

SERES

IMPACT REPORT 2019



index







*message from our
Co-Executive Directors*

Dear friends,

We want to celebrate our first year as Co-Directors leading SERES with you! It has been a wonderful journey of leadership and learning.

We are very proud and happy to have led SERES in a transition this year. Yes! We have made changes and we want to recognize the courage of our partners, board of directors, volunteers and mentors who have supported us on this journey.

Reflecting on some of the challenges we face like an alarming acceleration on climate change, social unrest in Latinamerica and the world, inequality and exclusion, the situation of indigenous women, post conflict and peace. We decided early 2019 to adopt new principles based on a TEAL organization model defined in the book “Reinventing Organizations” by Laloux, a book we fully recommend. These new principles will help us react with more empathy, resilience and compassion to these challenges. This change wasn’t made lightly, we reflected and we wanted to offer something transformational, that you could apply in your lives.

In SERES, we are constantly asking ourselves how are we being resilient, more compassionate, with more empathy and how are we responding to these global challenges. And the way we are responding is through a transformative leadership, where young leaders are stepping up to the local challenges, taking action and driving change.

This year our series of Transformative Sustainability Leadership programs involved 665 new young people and mobilized more than 2,722 people to take action. We had an internship program with four fellows in our ConeXpacios - connection spaces led by young people in Uspantán and Tecpán Guatemala - making an impact on a systemic level in their regions. We developed partnerships under the principles of radical collaboration with whom we are creating an ecosystem of opportunities and services for youth.

We continued our work with the families impacted by the eruption of Fuego Volcano, back in 2018, through our projects in The Resilience Farm. We implemented agroecological programs to and they harvested corn, beans, cassava, sweet potato, amaranth, chia. We developed an emergency plan, and we started to create a business model looking for its own long term sustainability.

How about the future? We want to develop a youth camp at the Resilience Farm, we want to develop an initiative that seeks the empowerment of indigenous women with Casa Maya, long term sustainability for the ConeXpacios through their own business models and we will continue in our evolutionary process responding to the needs of the youth in the region.

Our commitment, to follow the incredible work led by Corrina in this decade, is alive in us more than ever, because we have experienced SERES mission in our lives as young female Guatemalan leaders.

We will continue to innovate and to create the changes we want to see in the world.

Abigail & Sara

how to describe 2019?

For Latin America, 2019 was a challenging year, we saw countries like Venezuela in a political crisis, with hyperinflation and shortages of food and medicine; Chile's and Ecuador social unrest due to inequalities and discomfort with the government policies; and wildfires destroyed much of Brazil's Amazon Rainforest.

Coming closer to Central America, presidential elections were held in Guatemala and El Salvador, electing the youngest president in El Salvador's history. We were appalled by the arrests of young activists and leaders in Nicaragua after the massive protests against Ortega's government.

Many of these events led to massive migration, within Latin America and further north. In the case of the countries in the Northern Triangle, Trump's administration froze US foreign aid to Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, in an attempt to force governments to reduce the outflow of migrants.

Looking back at the challenges, we don't see a linear cause and effect problem, we see complex social problems that throughout the history of our countries, we have been affected by inequality and that has threatened our ability to reach our fullness and wholeness as a society.

However, we did see a commonality among these challenges, younger generations are speaking out, raising their voices, acting and creating change, sometimes through the disruptions of traditional systems.

Now, we have a sense of hope that a younger generation that is prepared with the right skills and mindset, will drive us to a more sustainable and unequal societies.

building organizational resilience

At the beginning of 2019, we decided to embark on a journey to transition SERES to a Teal Organization as one of the first organizations with this model in our region. The organizational structure in Teal is characterized by rapid change and adaptation, as adjustments are continuously made to better serve the organization's purpose, with a great focus on self-organization and self-management.

Teal is composed of three greater pillars: self-management, wholeness, and evolutionary process. Self-management is reflected in having an autonomous team, no bosses or fixed hierarchies, distributed decision making, no job titles but rather each individual has a number of roles that he/she has agreed to and committed to fulfill, everyone is giving access to information at the same time and disagreements are resolved among peers using a well-defined conflict resolution process.

Wholeness invites individuals to bring all of who they are to work, focusing on self-management, a safe and supportive environment, explicit ground rules, reflective and inspiring spaces, personal development and reimagine human resource processes.

Finally, the evolutionary process in Teal accepts that each organization has its own identity, life force and calling. The evolutionary purpose of a Teal organization reflects the deeper reason the organization exists. It relates to the difference it wants to make in the community it operates in, as well as in the marketplace it serves. It is not concerned with the competition or outperforming others; it is serving the 'greater good' that matters.

Integrating the different Teal pillars in SERES has been a learning and growing experience for all the members of our community, our staff, youth, board, and partners, as we try on new practices for decision making, planning, budgeting, etc.

There is still work to do to integrate more teal aspects to SERES, however, we can say this journey has been filled with new opportunities to showcase that integrating new models to very rigid and traditional backgrounds is possible. We hope our larger community of supporters and partners are feeling curious about our learning and we can share more about our experience.

As we have adapted our processes and structure, we have also received so much support from mentors and consultants. Thank you euforia and the Ross Michigan Business School for your knowledge, recommendations, and guidance on how to best integrate teal into SERES.

The most important part of adopting these new principles, is the ways we are looking to be inclusive at all levels, sensing what the world is asking from us and responding accordingly, and connecting our larger mission to every decision making process. In summary, the impact we are able to create for others.



Juan Pablo

Guatemala

“I was excited that in my first organizational work experience I would be part of a working model that manages roles with a learning and growth purpose, larger than a technical function.”



Dora

Guatemala

“These are the things I am most excited about Teal: being able to carry out the transition of many processes with a new organizational approach. The freedom to self-manage and highlight my leadership more from the roles I occupy. Becoming more aware of all the added value that SERES brings to each member. And the use of new tools (like Glassfrog).”



Marco Antonio

Guatemala

“What I learned and enjoyed most last year, was to see my coworkers as friends. Before, I was afraid to talk and lacked the confidence to approach them with difficult conversations. Now we see each other as friends and I am able to discuss my responsibilities with them.”



Lucía

Nicaragua

“The most challenging thing has been to deconstruct what I have known and practiced in past times as leadership, coming from vertical, radical and rigid systems, I have seen myself many times self-questioning (positively) my actions and attitudes by having to develop as a leader within of a referential framework like Teal.”



Antonio

El Salvador

“Making decisions has been the most difficult since I was very used to others making big decisions and now I have to analyze more situations to do my best.”



Liza

Guatemala

“Self-management has been the most difficult part of a teal organization. How do you measure your time, what do you give priority to, meet deadlines without having a person behind you reminding/telling you that you should do it. Self-management invites us to put into practice our ability to manage our time and our life. It invites us to have initiative, to be organized and responsible. A new model that allows you to have freedom.”

transformative sustainability leadership

We believe that leadership is a disposition, not a position. When willing, we all have the potential to use our influence for a worthwhile cause, leveraging our strengths to positively impact the world around us.

We believe that given encouragement and the right kind of learning, any young person can become a highly influential and impactful leader, deeply committed to addressing the root causes of injustice and inequality in their community.

We call it *Transformative Sustainability Leadership*.

This is why we seek to empower young people to navigate in emerging contexts, work collaboratively and practice responsible leadership in a way that allows them to shape that much-desired future aligned with the needs of the communities they serve.

Back in 2018, we initiated a fellowship program known as the Youth's Journey, which we aimed at young graduated ambassadors - trained and certified facilitators of TSL program -. During 2019, the fellowship program was strengthened in the Conexpacios in Tecpán, Chimaltenango and Uspantán, Quiché.

This fellowship program was born to fulfill different objectives. First, to support our youth network and their path within our programs; second, to maintain and expand the network of young people within our ecosystem in a more personal way, providing a space for bright young people to have their first professional development experience, providing them with learning resources that support their integral growth and development of soft and technical skills keys to shine in their lives and in their communities; and third, to guide the activities, based on a community diagnostic, of our new Conexpacios.

They are equipped not only with knowledge but also with the skills, attitudes, and values that allow them to be high-performance leaders. They are young role-models in their communities that inspire and motivate colleagues to work together. They are highly connected to a wide and diverse network and can manage resources that support local initiatives aligned with their vision of change. At the end of their three-year fellowship, these young leaders will have a solid vision and a high commitment towards doing sustainability a reality of equitable transformation in their communities.

meet our fellows

Flor

Manzanales, Tecpán

“This fellowship allowed me to lose my fear to lead. When the ConeXpacio started it was something special. We went from having no furniture to having a space full of young people, alliances and the community sharing and connecting. I see that there is still more space for young people, with more useful tools and to keep building different partnerships to continue strengthening and weaving more change agents.”



Edith

Tecpán, Chimaltenango

“It has been a year of satisfaction. I have seen my own evolution. This fellowship changed my life because I was able to experience new things. I saw the development of my community and met new people. I dream of Guatemala as a fair country, without corruption, where we all have the same opportunities, with quality educational centers and awareness of caring for mother earth.”



Johana

Uspantán, Quiché

“Thanks to the fellowship, we (SERES and I) - are being recognized in different spaces within my community. I dream of a just and sustainable Guatemala that all Guatemalans have access to a good education, good health and that all people learn to live in a healthier way with nature.”



Julio

Uspantán, Quiché

“SERES’s platform is more challenging than the traditional one and thanks to that it has allowed me to grow in all areas of my life. The fellowship changed my life by opening spaces for participation at a national and international level. This fellowship motivated me to make a change in my life and in my community. It broadened my personal vision and I was able to help more people.”



2019 impact

We all saw Greta Thunberg, a 16 year old Swedish activist raising awareness and moving millions of students, youth and entire cities for climate change strikes. She inspired, captivated and questioned world leaders to take immediate actions towards climate change strategies.

We can say she is a change agent of our generation and so are many other leaders, that didn't make the headlines but that are creating local and sustainable change in their communities.

Proudly we say, SERES youth are some of these agents, with their youth-led community initiatives they are influencing behavioral and physical changes within their communities by:

Developing self-efficacy through active community engagement, that helps build the skills and contacts required to make changes happen. *Citizen's muscles.*

Teaching project planning tools and skills for innovation and creation to accelerate action and increase impact. *Accelerating action.*

Teaching about conflict mediation and peacebuilding training through non-competitive play. *Peacebuilding.*

Exploring leadership as a verb, that requires doing, and an art form, that requires practice - informing the way that I work and walk in the world. *Leadership in action.*

Take a look at our impact during 2019

TYPE OF PLAN	#CAPS IMPLEMENTED	# PARTICIPANTS	#PEOPLE IMPACTED	IMPACT	AMOUNT
<i>Environmental Education</i>	7	146	216	Workshops facilitated	5
				Events coordinated	5
				Meetings held	3
				Awareness sign placed	1
<i>Civic Participations</i>	17	144	2,032	Community forums organized	10
				Events coordinated	25
				Sport events	3
				Organizations involved	10
				Art festivals	1
				Workshops facilitated	5
<i>Recycling and waste management</i>	4	121	82	Trash bags collected	35
				Cleaning campaigns	4
				Schools involved	1
<i>Reforestation and biodiversity</i>	8	125	355	Trees planted	2,770
				Reforestation campaign	6
<i>Food sovereignty</i>	4	19	37	Nursery created	3
				Workshops facilitated	2
				Meetings held	1
				Organic fertilizer	1
TOTAL	40	555	2,722		

programmatic summary

665
participants

2,722
indirect
beneficiaries

16
multi-day
programs

29
new youth
trainers



our achievements

Pathways to Resilience

Agroecology Project

After June 3, 2018 with the eruption of Fuego, Pathways to Resilience was the project designed to transform lives and livelihoods for the communities devastated in Escuintla.

Sudden onset disasters such as hurricanes, landslides and earthquakes tend to result in immediate and internal displacement. If the physical, environmental, and economic damage is too severe, communities are compelled to uproot more permanently and may migrate internationally. Hurricane Mitch in 1987 and Stan in 2005 permanently uprooted tens of thousands of Hondurans and Guatemalans. The same is likely to occur as a result of the June 2018 volcanic eruption in Guatemala, where a month after the event 86 percent of those displaced has lost their livelihoods.¹

This was one of the main objectives of the project, how we can use the disaster as a catalyst for kindness, agency and human dignity, through the development of alternative agricultural practices that allow them to have sustainable livelihoods.

In 2019, we worked alongside 25 families from San Miguel Los Lotes, El Rodeo, La Reina and Santa Rosa, all from Escuintla; providing a dynamic space to regenerate their livelihoods systems as farmers.

¹ OIM: “86 % de las personas afectadas por volcan perdieron fuentes de ingresos,” July 7, 2018, available at: <https://www.iom.int/es/news/oim-86-de-las-personas-afectadas-por-volcan-perdieron-fuentes-de-ingresos-enguatemala>, accessed September 17, 2018

The participating farmers had access to plots of 20*65 meter in which they established a sustainable agroecology system with diverse and resilient crops. In order to diversify the crops, we provided them with a donation of seeds:

- Corn (7 pounds/farmer)
- Sweet potato(40 seedlings/farmer)
- Cassava (30 seedlings of Yucca/per farmer)
- Amaranth(6 ounces/per farmer)
- Chia (1 ounce).

In parallel, we created eight demonstrative plots for the farmers to learn new agroecology techniques. The families practiced the knowledge acquired in the training by developing and working in our demonstrative area. This area was designed and implemented to create models of examples of sustainable practices for others to experience and experiment with. It functions as a practical, on hands, learning space for farmers and young leaders from SERES network and partners.

At the end of 2019 the families were able to produce for two harvest during the year. They harvested an average of 7,000 kg of corn, 220 kg of black beans, 1,500 sweet

potatoes and 50 pounds of amaranth, per family plot with a total saving of \$7,635.

We had 4 training sessions with La Botica Verde in agroforestry techniques, orchard planning, agricultural entrepreneurship, alternatives to agrochemical supplies such as insecticides, herbicides, and organic source fertilizers.

We implemented training in multistrata agroforestry with the Agroforestry Network for Sustainable Development (RAF). These orchards had the objective of being able to take advantage of an area less than 45 square meters for the simultaneous or sequential implementation of trees, food or medicinal crops. This system aimed to improve the productivity of land and farmers, at the same time, ecologically sustainable.

With the company Nelixia from Guatemala, dedicated to the extraction of essential oils from plants, we established an experimental musk area in which the families were granted decent work to carry out: the cleaning of land, pruning of trees (to avoid shade), musk seed sowing and maintenance. A total of 25 people benefited from this development.



*“The knowledge we are learning in the agricultural trainings, is helping us to transform our way of life and the way we earn our daily bread, I deeply thank SERES for the support of seeds and the trainings.”
Don Ovidio.*

FINANCIALS*

REVENUE AND OTHER SUPPORT

	FY 2018	FY 2019
Foundation Grants	\$226,597	\$119,813
SERES Global Grants	\$60,430	-
Individual Contributions	\$7,049	\$5,504
Fee-for-service	\$64,153	\$2,964
Other Income (interests)	\$522	\$684
Total	\$358,751	\$128,965

EXPENSES

	FY 2018	FY 2019
Training Programs (Central America)	\$153,560	\$132,052
Training Programs (International)	\$984	\$220
Leadership Center/Pathways	\$43,241	\$47,511
Grants	\$9,882	-
Operating Costs	\$13,200	\$18,654
Development	\$14,838	\$16,878
Management and General	\$25,286	\$26,809
Total	\$260,991	\$242,124

Net assets at beginning of year	\$131,398	\$229,868
Grant Reimbursement**	-	-\$40,803
Net assets at end of year	\$229,868	\$75,906

* For Guatemalan-based operations for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2019

**Funds from Inter-American Foundation (IAF) collaborative grant managed by Asociacion SERES until February 2019 and were transferred to another organization as part of the agreement for their management.



what's next for us?

Impact leadership

We will provide education, training and skills development to 1,500 young women and men.

ConEXpacios

We will develop 6 safe, youth-centered spaces in 6 municipalities in Guatemala and El Salvador to provide an ecosystem of support and services to achieve their vision for good living, strengthening community involvement led by young people in civic and political processes that are contributing to economic and sustainable development.

Grassroot Initiatives

We will develop 2 sustainable initiatives that allow economic freedom for women through a network of local homestays and provide financial sustainability to families through sustainable agriculture initiatives.

We finished the year 2019 more inspired.

We know we are facing many challenges in 2020 and yet we are convinced of the potential that young people have in Guatemala and El Salvador.

We are exploring with emergent strategies and invite you to explore too. The time is now. We need more change agents with creative solutions and possibilities. We need young people finding their voices and becoming a “leaderful generation”.

We need leaders who optimize, use ancestral wisdom, collaborate, and believe in themselves and their abilities to facilitate positive change.

We invite you to be part of this social transformation in the region as a champion and donor.

We are inviting you to support us TODAY with our current programs, TOMORROW with our new grassroot initiatives and ConeXpacios, and in the FUTURE leaving a legacy behind.

We need transforming leaders.

Together, we rise.

You can make a gift today

online

seres.org/donate

check

SERES Global

3865 Lakeshore Ave, Oakland CA 94610, USA.

* Gifts made to SERES contribute to our entire mission.
We apply your gifts where they are needed most.



S E R E S

**1ra Avenida Norte No. 12, Impact Hub
Antigua Sacatepequez Guatemala
Ph: +502 7832 2469 | info@seres.org**

www.seres.org