Nicaragua ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in 2007. In 2016, the MOH reinforced the Todos Con Voz program, which entails, among others, visiting persons with disabilities to monitor their health and update the national statistics.

In 1993, MoveAbility took over the ICRC’s support for the Centro Nacional de Producción de Ayudas Técnicas y Elementos Ortoprotésicos (CENAPRORTO) – now known as the Hospital Nacional de Rehabilitación Aldo Chavarría in Managua (the Aldo Chavarría Hospital) – which is run by the Ministry of Health (MOH).

We set up a regional office in Managua in 2000. As the MOH began to decentralize its free physical rehabilitation services, we started to assist its satellite centers in La Trinidad and Bilwi in 2010 and 2012 respectively.

We have also supported the Centro de Capacidades Diferentes (CAPADIFE) in Managua and Walking Unidos in León since 2004; these centers are run by the Fundación para la Rehabilitación Walking Unidos (FURWUS). The NGO Los Pipitos engages in advocacy efforts, and identifies and refers children in need of prostheses/orthoses. In 2016, we began to work with the Physiotherapy department of the Instituto Politécnico de la Salud “Luis Felipe Moncada” (POLISAL) of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua (UNAN).

As of the time of writing, the degradation of the socio-political context and the associated climate of violence have slowed the implementation of MoveAbility’s support in Nicaragua.

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KEY FACTS & FIGURES

POPULATION

6,218,000

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

~620,000

CAUSE OF DISABILITIES (MOBILITY, SELF-CARE, VISION)

Non-communicable diseases; Communicable, maternal, neonatal, and nutritional diseases; injuries

UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (UNCRPD)

2007

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX (HDI)

158/188

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MOVEABILITY’S PARTNERS IN NICARAGUA*

- Centro de Capacidades Diferentes (CAPADIFE), Managua
- Centro Nacional de Producción de Ayudas Técnicas y Elementos Ortoprotésicos (CENAPRORTO), Managua
- Cruz Roja Nicaraguense (CRN)
- Fundación para la Rehabilitacion Walking Unidos (FURWUS), Leon
- Laboratorio de Protesis y Ortesis, Puerto Cabezas Hospital, Bilwi
- Los Pipitos, Managua
- La Trinidad Hospital Workshop, La Trinidad
- Instituto Politécnico de la Salud “Luis Felipe Moncada” (UNAN-POLISAL)
- Walking Unidos (WU), Leon

*Presented in alphabetical order

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1 Source: World Bank data
2 Source: https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/statistics/
3 Source: http://www.healthdata.org/nicaragua
4 Ratification of the UNCRPD
A NEW SIGHT OF THE WORLD

Melania Parrales was only one year old when she severely burned her feet walking on blazing embers that were used in the family kitchen. Due to their difficult economic situation, her parents could not pay for adequate care in time and both of Melania’s feet had to be amputated.

When this unfortunate accident happened in 1953, the prostheses were not yet manufactured in Nicaragua, which meant that Melania had to move on her knee since she was a baby.

Life is difficult for Melania, who has to work in the markets selling spices to support herself. Although she had 11 children, their financial situation does not allow them to help her. She therefore goes to work every day by moving on her knees.

She emphasizes: “My children have their own families, I do not want to be a burden to anyone, I can still work and earn a living. I don’t want to beg to survive and I prefer to work. As long as I can, I will continue to go to the market every day.”

It is only now, at the age of 66, that she received her very first prosthesis. She was cared for by Rafael Bermudez, who had just graduated as Prosthetist/orthostist category II at the UDB, thanks to a MoveAbility grant. Melania was fully supported and accompanied to take her initial steps. For the first time she was standing up.

Despite her prostheses, Melania often continues to move on her knees. She explains: “I’ve been moving like this all my life, that’s all I know. I still need a little more time to adjust and above all I have to get used to a new way of seeing the world.”

Our approach in Nicaragua

Strengthen national physical rehabilitation services

From 2019 to 2021, we will prioritize working to help the authorities in Nicaragua bolster national physical rehabilitation services. We will support the MOH and the physical rehabilitation entity under its auspices, the centers under its supervision, and its program Todos con Voz with various forms of financial and technical assistance – for example, training for technicians and support in purchasing raw materials and components.

MoveAbility will similarly support the UNAN-POLISAL in strengthening its capacities and work with them, in collaboration with the Nicaraguan Red Cross, to carry out surveys of beneficiary satisfaction and assessments of quality of services at physical rehabilitation centers. To help ensure particularly economically vulnerable persons with disabilities have access to services at FURWUS, we will help reimburse their costs and, after 2019, explore ways to continue providing support to this end.
**MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS**

**NATIONAL PLAN**
With MoveAbility’s help, an entity under the authority of the Ministry of Health (MOH) was established to oversee national physical rehabilitation services.

**EDUCATION AND TRAINING**
Two technicians from the Centro Nacional de Producción de Ayudas Técnicas y Elementos Ortoprotésicos (CENAPRORTO) and 1 from the Fundación para la Rehabilitacion Walking Unidos (FURWUS) successfully completed their courses at UDB. We continued supporting students from Nicaragua pursuing degrees at the University of Don Bosco (UDB) in El Salvador and technicians from local service providers taking distance learning modules and short courses offered by UDB in collaboration with MoveAbility.

We facilitated meetings among the Instituto Politécnico de la Salud “Luis Felipe Moncada” (UNAN-POLISAL), the University of El Salvador (UES), other Universities of the region and with the participation of the Maastricht University enabling the universities to exchange their experiences and best practices, for example regarding curricula.

**ACCESS TO SERVICES**
Particularly economically vulnerable patients at the CAPADIFE and Walking Unidos received prosthetic and orthotic devices; we provided support to both organizations. Some of these patients also obtained physiotherapy from FURWUS, or were given financial assistance by MoveAbility to help cover their transport or accommodation costs.

**BENEFICIARY STATISTICS 2016–2018**

**PEOPLE WHO RECEIVED SERVICES FROM OUR PARTNERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>2,535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2,571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>1,651</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BREAKDOWN OF PEOPLE WHO RECEIVED SERVICES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ASSISTIVE DEVICES PROVIDED BY OUR PARTNERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Prostheses</th>
<th>Orthoses</th>
<th>Crutches</th>
<th>Wheelchairs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>682</td>
<td>1,221</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>1,447</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>927</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Services include: prosthetics and orthotics, physiotherapy, other rehabilitation services and consultations.
2. The final beneficiaries data as reported by the partners in the field.
3. As reported in October 2018, extrapolated to year end.
OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED IMPACT FOR 2019-2021

By the end of the reporting period covered by this document, in 2021, we aim to have contributed to the following objectives:

NATIONAL PLAN

- The MOH, including the physical rehabilitation entity under its authority and its program Todos con Voz, continue their work with some support from MoveAbility; they participate in exchanges or forums with practitioners in other Latin American countries
- New procedures and/or tools related to the registration and certification of persons with disabilities are ready for implementation by the MOH

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- Service providers in the physical rehabilitation sector in Nicaragua – including technicians working to obtain diplomas recognized by the International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics (ISPO), and professionals working under the MOH – bolster their capacities
- The National Autonomous University of Nicaragua (UNAN) improves its capacities to manage physiotherapy training, and revises its curriculum

QUALITY OF SERVICES

- Centers supported by MoveAbility are able to offer improved services, following field visits (e.g. of MoveAbility’s physiotherapy adviser, prosthetics/orthotics teachers from the University Don Bosco Prosthetics and Orthotics School (UDB), Centro Nacional de Producción de Ayudas Técnicas y Elementos Ortoprotésicos (CENAPRORTO)) and hands-on professional practice
- During 2019, MoveAbility, with the Nicaraguan Red Cross (NRC) and Instituto Politécnico de la Salud “Luis Felipe Moncada” (UNAN-POLISAL), assesses beneficiaries’ satisfaction and rehabilitation center’s service quality

ACCESS TO SERVICES

- Centers run by the MOH (e.g. rehabilitation centers, CENAPRORTO and its satellite centers) are able to purchase raw materials and components needed to provide good-quality services
- In 2019, economically vulnerable persons with disabilities, including children are able to receive services from Fundación para la Rehabilitacion Walking Unidos (FURWUS) subsidized by MoveAbility

MANAGEMENT CAPACITIES

- MoveAbility partner organizations improve their capacities, thanks to a program implemented by Moveability in collaboration with the Hermano Miguel Foundation (FMH), in 2019
- The authorities use a national database (for statistics on physical rehabilitation service patients, and implement this database in all their centers)

1 The budget is indicative and is subject to income received.