

Dear Friends,

In 2019 we celebrated our 20th anniversary. In partnership with The Rev. Pascual Torres and the Siempre Unidos staff, we evolved from a hospice setting in the early 2000s to two thriving clinics where **"SIDA = VIDA"** or **"AIDS = LIFE."**

We thank you for the years of support and friendship that made possible these two decades of high quality and compassionate care for people living with HIV in Honduras. We look forward to many more years.

We highlight the 2019 accomplishments including our successful surpassing of a UNAIDS 90-90-90 Campaign goal, the introduction of patient-centered services for people living with HIV who are 50 years and older, and our advocacy activities.

With tremendous gratitude and in solidarity,



Denise M. Main, MD
Co-founder & President
Board of Directors



Siempre Unidos co-founders Denise Main and Pascual Torres.

A MESSAGE FROM EL REVERENDO

Since 1999, Siempre Unidos has committed itself to the women, men, elderly people and adolescents living with HIV or AIDS in Honduras.

We work in the clinical and social realms. We are fully aware that HIV touches many edges in the life of the infected person - relationships, work, nutrition, stigma, and discrimination.




Delmy (in green shirt) and Pascual with a patient who receives monthly food support.

We also work with those human groups considered "key populations" meaning people who live at the periphery of society and who suffer from social displacement due to sexual orientation, gender identification, or work they perform.

Our mission of "Doing good and healing" in our Honduran context is titanic and impactful. This is precisely what makes Siempre Unidos of national significance.

Our work could not be carried out without the invaluable support of our generous donors, like each one of you. Muchísimas gracias!



The Rev. Pascual Torres
Co-founder & Honduras Executive Director

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CLINIC-BASED SERVICES

Exceeding the UNAIDS Goal



Lab scientists and physician operate the viral load analyzer.

HIV can be stopped. The UNAIDS 90-90-90 Campaign goals provide the strategy whereby countries aim to see 90% of their population tested, 90% of those treated and 90% of treated patients with suppressed viral loads.

We exceeded the UNAIDS goal – 91% of our patients have suppressed (undetectable) viral loads. A person with a suppressed viral load has almost 0% chance of infecting another with HIV. We accomplished this goal by close surveillance of our patients' health, home visits, nutritional and psychosocial support and viral load testing (we own the second viral load analyzer in the country).

Overall, our two clinics treated 471 HIV-positive patients, ensured monthly nutritional support to 60 impoverished HIV-positive patients, received over 1,200 patient visits for primary care, held 545 counseling sessions and 24 support group meetings, and served over 5,800 breakfasts and lunches.

ADVOCACY

Persecuted Communities Seek Refuge and Advocacy

Siempre Unidos advocates for the rights of people who are vulnerable due to their gender or sexual orientation. When members of these communities face violence and intimidation, they turn to Siempre Unidos for support. Below are just two examples of many where Siempre Unidos has intervened to help individuals facing stigma, discrimination and worse.

In one instance, a young gay couple “was humiliated, emotionally abused and publicly exposed” when visiting a government health clinic, wrote Pascual. He and

a staff member accompanied the couple to file a complaint with the Honduran Committee on Human Rights. “We have been following up on the case since we want to set a precedent to prevent this kind of abuse from happening to people because of their health condition and/or sexual orientation,” Pascual said.

In another instance, Pascual evacuated a transgender woman who had been threatened with murder to a safe house in Guatemala. Siempre Unidos is a refuge and a “family” as many patients call us. We are honored to help.



A community member stands should-to-shoulder with Pascual and staff member Xiomara (in red shirt).

OUTREACH

HIV+ 50+



Meeting at the clinic's outdoor pavilion to strategize about needed services.

Siempre Unidos serves 126 people living with HIV who are 50 years and older (27% of all HIV-positive patients). People with long-standing HIV infection are more likely to have cardiovascular disease, lung, kidney and liver disease, certain cancers, HIV-associated neurocognitive disorders, osteoporosis and frailty, falls, and incontinence. These can occur decades before their HIV-negative counterparts. The rate of depression is three times higher than that of the general population.

At the end of 2019, Siempre Unidos launched a support group for people who are HIV+ and 50 years and older. During the first meeting they identified issues to discuss and learn about including eyesight, respiratory and bone health problems, migraines, nutrition, handicrafts and family dynamics. Next year, Siempre Unidos will continue to innovate by developing medical and psychosocial protocols for older HIV+ adults. Hopefully, the government will replicate these new services for improved outcomes nationally.

SPECIAL FEATURE

Self-sustaining and Fulfilling

In a context of food insecurity and lack of public safety, Siempre Unidos offers an oasis of beauty and sustenance. The San Pedro Sula (SPS) clinic hosts a pond brimming with 300 self-propagating tilapia that are harvested every few months to feed patients and sell to neighbors. The SPS and Siguatepeque clinics are home to turkeys, chickens, fruit trees and vegetables.

These agricultural activities, month-long fundraising campaigns, and sliding fee scale for non-HIV patients are some of the ways the clinics contribute to the operational budget. In 2019, our Honduran staff raised over \$5,300 to pay for all clinic utilities, the laboratory technician's salary and meals for patients.



Staff member Juan holds baby turkeys.



The clinic's tilapia pond at harvest time.



20 Years and Always United

Twenty years ago, families, workplaces and communities shunned people with AIDS. Honduras had the highest HIV prevalence in Central America and no infrastructure to treat its people. Patients died alone and stigmatized.

By chance, Denise and her family met Pascual in Honduras and visited his

support group and hospice care for people with HIV. They established a Honduran – U.S. partnership, Siempre Unidos, the first HIV testing and treatment clinic that went on to serve as a model for other Honduran providers.

Over the years, many U.S. volunteers, donors and board members helped build

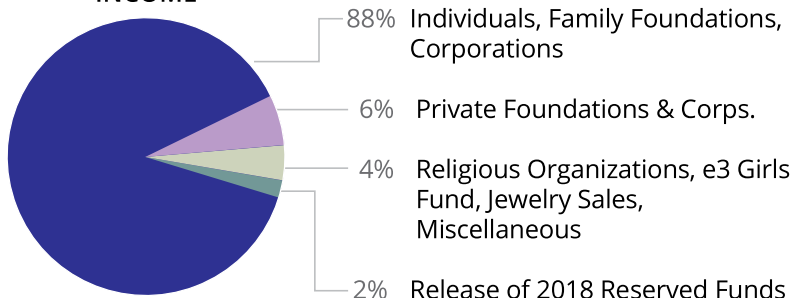
clinics, paint walls, treat patients and fund medical and psychosocial services. In this time, the number of patients quadrupled as did fundraising and expenditures. Our success is due to these U.S. supporters, the Siempre Unidos staff, and the unflagging respect for the dignity of every human being.



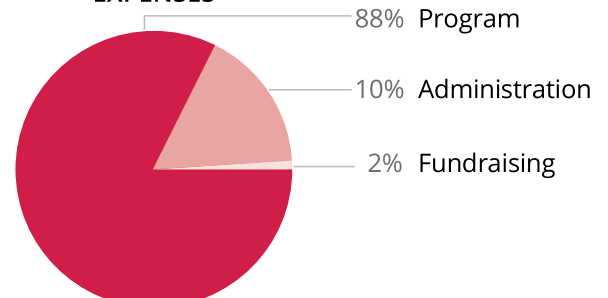
Honduran work trip volunteers gather to welcome Pascual.

FINANCIALS

INCOME



EXPENSES



In 2019, Siempre Unidos' cash-basis income totaled \$397,188. Expenses totaled \$337,066.