

# PROFILE: NICARAGUA

Photo?

**Nicaragua is the second-poorest country in the Americas. Natural disasters have compounded hardships brought by dictatorship and civil war.**

Heavily reliant on farming, Nicaragua has traditionally exported much of its produce, with ordinary people reaping few of the benefits. Instead, the bulk of revenue has boosted the coffers of a small Spanish-descended elite.

Following the 'Sandinista' revolution in 1979, the country's new leaders began redistributing property and wealth, and improving access to health and education. Fearing a socialist uprising in its 'backyard', the US sponsored a counter-revolution.

The ensuing turmoil led to the Sandinistas' defeat in the 1990 elections, held as part of a peace treaty. Nicaragua's infrastructure was in ruins, and incomes – of already poor people – had tumbled.

In 1998, Hurricane Mitch shattered recovery. One-fifth of the country's people were left homeless and thousands were killed. Nicaragua was left with a massive repair bill.

One of the most disaster-prone countries in Latin America, Nicaragua experiences major floods and landslides – exacerbated by deforestation – every two or three years.

Meanwhile, unemployment, drug trafficking and political corruption are fuelling Nicaragua's huge social challenges.

## TEARFUND'S WORK IN NICARAGUA

Tearfund's work in Nicaragua dates back to 1972, when a massive earthquake hit Managua, the capital. Our presence continues today through church networks that are building resilience to natural disasters.

A coalition of churches and NGOs (non-governmental organisations), Rocca is helping to save lives by promoting procedures and techniques that will improve the quality of emergency response.

Prodad is promoting sustainable development among Assemblies of God churches and their communities through initiatives such as tilapia fish cultivation to improve diets, sowing of essential grains, and environmental protection through reforestation.

AMC (Acción Médica Cristiana) works in Nicaragua's poorest communities along the Atlantic coast, targeting vulnerable women, children and teenagers with community health, food and nutrition, emergency relief and HIV prevention programmes.

CIEETS (Centro Intereclesial de Estudios Teológicos y Sociales) is training church and community leaders to be agents of social transformation in marginalised communities, helping them to care for their environments, tackle gender inequality and advocate for basic services such as safe water.

Meanwhile, with a vision 'to be a community of Christ's disciples in universities and colleges', Cecníc (Comunidad de Estudiantes Cristianos de Nicaragua) runs an HIV prevention and care programme among students that adopts an innovative sexual education approach.

- **Pray for people living in poverty in Nicaragua.**
- **Please pray for our Nicaraguan partners as they seek to help others.**
- **And pray for Nicaragua: for justice, peace, good health and hope for everyone.**