

Building Desks, Building Hope

By Scott Perry, Sales Executive

I came across a young girl in the village of Pucallpa. I don't know her name, and she didn't learn mine. Our team was working hard to complete our goal of building over 40 school desks that day and I wasn't paying attention to what was going on around me. It was HOT and we were working in a small building with little ventilation; it was the only building made of substantial materials in the entire village. I learned later that it served as a school, recreation room, shelter, town meeting hall and for a variety of other purposes.

I was aware that some of the kids and villagers had taken seats around the outside of the room to watch us work, but I was distant and working in my own little world, focused on the task at hand. As the sun began to get low, we realized we would indeed complete our goal today and I began to relax a little bit.



When the work had finished, we began cleaning up. There were a lot of nails on the floor that had bent and been discarded due to poor quality, hardness of the wood and inferior skills of the craftsman – not necessarily in that order! As I was walking around & picking up the nails, this little girl saw what I was doing and began to help. She would repeatedly pick up a nail and then run over and give it to me. As you can see by the expression on her face, she was taking the job as seriously as I was!

When we had finished, she gave me a big smile. I thought to myself, all this time, she was sitting there waiting to find some way she could help out. She wanted to be part of the action and maybe subconsciously wanted to have the pride of knowing she contributed to something that would help out the village. What were the rest of the villagers thinking? Did they want to help too? In the future, what opportunities could we offer them to help themselves better their situation?