



The history of human rights in Nicaragua is mostly one of mass graves stemming from the legacy of conquest and years of colonialism, tyrannical governments, dictatorships, and civil war. More recently, Nicaragua's guerilla war of the 1980s was and continues to be one of the most pressing human rights issues for the country. In addition to the 50,000 lives that were lost during the actual period of fighting, there are still approximately 76,000 landmines that are left over and continue to kill and maim hundreds. It is of no surprise that current human rights abuses stem largely from the aftermath of war. With few employment opportunities, little land for the returning soldiers, many were driven to desperation.

Besides the effects of war, another one of the most pressing human rights issues in Nicaragua today is that of the discrimination against indigenous peoples, mainly regarding land rights. In addition, there is severe intra-familial violence; abuse against women remains a daily, and potentially deadly, problem. Sweatshop and child labor remain prevalent as Nicaragua contains the second cheapest labor in the western hemisphere. Education of basic rights needs to be more widespread within the country, as does advocacy and enforcement.

FSD emphasizes the need to support and sustain human rights in all areas. By supporting work on projects that local communities determine to be critical, interns and volunteers learn about human rights issues from the perspective of those who are affected. Solutions are applied that legally address rights violations and educate vulnerable populations toward direct action and empowerment.

#### Internship/Volunteer opportunities in human rights in Nicaragua include:

- Support marginalized women by educating them to better understand their basic human rights and how to assert these rights. The program aims to promote self-efficacy and empower these women so that they may effectively combat intra-familial violence.
- Support the rights of children against mistreatment, abandonment, molestation, abuse, drug dependence and child labor through various education programs.
- Educate local women through a series of workshops about the Nicaraguan Constitution and the laws that benefit and protect women and their families. Provide legal and/or psychological support for victims of intra-familial violence who decide to take legal action.
- Support the lobby of government and legislative authorities about issues and solutions regarding violence against women.
- Assist a social promotion program that addresses communication techniques for the prevention of intra-familial violence and supports the healing of families who've suffered such hardship.

For more opportunities in human rights in Nicaragua, visit our website or contact us directly.