



CHURCH WORLD SERVICE

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

We are the regional office for Latin America and the Caribbean of Church World Service



Photo: Doug Smith

...a global humanitarian agency supported by 35 U.S. Protestant, Orthodox and Anglican denominations who came together to do in partnership what none of us could do as well alone: deliver relief and empower communities with sustainable self-help programs.



Photo: Doug Smith

CWS and its local partners do not proselytize...

We are people of faith working to eradicate hunger and poverty and to promote peace and justice, without regard to the religious affiliation or creed of our partners or people in need.



Photo: Doug Smith

We are about sharing resources and building North-South bridges...

We make it possible for our member denominations, congregations, individuals and other donors to share their resources with the region's most vulnerable and marginalized groups. We bring the stories of those in the North and South to each other, and provide opportunities for personal exchanges.



Photo: Paul Jeffrey

Partnership is key to empowerment...

We support and accompany the work of local partner organizations—religious and secular—who are working on the ground, often in arduous conditions, to deliver relief and empower communities with sustainable self-help programs.



Photo: Paul Jeffrey

U.S. churches, urban and rural communities, and others fund our work...

Our work is made possible in large part by funds raised by people who join CROP Hunger Walks in some 2,000 communities across the U.S. each year, and the contributions of the 35 CWS member communions and their emergency and development ministries. CWS projects have also received generous support from the Foods Resource Bank, which mobilizes donations from churches and farmers across the US.

Contact us!

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Our regional office for Latin America and the Caribbean is located together with several regional ecumenical organizations on the grounds of the theological institute ISEDET.

Eradicating Hunger



Photo: Doug Smith

Ending hunger is about more than giving food: it requires creating local capacity for sustainable access to adequate food and nutrition, including clean water. CWS promotes food security in Central America, the Dominican Republic and Haiti with programs that value indigenous knowledge, provide sustainable access to agricultural inputs (seeds, animals, fencing), provide training in nutrition and food diversification, and most importantly, strengthen community organizing and advocacy with public officials.

Our food security programs achieve lasting improvements such as decreased environmental degradation, better protection of fresh water sources, diversified and increased food production, and improved community organizing. All contribute to adequate food and nutrition throughout the year, bolstering community health.

Defending Indigenous Rights in the Chaco Region



Foto: Paul Jeffrey

South America's Gran Chaco region, Latin America's second largest forest reserve after the Amazon, is home to indigenous peoples who for hundreds of years lived in harmony with their eco-system before losing most of their land. In addition to living in extreme poverty, they are losing their culture and ways of life.

CWS and five partners in Argentina, Bolivia and Paraguay are strengthening the capacity of indigenous men and women in the Gran Chaco to secure title to their ancestral territory and to use the land in ways that are economically, socially and culturally sustainable. Already more than 300 women and other indigenous leaders have come together for the first time to share experiences, learn best practices for generating food and income, improve their organizations, and bring their concerns to the media and public officials.

Preventing Violence Against Children



Photo: Projeto Meninos e Meninas de Rua

CWS and partners in Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Uruguay have joined forces to strengthen local efforts to prevent child labor and sexual abuse, including commercial sexual exploitation. CWS partners both implement their own models of intervention and advocate for government policies that expand relevant public services.

This program successfully involves families, community members, public officials and the youth themselves in removing children from living and working in the streets, in preventing commercial sexual exploitation, and in helping survivors of sexual abuse heal physically and emotionally. We also support a project in Haiti that assists girls and boys working as domestic servants with education, counseling and training to move on to a better life.

Responding to Humanitarian Emergencies



Photo: Don Tatlock

When Natural Disasters Strike...

CWS is poised to take action when earthquakes, hurricanes and floods wipe out homes, destroy food production and devastate communities. We respond with partners and as a member of Action by Churches Together (ACT) International, the global emergency response consortium of churches and related agencies.

We share food aid, hygiene kits, medicines and blankets—and we help communities rebuild and strengthen local preparedness.

Assistance to Refugees...

We support Colombian refugees displaced by the armed conflict there as they resettle in Chile. Our partners expanded this program with funds leveraged from the government of Chile.

Speaking Out on U.S. Policy in the Region



Foto: Rick Reinhard

Addressing the root causes of hunger and poverty requires sound public policies as well as action at the community level. CWS participates in public education and advocates for U.S. government policies that reduce hunger and poverty and promote peace—especially in countries like Cuba and Colombia, where U.S. policy has an especially powerful impact.

We collaborate with the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) and are a member of the Latin America Working Group (LAWG), a coalition of over sixty organizations promoting U.S. policies that support human rights, social and economic justice, and sustainable development. We bring CWS partners from the region to Washington to participate in public education and advocacy on Capitol Hill during annual Ecumenical Advocacy Days.

Promoting Care for Caregivers



Photo: Martha Farnelo

Work-related stress is especially intense for those who assist vulnerable groups such as indigenous peoples, children survivors of sexual abuse, or other victims of extreme social exclusion. Our findings show the effects are dramatic on workers' physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being.

CWS is building a regional program to promote care for caregivers or “staff care,” the attitudes and actions that governmental and non-governmental agencies take to promote the well-being of their staff, and that staff take to promote the well-being of themselves and each other. This program includes awareness-raising among NGOs, donor organizations, and other stakeholders, development of diagnostic materials, training and practical tools, and accompaniment for initiatives.