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Relief & Development**

Healing a hurting world

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Building Access to Clean Water

Maria, her husband Juan and their five children knew the harmful effects of dirty, contaminated water in their village of Bijagua, Nicaragua. They used to bring the household water for cooking, bathing, drinking and washing in buckets from a stream 10 minutes away from their home — the same stream where cattle roamed.

The children were constantly sick with diarrhea, and getting the water each day was a real burden. “Our daughter spent so much time carrying water, she was falling behind in her school work. We always worried about her walking alone in the dark of the early mornings and evenings. There are poisonous snakes around here,” said Maria.

Episcopal Relief & Development partnered with El Porvenir, an organization that works in Nicaraguan communities to develop water, sanitation and re-forestation projects. The program also provided Maria and her community with education and training on properly maintaining the water system, water hygiene and protecting children and families from preventable, water-related diseases. Instances of water-borne illnesses were also tracked by local health monitors.

Now Bijagua has safe water and residents can stay healthy. “Our daughter is excelling in school now that she doesn’t have to carry buckets of water. And the children don’t have diarrhea anymore,” Maria stated.