

## Join us in supporting education for all in Nicaragua!

- Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign supports organisations in Nicaragua committed to social and economic justice. We carry this out through advocacy, disseminating information and building links between UK and Nicaraguan trade unionists, promoters and producers of fair trade products, and educationists. In addition, NSC provides support for Wales NSC and 12 towns in Britain that have twinning links with towns and communities in Nicaragua.
- NSC works with a network of UK based solidarity organisations supporting social and economic justice in Latin America

### NSC membership, donation and enquiry form

Join us in solidarity with Nicaraguan organisations struggling for social and economic justice by becoming a member of NSC, getting involved in Wales NSC or a twin town and/or taking part in a study tour.

NSC members receive our magazine *Central America Report* and news of our campaigning activities.

Individuals £25/£7.50 concessions, TU branches £40/Regions £60

Name & Address

Postcode

Tel:  email:

I enclose a cheque (payable to NSC) for £  (membership), £  (donation)

I wish to pay by Visa/Mastercard no

Expiry date  3 digit security no.  Signature

I would like information about:  study tours  NSC activities  twin towns

Please send me information on how I can get involved in NSC's education campaign

**GIFT AID!** Inland Revenue will give us 28 pence for every £1 you give us so, if you are a UK tax payer please sign and date. (NB. What you pay in income tax or capital gains tax must be equal to or more than the amount we will claim from your donation). I would like to Gift Aid all donations I've made to NSC in the last six years and all donations in the future until I notify you otherwise.

Sign  Date

**Return to:** NSC, 129 Seven Sisters Rd, London N7 7QG tel: 020 7272 9619

**Email:** nsc@nicaraguasc.org.uk **Website:** www.nicaraguasc.org.uk

**Nicaragua  
Solidarity  
Campaign**



# Nicaragua: Education for all

## Join our campaign!



photo: Martin Roger

These children should be attending a school with government provided educational materials, imaginative teaching in a reasonably sized class, in a well-maintained building. However, for most Nicaraguan children whose families live on £1 per day the reality is very different.

*"For every 100 children entering primary school, barely 20 complete all years; of these 23 enter secondary school and 11 finish. Of those 11, only 6.7 enter university, and only 2.5 graduate."*

**Vidaluz Meneses**

*Nicaraguan civil society coordination (CC) 2004.*

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Charity Registration No.  
1106881

**Why such a waste of talent and creativity?**



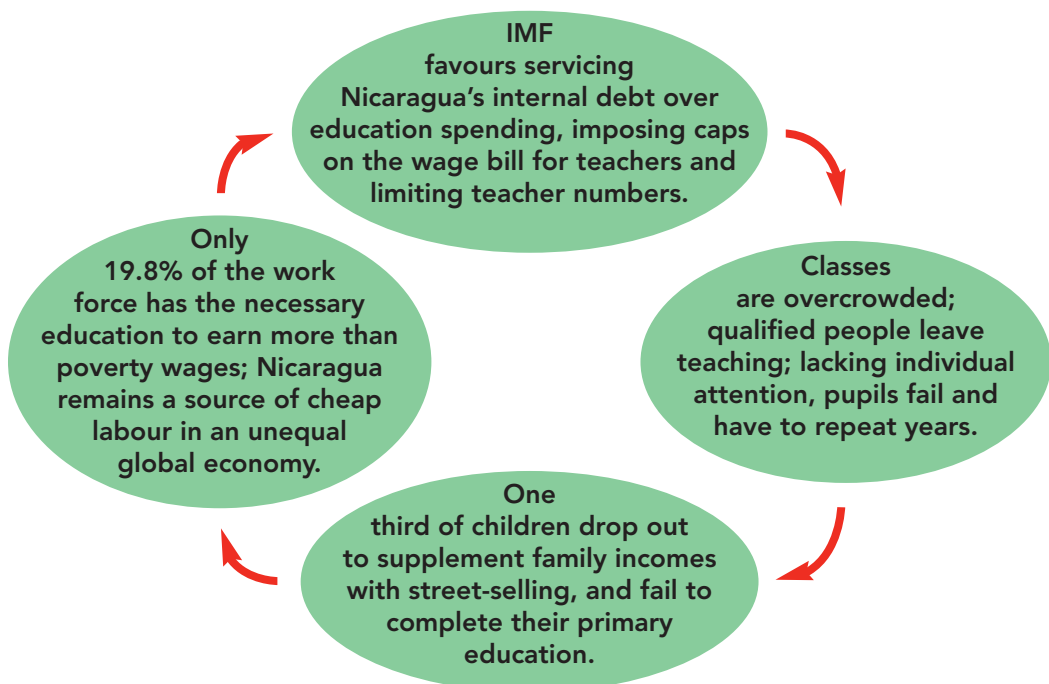
photo: Steve Lewis

## Work or education – why must they choose?

**Emely, Amy and Pedro** are three primary aged children who live in a neighbourhood of Leon. Due to lack of local employment their father left for Guatemala and their mother for Costa Rica, leaving the children on their own. To survive they sold things on the street until the local community rallied round and the parish priest gave them food and clothing. They returned to school when the Nicaragua Education, Cultural and Arts Trust (NECAT, an organisation affiliated to the NSC) provided them with bursaries for school materials, additional lessons and an opportunity to participate in sports and cultural activities in an after school club. There would be no need for such bursaries if Nicaraguan primary education were really free to all.

*Poverty means working to supplement family incomes and missing out on education.*

## International Monetary Fund (IMF) imposed vicious circle



*"Our unequal society is now reaping what it has sown. By denying quality education to children from the poorest homes – in Nicaragua the majority of children – the country is now condemned to an extremely unskilled labour force fit only for low level jobs"*  
**Alfredo Acevedo Vogl**, Nicaraguan economist, 2007

## The Right of all Nicaraguans to Education

The Sandinistas regained power in January 2007. According to the new Minister of Education: "The Government... has adopted as its motto and guide the right of all Nicaraguans to education... as a fundamental human right" (*El Nuevo Diario* 21 January 2007). He immediately abolished the "voluntary" fees families had to pay for school upkeep, materials, and even to supplement teachers' salaries.

"We're all very pleased with this", says a parent from León. "Enrolments for 2007 have gone up, so I think we're on the right road. But we'll have to wait and see. Now the Ministry has to take responsibility for basic services, furnishings, materials, books, and so on." Teachers salaries have already risen slightly, through they are still only 49% of the average wage.

A Venezuela supported adult literacy campaign is promised in the spirit of the much acclaimed Sandinista literacy crusade of the 1980s.

**But none of these measures can guarantee the long-term sustainable growth in education spending needed to achieve the UN millennium development goal:** universal primary education by 2015. For this, Nicaragua will have to double the percentage of GDP it spends on education.

However, unless the IMF alters its conditions, and recognises the long-term value of education as a key to poverty reduction, classrooms will remain overcrowded, low salaries will continue to force many good people out of teaching, and another generation of children will be condemned to poverty.

*"Without education there is no development. (...) Education is decisive not only in the growth of knowledge, capabilities, competences and values in individuals, but also in enabling those individuals to participate in and influence the social, economic, political and cultural development of their country"*  
 (National Education Agenda, Forum for Education and Human Development 2006)

## NSC's education campaign

NSC's campaign aims to support Nicaragua's efforts to reach the Millennium Development Goal of primary education for all by 2015, by;

- Supporting Nicaragua in challenging IMF and World Bank conditions that curb public spending on health and education;
- Working with Nicaraguan and UK grassroots organisations to support government efforts to regain control of

the education system and make it relevant to Nicaragua's needs;

- Developing with UK and Nicaraguan partners practical education projects that demonstrate good practice which the government can adopt and sustain.
- Promoting links for mutual learning and support between those involved in education in UK and Nicaragua