



## Las Mariitas, Nicaragua

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Flor de María Cruz Montoya, a 43-year-old housewife, is one of the hundreds of women in Las Mariitas who devoted hours daily to collecting water on behalf of their families. When their primary water source—an open well—ran dry, women had to return to walking long distances to fetch water from rivers, streams, or hand-dug wells. “The open well we depended on dried up and no longer provided water, so we had to turn to other sources. It became very difficult to walk long distances to access water,” she recalled. Women’s daily resilience was rewarded with illness as these unsafe water sources, which were exposed to insects, animal feces, dirt, rain, and harmful bacteria, caused serious waterborne diseases.

Thinking back on the impacts of unsafe water on her community, Flor de María shared, “Bathing and preparing food required using water from hand-dug wells, which was poor quality water and caused many health problems in our families. Yet, we had to rely on it due to water scarcity.” This crisis resulted in lost time, missed opportunities, increased absenteeism, unrelenting disease, expensive medical bills, and declining income.

Still, residents refused to give in to hopelessness. The Lord honored their faithfulness through Living Water International’s work. The Living Water Nicaragua team drilled a new borehole and installed a hand pump so that safe water flows freely for these 350 residents. Then, they equipped community members with life-saving sanitation and hygiene skills.

Flor de María sees this hand pump as a blessing from God and a symbol of progress. Envisioning her community’s bright future, she declared, “A lot will change now that this borehole exists. One day, we will be able to expand to a piped water system and have access to safe water directly in our homes.”



Since this open well ran dry, residents rely on hand-dug wells, rivers, or streams for all their water needs. These sources are unsafe, causing illness.



This man has peace of mind now that he and his family have reliable safe water easily accessible, protecting them from waterborne diseases!