Bienvenidos a Casa Congo
Empowering communities for sustainable development.
El Astillero, Nicaragua, 01/01/2021.
Our Journey

Casa Congo scaled organically thanks to passionate entrepreneurs, philanthropic supporters & local community advocacy. Today, our NGO operates a 1000 sqm conservation school in El Astillero, Nicaragua.

2017
Community engagement & land acquisition
Funds raised: $75k
Local students + volunteers: 5

2018
School construction & pilot programs
Funds raised: $22k
Local students + volunteers: 60

2019
First year full operations
Funds raised: $34k
Local students + volunteers 180

2020
COVID-19 & hurricane IOTA
Funds raised: $38k
Local students + volunteers: 150

2021
Growth & resilience focus
Funds raised: $62k (target)
Local students + volunteers: 200 (target)
Vision

We dream of scaling the Casa Congo model to regenerate the Nicaraguan region and other global socio-ecological systems.

Community Landmark
An eco-destination for students & families to come together.

Regional Restoration & Conservation
Regeneration of the Meso-American biological corridor.

Program Best Practice
A certified, scalable and experiential curriculum.

Financial & Operational Autonomy
100% owned and managed by the local community.
Community Based Conservation

A circular model where education & economic incentives drive environmental conservation & community development.
Programs

Our program tree was developed in collaboration with the community of El Astillero and designed to provide outcomes in education, research and services. All branches combine environmental conservation with socio-economic impact.

**Agroecology**
Education in sustainable agricultural practices and ecosystem restoration.
1. Agroecology Education
2. Food Sovereignty
3. Ecological Restoration
4. Watershed Management

**Built Environments**
Learn solutions for regenerative development through the use of natural materials.
1. Regenerative Design
2. Bioconstruction
3. Capacity Building
4. Energy & Waste

**Conservation**
Experiential learning in land and ocean conservation, sociology and policy.
1. Sea Turtles
2. Fisheries
3. Forestry
4. Scientific Research

**Community Development**
A combination of learning modules, social projects, events and creative activities.
1. Participatory Design
2. Ecotourism & Social Enterprise
3. Local Sports Club
4. Arts & Culture
Impact

Measuring program outcomes for the community and tracking “impact for money” for sponsors*.

28,500 turtles saved
15,000 trees planted
3,000 Kg of waste removed

40,000 hours of local employment
240+ local students
100+ international volunteers

4 scientific research projects
3 social artworks
100 community events

* cumulative impact metrics measured since July 2017 via Casa Congo’s “program KPI tracker” with ongoing inputs from local and international team members.
2021 Objectives

Casa Congo’s 2021 roadmap is informed by local demographic surveys & participatory planning with the community.

Priorities

Community wellbeing and programs
Infrastructure for climate change resilience
Economic and operational local autonomy
Sustainable growth and scalability

Programs

Enhance the women agroecology group with a focus on watershed projects and reforestation.

Build a seed nursery, improve the school facilities and setup a bamboo housing factory.

Expand the school curriculum and create more research and employment opportunities.

Extend public engagements to neighbouring communities and grow workshop participants.
2021 Opportunities

Casa Congo is proposing 4 key projects that will have the highest socio-environmental impact in 2021.

Las Flores
Engage over 100 communities members & Farmers for workshops and restoration projects
Budget: $12,000 (2021 opex)

Bamboo Social Housing Factory
130 x houses/year for homeless families and create a bioconstruction social enterprise managed by the locals
Budget: $65,000 (spin-off project, additional capex)

Ecology 2.0
Expand program to 60 more local students, employ 4 & start a turtle nursery in La Flor National Park
Budget: $13,150 (2021 opex)

School Operations and Upgrades
Enhanced facilities, equipment, staff, events and local logistics supporting 140+ students and volunteers
Budget: $29,850 (2021 opex)
Sources & uses of school funds

Maximizing money for impact thanks to a lean international overhead and established local community programs.

2021 Operating Budget: $55,000

- 92% (International Manhours)
- 8% (Admin Expense)
- 0% (Sources & uses of school funds)

8% for Administration & Marketing Expenses is substantially lower than the global NGO average.

International team (18 people) provides approx. 6,000 hours / year of manpower as in-kind donations.

This budget excludes capital works and major infrastructure projects (eg. bamboo factory).

Figures are in USD.

2021 Fundraising Target: $62,000

- 39% (To raise)
- 61% (Raised)

Thanks to Fondazione Ermotti and our Xmas Merchandising Campaign, we have already raised 61% of the total funds needed for 2021.

Casa Congo looks forward to raising the remaining 39% through partnerships, student collaborations, ecotourism / volunteering and sponsorships.

Casa Congo targets fundraising ~10% above the annual budget to cover unforeseen events. If it’s not spent, this contingency is then reinvested in the school.
Core Team

Trusted local community leaders, global social entrepreneurs & senior advisors.

Manuel Cortez
School President

Anielka Aguirre
Agroecology Coordinator

Daniela Lopez
Project Coordinator

Edwin Berroteran
Surf & Ocean Conservation

Alberto Calero
Safety & Carpentry

Gema Bonilla
School Teacher

Luca Marsaglia
Conservation Director

Sol Lewites
Built Environments Director

Tommaso Bellelli
Head of Growth / CFO

Nicholas Kaspereck
Managing Director

Lucas Worsdell
Agroecology Director

Federico Spagnuoli
Project Manager

Xavier Flores
Board Director, Strategy

Arianna Molino
Board Director, Operations

Gabriel Nagy
Board Director, Built Environments

Harry Whitcher
Board Director, Governance

Eva Franch i Gilabert
Board Director, Pedagogy

Shariq Khan
Board Director, Partnerships
How can you help Casa Congo?

We’re looking for people who share our vision for sustainable development.

**Partnership models**
- Sponsor a program
- Sponsor a specific project opportunity
- Academic & research collaborations
- Volunteering in Nicaragua
- Business ESG alliances
- Mentorship
- PR & awareness
- Content & product collabs

**Collaboration highlights since 2017**

![Logos of collaboration partners, including MARENA, Rockflower, National Geographic, and ESMT Berlin.]
Join the Movement!

Website: www.casacono.org
Social: @casaconoconservation
Contact: hola@casacono.org