Community Reforestation

At the beginning of each year, project participants and other community members come together to build nurseries from seeds gathered from native trees throughout the area.

This community-based reforestation initiative is situated upon a critical watershed that feeds into Nicaragua’s most important estuaries, the Estero Real. This estuary is home to one of the biggest extensions of mangroves and migratory birds in the region, and has been recognized by the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance. By reforesting this region, the programme plays an important role in regulating the hydrological cycle, providing important water and biodiversity benefits both locally and internationally and improves the quality of life of smallholder farmers.

1.75 million USD community payments made to date
3,600 jobs per year
3.8 million trees planted

These aims will be achieved through the establishment of multiple small-scale native species forest plantations on smallholder land. Participants entering the project own underutilised land and must demonstrate that participating will not conflict with their subsistence activities, notably

Project type:
Land Use and Forestry

Project location:
San Juan de Limay and Somoto, Nicaragua

Project status:
In operation, credits available

Annual CO₂ reduction:
~70,000 t

Situation without project
Forest degradation, deforestation

Contribution to the SDGs

Awards

Impressions
cattle ranching and agriculture. The project area covers 86 square kilometres and will support rural communities desperately in need of support and incentives to take control of their resources. Nicaragua is the second poorest country in the Western Hemisphere with a GDP per capita income of $1,079 per year.

Land use planning around watersheds is a key supporting activity; the project area includes one of the most critical watersheds in the municipality of San Juan de Limay, which suffers from seasonal water shortages and flooding. Increased forest cover will retain water through the dry season and minimise flooding in the rainy season. The project will also distribute fuel-efficient fireplaces equipped with chimneys that reduce smoke in the household, generating health benefits, particularly for women.

**We hope to create solidarity among communities, provide opportunities for families to earn extra income, act as a role model for others and build environmental awareness among subsistence farmers.**

_Elsa Gonzales, Head Community Technician and Office manager Taking Roots Nicaragua_

The project addresses the causes of deforestation, ensures direct, ongoing community involvement and technical training, and provides financial benefits for participants throughout the project. This occurs through payments for ecosystem services (PES) and income from timber and sustainable forest products. As a result, this multi-faceted approach will reduce forest degradation by easing pressure on surrounding natural forest while at the same time sequester quantifiable volumes of CO₂ from the atmosphere and improve the environmental and socio-economic conditions of families located in the community of San Juan de Limay.

**Impact and benefits achieved so far:**

- 776 smallholder families have reforested an area of 2,200 ha, this equals 3,143 soccer fields.
- These families planted 3.8 million trees.
- 3,600 jobs per year, 88% of them are landless farmers
- 1.75 million USD paid to communities where people are living on less than $2/day
- An additional USD 781,352 will be dispersed to the same farmers for taking care of the trees in the next few years.
- 119 communities participating communities