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Please Pray

God is not done working in Wiwinak, and I have seen many situations where communities come out stronger after a crisis. Please pray for this situation and AMC as they help sort out this chaos.

Money Falling from the Sky

It's easy to write about success stories, much harder to write ones that are heart-breakers. The story I want to share takes place in the village of Wiwinak, a community that is made up of about 800 inhabitants and located on the Rio Coco, about 80 kilometers from the nearest road, electrical outlet, or policeman. CRWRC in Nicaragua and our partner Acción Medica Cristiana (AMC) have been working in this area for the last four years together, promoting preventative health, sustainable agriculture, and disaster risk management.



Last week a small aircraft crashed in Wiwinak. In fact it crashed on the AMC agriculture training center property. The crew did not survive the crash. The cargo was cocaine and money. It's unclear how decisions were made, but apparently the money was distributed within the community and three other neighboring communities. The cocaine was likely converted to cash by reselling it to drug traffickers. Overnight, the community was transformed, but not in the way we had

anticipated. Merchants from the closest town—Waspam, 80 kilometers away—descended on Wiwinak, bringing with them all kinds of products for sale, from clothing to generators to chainsaws. Whereas before I would have had a hard time buying a pencil in a barter-based economy, now DVD players can be purchased for cash. To give you an idea how much money is circulating, a woman was arrested with \$80,000 in her bag in Waspam.

This is a story of how poverty collides with fast, easy money. Crime moved in quickly, evidenced by armed robbery by outsiders making raids on homes under the cover of night.

One person was fatally shot a couple days ago. AMC closed down its work in the community for security reasons. Even though it's planting time, there is little motivation by the community to work. And the abundance of chainsaws will undoubtedly impact the environment once the cash runs out.

It's heartbreaking because Wiwinak was one of our flagship communities



that we work with amongst the 28 communities in the program. Straddling the Nicaraguan/Honduran border, the river was well known to be a corridor for drug trafficking, moving drugs north and money south. The plane crash was not a surprise, but the reaction from the community was. Concealing money related to drug trafficking is highly illegal in Nicaragua. What happened to the leadership training we invested in Wiwinak? Why didn't the authorities intervene? In a conversation with Francisco Gutierrez, the director of AMC, he shared that it was "painstakingly clear that unless there is an underlying Biblical world view, our community development efforts are in vain."

