

# A school on the hillside

A construction project to improve school facilities for a remote hillside community in western Nicaragua



## Who are we?

Nuevas Esperanzas serves poor communities in Nicaragua through projects which provide practical and technical assistance in support of long-term sustainable development. We have a team of national staff based in León, serving rural communities on the Pacific side of Nicaragua and are supported by a UK registered charity.

We work in a number of sectors including agriculture, water, the environment, health, housing and education, following a model of holistic, transformational development. We aim to integrate innovation with good practice in development, always mindful of the complex web of economic, environmental, social and spiritual issues which conspire against those living in poverty.

## Contact Information:

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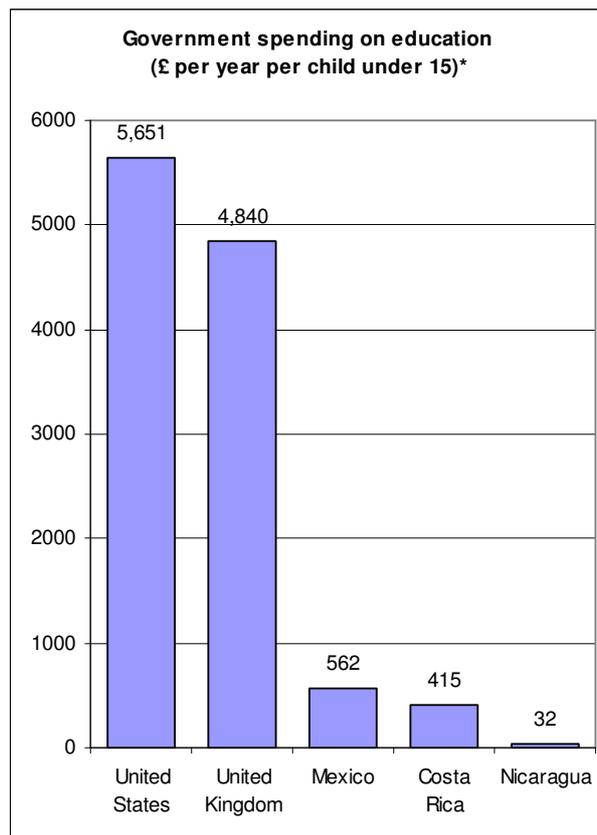
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## Background

The community of El Ojochal de Listón is situated high up on the slopes of Volcán Telica in the department of León, Nicaragua. For the 76 members of this community many aspects of daily life usually taken for granted represent big challenges. It is a two hour walk down a steep track to reach the nearest small town to buy food, collect water or go to school. This would not be possible for the 24 primary school age children from the community. A primary school with just one teacher exists for these children who are taught in

one mixed age group with few resources in very basic conditions.

Government spending on education in Nicaragua is very limited indeed with just US\$57 (£32) per year invested for each child under the age of 15. Mexico spends 18 times this amount and the United States 178 times as much.



\*source: United Nations Human Development Report 2005

Nuevas Esperanzas has been working with the community since November 2005 when a rainwater harvesting project was first proposed to address the severe water problems faced by the community. A rainwater harvesting tank was built to store the water collected from the roof of the existing makeshift school.



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## The project

This project aims to improve and expand the school facilities in El Ojochal. Links with the community have continued since the completion of the tank in 2006 and they have requested the help of Nuevas Esperanzas in improving the school facilities. The current school building is in a poor state of repair and has no sanitation facilities for the children at all.

### Objectives:

- To repair and improve the existing school.
- To build an annex to the existing building increasing the space available for the children.
- To improve the sanitation available with the construction of two latrines.
- To use the additional roof space to increase the area available for rainwater harvesting in the existing tank.

### Proposed programme of activities

- Before beginning construction, all the materials required for the project must be transported up the hillside to the community by mule and oxen. This may take between six and eight weeks depending on the condition of the track if construction takes place during the wet season.
- Work on the construction of the annex building can run in parallel to the repairs and improvements to be carried out on the existing building. The walls will be built of cement blocks and wood and concrete floors will be laid. A corrugated iron roof will be erected. This building work will take around eight weeks.
- Following completion of the annex building the roof will be fitted with guttering and pipes to connect it to the existing rainwater tank.
- Two latrines will be built at the school. This will take around one week.

## Budget for construction at El Ojochal

All values in GBP

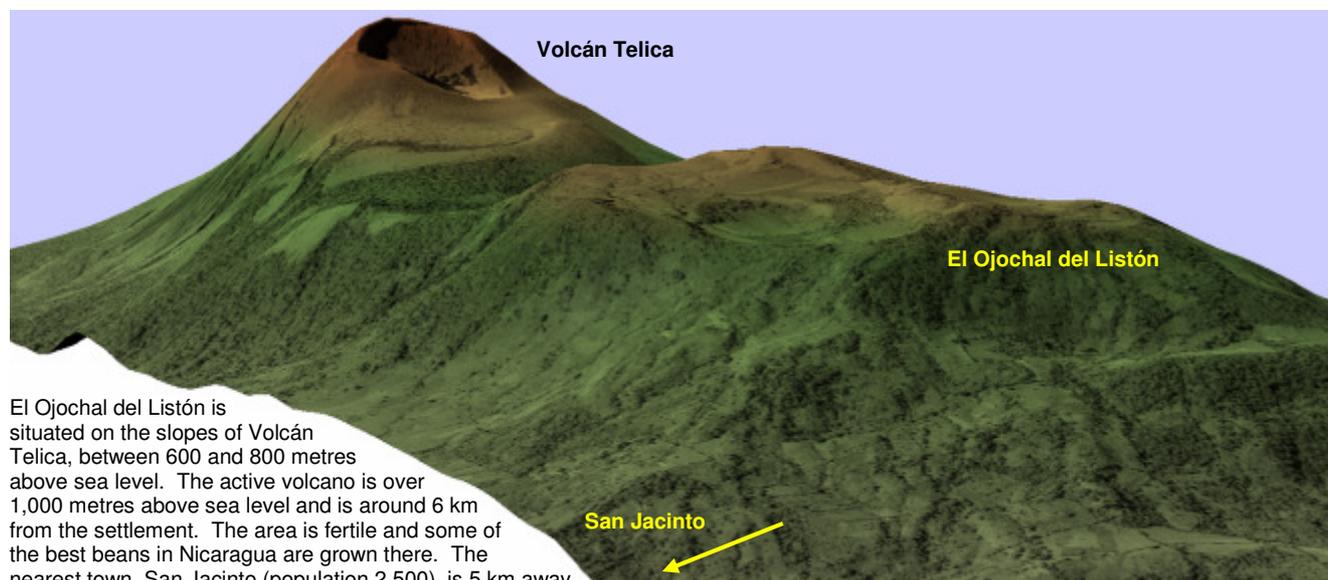
Description	Community contribution	Donations received	To be raised	Total
<b>Materials</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>970</b>	<b>1,460</b>
School building	170		970	1,140
Latrines		320		320
<b>Labour</b>	<b>300</b>		<b>455</b>	<b>755</b>
Trained Masons			455	455
Manual Labour	300			300
<b>Salaries</b>			<b>601</b>	<b>601</b>
Supervising Civil Engineer			274	274
Community Coordinator			202	202
Administrator			125	125
<b>Transport</b>			<b>125</b>	<b>125</b>
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>470</i>	<i>320</i>	<i>2,151</i>	<i>2,941</i>
<b>Indirect Project Costs</b>			<b>441</b>	<b>441</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>2,592</b>	<b>3,382</b>

The total amount to be raised for the project is **£2,592**, out of a total cost of £3,382.

For further information please contact us at:

[info@nuevasesperanzas.org](mailto:info@nuevasesperanzas.org)

Registered Charity Number: 1116109



El Ojochal del Listón is situated on the slopes of Volcán Telica, between 600 and 800 metres above sea level. The active volcano is over 1,000 metres above sea level and is around 6 km from the settlement. The area is fertile and some of the best beans in Nicaragua are grown there. The nearest town, San Jacinto (population 2,500), is 5 km away.