Regional Overview

Church Partner Profiles

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Rosa de Sarón Church, Metalio
Aguas Vivas Church, Cara Sucia
Templo Eben - Ezer, Dios de la Profecía Church, San Pedro El Cañal
Aposento Alto Church, El Cocalito
Manantiales de Vida Eterna Church, El Escondido
Oasis de Gloria Church, San Antonio del Monte
Mahanaim Church, Las Victorias
Fe y Amor Church, Mandinga
Monte de los Olivos Church, El Castaño
Monte de los Olivos Church, Teotepeque
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Becoming Leader Churches

Josué Church, Metalio
Nueva Jerusalén Church, La Chilena
Centro Cristiano Impacto Church, Shutia

Church and Community Program

Church Coach Supervisor Profile: Noé Canales
Church Coach Profile: Williams Rodríguez
Church Coach Profile: Jhony Pérez

“The Surprising Gifts of Simple Changes in Caluco: Erika’s Story, In Her Own Words”
In 2017 ENLACE church coaches trained and equipped 17 pastors, 177 church and community leaders on a monthly basis in 17 churches serving 45 communities in the Southwest Region. Two potential churches are currently on the waiting list to partner with ENLACE. The total area of impact for this region is 14,937 people.

The Southwest region is located in El Salvador’s western most provinces of Ahuachapan and Sonsonate. The region is comprised of many rural towns, each of which is surrounded by dozens of smaller villages. In the mountainous, rural villages most of the residents are subsistence farmers. They rent or own less than five acres of land and try to produce enough traditional crops (corn, beans and sorghum) to feed their families. The average person lives on between $1 and $2 per day. In the towns located along the coast, most families survive by fishing, a rather risky profession. They rent or own small boats, going far out into the ocean, often working all night for a few dollars worth of profit. The city of Cara Sucia is the regional center of commerce and with its close proximity to the Guatemalan border, many of its residents work in the markets that line the street leading to the border crossing. Even though it is the location of vibrant trade, it has a great need for sewage systems and latrines. In rural villages, the majority of people have limited access to primary health care services, schools, clean drinking water and sanitation facilities.

“The main objective isn’t to create walls but to draw near to people, show them God’s love and transform their lives.”

MARCO MELARA, PASTOR JERUSALEN CHURCH, SAN JOSE EL NARANJO
Jerusalén Church, located in San José El Naranjo proper, is a semi-rural congregation of 225 members, 50 of whom are strong leaders. Pastor Marcos Antonio Melara began working with ENLACE 1994, making him one of ENLACE’s pioneering pastors. Over the last 22 years, the church has worked with its community to implement a variety of projects such as hosting medical teams; installing eco-stoves and latrines; and building dozens of homes, a water tank and a Cistern for Liceo Cristiano School, a pedestrian bridge, roads, a school room, and retaining walls for the health clinic. In the process the church established solid relationships with its neighbors and started teaching other churches nearby how to reach out and serve their communities. The church has grown by 17% and has an area of impact of 2,281 people. Approximately 60% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

Project Report 2017
- Water tank and underground piping

Identified Projects for 2018
- Water system improvements
- Composting latrines (25)
- Road improvement in front of local school (50 meters)

Una Voz que Clama en el Desierto Church, surrounded by hills and rivers, is a humble congregation of 27 members, 5 of whom are leaders. In 2004 their former pastor, Jeovany Rivas, learned about ENLACE through the Jerusalén Church. In 2010 Pedro Flores became its new pastor and wanted to continue the church’s vision of working alongside their community supported by ENLACE’s coaching and training. After working hard over the last few years, the church has become a well-respected entity in the community. Working with the community in the past, the church repaired many of the main roads, built a water tank, installed 25 latrines and also implemented a reforestation plan. The church has grown and has an area of impact of 674 people. Approximately 60% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

Project Report 2017
- Composting latrines (25)

Identified Projects for 2018
- Footbridge construction
- Repair main road (50 meters)
- Composting latrines (20)
Rosa de Sarón Church, located on the western coast of El Salvador, has a congregation of 60 members, 10 of whom are leaders. In 2011 its founding pastor, Fermín Sánchez Hernández, learned about ENLACE through Jerusalén Church. The church began training and has focused on creating an effective management system for future projects such as eco-stoves, a retaining wall and electricity. In 2013 the church worked with the community on its first project, which was building 50 eco-stoves. This church’s work has become a model for implementing eco-stoves due to the incredibly organized way the church worked together and involved 2 community associations while installing the clean cookstoves in record time. By the close of 2015, the community had experienced a decade of the worst flooding it had ever seen. The adversity actually helped the church to strengthen its ties with its neighbors, the mayor, and local merchants as they worked together to address their problems. The church has grown by 5% and has an area of impact of 4,500 people. Approximately 40% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

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

**Identified Projects for 2018**
- Composting latrines group 1 (25)
- Composting latrines group 2 (25)
- Eco-stoves (25)
- New homes (10)
The Aguas Vivas Church is a congregation of 200 members, 45 of whom are leaders. Its pastor, Victor Manuel Herrera, learned about ENLACE through Jerusalén Church, where he served as one of its previous pastors. As he witnessed the process of transformation that San José El Naranjo was experiencing, his desire to connect with ENLACE grew. The church now has begun training and is in the process of getting to know the community and its needs in a more intimate and thorough way. Over the past year, the church has grown by 5% and is impacting 500 families. The church desires to impact its own community and the neighboring communities of La Vega, La 19, and La Génesis. Approximately 58% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

Eben-Ezer, Dios de la Profecía Church is a congregation of 30 members, 9 of whom are leaders. Its previous pastor, Abraham Eliseo Segovia, learned about ENLACE through his friendship with Pastor Miguel Bolaños from Príncipe de Paz Church in San Antonio. The church has worked hard in a variety of community health areas including safety retaining walls, mosquito fumigation, clean-up campaigns, and providing basic groceries for needy families. In so doing, the church has strengthened its connections to the mayor’s office and the Community Association. While the church has an area of impact of 1,077 people, a change in pastoral leadership in the last year has slowed the church’s outreach for the time being. Approximately 40% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).
Aposento Alto Church is a congregation of 107 members, 34 of whom are leaders. Its pastor, José Israel Pineda, learned about ENLACE through Principe de Paz Church. This church has built an excellent relationship with its Community Association, the mayor’s office, and the local school and health unit. Over the years by working together with their local organizations, the church has already accomplished many projects such as road improvement, latrine construction, classroom additions, and electricity. The church also completed a housing project in which the church bought and donated land to extremely needy families (that did not have any land of their own) and then helped to build their new homes. Because of their hard work and love, this incredible congregation is on track to become a LIDER church by the end of this year. The church has grown by 18% and has an area of impact of 1,597 people. Approximately 60% of the community members live in moderate to severe poverty (making less than $2 per capita per day).

Project Report 2017

Composting latrines (40)

Identified Projects for 2018

Composting latrines (40)
Bathrooms at the local public school
New homes (15)
Manantiales de Vida Eterna Church is a congregation of 21 members, 6 of whom are leaders. In 2014, the church worked in the village of San José El Naranjo proper on home building and community clean-up campaigns and thereby gained valuable experience on managing and implementing projects. Subsequently, the church built an excellent relationship with its Community Association, the mayor’s office and the local public school. Together they implemented latrine and water system projects. In 2017, Isaac Benjamín Orellana began serving as the new pastor and has embraced the vision of serving the community. The church’s an area of impact of 354 people. Approximately 60% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

Identified Projects for 2018

- New homes (10)
- Road risk-mitigation and improvement including a small culvert and paving
- Speed bump installation on principal road

The Oasis de Gloria Church is a congregation of 70 members, 16 of whom are leaders. Pastor Juan Antonio Fuentes Morales began pastoring the church in 2014. In his desire to find effective ways to be a blessing he approached ENLACE and encouraged a nearby pastor and his church to join him. So together with ENLACE’s support, Pastor Fermín Sánchez and the Rosa de Saron Church began to raise funds for a water project that would help 125 families. Starting from that project, the church has built an excellent relationship with the Mayor’s office, local health unit and the Community Association. The church has grown by 14% and has an area of impact of 2,625 people. Approximately 33% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

**Project Report 2017**

Water system (beginning stages of consultation with technicians, community and local government)

**Identified Projects for 2018**

- Create an official, legally recognized Water Board
- Eco-stoves (25)
- New homes (15)
Mahanaim Church is a congregation of 97 members, 19 of whom are leaders. Its pastor, Marvin Esaú Rivas, learned about ENLACE through his friendship with Pastor Fermín Sánchez from Rosa de Sarón Church in Metalio. As he witnessed the process of transformation that Metalio was experiencing, his desire to connect with ENLACE grew. Mahanaim Church has embraced ENLACE’s approach and all the leaders feel very called to serve their community. They have already begun smaller projects such as cleaning streets, providing food to families in need, and nutrition services for young children. Additionally, the pastor is also runs a Christian radio program and has a great deal of influence on the national level. The church has an area of impact of 1,395 people. Approximately 80% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

**Project Report 2017**

- Eco-stoves (20)

**Identified Projects for 2018**

- New homes (15)
- Road repair and improvement (200 meters)
- Conduct a baseline community economic development study
Fe y Amor Church is a small congregation of 18 people, 8 of whom are leaders. Pastor German Arnoldo Melgar has been pastoring this church since 2012 and met ENLACE through Pastor Victor Manuel Herrera of Aguas Vivas Church in Cara Sucia who had a great passion for serving his community and had built an educational center. Despite the small size of the Fe y Amor Church, it has served 100 families (approximately 500 people) on an ongoing basis by repairing roads and delivering food, clothes and shoes to severely impoverished households. It desires to do more and learn effective ways to serve in the coming year. The church has grown and has an area of impact of 500 people. Approximately 33% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

Identified Projects for 2018
- Eco-stoves (25)
- Composting latrines (25)

Monte de los Olivos Church is a small congregation of 20 people, 11 of whom are leaders. Pastor Mario Alexander Fermán has been pastoring this church since 2003 and met ENLACE through Pastor Victor Manuel Herrera of Aguas Vivas Church in Cara Sucia who had a great passion for serving his community and had built an educational center. Despite the small size of the Monte de los Olivos Church, it has served 365 people on an ongoing basis by delivering food, clothes and glasses to severely impoverished households. Also help with funeral aid, It desires to do more and learn effective ways to serve in the coming year. The church has grown by 10% and has an area of impact of 1,511 people. Approximately 58% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

Identified Projects for 2018
- Eco-stoves (30)
- Composting latrines (40)
- Classroom construction at local public school (2)
- Installation of new floor at local public school
Monte de Los Olivos Church is a small congregation of 48 people, 12 of whom are leaders. Pastor José Antonio León has been pastoring this church since 2010 and met ENLACE through Pastor Fermín Sánchez from Rosa de Sarón Church in Metalio. As he witnessed the process of transformation that Metalio was experiencing, his desire to connect with ENLACE grew. Despite the small size of the Monte de los Olivos Church, it has served 450 people on an ongoing basis by offering day-care, children’s activities and medical aid. The church is excited to find more ways to effectively serve its neighbors in the coming year. The church has an area of impact of 450 people. Approximately 59% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

**Identified Projects for 2018**

- Eco-stoves (25)
- Home improvements with special attention given to roofing
- Repair of 3 gutters along a main road for risk mitigation in the rainy season

Maranatha Church is a small congregation of 38 people, 12 of whom are leaders. Pastor Rigoberto Antonio Mejía has been pastoring this church since 2012 and met ENLACE through Pastor Fermín Sánchez from Rosa de Sarón Church in Metalio. As he witnessed the process of transformation that Metalio was experiencing, his desire to connect with ENLACE grew. Despite the small size of the Maranatha Church, it has served 250 people on an ongoing basis by food delivery and road repair. It desires to do more and learn effective ways to serve in the coming year. The church has an area of impact of 250 people. Approximately 59% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

**Identified Projects for 2018**

- Eco-stoves (25)
- Composting latrines (25)
- Playground at the local school
Three new churches began to partner with ENLACE between the last months of 2017. Each partner had a strong passion to serve its communities and began with 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 yearly 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 future potential.

“We are so thankful because ENLACE opened our eyes to the possibilities and gave us the capacity for us to work with our community. It’s of great importance to carry out the gospel of Christ in a holistic way. Our lives are not just spiritual but physical and Jesus himself preached in this way.”

Pastor German Melgar, Mandinga
Josué Church is a congregation of 103 members, 18 of whom are leaders. Its pastor, Jorge Alberto Torres, learned about ENLACE through his friendship with Pastor Fermín Sánchez from Rosa de Sarón Church in Metalio. The pastor and the leaders of the church are incredibly committed to their community. Using their own resources and efforts they have implemented many projects, including a community health campaign and a program to care for their elderly neighbors. The church has an area of impact of 1,500 people. Approximately 39.50% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

Nueva Jerusalén Church is a congregation of 110 members, 24 of whom are leaders. Its pastor, Manuel de Jesús Rivas, learned about ENLACE through his friendship with Pastor German Melgar of the Fe y Amor. The church is located in a semi-urban areas and has strong relationships with their local mayor’s office and the ministry of health unit. Working with these entities, the church has led many efforts that include a health campaign, a community clean-up campaign, medical teams, road repairs, and a reforestation project. The church has an area of impact of 435 people. Approximately 23.30% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).

Centro Cristiano Impacto Church is a congregation of 29 members, 11 of whom are leaders. Its pastor, Daniel Oswaldo González, learned about ENLACE through his friendship with Pastor Fermín Sánchez of the Rosa de Sarón Church. The church is located in a semi-urban area and has strong a relationship with their local mayor’s office and the water board. Working with these entities, the church has led many efforts that include donating material to the community water system, bringing groceries to needy families and running medical intervention campaigns. The church has an area of impact of 350 people. Approximately 55% of this population live in extreme poverty (making less $2 per capita per day).
When Noé Canales was just a teenager he already had a strong passion to serve Christ. He devoted much of his time as a volunteer with the Royal Rangers, a Christian wilderness program for boys. After High School he took on many odd jobs while he began to study theology. Three years into his studies, Noé was hired by World Vision as a Christian Commitment Coordinator, and began a career in community development. Through this experience, Noé saw a glimpse of what rural churches can accomplish when they work with their communities. When the World Vision program concluded, Noé encountered ENLACE and joined its staff in June 2011.

Being involved with ENLACE has provided Noé a way to continue his passion to serve Christ. He says, “I’m excited to be part of this process…[I love] walking with the pastors…walking down the streets of their communities, meeting with them, talking about the challenges in their communities and coming up with solutions…[I love] discussing how God helps [to] bring development and change.”

Over the last four years, Noé helped to foment an amazing growth in the number of churches in the region of San José El Naranjo, going from two to 12! These churches now form a regional network that meets on an ongoing basis to share experiences and coordinate efforts. This region’s cohesiveness was displayed in an amazing way during a thanksgiving service late in 2013. More than 500 community members from all over the region and the mayor celebrated the year’s successes with representatives of all nine churches and ENLACE. Noé’s hard work and vision has made these successes possible. Noé completed his studies in Theology and Missions at the Assemblies of God Christian University in 2017 and will graduate in 2018.

Noé and his wife, Mirna Quiñonez, have one son, Ricardo Ernesto.
Williams Rodriguez was just 13 when he committed his life to Christ and began to live a life of incredible desire and devotion. As the years progressed, his passion grew until he realized that God had a specific calling on his life.

As a result, Williams enrolled in the Bible Institute in Santa Ana. During those years he became an associate pastor at Cristo Vive Church where he learned about ENLACE. His church began to partner with ENLACE and every time a church coach came to visit his community, he loved learning from them but often found himself wanting to join them as they went out to other communities and churches in the Abelines region. His desire to explore other places and minister to people far and near was a passion he could not deny.

His time came in 2012 when Williams had the opportunity to go on a mission trip to Nicaragua. It was there after ministering to people and then taking some time out to see the rainforest that he felt God’s presence. In the silence, surrounded by God’s creation, it became clear to him that the strong missionary call could be combined with the kind of work he experienced with ENLACE’s training. For Williams this moment was “the step God used, the last link in the chain,” that combined his “desire to serve others” with his missionary calling. “ENLACE is the place where I can apply this [passion]” said Williams.

In April 2013, he began to serve as a church coach for ENLACE and could finally travel with other coaches throughout the Abelines and San Miguel region. After a few months of being a church coach, Williams stated, “I’m astonished at the poor conditions in which people can live...but their simplicity, their dedication, their loyalty to God and their passion to help others is incredible; to see all that in the midst of difficulties they face, in the midst of what we call poverty, they give and give from what they have.”

Williams received his Masters in Theology from the Assemblies of God Christian University with a specialization in Missions in 2017.

“ENLACE is the place where I can apply [my passion].”
Jhony Pérez Rosales is one of the youngest church coaches at ENLACE but his years of service in the church and devotion to his family have afforded him wisdom beyond his age.

He grew up in a Christian home. His parents have served as pastors in the Church of God for over twenty years. He has seven brothers and two sisters. (Two siblings have died.) His childhood was characterized by going to church, getting a strong education and living in communities that were battered by gangs and poverty. Despite the difficulties, Jhony’s parents led their church to reach out and serve the poor—even providing meals for boys coerced into and trapped in gang life.

While Jhony’s life of service has been meaningful, it has not been easy. He has lived in one of the most violent neighborhoods in El Salvador controlled by gangs where fear and risk are daily companions. For Jhony, even as he attended school or worked at a gas station, the dangers of robbery and assault were and are constantly real.

After a few years of choosing to play fútbol instead of going to church as a pre-teen, Jhony became more serious about his pastoral calling and began to serve with his father when he was 12 years old. He worked hard at his theological studies and is just one year shy of receiving his Master’s in Theology. (He hopes to complete his degree when the funds become available.) Over time, however, he came to believe that not only was Bible training necessary, but other tools were needed to be an effective pastor. To that end, he enrolled at the Universidad Tecnológica and has almost completed his degree in Psychology. During that time, he also became interested in ENLACE and its vision of the church.

According to Jhony, “I thought I was the only crazy one. I always wanted our churches to start really caring and working with the churches that had fewer resources. When I came to learn about ENLACE’s mission—this theoretical idea became real. In my church we built a house, helped students to attend university, and bought groceries for needy families. This is what I always liked to do. But with ENLACE this service is made systematic and integral to the church’s mission. I learned about it at the university and now I feel privileged to participate.”

Jhony joined the ENLACE staff in 2016. His wife, Jaqueline Teresa is finishing her degree in Education with a specialty in English. They live with her mother and niece.
I am grateful to my God for my new eco-stove! It has helped me quite a lot! First, it is saving wood. We don’t have to take the time to gather or buy it now. It lasts much longer. Second, my health has gotten so much better because the chimney carries the smoke outside.

A doctor had diagnosed me with a heart problem. He said that it was becoming very agitated from the smoke inside our house. He said that I was running the risk of having a heart attack. I knew it was grave, but I had no idea what I could do about it. I have to cook for my family. We all have to eat. We are very poor, and so we could not afford to buy a gas stove or the gas it takes to use it. I knew my children worried, but I also worried about them; they are my greatest treasure! I want to live to see my grandchildren. So I asked God to put a hand on my body, and I trusted him for a miracle.

When the church reached out to me, I was surprised! After they had surveyed our community, they told me that I was first on their list to receive an eco-stove. When everyone arrived with the materials and to help me with the construction, I was so happy to see the crowd that was visiting me. And after the eco-stove was built, they even cooked for me using the same comal [griddle] that I used before!

A month later I went to the doctor again, and he ran some tests. When the results came back, he was surprised! My heart was improving, and he said that I was free from the risk of attack. I could feel that my heart wasn’t agitated anymore. I told him that I was grateful to my God because an improved stove saved my life.