



# EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABILITY

JANUARY 2010 | vol 2 issue 1

## NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### Happy New Year from EOS International!

It is exciting to be sharing our second newsletter with you to catch you up on all that has happened since our last was written in May '09. We have since welcomed new members to our staff, sent two groups down to Nicaragua, and made significant progress with our drip irrigation systems and fuel-efficient ovens. Expanding our drip irrigation project and obtaining our 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status were the two biggest accomplishments of 2009.

After installing a 50 square meter drip irrigation demonstration system in San Jose, Nicaragua last March, two local farmers approached Wes Meier, our Nicaragua Country Director, about investing in a larger system for their own land. In four months we designed and installed the two systems; each ten times larger than the initial system! We continue to install smaller plots and focus on improving system design while lowering the initial cost.

Obtaining 501(c)(3) status was high on our priority list as this makes donations to EOS tax-deductible and thus, more attractive to prospective donors. Thanks to the time and legal expertise of Christine Mohr and Kelly Smith of Davis McGrath LLC our initial request was approved and this status was granted back in June. It was a major step forward for EOS as we continue our efforts to improve the lives of people living in poverty with appropriate technology solutions.

One challenge that consumed many staff hours last year was narrowing and refining our focus. Our initial mission was purposefully left broad and open to interpretation but in time, this lack of clarity made it difficult to make decisions about potential projects and left us unable to fundraise effectively. We now press forward with the mission of using appropriate technology solutions to create economic opportunities for people living in poverty.

The year ahead brings new challenges and opportunities for us. Wes finishes his Peace Corps service in November 2010 and we plan to hire a local technician to support our projects beyond Wes' tenure in Nicaragua. We are striving to fill this position by May to give Wes six months to train the technician. We also hope to add officers, board members, and volunteers to the EOS team in order to help us manage our growing workload. Specific position openings are further explained in our *2010 EOS Wish List* section. It will be an exciting year, and if you are interested in joining the EOS team, please contact me at [gregory.mcgrath@eosintl.org](mailto:gregory.mcgrath@eosintl.org).

Feliz año nuevo (Happy new year),  
Greg McGrath  
Executive Director



Here Greg is mixing up the mortar before the construction of a fuel-efficient oven in Nicaragua.

# VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

## EOS Wish List for 2010

After one year of operation, EOS has a whole host of needs that must be met in order for us to become the organization we are striving to be. Below are descriptions of areas in which we need volunteer support in 2010. Are you able to assist EOS in any of the areas below? Do you know anyone who has an interest in one of these areas or who is looking for a rewarding volunteer opportunity? If so, please contact our executive director at [gregory.mcgrath@eosintl.org](mailto:gregory.mcgrath@eosintl.org). Helping us fill these needs will provide more opportunities for EOS International to combat poverty in the developing world.



EOS is always looking for volunteers to help support our project teams and/or to participate on trips to Nicaragua. In the picture above, EOS volunteers stand in front of a fuel-efficient oven that they built in three hours. If you're interested in getting involved, please contact our Executive Director at [gregory.mcgrath@eosintl.org](mailto:gregory.mcgrath@eosintl.org).

### \*\*\* CPA/TAX PROFESSIONAL \*\*\* (TIME-SENSITIVE NEED!!)

– Our fiscal year ended on December 31st; therefore our taxes are due April 15th. We need someone to assist us in our filing. EOS has not had to file previously, so this person would ideally be familiar with tax Form 990 and non-profit tax in general.

**Board Members** – EOS International is looking to expand and diversify our board of directors. We are looking for leaders that are passionate about the EOS mission and are willing to support us with your time, access to your personal network, and/or financially. The time commitment for a board member is estimated at 3-5 hours per month.

**Officers and Staff Members** – In order to keep up with the demands of a growing organization, EOS needs more day-to-day support to achieve our goals this year. We hope to fill an officer position as well as three newly created staff positions. Officer roles require 5 or more hours per week and program coordinator positions will require 3-5 hours per week.

### Officer opening

• **Director of Operations** – This person will manage existing development projects and explore new opportunities for EOS.

### New program coordinator positions

- **Volunteer Coordinator** – This person will identify and promote new volunteer opportunities, coordinate existing volunteer efforts, set up group trips, and manage our database of interested volunteers.
- **PR Coordinator** – Working with the Executive Director, this person will coordinate all public relations aspects of EOS. This will include (but not be limited to) managing the EOS newsletter series, updating social networking tools, and seeking out opportunities for increased visibility both inside and out of the field of international development.
- **Fundraising Coordinator** – Working with the Finance Director, this person will help identify fundraising opportunities, coordinate fundraising efforts, plan/host fundraisers, and search out/coordinate writing applicable grants. The ideal applicant would have experience with the writing of grant applications, although this is not required for the position.

# NICARAGUA PROJECT UPDATE

We started 2009 with hopes of making a difference in Nicaragua. After having a year to understand our role and to develop projects, we are taking momentum into 2010 and have set specific goals around our three projects: drip irrigation systems, fuel-efficient ovens, and biodigesters. We is leading our efforts on the ground and has engaged and energized Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) in multiple locations throughout the country to install these technologies, creating opportunities for more Nicaraguans and increasing the impact of EOS.



Six members of the EOS team stand proudly with the students of a school in Palmar Sur, Nicaragua after working together to install a drip irrigation system on their school grounds. This system will be used to teach students about agriculture and the importance of water conservation while introducing this technology to an entire village.

We came a long way in 2009. Here are a few highlights to show where we started the year, the progress made, and our goals for a strong 2010.

## Where We Were

- » Learning the basics of drip irrigation
- » Determining our focus as an organization

## Where We Are

- » Installed seven drip irrigation systems and built 22 fuel-efficient ovens in 2009
- » Teaching PCVs about drip irrigation and how to install a system
- » Utilizing Peace Corps network in Nicaragua to install technologies in more villages

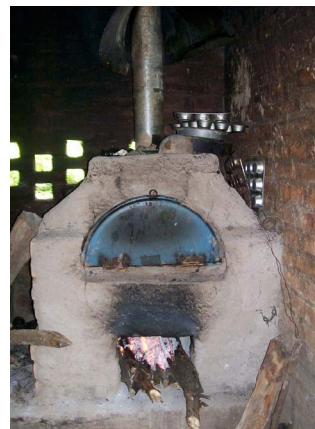
## Where We're Going

- » Install 50 drip irrigation systems and build 100 fuel-efficient ovens this year
- » Construct 20 biodigesters for a co-op in El Valle de San Antonio, Nicaragua
- » Hire a Nicaraguan technician to continue technology installations
- » Develop a micro-loan program for farmers pursuing drip irrigation

Visit [www.eosintl.org/projects](http://www.eosintl.org/projects) to learn more about our work in Nicaragua.



Members of a women's co-op in San Jose, Nicaragua prepare cookies to be baked in their fuel-efficient oven that EOS built. They meet twice a week to bake, giving them a social outlet and a source of income, as their products have been successful selling at market.



This is the fuel-efficient oven EOS is building. It costs \$45, takes three hours to build, and uses 75% less fuel than traditional oven designs.



This biodigester, installed by EOS, removes a family's dependence on cooking with solid fuels. They convert manure to biogas and produce up to five hours of gas for cooking per day. Each system costs \$130.]

## SHARING THE “WEALTH”

*Empower* and *collaborate* are two verbs central to the core of EOS International. We strive to empower people living in poverty and collaborate with a variety of groups to engage the end-users of our technologies and achieve greater success. In Nicaragua, EOS is working with farmers, co-ops, Peace Corps Volunteers, local agriculture and micro-finance organizations, and elementary schools on current projects. Two of our collaborative efforts are described below in further detail.



Lindsay is one of many Peace Corps Volunteers that are helping promote our drip irrigation project by installing systems in the Nicaraguan villages where they live. They are introducing this technology to rural farmers as a low-cost opportunity to increase income while helping EOS reach more parts of the country.



Patrick (lower left) is a Peace Corps Volunteer who helped EOS install a drip irrigation system at an elementary school in the village where he lives. Here he is showing students how to connect part of the system. We talked with them about the benefits of drip irrigation and engaged them during installation to give them a sense of ownership of the system that will remain in their schoolyard.

## FINANCE UPDATE

Almost \$1,000 was raised as a result of the generosity of our members after our initial newsletter was sent out in May '09. To date, EOS International has raised over \$7,000 to support our projects in Nicaragua. Donations from supporters like you are what allow EOS International to continue to pursue our vision of empowering people in the developing world to find a means to end their poverty. EOS is incredibly thankful for the generosity that has already been shown to our young organization.

In 2010, EOS plans to further expand our operations in Nicaragua in order to keep progressing towards our goal of alleviating poverty. We can only do this with the financial support of generous people who share in our belief that appropriate technology can be used to break this cycle. A donation of as little as \$25 will provide the basic components for a drip irrigation that will allow a small family to begin lifting themselves out of poverty by raising and selling vegetables during the dry season.

**Checks can be made payable to EOS International and sent to:**

**EOS International  
c/o Joseph Lamusga  
454 East North Street #301  
Indianapolis, IN 46202**

Donations can also be done securely online through PayPal® or Google Checkout®. Please visit [www.eosintl.org/donate](http://www.eosintl.org/donate) or contact [donations@eosintl.org](mailto:donations@eosintl.org) for more information.

**Please consider making a donation to EOS International today!**

## INSIDE EOS – VOLUNTEER TESTIMONIALS

Learn about what it's like to volunteer with EOS as Lando Roberts and Chris Ludwig share their experiences traveling to and working with EOS in Nicaragua



### Lando Roberts

“I met Greg McGrath and Wes Meier during my time at Iowa State University. I was really impressed by their motivation, passion and commitment to start their own NGO (EOS) after graduating from ISU. I

kept in touch with them over the years and eagerly tracked the progress of EOS. When I found out they were looking for volunteers for their inaugural trip to Nicaragua in March 2009, I enthusiastically offered my services. I had just been reading Out of Poverty by Paul Polak which features some of the ideas and practices of drip irrigation for small plot farmers. EOS was going to be working with a community to help install such systems. It was an exciting and productive trip.

Last October, I volunteered yet again to go to the same community and essentially scale up the installation of drip irrigation systems for a couple of farmers and other communities that had become interested in our work back in March. We also had the opportunity to help build an innovative stove that used less firewood and produced less smoke to help families start up businesses selling baked goods. All in all, these trips were eye opening and life changing trips for me. EOS is an organization you can team up with, travel to developing countries, and make meaningful contributions to the communities that they work in. If you have a chance to volunteer with EOS, don't pass it up.”



### Chris Ludwig

“Hi, I am an engineer working in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. In mid-2009, a colleague invited me to an EOS presentation. The presentation notes contained information about sustainable engineering, which sounded very

interesting to me. I attended the presentation, and decided to correspond with Greg McGrath, the EOS presenter, about possibly working with him in the future on some of his sustainable engineering projects with EOS. After a few months, I learned of a trip that Greg was planning to travel to Nicaragua to work on some small-scale irrigation projects. I asked if I could join them, and ended up going and helping with the projects.

I greatly enjoyed traveling to Nicaragua, meeting some of the people, and seeing the beautiful countryside. The projects that we worked on were worthwhile and well planned. A lot was learned during our first projects, and the education will improve the outcome of future projects in my opinion. The EOS leaders seem very committed to the concept of sustainable engineering. They strive to help the farmer by partially funding the irrigation system cost. This gives him a vested interest in the success of the system. I have continued to be involved with EOS after returning from the trip. I look forward to hearing news of farmers with their dry season crops being harvested.”

## GET TO KNOW THE EOS STAFF

There are two new faces that joined the EOS staff in 2009. David Lohry is the Project Manager for our Drip Irrigation Project Team and Kelli Todd is serving as the Assistant Director of Operations. Learn more about them below.



### Kelli Todd

Originally from Sioux City, Iowa, Kelli obtained her bachelor's degree in English Literature from Iowa State University in 2006. During her academic career, Kelli gained a deep passion for traveling and learning about global issues while studying abroad in Alicante, Spain. Upon graduation, Kelli managed a medical spa in North Carolina that spurred her interest in health policy, and she is currently pursuing graduate school in public policy beginning in fall 2010. Wanting to combine her experiences and passion in making a positive impact in developing countries, Kelli became an active member of EOS. Kelli is serving as the Assistant Director of Operations and assists in organizing the infrastructure for further growth and aids in developing ideas for spreading awareness. Working with EOS, Kelli has been able to collaborate with other members who are also passionate about making a difference in improving the quality of life of those in developing countries and is continually learning about relevant, global issues. Kelli is also excited about the opportunities to travel internationally with EOS and is hoping to visit Nicaragua in early 2010.



### David Lohry

David Lohry joined EOS International in June 2009 and is currently serving as Project Manager for the Drip Irrigation installations in Nicaragua. After graduating from Iowa State University in Chemical Engineering, David went to work for Tate and Lyle where he helped engineer and manage the startup of an energy efficient process for fuel grade ethanol production. After seeing the technological improvements and emphasis on energy conservation in manufacturing facilities, David is excited in bringing these core values to developing countries.

## HELP MAKE 2010 A SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR NICARAGUA

**Nicaragua is the second poorest country in the western hemisphere. Get involved with EOS today to do your part.**

EOS needs to fill positions on our volunteer staff and will require increased financial contributions to meet the demands of the growing needs in Nicaragua as well as the needs of our growing organization. Contact us at [info@eosintl.org](mailto:info@eosintl.org) to learn more about how you can help and visit us on the web at [www.eosintl.org](http://www.eosintl.org) to stay up to date with how EOS International is making an impact in the developing world!

