

**Contact Information:** Nuevas Esperanzas  
 Apartado No. 400  
 León, Nicaragua  
 Tel +505 311 6057

info@nuevasesperanzas.org  
 www.nuevasesperanzas.org

La Palmerita is an impoverished rural community located approximately 10 km from Malpaisillo in the Department of León, western Nicaragua. The origins of this community date back to 2001 when the global coffee crisis hit Nicaragua particularly hard. Coffee workers from the north of the country converged on the capital, Managua, to appeal to the government for help. These demonstrations pressured the government into making available some land in the west of the country where the former coffee workers could settle, promising assistance with housing and other basic needs. This property, a former cotton plantation, is known as 'La Palmerita'.



Many of the families who had participated in the demonstrations in Managua moved onto the land at La Palmerita in the following months living in extreme poverty in shelters made from sheets of black polythene. For numerous reasons these terrible living conditions continued for more than five years until a concerted effort by Nuevas Esperanzas and several other charitable organisations and government agencies succeeded in legalising the occupation of the land and initiating the construction of permanent houses.

## Country Profile:

Nicaragua is the poorest country in Latin America and has a history of exploitation, underdevelopment and civil war. It is also a country that has been repeatedly devastated by natural disasters. It is at risk from earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, floods, tsunamis, landslides, and drought. Nicaragua has suffered two famous natural disasters in recent history and numerous others which did not attract so much international attention. Not only have the death tolls, mass displacement and human suffering been catastrophic, but the economic effects have been profound and long-lasting.



La Palmerita



Now that there are 112 houses ready to be occupied, there is an urgent need to provide adequate sanitation. The construction of a latrine for each family will considerably improve living conditions and environmental hygiene. Between the 112 families to benefit from this project, there are 443 people in total, many of whom are children under the age of 8.



The construction of these latrines and their proper use will have a direct impact on the health and hygiene of the community, resulting in a significant reduction of diarrhoeal and other water-borne diseases which are sadly very widespread at La Palmerita.



Having carried out an evaluation of the available options, it is proposed that the most appropriate design is for 'Ventilated Improved Pit' (VIP) latrines constructed using prefabricated components (metal superstructure with fibreglass latrine slab and toilet pedestal) as shown in the photograph on the left.

It is estimated that the construction of the 112 latrines will take approximately three months and that the total budget for the implementation of the project is £18,237 (approximately £163 per latrine). This budget is made up as follows:

	£
<b>CONSTRUCTION OF LATRINES</b>	<b>14,175</b>
Pre-fabricated latrine components	9,570
Construction materials	2,088
Labour	1,188
Contingency	1,329
<b>ADMINISTRATION COSTS</b>	<b>4,062</b>
Staff costs	1,083
Transport	600
Overheads (15%)	2,379
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£ 18,237</b>

*A full budget and detailed proposal for this project is available on request by e-mailing [info@nuevasesperanzas.org](mailto:info@nuevasesperanzas.org).*