

NICARAGUA



THE NEED:

With approximately 25% of its population living under the national poverty line, Nicaragua is one of the poorest countries in Latin America. Despite the fact that Nicaragua is primarily an agricultural economy, many citizens still face a daily struggle to obtain adequate food for themselves and their families, and nearly one out of five children suffer from chronic malnutrition. Furthermore, only about 25% of Nicaragua’s rural families have access to safe drinking water in their homes, and only one-third have access to adequate sanitary facilities (i.e. latrines), which together contribute to the country’s high incidence of childhood mortality from diarrhea and malnutrition.



REGIONAL FOCUS: Jinotega, Región Autónoma del Caribe Norte y Sur

TECHNICAL EXPERTISE: Economic Empowerment, Maternal & Child Health, Food and Nutrition Security, Disaster Risk Reduction & Response, Water & Sanitation, Education



OVERVIEW

For 25 years, PCI has implemented integrated development projects in Nicaragua, combining interventions in the areas of health, education, economic empowerment, water and sanitation, food and nutrition security, and disaster response and risk reduction. By taking an integrated approach to all of its programs, PCI ensures that community needs are addressed comprehensively and efficiently. Central to PCI’s success is its focus on local capacity building, which ranges from strengthening rural farming cooperatives to mobilizing schools to meet the needs of their students to training networks of community health workers. Through this approach, PCI ensures that the impact of its work far outlasts the lifecycle of any given project.

INCREASING EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AND HEALTH

Since 2013, PCI has been collaborating with the US Department of Agriculture, various local ministries and local NGO partners to implement a multi-year Food for Education Program. This is designed to increase enrollment, retention and attendance rates of pre- and primary-school students through the provision of daily school breakfasts. The program is reaching two of Nicaragua’s most vulnerable departments – Jinotega, in the northern central corridor, and the Región Autónoma del Caribe Sur, along the Caribbean Coast. PCI is also teaching parents about health and hygiene, nutrition and food security, as well as hosting school fairs that enable students to share nutrition, environment and youth leadership messages with other community members. Complementary activities such as solar disinfection of water, infrastructure improvements and the development of school gardens are also improving the quality of education and the health of children, teachers and communities.

Through PCI’s Food for Education project, participating parents prepare a nutritious daily meal for over 77,000 students every day! The meals provide an incentive for children to attend school and allow children, who would go hungry otherwise, the ability to concentrate, learn and develop to their fullest potential.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES TO COMBAT VIOLENCE & CRIME

With funding from the Department of State’s Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, PCI is implementing the POSSibilities Project, which seeks to increase citizen security and reduce the viability of drug trafficking in Nicaragua’s autonomous regions. This three-year project is being implemented in four of the eight municipalities of the Región Autónoma del Caribe Norte and in 46 of the highest risk communities most vulnerable to trafficking, and covers a population of approximately 74,000 recipients, representing nearly one third of the population within these four



PCI (Project Concern International) is an international nonprofit on a mission to enhance health, end hunger and overcome hardship worldwide. Founded in 1961, PCI impacted the lives of more than 19 million people last year alone through programs in 15 countries spanning Asia, Africa and the Americas.



Youth participating in leadership training on topics such as civic values, gender equity, family violence, drug and alcohol abuse.

Under its USDA-funded project, PCI built the capacity of 38 farming cooperatives and strengthened two local Centers for Rural Development, which in turn raised the average income of participating farmers by 146%.

municipalities. By increasing capacity and leadership within civil society to address security issues and strengthening communities to reduce risk and increase economic opportunity, POSSibilities is attacking the root causes of violence, crime and deterioration of civil society in the region. These objectives are carried out through activities that develop youth leadership, strengthen community leaders, engage local business owners to increase their commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility, and support women's social and economic empowerment.

BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF FARMING COOPERATIVES

Since 2002, PCI has been working with small-scale farmers in Nicaragua to help them grow higher quality crops, sell them for the best price, and increase their family incomes. Building on the successes of its seven-year USAID-funded Development Assistance Program, PCI's recent USDA-funded agricultural program effectively increased the incomes of rural farmers in seven municipalities in the departments of Jinotega and Nueva Segovia. Through this project, PCI strengthened two Centers for Rural Development, which provide hands-on demonstration and training for agricultural producers to help them improve their production and sell their products at higher prices. The Centers provide an important platform for the effective transfer of knowledge and skills that are vitally important for empowering farming communities as the principal agents of their own progress.

PCI is continuing to work closely with two of these partner cooperatives on a health and food/livelihoods security program in partnership with Keurig Green Mountain. The project is being implemented through 2016, and seeks to economic, health and nutrition status of 850 vulnerable coffee-farming families in Yalí, Jinotega. Sustainability, environmental conservation and gender equity are three cross-cutting themes woven throughout the project.

RECENT PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Healthy and Productive Farming Communities:** PCI has worked in Jinotega since 1997 and is widely recognized for its leadership and long-standing commitment to the region. Of particular mention is PCI's USAID-funded Development Assistance Program (2001-2008) which reached 76,000 people in 300 communities of rural Jinotega, reduced post-harvest loss among farmers to an insignificant 0.2%, and increased the average net income of families by 111%. Furthermore, using community-based health interventions like growth monitoring and birth planning, PCI's work in Jinotega reduced malnutrition by 35% among 10,194 children under 2 and reduced to zero the number of maternal deaths in 50 participating communities.
- Community-Led Water & Sanitation:** With 12 years of experience implementing water and sanitation programs throughout the country, PCI has become an expert in the development of sustainable, community-managed water and sanitation systems. PCI is also a leading clean water advocate and is an active member of Nicaragua's RASNIC network which promotes access to clean water and sanitation facilities. To date, PCI has constructed 117 water systems and over 2,450 latrines in local schools and communities, and has organized and trained 117 water and sanitation committees to locally manage water and sanitation systems.
- Family-Centered Maternal & Child Health:** By training a network of hundreds of community health volunteers, providing education on good health practices, and facilitating linkages to hospitals and clinics, PCI made strides toward better family health for over 7,200 children under two years of age and 5,700 caregivers in 353 rural communities in rural Jinotega where poverty, acute malnutrition and stunting are among the highest levels in the country.

PCI/NICARAGUA

Leonel Arguello Yrigoyen
Country Director
larguello@pciglobal.org
ph: 011-505-22663748

INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

5151 Murphy Canyon Road, Suite 320
San Diego, CA 92123
ph: (858) 279-9690
www.PCIglobal.org

WASHINGTON, DC OFFICE

1140 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 900
Washington, DC 20036
ph: (202) 223-0088

SEATTLE REPRESENTATIVE

pciseattle@pciglobal.org