NORTHWEST REGION
Regional Overview

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The Gifts of Heart and Home in Caña Brava: A Story of Transformation in Three Miracles
The Northwest Region is located in El Salvador’s westernmost provinces of Santa Ana and La Libertad with a total population of nearly 700,000. Approximately 300,000 people live in or near urban centers and the remaining 400,000 live in semi-rural or rural communities. Recent reports state that 23% of the population, or 161,000 people, live in extreme poverty (making less than $1 per day) and 46% of the population, or 332,000 people, live in severe poverty (making less than $2 per day). The region is diverse and has complex challenges. Urban areas are densely populated and face security issues, household waste problems, and unemployment. Rural areas are also densely populated and face critical challenges such as dilapidated roads, inadequate housing, poor health and struggling economic development.

In 2017 ENLACE trained and equipped over 335 church leaders and community leaders on a monthly basis in 33 churches serving 78 communities in the region of Santa Ana and La Libertad. The total area impact for this region is 34,308 people. Five churches are currently on the waiting list to partner with ENLACE.

“For the churches here, ENLACE is something new. But the congregations are very excited. As a pastor I am grateful and want to serve my community.”

MIGUEL RAMIREZ, PASTOR LLUVIAS POSTRERAS CHURCH, LA ISLA
Nueva Jerusalén Church is a committed and flourishing congregation of 960 members, 175 of whom are committed leaders. Its previous pastor, Rafael González first learned about ENLACE while working with a medical clinic that was used by students from a Christian school sharing his church building. In 2008, Pastor Rafael asked ENLACE to develop a strategy that would help his church reach out to its community. In 2012, Pastor Rafael assumed a new role as the Santa Ana regional presbyter. He invited Nehemías Juárez, who had once served as an associate pastor at Nueva Jerusalén to become the new pastor.

Over the years, the church has strengthened existing relationships with school parents, teachers and students and also established a relationship with the mayor’s office and the community association. As a result, the church has implemented many projects, most recently a pedestrian bridge which allows residents to safely cross the Pan-American Highway. The church’s strong leadership and great capacity for outreach has extended its impact to neighboring communities like El Ranchador and Porvenir and is on track to become a LIDER church in 2018. The church has grown by 2% in recent years and has the potential to impact 3,280 people. Approximately 34% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

Zurisadai Church is an energetic and active congregation of 175 members, 25 of whom are very strong leaders. In 2008 its pastor, Jaime Mauricio Alvarado, heard about ENLACE through conversations with Rafael González, the pastor of the Nueva Jerusalén Church. Pastor Mauricio, a dedicated leader who constantly seeks opportunities to grow, along with his wife, Yanira, who is also a talented leader, were encouraged by Pastor Rafael to lead their church into a new vision of ministry. With incredible excitement and speed, this church joined with its local community association and helped to inspire a desire to serve. Since that time, a myriad of projects such as road repairs, new homes, an improved water system and home gardens have gone forward. Both the landscape of San Jacinto and the hearts of hundreds of its residents have been transformed. Pastor Mauricio graciously served on the ENLACE Pastoral Steering Committee and his church has experienced a 15% growth and has the capacity to serve 1,548 people. It now has completed the entire process with the Church and Community Program and is a LIDER church!

Approximately 35% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).
Lluvia Postrera Church is a small congregation that has grown rapidly and wants to serve its community. Its pastor, Miguel Ramírez, learned about ENLACE from his brother, Juan Ramírez of Chantunene, a partner with ENLACE.

The church began with just 7 people and has grown to 28, 12 of whom are recognized leaders and many more members are involved in various ways. The DNA of this church is made of service, commitment and dedication to the community. They’ve already begun to implement a community safety project that includes street lights and a water system, medical teams in tandem with the local community association and the mayor’s office. The church has the potential to impact approximately 500 people or 64 families. The church has the potential to impact 268 people. Approximately 34% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

identified Projects for 2018

- Community health campaign
- Road repair and improvements (100 meters)
- New homes (5)
- Public safety lighting (13 street lamps)
Puerta del Cielo Church is a rural congregation of 34 members, 8 of whom are leaders. In 2008 its former pastor, Mario Ernesto Mejía, learned about ENLACE through conversations with Pastor Mauricio Alvarado from the Zuriasadai Church in San Jacinto, who encouraged him to reach out and serve his community. Pastor Mario, a man of great passion and faith, inspired his church to serve. He and his church established new relationships with several community organizations as well as the mayor’s office. Additionally, the church created strong friendships with community members and churchgoers from different churches in the community. In June 2012 Orlando Majano became the church’s new pastor. Pastor Orlando, a devoted leader with a strong personal testimony, and the church implemented their first housing project and led a joint effort with the community to repair the main road. In 2016, however, Pastor Orlando faced health challenges that made it impossible for him to continue his work. The congregation is now led by Pastor José Guillermo Flores who is striving to continue the partnership with ENLACE. The church has grown and has directly impacted more than 1,500 people. Approximately 24% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

Monte Horeb Church is a motivated and well-connected congregation that has 145 members, 23 of whom are leaders. In 2010 its pastor, Elman Meléndez, learned of ENLACE through conversations with Pastor Rafael González from the Nueva Jerusalén Church. The church already had close relationships with its community as a result of having collaborated with the Ministry of Health in previous projects. Through ENLACE’s training, the church improved its project management and strengthened relationships with other organizations. Together the church and community have implemented health initiatives, such as home gardens and latrines. After coordinating effective relief efforts in response to a devastating tropical storm in 2011, the church has maintained its role as a well-organized and responsive group within its community. With the leadership of a new pastor in 2017, Angel Otoniel Ramírez, the church has continued its work with great enthusiasm. The church has a direct impact of more than 1,440 people. Approximately 34% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).
The Arca de Dios Church is a semi-rural congregation of 120 members, 40 of whom are leaders. In 2010, its pastor, Francisco Javier Mendoza, heard about ENLACE through conversations with pastor Rafael González from the Nueva Jerusalén Church. One of the greatest challenges facing this community is the presence of gangs. Despite this, he and his church committed to being a place of love and care for all the people of El Ranchador. Sadly, Pastor Francisco died in 2016. The new pastor, Elman Menéndez, began his tenure here. His previous church had been partners with ENLACE and so now, he continues with the same vision.

As a result of working with Compassion International, the church had developed a close relationship with its community. ENLACE strengthened their community ties by helping them to become better organized and more integrated with other leaders and families in the community. ENLACE also helped to establish new relationships with other organizations. While most residents have access to clean water and electricity, they struggle with inadequate housing, infrastructure problems, malnutrition, and lack of development opportunities. By the end of 2011, the church, together with the community, implemented home gardens and home construction projects along with the construction of a new bridge and a clinic. All of these projects have combined to impact every resident in greatly needed and profound ways. The church has grown substantially and has a capacity to impact 6,000 families. Approximately 12% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

"Our church now not only preaches a gospel of inner healing but also of physical health in ourselves and our communities. Becoming the church is what the Great Commission is all about. Our leaderships has grown and we hope to continue to grow in the whole gospel."

Pastor Nehemías Juárez

Identified Projects for 2018

- New homes (6)
- Road repair and improvements (300 meters)
- Public safety lighting (20 street lamps)
Cristo Vive Church, located on beautiful Lake Coatepeque, is a congregation of 45 members, 15 of whom are leaders. In 2010 its pastor, Mauricio Reyes, learned about ENLACE through conversations with Pastor Rafael González from the Nueva Jerusalén Church who invited him to attend an ENLACE seminar about how a church can work effectively with its community.

Pastor Mauricio and his young and dynamic leaders inspired and motivated their congregation to actively begin to connect to their community. They strengthened existing relationships with the local public school and the community association. They implemented projects such as eco-stoves and home gardens. In August 2015, Pastor Mauricio retired and a new pastor, Pablo Crespin, stepped in to transition the church to the new full time pastor, Walter Antonio Gutiérrez. The church has an area of impact of 800 people. Approximately 35% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day). The name of their town, La Bendición, means “The Blessing” in English and the church has truly embodied that in their community.

Puerta del Cielo Church is a semi-urban congregation of 100 members, 15 of whom are leaders. Pastor Francisco Javier Portillo was the pastor of one of ENLACE’s first local partner churches in the hamlet of El Cambio, El Tinteral. Pastor Francisco moved to San Juan Buenavista and contacted ENLACE in 2011 to help him create a vision for his church and community with this new congregation. After Pastor Francisco relocated to a different church, and Pastor Carlos Linares helped out for a time and then the present pastor, Esau Bermudez, became the church’s full-time pastor in 2013. According to Gerson, the ENLACE Church Coach, Pastor Esau is continuing to work with the church’s motivated and diverse group of leaders in community transformation.

The church has built strong relationships with many community organizations and implemented health projects such as home gardens, eco-stoves and latrines. With each project the church has strengthened ties with the public school and the community’s water board while also increasing their own management capacity and organizational ability. The church has grown by 5% and is directly serving 350 families. Approximately 35% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).
Canaán Church, located in the community called Los Pinos, Santa Ana, is a small congregation of 55 members, 12 of whom are leaders. In 2011 the church’s new pastor, Mario Mejía, contacted ENLACE. He had previously been the pastor of Puerta del Cielo Church in El Progreso and had worked with ENLACE since 2010 and sought to work with ENLACE again. Because he had previous training, Pastor Mario inspired his congregation to address some pressing needs and without hesitation, they began to lead mitigation efforts in Los Pinos. The church desires not only to help its immediate community but also the nearby villages of El Porvenir and Montebello, impacting 1,500 people. Since February 2016, Pastor José Lopez has been pastoring the church. Pastor José has been inspired by all that the church has achieved so far and is anxious to continue serving the community. The church has directly impacted more than 2,500 people. Approximately 20% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

**Identified Projects for 2018**

- Medical teams
- Eco-stoves (24)
- New homes (8)
- Security perimeter wall at local public school

“To talk about ENLACE is to talk about a good organization. As a church we tried to get organized, but with ENLACE we have seen a huge improvement. Many of us (in the church) are now members of community associations and the community has noticed a great change.”

Pastor Juan Ramírez
Casa del Alfarero Church is a strong congregation of 110 members, 18 of whom are leaders. The church was founded in 1998 with the establishment of a new neighborhood in Chantusnene made up of 64 families. In 2011 its pastor, Juan Ramírez, attended a conference in which he learned of ENLACE from an inspiring presentation given by Pastor Rafael González from the Nueva Jerusalén Church. He spoke about what his church had been doing in the city of Comecayo. Up to that point, Pastor Juan had believed that the church should not get involved with outsiders even though he had been quite involved with his neighbors’ needs for many years. Pastor Rafael invited him to meet the ENLACE team. After connecting with ENLACE, Pastor Juan became excited and after working on a series of initiatives, he served on the ENLACE Pastoral Steering Committee. The church has experienced a 11% growth in recent years and is on track to become a LIDER church in 2018! With the completion of a major road project, the church is serving more than 2,320 people. Approximately 33% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

La Bendición Church, is a very motivated and well-connected congregation that has 66 members, 23 of whom are leaders. Pastor José Alvaro Franco learned of ENLACE from Pastor Juan Ramírez from Chantusnene. Pastor José got very excited about the impact that the Chantusnene church was making and wanted to join them. To that end, they hope to strengthen and expand efforts to the area of San Juan Opico.

Currently, the church is very active in providing food and clothing to the poorest in its community and has worked with the local Kimberly Clark Factory to provide food for poor families in the community. The church also has a strong relationship with the local Community Association and the Mayor’s Office. The church has grown in recent years and has an area of impact of approximately 1,500 people. Approximately 33% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).
Luz de la Vida Church, located in the community called San José, is a congregation of 46 members, 10 of whom are leaders. This congregation has a great passion and desire to transform its own community and the immediate neighborhood of Hacienda Santa Adela. Close to 500 residents in San José have access to electricity but they struggle with water (access and quality), school infrastructure problems, health care, and lack of development opportunities.

Oscar Ernesto Villalta, the church’s original pastor, first began to inspire the church to serve by leading by example. He and his church established good relationships with the Community Association and created strong friendships with community members and churchgoers from nearby churches already working with ENLACE, such as Cristo Vive in La Bendición. After a change in leadership in 2015, a new pastor, Casimiro Santos Castillo, was installed in 2016. The church has grown substantially and its area of impact is more than 200 people. Approximately 12% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

Identified Projects for 2018

- Pit latrines (14)
- Road repair (100 meters)
- Footbridge

Iglesia de Dios Church is a congregation of 20 members, 6 of whom are strong leaders. Even though the church’s denomination discouraged community interaction, Pastor Manuel Landaverde along with many church members could not close their eyes to the problems that their neighbors were facing from extreme poverty and a lack of economic opportunities to the strong gang presence.

The church began working with ENLACE in 2013 when Pastor Rigoberto Villacorta learned about the work a church was doing in the same denomination. Along with starting the training, the church began to get to know the local leaders of ANDA, the government water agency. Over the last two years, the church helped to serve 100 families with a new clean water system. The church is excited to continue because there are more families in their community who need access to clean water and the church is hoping to impact 1,500 people in their area with that and other projects. Approximately 12% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

Identified Projects for 2018

- Retaining wall on main road
- Public safety lighting (12 street lamps)
- Rainwater curbs and drainage
Iglesia de Dios Church is a very motivated and well-connected congregation that has 67 members, 16 of whom are leaders. Pastor Rigoberto Villacorta learned of ENLACE from Pastor Elman Meléndez from La Reforma and was excited to strengthen the work the church was already doing in its community.

The church had been working with an association of engineers to build a home for a family in need. The church also has a strong relationship with the local health unit and collaborated with them in fumigation campaigns and medical teams. The church has experienced a 8% growth, serving more than 3,000 people. Approximately 36% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

**Project Report 2017**

- New homes (6)

**Identified Projects for 2018**

- Eco-stoves (15)
- Road repair (100 meters)
- New homes (6)
Betesda Church is a small congregation of 110 members, 20 of whom are leaders. In 2012 its pastor, Victor Hugo Ortiz, heard of an organization that could help to better focus their efforts to work with the community. The church was already reaching out with a food program and computer classes for children and when he met pastor Rafael González from the Nueva Jerusalén Church, he was excited to learn about how he could establish a partnership with ENLACE. In 2015, the church purchased a plot of land with the hope that they will soon begin construction on a recreation and business development area for the community. This congregation has grown of 10% in recent years and impacts 1,440 people directly with hopes to reach nearby villages of La Luz, San Carlos and Santa Elena. Approximately 35% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

Simiente de Abraham Church, located in the community called Las Victorias, San Juan Opico, La Libertad, is a congregation of 87 members, 12 of which are leaders. Its pastor, Arturo Orellana Carrillo, has pastored this church since 2008. He first learned about ENLACE through Pastor Juan Ramírez from the Casa del Alfarero Church en Chantusnene. Pastor Arturo and the church participated in building a home for a very impoverished family. The church has a direct area of impact of 1,100 people. Approximately 14% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

Identified Projects for 2018

- Water tank
- New homes (10)
- Public safety lighting (11 street lamps)
- Road repair (300 meters)
Roca Eterna Church, located in San Miguelito, Coatepeque, Santa Ana, is made up of 69 members, 16 of which are leaders. Its pastor, Israel Guardado, learned of ENLACE from Pastor Orlando Majano of the Puerta del Cielo Church in El Progreso. Pastor Israel and his church had already been working in their community in various ways since 2013. They had coordinated many efforts with the local Community Association to repair roads and the roofs of many homes that were very run down. This congregation has grown of 11% in recent years and impacts 1,750 people directly. Approximately 23% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

**Project Report 2017**
- Road repair and improvements
- Classrooms at local public school

**Identified Projects for 2018**
- Roof repair and infrastructure improvements at local school
- Road repair (85 meters)
- Water tank construction

Arca de Noé Church, located in the community called El Cascajal, Santa Ana, is a congregation of 95 members, 27 of whom are leaders. Its pastor, Tito Consuegra Morán, learned about ENLACE from Pastor Orlando Majano of the Puerta del Cielo Church in El Progreso. The church has been active in its community with grocery distribution, repairing streets, and constructing one new home. They are excited to work with ENLACE in order to create sustainable projects that will impact more people in their community in effective ways. They wish to impact the approximately 4,500 people in El Cascajal, San Luis, El Centro and Israel. Approximately 12% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

**Project Report 2017**
- Composting latrines (25)
- Eco-stoves (25)

**Identified Projects for 2018**
- Pit latrines (15)
- Eco-stoves (10)
- Pump and water distribution network, construction of water system stage 1
- Road repair and improvements (375 meters)
- New homes (10)
Jehová Jireh Church, located in the community called Las Cruces, on the road that leads to Santa Ana and Sonsonate, is a congregation of 82 members, 19 of whom are leaders. Pastor Victor Hugo Ortiz of Betesda Church introduced ENLACE to the church and its pastor, Jennifer Bautista. She has pastored this church since 2003. Las Cruces is divided into three main areas, all of which are extremely poor. They lack electricity and the closest water source and medical clinic is 3 kilometers away. Pastor Jennifer and her congregation are currently providing nutrition services for children and have led road repair and street cleaning projects. The church has grown substantially in recent years and hopes to continue to serve its community with sustainable projects. The church’s area of impact is 2,500 people. Approximately 16% of community members live in moderate to severe poverty (less than $2 per capita per day).

Project Report 2017

Classroom construction at local school (2)

Identified Projects for 2018

Eco-stoves (17)
Public safety lighting (18 street lamps)
New homes (9)
Palabra de Fe Church, located in the community El Carmen, Santa Ana, is a congregation made up of 40 members, 7 of whom are leaders. The church’s previous pastor, Edwin Israel del Valle, learned about ENLACE from Pastor Juan Ramírez of the Casa del Alfarero Church in Chantusnene. Pastor Juan and the church have already been involved with the community of El Carmen by participating in medical campaigns, food/supply delivery to poor households and repairing roads. These projects have already benefited close to 700 people. Even so, the Palabra de Fe church and its new pastor, Efraín Alvanez, have said that they have a long way to go because there is so much to be done. They hope to address more road projects along with the urgent need for a footbridge that would allow residents (including school children) to cross over the busy Panamerican highway to and from work and school to continue to serve their community. The church’s area of impact is 1,620 people. Approximately 12% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

Rios de Agua Viva Church, located in the community called La Joyita, La Libertad, is a small congregation of 54 members, 9 of whom are leaders. Its pastor, Alfonso Nuñez, has only a few years of leading this congregation but has 30 years of experience pastoring other rural congregations. After hearing about ENLACE through pastor Elman Meléndez of the Monte Horeb Church in El Progreso, the congregation was active in serving its neighbors carrying groceries, clean-up campaigns, repairing streets and conducting medical campaigns in La Joyita and Nueva Inglaterra. The church has grown 2% in recent years and impacts 2,800 people directly. Approximately 36% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

Jerusalén Church is a small congregation of 37 members, 5 of which are leaders. It’s located in the hamlet Las Pozas which is inside the municipality of San Lorenzo in the department of Ahuachapán. Its pastor, Obed Otoniel Cáceres, learned of ENLACE from Pastor Juan Ramírez of the Casa del Alfarero Church in Chantusnene. The church has been involved in various outreach efforts since 2008 with projects such as meals for children, a piñata shop, meetings with the local police force, fundraising for street lamps, and mosquito fumigation. The church is ready and excited to take the next step in broadening their scope and make a more long term of impact with their efforts. The church has an area of impact of 562 people. Approximately 28% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).
Gilgal Church is located on the border with Guatemala and has 105 members, 23 of which are leaders. Its pastor, Eliseo Recinos Gómez, learned of ENLACE from Pastor Orlando Majano who used to pastor the Puerta del Cielo Church in El Progreso. The church has been involved in the hamlet of Piedras Azules (actually located in Guatemala), an extremely poor community. They have provided home cleaning, agricultural support during harvest, home visiting and detention center visitation. The church has grown substantially in recent years and its area of impact is approximately 2,500 people in this very humble community. Approximately 22% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

Identified Projects for 2018

- Repair of local medical clinic
- Construction of multipurpose room at local school
- Construction of a community multipurpose gazebo

Emanuel Church, located in the hamlet of Tepecoyo in the department of La Libertad, is a congregation of 60 members, 19 of which are leaders. Its pastor, Heber Neftalí Chávez Recinos, learned of ENLACE from Pastor Elman Meléndez of the Monte Horeb Church in La Reforma. The church has been involved in various outreach efforts since 2004 with projects such as repairing of roads, temporary shelters, toys and clothes for children, support for the sick, and basic food baskets for extremely impoverished households. The church is ready and excited to take the next step in broadening the scope of their work and make a more long term of impact with their efforts. The church has the ability to impact 365 people directly and hopes to serve others in the hamlets of La Meca, Las Tres Marías, La Chutía and El Mango. Approximately 21% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

Identified Projects for 2018

- New homes (2)
- Construction of recreational space for children (sports area and multipurpose gazebo)
- Piping network for rainwater drainage system (25 meters)
Beerseba Church is made up of 45 members, 8 of which are leaders. Its pastor, Nehemías Natanael Arcia Pacheco, learned of ENLACE from Pastor Juan Ramírez of the Casa del Alfarero Church in Chantusne. Pastor Nehemías and his church had already been working in their community in various ways since 2004. They had served families in extreme need by bringing food and supplies, repairing homes and providing medication. The church, however, wants to do more and to create long term change for its neighbors on a broader scale. The church has grown in recent years and has an area of impact of 1,985 people. Approximately 26% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

**Identified Projects for 2018**

- Roof repair of homes (15)
- Road repair and improvements in front of Cafetalito public school (85 meters)
- Bathroom remodeling and improvement at Cafetalito public school

Atenas Church is made up of 110 members, 40 of which are leaders. Its pastor, Florencio Ascencio Sánchez, learned of ENLACE from Mauricio Alvarado, pastor of the Zurisadai Church, who encouraged him to reach out and serve his community. They had served kids and elderly people in extreme need by bringing food and supplies, road repair, street lights and wall for the public school. The church, however, wants to do more and to create long term change for its neighbors on a broader scale. The church has grown in recent years and has a direct area of impact of 1,340 people. Approximately 35% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

**Identified Projects for 2018**

- Pit latrines (15)
- Roof repair at public school
- Road repair
Bethel Church, located in San Antonio Pajonal, Santa Ana, is a 60-member congregation, 15 of whom are leaders. Its pastor, Santos Arturo Castaneda has led the church for more than 20 years. During this time he has created strong relationships with the local mayor’s office and the public school along with two local ministries, Compassion and “Mirada de Amor”. Together they have created community clean-up campaigns, grocery deliveries, medical teams and a youth nutrition and clothing initiative. The church came to know ENLACE from their connection with Pastor Mauricio Alvarado from the Zurisadai Church. The church has an area of impact of 4,000 people. Approximately 35% live in extreme poverty (making less than $2 per capita per day).

Identified Projects for 2018

- Pit latrines (15)
- Roof repair at local public school
- Road curbing and gutters (300 meters)

Emanuel Church, located in the hamlet of San Juan Opico in the department of La Libertad, is a congregation of 250 members, 50 of whom are leaders. Its pastor, Pedro Cardoza, learned of ENLACE from Pastor Mauricio Alvarado of the Zurisadai Church. They have worked with their local mayor’s office and public school on infrastructure improvement projects including roof repair and a retaining wall. Their area of impact is 900 people. Approximately 14% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less than $2 per capita per day).

Identified Projects for 2018

- New homes (4)
- Road curbing and gutters (100 meters)
- Road improvements and paving in front of local public school (500 meters)
Una Luz en tu Camino Church, located in El Tamarindo, Texistepeque, Santa Ana, is made up of 64 members, 19 of whom are leaders. After learning about ENLACE from Pastor Mauricio Alvarado of the Zurisadai Church, the church coordinated many efforts with the local Community Association, the Mayor’s office and local school. The church worked on projects such as community-building soccer tournaments, clean-up campaigns that included both streets and rivers. This church is currently waiting for a new pastor. It has a potential impact of 500 personas. Approximately 35% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less than $2 per capita per day).

Casa de Presencia Church is a small congregation of 40 members, 8 of which are leaders. The church is located in the hamlet of El Chilar which is inside the municipality of San Juan Opico in the department of La Libertad. Its pastor, Oscar Antonio Vásquez, learned of ENLACE from Pastor Miguel Ramírez from the Lluvia Postrera en La Isla Church. Casa de Presencia has already been working closely with the local school by helping to build a kitchen and provide computer learning courses. The church’s area of impact is 300 people. Approximately 14% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less than $2 per capita per day).

### Identified Projects for 2018

**Casa de Presencia Church**

**El Chilar**

- Expansion of local medical clinic
- Installation of rainwater drainage pipes (500 meters)
- Conduct a baseline community economic development study

**Una Luz en Tu Camino Church**

**El Tamarindo**

- New homes (4)
- Construction of perimeter security fence at local public school (175 meters)
- Public safety lighting (15 street lamps)
Four new churches began to partner with ENLACE in 2017. Each partner had a strong passion to serve its communities and began ENLACE’s coaching and training program. Through workshops, seminars and hands-on activities, church pastors and members are prepared to become effective servant-leaders in their communities.

During this initial stage in ENLACE’s coaching and training program, the ENLACE coach focuses on the first three (of six) iterative stages in the yearlong church-coaching process:

**DISCOVER**
**ORGANIZE**
**LISTEN**

**PARTNER**
**EMBODY**
**REPLICATE**

Each area is designed to help prepare a church, new to community development, to understand itself as a redemptive agent of change, explore its community, and reach out to its neighbors effectively. Such preparation maximizes the effectiveness of future projects and is extremely important to help the partner reach its fullest potential.
Estandarte de la Fe Church, located in San Juan Opico, La Libertad, has 50 members, 19 of whom are strong leaders. Its pastor, Oscar Ernesto Villalta, discovered ENLACE from Pastor Juan Ramírez of the Casa del Alfarero Church in Chantusnene and began to partner with us in June 2017. Pastor Oscar already has experience working in community development and, along with his leaders, completed various projects including improving 60 meters of a main thoroughfare, painting the entire public school, and food and home supplies distribution to extremely needy families. The church has strengthened its relationships with local organizations and is excited to expand its service in the years ahead. Its area of impact is 2000 people. Approximately 34% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less than $1 per capita per day).

Amistad Cristiana Church, located in the municipality of Colón, La Libertad, has 100 members, six of whom are leaders and is pastored by Marlon Alexander Cuestas. After contacting ENLACE directly because they had a strong desire to receive training and support in community development, the church began to partner in June 2017. It has worked with its community to host medical teams, visit the sick and bring basic food, clothing and supplies to needy families. The church has an area of impact of 3000 people. Approximately 27% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less than $1 per capita per day).
Perla Preciosa Church is located in Guarnecia, Santa Ana. It has 25 members, eight of whom are leaders. Pastor Jonathan Alfaro discovered ENLACE through his friendship with Pastor Mauricio Alvarado who partners with ENLACE. The church began its own partnership in 2017. Even though this congregation is small, it has already worked diligently to connect to local organizations and serve its community through clean-up and mosquito control campaigns along with providing basic food and home supplies to extremely needy families. The church has an area of impact of 684 people. In this region, 46% of the population live in extreme poverty (making less than $2 per capita per day).

Ríos de Agua Viva Church is located near the Guatemalan border in the department of Santa Ana. It is a small congregation of 45 members, 11 of whom are leaders and is pastored by Eliasim Aquino. The church began its partnership in June 2017. The church had accomplished some outreach projects, such as providing the needy with food baskets, clothing and supplies and conducted medical brigades, but it, wanted help to learn how to serve its community more effectively and with sustainable, community-building projects. The church’s area of impact is 600 people, with a special focus on the El Carmen neighborhood. Approximately 68% of Santiago de la Frontera population live in extreme poverty (making less than $2 per capita per day).
Gerson DeLeón was only 19 years old when his pastor noted his hard work ethic and asked him to lead a small congregation. During that time, he found that his heart was most burdened for young children and youth. That burden led him to an opportunity to work for one year with a project with The Samaritan’s Purse. After that work concluded, he joined the staff of Compassion International where he worked for the next seven years. According to Gerson, both experiences were very rewarding and allowed him to learn much about working in rural communities.

When the contract with Compassion International ended, Gerson began looking for a job that would support both his wife of three years, Ada, and their year-old son, Esteban. Even though he had a degree in International Relations, Gerson found work as a school teacher. Soon, however, the opportunity to join the ENLACE staff as a Church Coach appeared. Gerson believed it was God’s leading and said, “God has led me on this path for years.”

Over ten years have gone by since Gerson pastored a small group of believers. Now he serves as a Church Coach to five churches in the Santa Ana Region. Explaining his experience he says, “I believe the role of a Church Coach is vital because he spends more time in the community and can see not only the community’s needs but also the opportunities that exist for the church to collaborate with its community to bring about solutions...And I like to be where there is need.”

"God has led me to missions and refined me through this work."

Gerson DeLeón, Church Coach Supervisor Profile
I feel grateful first to God and to ENLACE because now everyone in our hamlet recognizes the church as a friend and a light. This year we inaugurated six homes for six families in the community, and all of them were so very grateful. Since that time, our church has been on fire to find more projects to undertake in our community. The community now sees us with a favorable eye and that’s why we feel so happy and grateful for the help that we’ve been given.

Two of the families for whom we were able to build a home are headed by single mothers. They work day and night but barely make it week to week. Previously, they and family members were living in incredibly poor circumstances—dirt floors, plastic walls and roofs, nothing very safe. Maria Magdalena, lived with her nine children, and they all lived miserably. The other, Fidelina Elvira, just has one son but despite their incredible industriousness, it was still hard for them to get ahead. But now, we feel so incredibly blessed that they were favored by God. It is such a miracle to see them all finally living in a secure home.
# 2 MARIA MAGDALENA

I have been living in this community for 20 years, and I have always dreamed of having a better home because the one we lived in was not suitable for my family of 10. We all work in one way or another but can barely make enough to provide for the very basics. We could not save anything and our house was always in need of repair, especially in the rainy season.

We used to dread knowing that winter [the rainy season] was coming because the conditions would become so terribly bad. Water flowed through the house; it seemed we lived in a river! The only fixes we could make were made by materials we would find. But these scraps wouldn’t last with the wind. My biggest worry was for the youngest children. They would get sick and would be frightened as they watched water run into the house.

When the pastor approached me to tell me that there was a housing project, I was overjoyed. Nobody in these times seems to care for others. What the church is now doing is such a blessing because even if one does not go to their church, they still take us into account. And then the project happened so fast! The engineer gave us a date and things got going. They asked us to work alongside them as part of the project and we did so with great pleasure! We took great pride in cleaning many of the areas of land designated for new homes because we knew one day we would be having fun there as a family and I also wanted to help others with their new homes.

Thank God we will never have to face a winter again without a secure place to live. I feel happy, blessed and grateful to God and to all of you who make this possible.

# 3 FIDELINA ELVIRA

My eleven-year-old son, Carlos, and I have lived here for 12 years. Every year it has been the same problem. When winter [the rainy season] comes, the entire hamlet is flooded. Often times we would have to go out into the night to find neighbors who would help us get the water out of the house or help us cover the few things we have. Sometimes we got sick because our dirt floors become mud and remain wet for several days. Trying to keep things dry was one thing, but drying things at all once they were wet was nearly impossible as some weeks it never stopped raining. Also, when the weather is bad like that, I have difficulty selling my fruits and vegetables and eventually my harvest goes bad.

When the pastor and the ADESCO [Community Association] visited me, I was honestly surprised. I really didn’t think that anyone cared about us. And now to have a home! I am so grateful to everyone who worked together to make this miracle happen. I thought that being a single mother meant I would always be alone, the only one worrying about my son. But that isn’t the case. For me, this is a blessing from God and with this new home I will find peace and I won’t worry about us getting sick since our beds will stay dry.