

THE STORY OF LA CONFIANZA

The story of La Confianza is presented below in eight boxes. The rocky road that the community has travelled means that they are mixed up. Read through them carefully, then cut them out and arrange the story in the correct order (answers to this activity can be found on page three of the teacher magazine).



1

The community of 'La Confianza' could no longer export oil. Farming experts advised them to grow oranges and limes. However it takes four years for the oranges to grow and produce any money.

In the 1990s the rural community at 'La Confianza' produced oil from the African Palm crops. They exported it mainly to Mexico. Palm oil is extracted from the pulp of the fruit of the oil palm tree. It is widely used as cooking oil, an industrial lubricant for machinery and forms the basis of many soap products.

2

3

The community had no way to get the oil to the port so they lost their business exporting the oil to Mexico. They started to experience money difficulties.

When they couldn't pay back the loans the bank took their land. They sold it to a wealthy landowner for only 1 dollar a hectare.

4

A wealthy landowner offered to buy the land. He tried to persuade the community that this would be a wise decision. Only 5% of the community agreed to sell.

5

Today the descendents of the original farmers from 'La Confianza' have come together to live as a community on the plantation. They want to reclaim the land that was unfairly taken from them.

6

In order to export the oil to Mexico the community had to hire trucks to transport the oil from the processing plant to the port. The landowner threatened to stop doing business with the trucking company if they continued to transport the oil.

7

The community turned to the banks for a loan but they were given only six months to pay the money back. They had no source of income so this was impossible.

8



Henry Perez Portales, Honduras

Posts >>

Henry Perez Portales Can it really be only ten months since I moved here to 'La Confianza' with my family? The warm welcome we received from the community made up for the poor living conditions we have to put up with. We arrived early that December morning with little more than a small cardboard box containing the families' possessions and the clothes on our back. The community gave us some money to buy plastic and my older brother Samuel and I set about making a house, using branches of wood as a frame. Samuel suggested we use palm leaves to make beds for the family and they were all pleased with the end result. The house is basic and it can feel like you are sleeping in an oven at night but it is dry and is the place we call home at present.

Henry Perez Portales Six days a week I get up at 4am and grab some beans and tortillas for breakfast before walking an hour to the plantation. Working conditions here on the plantation are difficult but I am no stranger to hard work. My earliest childhood memory is when I was taken out of school by my parents to work at a factory. I was given a long metal spike and was expected to raise heavy palm fruit over my shoulders in order to smash it off the ground to break it up. It was back breaking work and we received only 50 cents a day for our efforts. Back in those days we had very little money and my mum would buy food on a daily basis from one of the small shops in the town. My parents moved here so that one day we can hopefully own a small plot of land ourselves and we can begin to feed ourselves.

Profile:

Name:

Henry Perez Portales

Age:

19

Family:

Lives in La Confianza with mum Joaquina and dad Pedro, older brother Samuel (21) and younger brother and sisters Mayra (11), Giselda (8) and Erilin (5).

Likes:

Building and making things.

Dislikes:

Getting up at 4am.

Hopes:

For the family to own a plot of land.

Photo Album:



Mum and Dad.



My sister Giselda standing outside our house.





Naheli Damari Gutierrez Perez, Honduras

Posts >>

Naheli Damari Gutierrez Perez I woke up this morning and felt like I hadn't slept at all. I don't think I will ever get used to sleeping on palm leaves and under a blue nylon roof instead of a house. As time passes I almost forget what our old life used to be like, in our hometown of Cabrera. Both of my parents had good jobs and I was excited about entering my first year of secondary school. However, I don't regret joining my parents here in the camp for a minute. I'm not saying it's easy, especially since both of my parents have lost their jobs due to their involvement in the MUCA land movement. MUCA is a cooperative of 5 communities, one of which is La Confianza. These communities are trying to reclaim 11,000 hectares of land and as a result face violent attacks from the wealthy landowner. Several members of MUCA have been murdered over the past few years in their struggle to win back the land that is rightfully theirs. We face daily intimidation and money is difficult to come by. We cannot build strong houses because they are often attacked and burnt down by the landowner's security. Yet I am really proud of both my parents, especially my mum who is one of the few female camp leaders. Just recently my dad has been elected President of the camp.

Naheli Damari Gutierrez Perez Living here consists of either long hot days working on the African Palm plantations or even longer hotter days working in one of the many camp kitchens. If I had a choice I would gladly work on the plantations, the work is physical and your muscles ache but I get to finish earlier and catch up with my friends in the afternoon. I hate working in the kitchens because it feels like you are working in an oven and the day seems to go on forever. My sister Diana helps me get through it all and because we work together we are closer than ever.

Profile:

Name:

Naheli Damari Guitierrez Perez

Age:

15

Family:

Mum Maria and dad Rigoberto, older sister Diana (17) and younger brother Dani (11).

Likes:

Chatting with friends, spending time with my sister Diana.

Dislikes:

Sleeping on palm leaves, being on kitchen duty.

Nickname:

'Little Warrior' – called this because I have a strong sense of justice.

Hopes:

To become a teacher one day and teach other children who have also been forced from their homes.

Photo Album:



My brother Dani, with my mum Maria.



My sister Diana and I chat to Trocaire workers about life in the camp.





A FACEBOOK FACT FINDING MISSION!



Go to www.facebook.com/trocaireireland and click on the Tab 'Students' to find answers to the following;

⇒ **3 THINGS I FOUND OUT ABOUT TRÓCAIRE**

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

⇒ **WHAT KIND OF ACTIONS ARE TRÓCAIRE ASKING PEOPLE TO TAKE?**

⇒ **HOW DO YOU THINK THESE ACTIONS CAN HELP?**

⇒ **WHAT ELSE CAN YOU FIND OUT ABOUT LA CONFIANZA?**

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