 2-3 acres of land.

Participating farmers are active members of the



Association of Farming Cooperatives, *Unión de Cooperativas Agropecuarias (UCA)* in San Ramon. Their farms are in different zones and at different elevations in the Matagalpa area. From

the macadamia harvests, farmers have either sold their macadamia nuts, or are growing their own seedlings to augment their complement of trees or are offering the seedlings for sale.

As well as macadamia and coffee, the UCA has begun to introduce cocoa. The cocoa plants can be grown at a lower altitude than coffee (800 metres or below).

Irrigation Project (Boaco Area)



SHEAF/ESPIGA is funding a micro irrigation project in a community near Boaco. Nicaragua has a dry season in which it is difficult to grow anything in a climate which otherwise should allow for

multiple harvests. Through gasoline engines, water is pumped from nearby rivers to irrigate market garden crops which are sold at local markets. By irrigating, farmers will have crops to sell all year.

Educational Projects: Scholarships
High School (San Ramon area)

SHEAF/ESPIGA provides scholarships for rural high school students. This level of education is



free in Nicaragua, but students need assistance to pay for uniforms,

supplies and travel costs.

Post Secondary

SHEAF/ESPIGA grants partial scholarships to post-secondary students. These



scholarships are designed to cover

transportation, school supplies and part of their tuition fees. Students tend to go to school on weekends and work during the week to help pay their school fees.

Graduation Fees

SHEAF/ESPIGA helps with Post Secondary graduation costs. Post Secondary institutions in Nicaragua charge substantial graduation fees ranging from \$800 to \$1,200 US dollars. Most students cannot



afford these fees and cannot find appropriate work until they have their degree/diploma.

Deaf Students

SHEAF/ESPIGA provides scholarships for special needs students such as these deaf students. The students, who come from poor families,



receive minimal support in the public system.

Community Initiatives

Managua

SHEAF/ESPIGA supports the Batahola Cultural Centre in Managua which offers respite to children living in poverty from the drudgery of their daily lives by offering classes in music, drama, art, dance and other cultural activities. The aim is to provide an



aesthetic and creative dimension to their lives. A side benefit is that children, especially teenagers who attend these classes become more engaged in school thereby decreasing the drop out rate.

Siksayari

SHEAF/ESPIGA provides funds for school supplies and equipment. The school is in a remote indigenous community and in spite of government



support is in need of help for resources and augmentation of teachers' assistants' salaries.

How You Can Help

Financial contributions, one time, annual or monthly, are very welcome. If you wish to support a specific project, please indicate this when you donate and your contribution will go directly to the designated project. If you prefer not to designate your donation, it will be directed toward the greatest need.

We are proud to report that our administrative costs are low because the Canadian component of **SHEAF/ESPIGA** is managed by volunteers.

We invite you to look at our web site, to donate online, to donate securities or to explore planned giving.

We invite you to inquire about groups visiting our projects in Nicaragua.

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Salud (Health)
Educación (Education)
Agricultura (Agriculture)
Fundación (Foundation)
(**SHEAF/ESPIGA**)
(Espiga is Spanish for Sheaf)

What is SHEAF

It is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) that fights poverty in Central America. It is a registered Canadian charity.

Purpose

To assist the poor, the marginalized, the underprivileged and minority groups in Central America in living more meaningful and productive lives by focusing on health issues, educational programs and agricultural projects. To fulfill its purpose **SHEAF/ESPIGA**

- Invites the support and participation of donors and volunteers.
- Cooperates with compatible local agencies and organizations that have like-minded goals