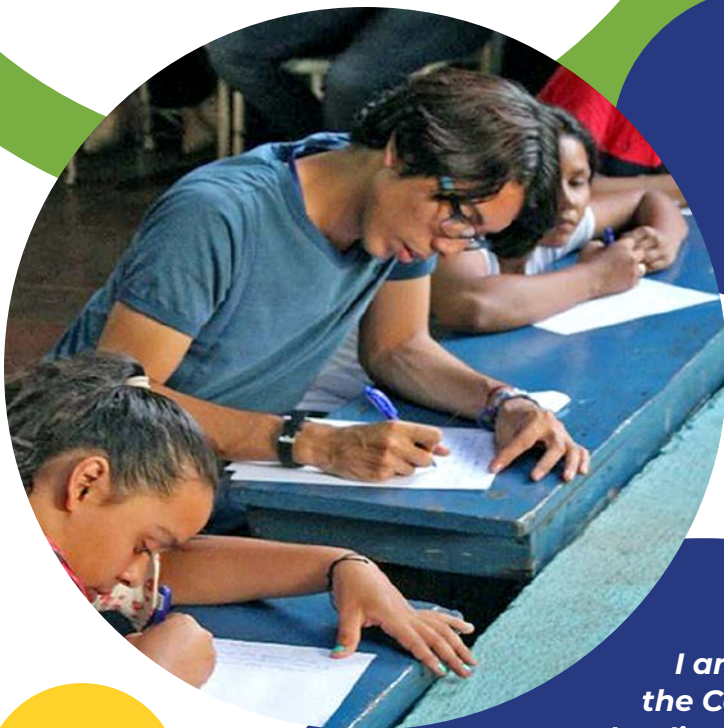




friends of  
**Batahola**  
Annual Report 2018



*I am grateful to the Center for the healing spaces that they opened to me during the 2018 sociopolitical crisis. Because of the workshops that they held, I was able to express my feelings, take a step back, and reflect. If I didn't have that kind of support, I don't know where I'd be right now. But here I am, working, studying, and looking towards the future.*

— Mauricio

# A Year of Sharing in 2018

## Education Program

"I was anxious when I first started volunteering with adolescents at the Center. I'm very shy and get nervous speaking in public," shared Victor, an accounting major and one of **68 students** from families in vulnerable situations who form part of the **Scholarship Program**. During their time in the program, the students must maintain at least a B average and do some volunteer work to hone their leadership skills. Now, Victor exudes self-confidence: "I now know myself and recognize my skill sets. I feel capable and confident."



**Two hundred children, youth, and adult readers visited CCBN's Community Library** in 2018. While many schools and universities shut their doors, the Center remained open as a safe space for children to play, read, and study. Eliut, a member of the library's **Book Club**, visits the space every afternoon: "I

like to do my homework, study, and read mystery books. I really enjoy spending time in the library and sharing with my friends." In addition to the Book Club, the library also hosted two weekly afternoon sessions: **Good Study Habits and Techniques** with **40 children** and an **Afterschool Study Program** with **25 adolescents**.



"I learn new techniques at every Cosmetology class and yet know that I still have so much more to learn," shared María, one of **157 students** who garnered income-generating skills through 13 different technical courses in the **Center's Women's Education Program**. "I appreciate how the Center encourages me and I thank God that I have this opportunity to learn."



When Cinthya signed her child up for the Center's **Scholarship Program**, she didn't realize it would transform her life as well. She is one of **54 parents and guardians** with children in the scholarship program who receive workshops on healthy eating, emotional regulation, and child care. "Throughout these 10 months I learned how to recognize and healthily express my emotions. I now value myself as a person. My life has changed in every aspect."

**Twenty-one students**, including Virginia, graduated from the Center's **Basic Adult Education** course last November. Because of economic hardship and issues within her home, Virginia had never before been able to pursue an education, instead dedicating herself to caring for her siblings. However, because of her persistence and dedication, Virginia successfully completed her elementary school degree and is hoping to start working towards her high school degree. She dreams of working in information technology in the future.



## Arts and Culture Program

"When I'm in my guitar class, I learn new songs, different techniques, and guitar maintenance, all while having fun with my teacher and classmates," says eight-year-old Harrinton, one of the **88 children and adolescents** in the **CCBN's Arts Program**.



**Eighteen adolescents, 11 college students, and 25 mothers** attended **seven workshops**

that focused on processing the sociopolitical crisis. These workshops created safe spaces where everyone was free to explore their feelings, listen to others, and learn how to take care of themselves during these troublesome times.



## Integrity Program

“As women, we are regarded as worthless and are forced to stay at home,” reflects María José who is one of **197 beneficiaries** participating in CCBN and Trócaire’s “**We the Heroines of Our Lives, Families and Communities Program.**” “The psychologists help us raise our self-esteem, showing us that we are worthy and important. I have learned to love myself and stand up against violence towards myself or my children.”



The Center’s and Trócaire’s “We the Heroines of Our Lives, Families and Communities Program” also holds workshops on **new masculinities**. **Ninety men** have come together to reflect on what it means to be a man in today’s world. Carlos, one of the participants in the program, ruminated on how he had learned that “it is just that we divide household duties equally.”

**Twenty-five women** participated in the **United for our Emotional and Physical Security Project** that focused on self-knowledge, self-respect, and self-esteem. The women visualized how these new realizations could be applied to their daily lives, opening a path for them to participate in spaces of decision making and social impact in the future.

Two workshops called **Gender and My Personal Story** were held with **11 adolescents** to reflect on gender roles and how these affect social, political, and economic inequality.

The **Integrity Program** facilitated hour-long safe spaces within **10 technical courses** at the Center where students were able to recognize their emotions that were brought on because of the sociopolitical crisis. **One hundred and one students** expressed themselves and formed circles of trust.



# Thank You

## The Cultural Center of Batahola Norte Thrives

It is hard to believe that it has been 18 months since the political crisis started on April 18th, 2018. The good news is that the Center not only survived but is thriving, thanks in no small part to the generosity of our donors who came through during our emergency fundraising campaign. The Center was able to stay open because of this financial support and the administration's and staff's incredible courage, determination and vision.

This newsletter is filled with amazing stories illustrating how the Center continues to provide an environment that educates and empowers its students. As the unemployment rate soars the Center's enrollment has grown. The administration has adjusted the hours, added more psychological support and safe spaces for the children to meet the current needs.

Many nonprofits have left Nicaragua following the political upheaval and grants are few and far between. We are so blessed to have donors like you that have faith that the Center will be there for generations, carrying on the vision of Sr. Margie and Fr. Angel that a New Dawn will come.

## Peace and Blessings,

*Pat Berning and Sue Keefe, Board of Directors Co-Presidents, Friends of Batahola*

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## The Sister Margie and Father Angel Legacy Circle

These are donors who have remembered the Friends of Batahola in their estate planning. The board members of Friends of Batahola are proud to have arrived at this point, when we can be assured the endowment will see the needs of the Cultural Center of Batahola Norte well into the future. (If you have remembered us in your estate plans, please let us know so we can add your name to this circle. If you would like more information about a legacy gift please contact us.)

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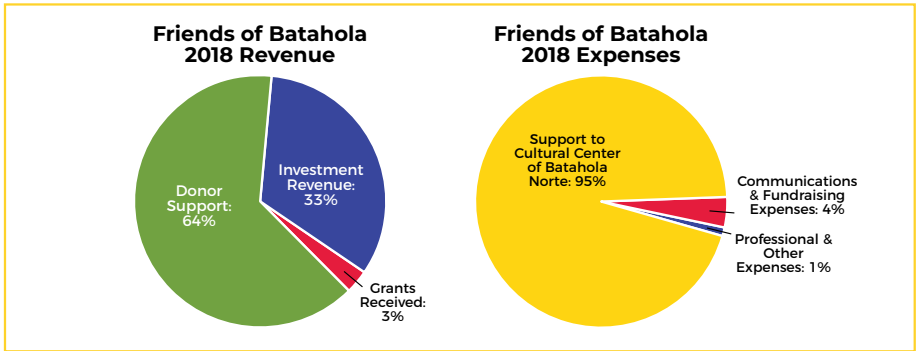
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We use the professional services of a CPA to prepare our 990 tax report. Ninety-seven percent of donations go to the direct support of the Cultural Center of Batahola Norte. All board members are volunteers, and there is no paid staff.



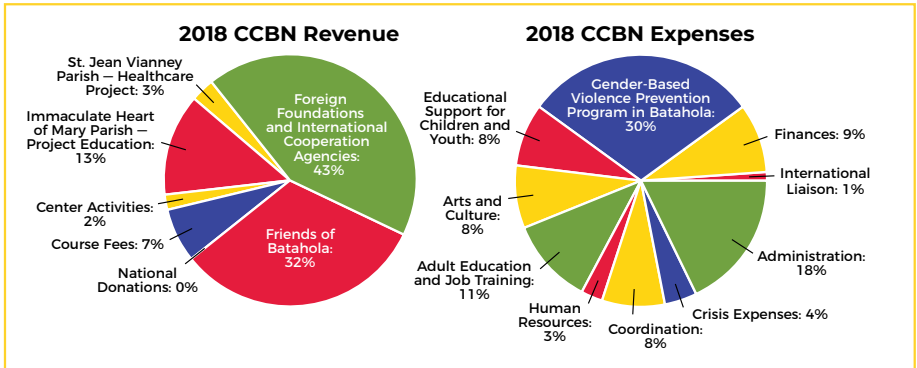
### Vision Statement

The Friends of Batahola (FOB) are inspired by the vision of the Cultural Center of Batahola Norte (CCBN) founders, Sr. Margie Navarro, CSJ, and Fr. Angel Torrellas, OP, and will continue their mission of empowering the people of Nicaragua.

### Mission Statement

Friends of Batahola supports, sustains and promotes the CCBN in Managua, Nicaragua, through prayer, financial assistance, solidarity and building community, thereby responding to the call of the Gospel.

The CCBN is an oasis in the midst of Nicaragua’s many challenges. The Friends of Batahola are committed to the on-going support of the CCBN through friendship, prayer, solidarity and financial support, as the CCBN works to educate and empower people from Batahola and more than 140 neighborhoods of Managua, Nicaragua.



We're on the Web...



friendsofbatahola.org · bataholavolunteers.wordpress.com · Facebook: Friends of Batahola

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