

Tropicalia

# 2015 Sustainability Report

Fully designed and bilingual report coming soon



FUNDACIÓN  
TROPICALIA

Sofia Perazzo  
4/25/2016



### **Sustainable Reporting**

We are proud to issue our 5<sup>th</sup> Tropicalia Sustainability Report, issued in full accordance with our values and actions as stewards of nature's beauty.

Our sustainability reports are printed on 100% recycled paper and substituted in electronic form wherever possible. All hard copies are delivered using electric motorbike messengers. In 2014, this approach saved:

- 195.25 kilograms of CO<sup>2</sup> emissions
- 1,364 gallons of water
- 16.3 adult trees

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## **A WORD FROM ADRIANA**

- [Treasuring Abundance](#)

## **2015 HIGHLIGHTS**

### **TROPICALIA**

- [A Vision of Sustainable Luxury](#)
- [Splendor on the Sea](#)
- [Sustainability in Action](#)
- [A Bold Vision](#)

### **FUNDACIÓN TROPICALIA**

- [Planning for Prosperity](#)
- [2015 Milestones](#)
- [Environmental Protection](#)
- [Promoting Education](#)
- [A Productive Community](#)
- [Socio-Cultural Advocacy](#)

### **PARTNERS FOR SUSTAINABILITY**

- [A Network of Partnerships](#)
- [United Nations Global Compact](#)

### **LOOKING TO THE FUTURE**

- [We're Just Getting Started](#)

## **A WORD FROM ADRIANA**

### **NATURALLY BOUNTIFUL**

As CEO of Cisneros, I relish the opportunity to reflect back on our eighth year of championing sustainable development on the northeastern shores of the Dominican Republic. Tropicalia, a sustainable luxury resort developed by Cisneros Real Estate, achieved a number of new milestones this year and it is with great pleasure that I present our fifth annual sustainability report.

This report details our progress in 2015 across all our previous, ongoing and new environmental, economic, and social initiatives. Tropicalia's success depends not only on our team, but also our partners, stakeholders, and our relationship with the community of Miches. This year we brought on new consultants, expanded the scope of our work with existing partners, and continued to cultivate our stakeholder groups. These successes, along with lessons learned throughout our journey, help us to continuously improve our efforts to create a model for sustainable development in the Caribbean.

We advocate for both the planet's and the community's prosperity via inclusive supply chains, development programs, education and environmental management by working with partners that understand this approach to business and pursue with us a different, yet competitive model for a new kind of tourism in the region. Our partnership with Four Seasons in 2015 continued to flourish and strengthen because we see eye-to-eye on this front. Four Seasons, the world's foremost luxury hotel and resort company with a long-standing commitment to sustainability, worked closely with Cisneros Real Estate and the design and architecture teams to ensure that Tropicalia is positioned as a model for sustainable luxury tourism; the most compelling example of this commitment was our decision to pursue LEED certification for Four Seasons Tropicalia.

Tropicalia also continued working with The Ocean Foundation, a non-profit organization and expert in ocean health and coastal conservation, and our third-party auditor verifying the information reported here. Continuing with the momentum of last year's work toward creating a self-monitoring Sustainability Management System (SMS), in 2015 we began vetting the SMS with our design, development and construction partners who have provided valuable input and

recommendations to make our SMS more comprehensive and effective. In 2016, we will continue these efforts.

Tropicalia recognizes the potential opportunities and clear business case for taking action on global issues such as poverty, gender equality, and climate change. In 2015 the United Nations reexamined the Millennium Development Goals and as a result ratified the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), or Global Goals, that will mark the development agenda through the year 2030. The 17 SDGs present an opportunity for businesses to drive innovation by analyzing social problems and applying strategic business solutions that build markets, strengthen supply chains and even uncover new sources of profitability. At Tropicalia we've had this mindset from the start as sustainability goals have driven business decisions since 2008, when we established Fundación Tropicalia. Today, the SMS we've modeled specifically for Tropicalia also cross-references the SDGs, such that our business works toward the 17 Global Goals directly and indirectly.

We are thankful to all those who have supported us in the past and who share our dream of creating an international model for sustainable tourism in the Dominican Republic.

I hope you enjoy reading our report,

Adriana Cisneros de Griffin

## 2015 HIGHLIGHTS

### SHOVEL READY

- Tropicalia is preparing for construction and pursuing LEED certification for Four Seasons Tropicalia

### FOCUSED ON PARTNERSHIPS

- Tropicalia consolidated its partnerships with Four Seasons and Banreservas

### CREATING OUR ONLINE COMMUNITY

- Fundación Tropicalia launched its website ([www.fundaciontropicalia.com](http://www.fundaciontropicalia.com)) in May 2015 and increased its communications reach via social media. As of December 31, 2015, our reach includes 996 Facebook likes, 195 Twitter followers, and 420 Instagram followers.

### ADDING VALUE TO OUR INCLUSIVE SUPPLY CHAIN

- Fundación Tropicalia consolidated three new partnerships: ADOPEM Bank and ADOPEM NGO as well as with Junta Agroempresarial Dominicana, which add tremendous value to the Sustainable Tourism Supply Chain Program.

## TROPICALIA



*The organic beauty of the landscape is the inspiration for Tropicalia, in both its destination and its way of life. Here, nature, community and culture live together in harmony, and all thrive through thoughtful action and programs. At Tropicalia, we honor our commitment to the environment by celebrating its natural wonder and preserving it for all.*

# A VISION OF SUSTAINABLE LUXURY

## ABOUT TROPICALIA

Tropicalia is a high-end, low-impact resort that integrates luxury travel with environmental integrity. Conceived by Gustavo A. Cisneros, Chairman of Cisneros, and CEO Adriana Cisneros de Griffin, Tropicalia is the flagship project of Cisneros Real Estate currently under the direction of Patrick Freeman. This resort development is positioned to serve as a model for sustainable tourism in the Caribbean, providing world-class services that are both environmentally and socially responsible.

To be built along the sandy northeastern coast of the Dominican Republic, Tropicalia will be comprised of an Isay Weinfeld designed Four Seasons luxury beach resort with 169 keys and 40 branded residences. The property is characterized by ample amenities that include a world-class spa and an 18-hole golf course, designed by the internationally acclaimed landscape architect Tom Doak.

## A COMMITMENT TO RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

Tropicalia signed the United Nations Global Compact in 2010, and as such committed to human rights protection in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, gender equity, equal opportunity employment, a documented labor force, the freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining and the repudiation of child labor. We also observe local and international laws and labor standards, and work against corruption by holding open and transparent dialogue with government officials and other stakeholders.

Our commitment to human rights, environmental protection, structural integrity, smart and efficient infrastructure design as well as our community development activities are guided and monitored by a proprietary Sustainability Management System.



# SPLENDOR ON THE SEA

## THE MICHEs COASTLINE

Tropicalia is located in the Municipality of Miches in the El Seibo province, a place of breathtaking, untouched natural beauty. This corner of the Dominican Republic is home to a uniquely diverse ecosystem of beaches, coral reefs, mountains, jungles, ocean, lagoons and rivers. Each year, over 2,000 humpback whales migrate to the world-renowned Samaná Bay to mate and give birth. The nearby Los Haitises National Park boasts limestone plateaus, conical hills, caverns, and a large mangrove forest. The Wildlife Refuge Lagunas Redonda and Limón is a nature reserve within the municipality consisting of two impressive lagoons home to endemic plants and animals of the region. The spectacular La Gina Bay is preserved as a habitat and species management area. Miches also possesses natural attractions such as the beaches of Costa Esmeralda and Playa Arriba, as well as the Eastern Corridor mountain range, fields and prairies. These, as well as historical and cultural landmarks, are some of the attractions that make this coastal settlement so unique.

The region's main economic industries include agriculture (primarily cocoa, coconut, rice and root vegetables), cattle-raising, artisanal fishing, local crafts and small businesses. However, as an emerging rural community, Miches faces social and economic challenges: poverty, unemployment and delinquency are the result of limited market access, low levels of education, and scarce economic opportunities.

But these statistics are changing with Tropicalia's community development work as well as increased road and telecommunications access. In early 2015, a highway project from Miches to Punta Cana was completed, removing one of the largest barriers to socioeconomic development. Today this coastal town is now connected via new roads to the entire Punta Cana area, radically increasing access to new tourism markets. Miches is now only an hour-long drive from the Punta Cana airport, one of the busiest international airports in the Caribbean.

Under the guise of the project "Inclusion of Micro and Small Enterprises (MSE) in the Sustainable Tourism Supply Chain," Fundación Tropicalia commissioned a

baseline study to examine the supply and demand opportunities in Miches given the unprecedented access provided by the new highway. As a result, we are in a unique position to support the MSE sector as it adapts to new opportunities for growth.

### **SIDENOTE:**

*According to the latest statistics from the Dominican Republic National Statistics Office, 69.1% of people in the El Seibo province live in poverty, with 28.1% living in extreme poverty.*

*Source: "Number of people in terms of overall and extreme poverty by province, 2002 and 2010." National Statistics Office, September 19, 2014.*

### **Testimonial:**

*"I believe that by 2016 we must address challenges such as... promoting attractions and improving roads to isolated communities in order to allow visitors and investors to also discover them. We must also give a big boost to tourism to bring more development to the municipality." – Daniel Martínez, Miches community member, Community Newsletter, Edition 27, November-December 2015*

# SUSTAINABILITY IN ACTION

## TROPICALIA'S KEY COMMITMENTS TO SUSTAINABILITY:

**ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY:** *Financial, environmental and social viability are equally considered in making sound business decisions*

**ENVIRONMENTAL BALANCE:** *Protection and conservation of the natural environment using sustainable site development and destination management to preserve biological integrity, habitat connectivity, and green space*

**THOUGHTFUL ARCHITECTURE:** *Design and development standards that guarantee quality and environmentally-sound construction techniques*

**COMMUNITY ADVANCEMENT:** *Local economic diversification and community development fomented by Fundación Tropicalia programs in the Miches community*

With all our commitments, we pledge to select partners and providers based on *shared value creation and their commitment to sustainability*

## SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS

Proper governance and mechanisms for self-evaluation are crucial to ensuring sustainability. In 2014, we designed a Sustainability Management System characterized by 89 criteria that account for concrete action in the areas of destination management, cultural heritage and community development; legal accountability and human resources, including labor and human rights; and built and natural environments. To create the SMS, we synthesized the information available in Tropicalia's Environmental Impact Study and multiple internationally recognized best practices and reporting guidelines from the Global Reporting Initiative, Global Sustainable Tourism Council, Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council, Inter-American Development Bank, Green Globe, and The Ocean Foundation, among others.

In 2015, we continued working with The Ocean Foundation to finalize our SMS and engaged our key partners such as Codelpa, Gensler, Sinergo and Thompson Engineers, Tropicalia's construction, development and design teams, inviting their feedback to further vet this management tool. This exercise resulted in additional segmentation of the SMS according to the specific user in order to facilitate implementation as some criteria were pertinent to construction and others to hotel operation and so on.

Additionally, when Tropicalia decided to pursue LEED certification (further described in the Architecture spotlight) and with the launch of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in 2015, we cross referenced these global and universal criteria with SMS indicators to optimize reporting and monitoring exercises that will be undertaken by various partners and operational teams. We anticipate piloting the SMS in 2016 with our construction partners.

In 2015, we also celebrated our 10<sup>th</sup> annual Tropicalia Sustainability Committee meeting where we made strategic decisions for 2016 with the valuable input of senior leadership.

Lastly, new contracts with our major partners included an annex where the principles of the United Nations Global Compact were listed, thus conveying our expectation that everyone involved in the construction and operation of Tropicalia will comply at minimum with these international standards for sustainable business.

## **ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY**

So often sustainability reporting is limited to environmental and social commitments, yet economic sustainability also plays a critical role in creating a healthy business environment. In 2015 Tropicalia consolidated its partnership with Banreservas, the Dominican Republic's state-owned bank, to raise US \$310 million dollars of investment capital. Tropicalia's history of working in partnership with public, private and civil society institutions certainly paved the way toward forging a long-term public-private partnership with Banreservas. As a state-owned bank, Banreservas is particularly committed to the prosperity and wellbeing of the Dominican people, a value that especially resonated with Tropicalia.

Banreservas is the first fully integrated bank offering financial services in the Miches community since 2003.

Their keen eye for integrating banking intelligence with social prosperity has driven their corporate social responsibility strategy and generated socioeconomic development programs of great impact. Some examples include mentorship programs for micro-entrepreneur and financial education programs for underserved communities. In 2016, Tropicalia and Fundación Tropicalia will explore new opportunities with Banreservas for optimizing our impact both within our business and the Miches community.

## ENVIRONMENTAL BALANCE

Tropicalia submits bi-annual environmental compliance reports for approval to the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources. In 2015, two reports were submitted and approved, noting that the status of the physical property of Tropicalia is in the same condition as it was five years ago when Tropicalia finalized its Environmental Impact Study (EIS). Our Sustainability Management System draws on the baseline biological data; relevant local, regional and international environmental regulations; and sustainable best practices outlined in the EIS.

These outputs emphasize Tropicalia's commitment to implement and maintain a management system that ensures appropriate levels of health and environmental awareness within Tropicalia's property for clients, members of the company and the local community. The reports are also aimed at ensuring the sustainability of Tropicalia's business through the preferences for local consumption and continuous improvement in how Tropicalia uses natural resources in its immediate environment.

Tropicalia continues to identify, monitor, and manage significant environmental aspects within the property's design, construction and operation, including but not limited to:

- Water and energy use
- Recycling and disposal of solid waste and sewage
- Management of hazardous substances and gas emissions
- Community and cultural development via the employment of a local workforce consistent with human resources policies

## THOUGHTFUL ARCHITECTURE

In 2015, Tropicalia completed the conceptual and schematic design phases of the Four Seasons, designed by renowned Brazilian architect Isay Weinfeld. Cisneros Real Estate also made the bold decision to pursue LEED certification for building, design and construction components with an ambitious goal of minimally Silver certification.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is a rigorous third-party verification standard that provides a global benchmark for excellence in green building, vying for energy efficiency and the use of local, reusable or repurposed materials among other sustainability categories such as water and air quality. Should Four Seasons Tropicalia obtain LEED certification, it will be the first resort to do so in the Dominican Republic.

The architectural elements developed in 2015 include: designs for built structures on minimal percentages of land; the use of locally sourced construction materials; designs for a cultural center to promote Dominican heritage; the incorporation of locally influenced cuisine concepts; the use of electric vehicle transportation; and the incorporation of green roofs. Tropicalia began drafting construction documents and plans for construction to roll out over the next two to three years.

## **COMMUNITY ADVANCEMENT**

Local communities and environmental stewardship uniquely benefit from the sustainable luxury tourism's niche business model. Positive cascading effects include: reducing energy consumption; minimizing waste; training and retaining a skilled local workforce; sourcing fresh, local produce; offering sensitively planned cultural excursions; and promoting value added goods and services.

At Tropicalia we actively play a role in destination management, undertake environmental stewardship and invest in the local community. As a result, stakeholder engagement with community leaders, tourism officials and local authorities is robust and necessary in order to forge a common path toward a shared vision for development and improved livelihoods.

Fundación Tropicalia is fueled by a strategic approach to philanthropy and corporate responsibility, resulting in the development and implementation of innovative programs in agriculture, gender equality, education, environment and micro entrepreneurship.



# A BOLD VISION

**From Patrick Freeman, President of Cisneros Real Estate**

“I believe great things endure. On a practical level, things given the ability to endure could become great. For me, this is the essence of sustainability. To persevere in a sea of change requires the ability to look at the implications of a decision both 30-years and 30 minutes into the future. This approach is intrinsic to our decision making process at Tropicalia. We own the outcome of that decision today and we own it tomorrow. We own the impact it has on the community and we own the impact it has on the world. It's a responsibility we take very seriously and it shows in what we are seeking to create at Tropicalia. The Cisneros Family looks at the world this way and I'm honored to work with them in making Tropicalia great and enduring.”

# FUNDACIÓN TROPICALIA



*We are committed to building more than a resort. With the Fundación Tropicalia, we are sustaining and advancing the interests of the vibrant way of life and culture of the local community. We are firmly committed to being an energetic partner, with the desire for a bright, prosperous future for the region.*

## **PLANNING FOR PROSPERITY**

Fundación Tropicalia designs and implements programs for the local community in four key areas: the environment, education, productivity, and socio-cultural advocacy. Established in 2008 by Tropicalia, the foundation drives sustainable, socioeconomic development in Miches and the surrounding communities by working in partnership with the community and institutions from the private, public, civil society and academic sectors. The diversity of our partnerships allows for innovative, high-impact programs and the efficient use of resources. With eight years of on-the-ground experience, the Fundación Tropicalia team continues to successfully advance sustainable development through high-impact initiatives, local stakeholder engagement, and shared value opportunities to drive business solutions to the most pressing social problems in the region.

## **2015 MILESTONES**

**Laguna Redonda Water Study submitted to MARENA**

**Established first Automatic Meteorological Station in Miches**

**Offered a new financial product for farmers**

**New partnerships for sustainable tourism in Miches**

**Launched Fundación Tropicalia's social media**

# ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

## LAGUNA REDONDA WATERSHED RESEARCH PROJECT

In 2013, Fundación Tropicalia commissioned a one-year environmental analysis of Laguna Redonda, the first study of its kind in the Dominican Republic. Over the course of this study, researchers thoroughly assessed:

- The geological and hydrological features of the lagoon and associated watershed;
- The quality of the water, including levels of contaminants, levels of oxygen and other key indicators of water quality;
- The diversity and abundance of local flora and fauna, including birds, fish and mangroves; and
- Human activities in and around the lagoon and the relationship between lagoon health and those activities.

In August 2015, Fundación Tropicalia reported the results of this extensive study to the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARENA), where more than 60 professionals and environmental experts from MARENA attended, after which the study was formally submitted to the Department of Biodiversity and Protected Areas.

The primary takeaway of the study found that a correlation exists between the amount of rainfall and the water quality of Laguna Redonda; whereas the months with the highest rainfall were also the months that recorded the highest turbidity and organic materials levels in the lagoon's water. This is mostly due to the deforestation taking place in the ravines and valleys surrounding this body of water as well as the presence of cattle near various water sources that drain into the lagoon. In order to ensure the lagoon's ecological health and thus position this as a unique sustainable tourism attraction, the study recommended the development of a co-management plan, which includes:

- Preservation and reforestation of mangrove systems to improve water quality;
- Management of fisheries to improve yield for fishermen and long term sustainability of the lagoon's resources;
- Education for local community members on existing laws and regulations for protected areas to ensure human activities do not damage the resources provided by the lagoon; and
- Ecotourism and visitation services that inform tourists and visitors of the lagoon's ecological and geographical contributions.

In 2016, Tropicalia will continue to take water quality samples of the lagoon, albeit with less frequency, in order to monitor and account for any changes. Additionally, Fundación Tropicalia will work in consultation with community members and MARENA to implement the study's recommendations to begin a stewardship plan for the Laguna Redonda and Limon Wildlife Refuge in general.

## AUTOMATIC WEATHER STATION

In September, Fundación Tropicalia installed the first Automatic Weather Station in Miches. The station records wind direction and speed, humidity, dew point, air pressure, temperature, solar radiation, ultraviolet radiation, and rainfall. Data is uploaded to an online weather platform every minute on [www.wunderground.com](http://www.wunderground.com). The climatological data will be a great contribution to tourism, agriculture and the Miches community in general by providing accurate, up-to-date local weather information and tracking capabilities over time.

# PROMOTING EDUCATION

## SCHOOL RENOVATION & MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

In 2015, Fundación Tropicalia celebrated the eighth anniversary of the School Renovation and Maintenance Program (PRyME); an administrative and infrastructure support program which has reached twelve public primary and secondary schools. The goal of this program is to support school administrators in the maintenance and repair of their education centers. More than a program, PRyME is a platform that brings together the education community, including the teachers, students, parents and the Ministry of Education in order to find solutions to common problems. To date, the program has positively impacted the lives of 4,492 students and more than 200 teachers.

As customary, in 2015 Fundación Tropicalia hosted its annual PRyME celebration with approximately 300 education stakeholders to commemorate the previous year's work and publicly recognize outstanding community leaders.

In 2015, Fundación Tropicalia supported the following projects in the schools listed below, while continuing to play an advisory role in maintenance, management and academic processes of others.

This Year's Supported Projects:

### Primary School KM10

As a result of changing public education policy, Primary School KM10 was included in the extended school-day program, which takes the school day from 3 to 8 hours of education. Fundación Tropicalia provided building materials for the construction of a kitchen in order to provide the students and faculty lunches and snacks.

*2 teachers*

*46 students*

### Liceo TV Centro La Gina

The La Gina High School and Fundación Tropicalia built a garbage collection center to facilitate proper waste management and composting at the school.

*9 teachers*

*143 students*

## SCHOLARSHIP & CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Fundación Tropicalia coordinates a scholarship and cultural exchange program with Universidad ISA (Instituto Superior de Agricultura, or UISA), a four-year university specializing in agricultural sciences located in Santiago de los Caballeros. In order to give young people the chance to have cultural and historical experiences consistent with their career interests, this year 15 scholarship students and 5 education scholarship students participated in conversations with professionals who shared personal experiences and encouraged students to pursue their fields of interest.

Fundación Tropicalia and UISA provide work-study, cultural and professional exchange opportunities, on-campus counseling support, and parent meetings in Miches to all scholarship recipients.

### *SIDENOTE:*

*Miches students that pursue a degree in Natural Sciences Education are awarded a full scholarship from the MINERD/INAFOCAM. Fundación Tropicalia provides these students with socio-emotional, work-study and professional support services offered to all FT/UISA scholarship students.*

## EDUCA PARTNERSHIP

EDUCA (Business Action for Education) is a national NGO located in Santo Domingo born from a group of businessmen concerned about the alarming reality of the Dominican education system. 2015 marks the third year of Fundación Tropicalia's membership on the board of EDUCA, which to this day remains an important player in Education Public Policy. In 2015, EDUCA continued to provide a platform for education networking and served as a resource center for Fundación Tropicalia. Additionally, in August, EDUCA and Fundación Tropicalia participated in an awareness campaign, "The Tree of Hope" hosted by Ágora Mall in Santo Domingo. During this three-day initiative Fundación Tropicalia presented its environmental, gender and education programs to thousands of onlookers and mall shoppers.

## IN-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

In 2014 Fundación Tropicalia launched a supplementary activities program in Miches public schools to support students' interests in and aptitude for the arts and critical and creative thinking. In 2015, we were able to diversify the reach and content of these programs.

- **Arts and Crafts:** Our Arts and Crafts program aims to motivate and develop students' fine motor skills through experimentation with different materials like natural fibers, cloth, and felt. The workshop series expanded in 2015, benefitting a total of 201 students at the La Mina and KM10 primary schools. These workshops culminated in a Parent-Student day, where the children displayed their creations.
- **School Choir:** New this year, the School Choir program supported the existing La Mina School Choir during which students learned about vocalization techniques, expression and proper stage presence. Fundación Tropicalia worked with local seamstresses to elaborate uniforms for the school choir. This program culminated with a performance that parents and community members attended.
- **Art and Recycling:** In an effort to encourage environmental stewardship, a recycling workshop taught students different artistic techniques using recyclable materials like plastic, wood, and cardboard to create works of art. These too were later displayed for parents and visitors to see.

### *Testimonial:*

*"I like it a lot because we have learned things and can use our creativity... I learn a lot, and when the workshop is over, I'd like to join the painting class too."*

*– Albania Mata, La Mina primary school student, Community Newsletter, 24th Edition, May-June 2015*



# A PRODUCTIVE COMMUNITY

## A SUSTAINABLE TOURISM SUPPLY CHAIN IN MICHES

2015 marks the third year of the US \$1.6 million project “Inclusion of the Micro and Small Enterprise into the Sustainable Tourism Supply Chain in Miches,” an initiative supported by the Inter-American Development Bank’s Multilateral Investment Fund (IDB/MIF). Though this project was originally scheduled to end in March 2016, IDB/MIF submitted the project to an interim evaluation, which resulted in a number of strategic recommendations and consequently extended the project’s length.

The goal of this initiative is to improve market access for local farmers and entrepreneurs by incorporating them into the tourism value chain generated by Tropicalia, its partners and other anchor companies in the region, which all require high-quality goods and services. To reach this goal Fundación Tropicalia cultivates and strengthens the supply chain via capacity building and access to financing and technical assistance.

As of December 2015, Fundación Tropicalia had received over US \$256,641, representing 34.3% of IDB/MIF’s total planned investment, with a remaining US \$490,521 to be distributed within the project’s timeframe.

### FIVE COMPONENTS OF THE SUPPLY CHAIN INITIATIVE

- 1. Strengthen the administrative and commercial management of local producer organizations*
- 2. Improve the quality and diversification of agricultural produce*
- 3. Support entrepreneurial initiatives that service the tourism industry*
- 4. Increase access to financing for producers and entrepreneurs via a microcredit program*
- 5. Provide knowledge and strategic communication to promote inclusive business models in other tourist destinations*

In 2015 Fundación Tropicalia coordinated a series of workshops, teaching 110 farmers about agricultural best practices and organic production. Though the year yielded low productivity and financial hardship for many farmers in the region due to a severe drought, we managed to support 40 ginger and passion

fruit producers who in turn received weekly technical mentoring and recommendations on proper soil management and efficient use of nutritional and organic inputs. Experts recommended immediate application of fertilizer in order to counteract the damage done by the dry climate. Fundación Tropicalia funded the workshop and provided fertilizer and new seedlings while the producers provided the labor for the nutrient application.

## 2015 MILESTONES OF THE SUPPLY CHAIN INITIATIVE

1. The further consolidation of the Cooperative of Production and Multiple Services of Miches (COOPROMI), Miches' first multiple services cooperative established in order to consolidate and organize various goods and services sectors in the municipality.
2. The addition of ADOPEM Bank and ADOPEM NGO as new partners to the project. The former is among the Dominican Republic's most important and successful microfinance institutions that operates as a commercial bank specialized in lending to women; the latter is its non-profit division that supports financial and business plan education services for clients and the general population. In June, Fundación Tropicalia secured a new partnership with both ADOPEM Bank and ADOPEM NGO to further support the components of the IDB/MIF project that tend to micro entrepreneurs' access to credit and education. In 2015, the partnership successfully developed a Business Plan Development Program for the winners of last year's "¡Miches Si!" business competition. Together we will also work toward improving extracurricular and in-school programs in Miches focused on financial education and women's empowerment.
3. The addition of the Junta Agroempresarial Dominicana (JAD), or the Dominican Agribusiness Council, the largest organization of producers in the Dominican Republic that supports, encourages, promotes and defends agricultural production by offering technical assistance, training and other services to local farmers. Through this agreement, the JAD and Fundación Tropicalia agree to implement collaborative, high impact initiatives that identify opportunities for economic development in the agricultural and ranching sectors in Miches and surrounding communities. Additionally, the JAD will play a key role in advising and implementing the strategic recommendations provided by the IDB/MIF's interim evaluation.

### *Testimonial:*

*“The drought this year has been very long, normally it lasts three months but this year it has lasted eight. Some of my passion fruits have struggled and others we have had to water extra. The drought has also greatly affected rice, which needs more water, and part of the harvest has been lost.”*  
- Arcadio Ureña, Miches passion fruit producer, Community Newsletter, Edition 26, September-October 2015.

## MICROFINANCE FOR LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS

Fundación Tropicalia understands that socioeconomic development depends on the extent to which the average Michero has access to financial services and products. That’s why in 2008 Fundación Tropicalia partnered with Fondo para el Desarrollo, Inc. (FONDESA), a leading microfinance institution in the Dominican Republic, in order to diversify banking options, formalize the borrowing process and support inclusive business programs in Miches. Thanks to FONDESA, over the last eight years thousands of families have had access to affordable credit.

To date, FONDESA has placed nearly RD \$232 million in the form of microloans for local entrepreneurs, impacting the following sectors: agriculture, commerce, services, consumption, housing improvement, livestock, and manufacturing. In 2015 alone, FONDESA issued 914 new loans, totaling more than RD \$46.75 million. These loans strengthened 1,181 jobs and benefited 1,049 families; including 39.4% of FONDESA’s loans going to women entrepreneurs.

FONDESA also continued to offer the microfinance loan program launched in 2014, especially designed for the farmers and beneficiaries of the IDB/MIF project. To date, 35 Miches families have accessed this financial tool, 23 of which are direct participants of the IDB/MIF project, while the remaining 12 are FONDESA clients, representing a total of RD \$ 4.199 million in support of agricultural diversification. This adds up to US \$96,311 invested by FONDESA in support of an inclusive tourism supply chain, exceeding the expected outcome originally delineated by the project.

# SOCIO-CULTURAL ADVOCACY

## CULTURAL IDENTITY

Sustainable tourism requires stewardship and fomentation of local cultural identity. As such, Fundación Tropicalia maximizes the natural and cultural heritage of the region by supporting various cultural activities in partnership with the local government and community leaders. Initiatives supported in 2015 include:

- The annual and historically significant *Carnaval* celebrations.
- The “Fiesta de Palos.” Each year, Micheros honor their patron saint San Antonio de Padua with a celebration during the *Patronales* festival. Fundación Tropicalia sponsored the activity by contributing with decorations and contracting the *atabaleros*, or musicians who play the traditional percussion instrument of the region.

*“La tradición de los atabales es antigua y viene de las fiestas que hacían siglos atrás en el campo. Nosotros siempre los hemos visto en celebraciones, en las salves a la Milagrosa, en el perico ripiao...en todo.” – Los Músicos, Boletín Comunitario, 24 Edición, mayo-junio 2015*

*“The tradition of the drums is old and comes from the celebrations that were made centuries ago in the countryside. We have always seen this tradition in celebrations, in the honoring of the Miraculous, in perico ripiao music ... in everything.” – Musicians from Hato Jovero, Community Newsletter, 24th Edition, May-June 2015*

## “SOY NIÑA, SOY IMPORTANTE” (I’M A GIRL, I’M IMPORTANT) GIRLS SUMMER CAMP

This was the third year Fundación Tropicalia implemented the “Soy niña, soy importante” (SNSI) or *I’m a girl, I’m Important* all-girls summer day camp. The camp’s objective is to remind girls of their value in society, and instill in them the socio-emotional skills needed to make informed and important decisions like staying in school, staying safe and timely family planning.

Young girls living in poverty who become pregnant are not only at higher risk for health complications related to early pregnancy, but they are also more likely to drop out of school in order to tend to children, hindering their personal and professional development.

SNSI was created to counter this cycle that keeps girls and women in the grasps of inequality, lack of opportunities and violence. Providing a safe space for girls to grow and learn, SNSI brought together 257 girls from six different communities over three unforgettable camp sessions, during which girls learned about self-esteem, life planning, healthy eating and nutrition, sport activities, and environmental stewardship. This year, more than 80 volunteers from Miches, Santo Domingo, and across the country dedicated their time to the summer camp. During the camp's second year of fundraising, 21 companies and 72 individual donors contributed US \$20,620 to Friends of Fundación Tropicalia via the donation platform of The Ocean Foundation, our fiscal sponsor in the United States.

### **SIDENOTE:**

*Teen pregnancy represents one of the largest societal issues for girls in the Dominican Republic and perpetuates the cycle of illiteracy and poverty: 43.9 % of girls have been pregnant at least once before the age of 19, placing the Dominican Republic as the 5<sup>th</sup> highest teen pregnancy rate in Latin America.*

*Source: "Análisis De La Situación De La Infancia Y La Adolescencia En La República Dominicana 2012," UNICEF, accessed March 7, 2016. [http://www.unicef.org/republicadominicana/Analisis\\_Situacion\\_Ninez\\_corregido\\_ago13\\_\\_web.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/republicadominicana/Analisis_Situacion_Ninez_corregido_ago13__web.pdf)*

### **COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER**

In 2015, Fundación Tropicalia issued six new editions of its Community Newsletter. Fundación Tropicalia circulates 2,000 copies of each edition in more than 50 distribution points in Miches. The Community Newsletters serve an educational mission, following an editorial line that promotes sustainable development, environmental stewardship, health and disease awareness, local culture and traditions, and individual and civic responsibility for children and adults alike.

### **"FUN IS SAFETY FIRST" AWARENESS CAMPAIGN**

The Dominican Republic has a rich cultural tradition and celebrates several important holidays in the form of street fairs, parades and events. Every February, Miches celebrates its traditional *Carnaval*, and in June celebrates its patron saint, San Antonio de Padua, the Day of San Juan and Cultural Week of Artemiches. Over the years, we've witnessed that festive occasions were

coming at the cost of safety; this became particularly evident in 2014 when several injuries took place during these municipal celebrations. As a result, Fundación Tropicalia along with the Associated Press of Miches launched a communications campaign called "*Fun is Safety First*" in order to create awareness around our civic duty and to promote safety as a key component of having good fun. The campaign advocated for respect, harmony and coexistence during festivities; messages were disseminated via loudspeakers, digital content, local media interviews, promotional T-shirts, and increased police presence at events.

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

*Building a strong foundation for Tropicalia means creating a thoughtful, engaged network of partners who are equally invested in the success of the project's goals and its commitment to sustainability. We proudly recognize our relationships with these organizations and will continue to work to pursue successful outcomes for years to come.*

## **A NETWORK OF PARTNERSHIPS**

*FOOTNOTE: "Only active/current alliances through December 31, 2015 are listed."*

### **TROPICALIA**

#### **GOVERNMENT**

##### **Ministry of Tourism**

2009-present Tropicalia complies with the Ministry of Tourism regulations for tourist developments.

##### **Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources**

2008-present. Tropicalia/Fundación Tropicalia and the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources collaborate on special projects related to environment and education.

##### **Export and Investment Center of the Dominican Republic (CEI-RD)**

2015-present. Tropicalia works alongside the CEI-RD to promote and foment investments in the country.

##### **Ministry of Public Works and Communication**

2015-present. Tropicalia works with the Ministry of Communications to assure development compliance and to promote the development of public works in the region.

## **BUSINESS, CIVIL SOCIETY & NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**

### [The Ocean Foundation](#)

2013-present. Tropicalia works with TOF to support reporting efforts, elaborate measurement tools and verify social and environmental sustainability initiatives.

### [National Association of Hotels and Restaurants \(ASONAHORES\)](#)

Member since 2011.

### [National Private Business Council \(CONEP\)](#)

Member since 2014.

### [Dominican Association of Tourism Real Estate Businesses \(ADETI\)](#)

Member since 2011.

## **INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

### [United Nations Global Compact](#)

2010-present. Tropicalia pledges to the ten principles of the United Nations Global Compact in the areas of human rights, labor, the environment and anti-corruption.

## **DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNICATIONS TEAM**

[Arquitecto Pérez Morales & Asociados](#)

[Baird & Associates](#)

[Blue Spas](#)

[Carbone Smolan Agency \(CSA\)](#)

[Cisneros](#)

[Cisneros Real Estate](#)

[Codelpa](#)

[Craig Roberts](#)

[Ecomar, SA](#)

[Ecomensajería](#)

[EDG Restaurant](#)



EDSA  
Epsa Labco  
Ernst & Young  
Fer Figheras  
Four Seasons  
Gensler  
Geofitech  
Geoconsult  
Holsteinson & Asociados, SA (HOLASA)  
Horwath HTL  
HVS  
Isay Weinfeld  
Jones Lang LaSalle  
Llorente & Cuenca  
Mapex  
Matter Unlimited  
Marshall  
Renaissance Golf Design  
Sheila Donnelly & Associates (SDA)  
Sherwood  
Sinergo Development Group  
Thompson Engineering

# FUNDACIÓN TROPICALIA

## GOVERNMENT

### Municipality of Miches

2008-present. Tropicalia/Fundación Tropicalia and the Municipality of Miches collaborate on special projects related to culture, sports, education and environment.

### Ministry of Education of the Dominican Republic

2010-present. Fundación Tropicalia and the Ministry of Education of the Dominican Republic work to improve the quality of education in the Miches school district.

### Ministry of Agriculture

2013-present. Fundación Tropicalia and the Ministry of Agriculture collaborate on special projects related to agricultural supply chains and technical training for farmers.

## BUSINESS, CIVIL SOCIETY & NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

### ADOPEM Banco

2015-present. Fundación Tropicalia and ADOPEM Banco work together to widen the scope of financial services available to the micro entrepreneurs that are supported by Fundación Tropicalia programs.

### ADOPEM NGO

2015-present. Fundación Tropicalia and ADOPEM NGO work together to bring financial and women's empowerment education programs to the Miches community.

### EDUCA (Acción Empresarial pro la Educación)

2013-present. Fundación Tropicalia and EDUCA work together to improve public education policy, create brand awareness and drive impact in Miches education programs.

#### Fondo para el Desarrollo, Inc. (FONDESA)

2008-present. Fundación Tropicalia and FONDESA work together to democratize access to financial services, diversify banking products and support the inclusion of micro and small enterprises in the tourist and agricultural supply chains.

#### Junta Agroempresarial Dominicana (JAD)

2015-present. Fundación Tropicalia and JAD work together to bring development opportunities to local farmers and agribusinesses in Miches.

#### National Business Network for Environmental Protection (ECORED)

2008-present. Fundación Tropicalia gains access to a private-sector network that increases environmental protection efforts and promotes public-private sector dialogue.

### **INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

#### Inter-American Development Bank, Multilateral Investment Fund (IDB-MIF)

2012-present. Fundación Tropicalia and the IDB/MIF execute a project for the inclusion of micro and small enterprises into the sustainable tourism supply chain in Miches.

### **ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS**

#### Universidad ISA (College of Agriculture)

2011-present. Fundación Tropicalia and ISA University host a scholarship program for Miches students who are interested in agricultural science and science education careers.

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE



*Wherever we look, abundance surrounds us. It's our responsibility, and in our nature, to care for the land and the environment around us. We'll never lose sight of this as we pioneer the future of sustainable luxury. Our drive to lead the way in the sector is unparalleled, and we're proud to set the standard for what's next.*

## **WE'RE JUST GETTING STARTED**

Recently we reached a landmark moment, holding our “Comienza Tropicalia” event which celebrated the ground-breaking for Four Seasons Tropicalia. The future of Tropicalia, its surrounding community and environment, and its partnerships are bright. Intelligent, thoughtful efforts to bring the most sincere impact through sustainability has created an ecosystem in which all parties benefit.

As we look forward to continuing to our work in sustainable luxury development, we anticipate marking these milestones in 2016:

- Piloting the Sustainability Management System (SMS) with our construction partners
- Exploring new opportunities with Banreservas for optimizing our impact both within our business and the Miches community
- Supporting the launch of the Miches, El Seibo Tourism Cluster

Today, you can visit [Tropicalia.com](http://Tropicalia.com) to share the vision of this world class development and better understand the model for sustainability that it represents. Please also take a moment to add your support by following and “liking” our content on our social media channels.

Thank you.