



TGUP Project Details

Classroom and Community Center

La Pitilla, Nicaragua



PROJECT NAME:

La Pitilla Classroom and Community Center

PROJECT SUMMARY:

La Pitilla is a remote rural community of Tipitapa, Nicaragua, with very difficult access, located 19 miles

northeast of the municipal capital. It is a small village with houses scattered along a creek that provides water to the bigger community of Mesas de Acicaya. The community has a functioning school with a teacher and 28 children operating in a tiny 2x4 meter building made of aluminum and rustic wood. The dirt floor becomes muddy when it rains, making the school environment messy during the rainy season. This project will construct a 10x8 meter building made with a concrete floor; a metal framework will be covered with cement dry wall, and a roof made of zinc supported by steel purlins. The windows will be open and protected by square metal pipe pieces. The doors will be made of the same materials. A latrine will also be constructed as the school doesn't have one, and children need to go to neighboring homes for toilet use. The building will be used during the day for school, and after school/weekends for community events.

PROJECT PARTNERS:

The Global Uplift Project (TGUP) helps American students and individuals build classrooms and other infrastructure projects in the developing world from donations as small as one dollar (hence its name). Since its founding in 2007, TGUP has completed more than 120 such projects in 16 countries in Asia, Central America, and Africa. TGUP is an IRS registered 501c3 nonprofit.

Seeds of Learning (SOL) has worked with communities in Central America since 1991 to improve access to education. It has constructed 196 classrooms within 61 different communities across Nicaragua and El Salvador. SOL has two offices in Nicaragua and has headquarters in northern California. SOL is an IRS registered 501c3 nonprofit.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT:

Seeds of Learning

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PROJECT DATES: As soon as funding is provided

PROJECT TIMELINE: 3 months from funding

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY:



La Pitilla is a small rural community that is part of the Tipitapa municipality located near the northern border of the municipality, 19 miles to the northeast of the municipal capital, Managua. The community is spread out in a wide area along a creek, from which drinking water is pumped to the bigger community of Mesas de Acicaya (population 800), which is 1.5 miles away. The inhabitants of the community are farmers

and cattle raisers. Some people also work as laborers in middle size farms located near the community. The population of the La Pitilla community is roughly 100-120 people. There is no electricity and water is sourced from wells and the creek.

This community is also vulnerable to floods and mudslides because of its location in a valley near a creek surrounded by hills. Homes are very basic built with scrap wood and metal materials, making them unstable in severe weather.

Access to La Pitilla is very difficult; it is possible to drive on a rocky and bumpy dirt road to Mesas de Acicaya but then access is only by foot or horseback. Materials for the project will be taken to Mesas de Acicaya and then carried on horseback or oxen carts to the project site. The community inhabitants are more than willing to volunteer to transport the materials for the project.

SOL first got in touch with the community through their projects in the neighboring area of Mesas de Acicaya, where the school principal for seven schools has his headquarters. The teacher of La Pitilla School, who has been promoting this school project for a long time, also lives in Mesas de Acicaya and approached SOL for support. Students from La Pitilla participate in activities of the SOL-funded Learning Resource Center of Mesas de Acicaya.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL:

Since the government of Nicaragua operates with very limited resources, the community members have taken it upon themselves to build their own school. The land has already been donated to the community by one of its inhabitants. Currently, the land is owned by the community and has not been legally given to the Ministry of Education. Once the new classroom is completed, the community will transfer the school and property ownership to the Ministry of Education.



La Pitilla elementary is a multi-grade school: a single teacher teaches all grades from pre-school through sixth grade. Currently there are 28 students in the following levels:

Pre-school: 7
First grade: 5
Second grade: 4
Third grade: 7
Fourth grade: 4
Fifth grade: 1
Sixth grade: 0

The school infrastructure is very rustic, offering limited space and very poor conditions for learning. The dirt floor of the school is not protected from external elements, and it is usually flooded or muddy when it rains. The low walls and roof made of corrugated metal sheets make the school room very hot during sunny days. The limited space (6.5'x13') for 28 kids, who are in seven different grades, is very noisy and chaotic, making teaching and learning difficult. These conditions affect the school and student performance. Two students, enrolled at the beginning of the year, have already dropped out; inconsistent attendance is common, affecting student's performance and work completion. It is clear the poor school conditions are affecting motivation of students.

ABOUT THE PROJECT: This project will consist of the construction of a single 33'x20' classroom that will also be used as a community center after school hours. The building will be constructed on a concrete slab reinforced with steel mesh. The pillars and beams will be made of square 4"x4" steel pipes. The walls will be made of pre-fabricated cement dry wall sheets. The roof structure will be made with 4'x2" steel purlins and will be covered with zinc roofing sheets. We expect this new school space will produce the following outputs:

- A comfortable space where the teacher can organize small groups of students with enough separation to minimize the interference between groups. The space will also be suitable for dynamic activities that improve the teaching methodologies by encouraging learning-by-doing. A general improvement in students' performance and educational outputs is expected as a result.
- The new school will also provide a central space for the community to meet for different purposes; community assemblies to address development issues, cultural activities, training workshops, adult literacy classes, and other services provided by the government and service organizations (health care, vaccination, vocational training, etc.)
- A safe temporary shelter for families affected by natural disasters, like floods or mudslides.

After the completion of the construction phase, the project will be managed jointly by the community and the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education, who is already paying the teacher's salary. The community will eventually transfer the property to the Ministry of Education for long-term management and maintenance.

The community and teacher are committed to helping with the labor of the project in an effort to reduce the costs. Horses and oxen owned by the villagers will be used to cart the materials.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT COSTS:

Direct materials	\$ 9,407
Direct Labor	\$ 3,830
Admin Expenses	\$ 850
Total	\$14,087

DETAILS OF PROJECT COSTS:

LA PITILLA SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROJECT 2020				
Category	Description	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total cost in US\$
Materials and equipment	Cement bags	12.00	70	840
	Sand (m3)	20.40	13	265
	Gravel (m3)	31.20	7	218
	Cinder Blocks	0.81	540	438
	Steel bars 3/8" qq	48.00	3.5	168
	Steel bars 1/4" qq	45.60	2	91
	4x4"x1/8 square pipe	92.40	8	739
	4x4" ch16 square pipe	37.20	21	781
	4x2 ch16 purlins	19.20	16	307
	1" square pipe	9.10	27	246
	1 1/4" round steel pipe	14.40	2	29
	2.35 x 6 m. steel mesh	37.02	7	259
	Roofing sheets	16.27	80	1302
	Cement dry wall sheets	35.03	18	631
	Thinset mix	7.20	13	94
	2" screws for dry wall sheets	0.13	350	46
	1" screws for roofing sheets	0.10	320	31
	Roof ridge cap (units)	9.72	6	58
	Transport	132.00	8	1056
	Welding rod box	24.00	3	72
	Cutting disk 7"	4.20	15	63
	Anticorrosive paint 5 gal bucket	63.60	3	191
	Motorized welding equipment rental	34.50	8	276
	Welding equipment fuel (gallons)	5.04	40	202
	Wall paint (5 gal bucket)	69.60	5	348
	Thinner (gallons)	8.40	11	92
	Paintbrushes and rollers	84.00	1	84
	Latrine	240.00	2	480
				\$9,407
Admin Expenses	Transportation	60	10	600
	Food	5	50	250
				\$850

Personnel	Masonry (slab)	774	1	774
	Roof construction (m2)	7.32	102	746
	Walls and windows construction	960	1	960
	Field supervision (monthly)	450	3	1350
				\$3,830
				\$14,087

SUMMARY AND EVALUATION:

We rate this a high priority project. That is based on several factors:

- Existing resources are both overstretched and deficient;
- The facilities will be utilized immediately;
- New facilities will be utilized by multiple groups within the community
- SOL has a excellent working relationships with the teachers and community;
- TGUP's productive history of working with SOL;
- There is already a commitment by the Ministry of Education of Nicaragua to provide the school resources, including the teacher's wage, in the future.

The project impact indicators to be monitored include:

- An increase of 25% more in school enrollment.
- A 20% improvement in school attendance.
- 35 students and one teacher with decent conditions for teaching and learning.
- A 10% improvement in elementary school completion.
- 120 community inhabitants participating in activities hosted by the new school, including assemblies, cultural events, and community service delivery (health and education).
- An average 10% improvement in students' school performance.