

# Nicaragua



Many of Nicaragua's poor are subsistence farmers who struggle to transform small plots of land into sources of nourishment for their families year round. This is no easy task, especially when their nutrition and livelihoods are so intimately connected to the soil and changing weather patterns.

PWS&D is working with *The Soya Association of Nicaragua (SOYNICA)* and *The Pro-Denominational Alliance Council of Evangelical Churches (CEPAD)* to address the underlying causes of hunger and poverty so vulnerable families have healthier futures.

## Sowing the Seeds of Food Security

Agriculture as a way of life can be a risky business. Food production in Nicaragua hinges almost entirely on the rains. But in recent years, the rains have become less predictable, making it difficult for farmers to know when to plant their crops. As a result, families experience lean periods and struggle with hunger between growing seasons. Farmers who depend on a few staple crops are even more susceptible to crop failure and food shortages. Conventional farming practices like burning or the use of chemical pesticides might yield quick results, while leaving the soil less fertile in the long-term.

Through innovative agriculture programs, PWS&D is helping



smallholder farmers adapt to the changing climate and replace environmentally destructive practices with more sustainable techniques. Workshops teach farmers how to improve soil quality, conserve water and use organic fertilizers to increase crop production. With this help, farmers are able to harvest multiple times a year and plant vegetables that normally wouldn't grow in the dry conditions. Excess produce is sold at the market to earn income and help families improve their quality of life.

### Hidden Hunger & Child Nutrition

In Nicaragua, over 19 per cent of the population is considered malnourished. Food security here is about more than the availability of food, but also the nutrients in the food eaten. Many families consume a limited diet of rice, beans and corn, eating very little fruits and vegetables. As a result, children experience serious delays in their development or stunting of their growth.

To strengthen the health of communities, PWS&D provides farmers with vegetables seeds, fruit tree sapling and measurement kits. Through workshops, parents are taught about the importance of balanced diets, breastfeeding for newborns and how to choose foods according to their nutritional value. By checking children's height, weight and haemoglobin levels, community volunteers are able to assess the nutritional status of children and take action to get their development back on track.



### Building Healthier Futures – Maria's Story

“My name is Maria Carazo. This project has been very important to me and my family. I have received plants such as mango, star fruit, passion fruit, orange, papaya, and cassava, as well as vegetable seeds to plant in our garden.

Through trainings, I also learned how to raise vegetable beds, improve holes for planting and how to make natural insecticides and compost. By using these farming methods and planting these seeds, we have improved our nutrition, mainly of our children. We now weigh our children each month to see if they are growing properly and know how to feed them in order to improve their nutrition.”

### Your Gifts Make a Difference!

Through your generous support of PWS&D, communities in Nicaragua are overcoming hunger and building healthier futures.

**\$1,520 provides a community with vegetable seeds, fruit tree saplings, tools and training.**