

CONCIENTIZACIÓN: UN COMPROMISO COLECTIVO



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LOCATION: Nicaragua, Catarina

Nicaragua is the largest country in Central America. According to the World Bank its population was of 6.15 millions by 2016. Spanish is the official language, however in the Autonomous Regions other languages are spoken including *Garífuna, Rama, English Creole, Miskito, Guatuso*, and so forth. Tourism is considered the second largest industry in Nicaragua. **Catarina**, the city I was placed is located in the department of Masaya. Its population is of 8,350 including urban and rural areas.

Community Partner

El Puente COOP is composed of 22 members including women, men, youth and elders. I worked directly with all members and their families. Also, I worked indirectly with local partner institutions including public school, library, Baptist church. The COOP aims to enhance professional and creative skills by fostering cooperativism values that promote sustainability.



Global Independent Study Goals

This course enhanced my SW practice from a global perspective with focus in utilizing the *Critical Intersectionality* framework to analyze the intersection of gender, mestizaje, class & their relation to power as the barriers to social justice goals.

Outcomes

My major accomplishments included

- Developed COOP priority assessment
- Coordinating & facilitating a SWOT Analysis Workshop as part of the Strategic Planning
- Planned an exchange visit for partnership building with CEPROSI a grassroots nonprofit in Nindirí
- Developed systematic observation.
- I wrote an evaluation report with recommendations

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Skills Utilized

- **Cultural Humility** was a key competency that allowed me to immerse in the community. It was the people there who taught me about their culture, I simply listened intentionally.
- **Assessment & Evaluation** based on their priorities I developed an assessment as an evaluative process that would support their long term goals.
- **Consciousness-Raising** was a daily practice.

Lessons Learned

- Practice *humility* by taking time to be immerse and let people teach you about their life and collective memory
- *Flexibility* is important as context and cultural values varies making processes to move at different pace
- *Prevent assumptions* by understanding your reactions to observations as part of the learning process and say “I don’t know” when you don’t

Classroom Connections

The courses below enhanced my Praxis as both enacted me to think analytically.

- Critical Intersectionality in Social Work Practice (SW510)
- Multicultural, Multilingual Organizing (SW657)

Career Goals

After this experience I am interested in applying to doctoral programs that allows me to do Participatory Action Research in the Latin American Region and Globally.

Advice

- Expose yourself out of your comfort zone by trying
- Social Justice is a global social work practice be aware of this
- Respect and honor people’s collective history wherever you go

