



## THE FACE OF COMMUNITY

*A new kind of community was formed - not as women being helped but as women helping themselves..*

In May, 2006, women living with HIV/AIDS in Roatan, Honduras, came together as educators in a new CFCA project titled **Empowering, Educating and Employing women**. The women have known each other for years as mothers, as friends, and as peers in the community living with the disease. As a result of this new project, Familias Saludables clients formed a new kind of community – not as women being helped, but as women helping themselves. Every week, the women meet to learn about HIV/AIDS, human rights and their role in reducing stigma across the island. At the end of their training, the team will deliver information about HIV/AIDS and human rights in schools, churches and community meet-



PHOTO BY VALERIE NELSON

We have a new project called *Empowering, Educating and Employing Women* and this project is tackling stigma of HIV on this island. In this project there are eight very strong, very amazing women who are putting a face to HIV/AIDS who in Roatan are about to stand up and say listen, **this is who I am, I am a woman, I am a mother, I could be your sister, your best friend, your child, your mother. This is me and I am living with HIV.**

– Valerie Nelson (Coordinator of Familias Saludables - Healthy Families)

ings. In the process, they have created a support group that may prove to be as influential in their lives as the project itself.

The goal of the project is to create a culture of acceptance around people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWAs), and a result, decrease barriers to employment for PLWAs.

Many employers require their workers to show HIV-negative status cards upon employment. This illegal and discriminatory practice leaves PLWAs without work. In some cases, HIV positive individuals will seek out a fraudulent HIV-negative card in order to keep their jobs. Employers perpetuate stigma by fueling the belief that PLWAs pose a risk to their workplace.



Change for Children Association (CFCA) is an Edmonton-based non-profit, non-governmental organization with a 30-year history of working for sustainable, grassroots community development in Latin America and Africa.

Our development projects, their cost and priority, are determined by our Southern partners according to the current needs of their communities.

In Canada, our Global Education program engages the public in a process of awareness raising, analysis and action on issues of global justice.

While CFCA highly values its partnerships with communities of various religious and political persuasions, we are a non-sectarian, non-partisan society.



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**CFCA, 10808 -124 Street, 2nd Flr.  
Edmonton, Alberta, T5M 0H3  
Phone: 780-448-1505  
Fax: 780-448-1507  
www.changeforchildren.org  
cfca@www.changeforchildren.org**

Registered Charitable Organization No.  
11884 9496 RR0001

## THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

**"Communities are comparable to trees.** In the soil, invisible to our eyes, are the roots, whose tips are at the same time the strongest and the weakest point of a tree. They are strong because through the thousands upon thousands of root tips the tree absorbs nourishment from the soil. They are weak points because the tips of the roots are fragile, very fragile. Any small imperfection can hurt or damage them. However without the unending fragility of the roots, the strength of the tree can not emerge and can not be maintained. Therefore this fragility has to be maintained, cultivated it, and never eliminated. The taller the tree, the deeper the roots branch out, lending more strengths and vigor to tree. The strengths appear out of a sum of its weaknesses. In the human context: human contact, spontaneity, the happening of events, the conversations, the personal problems, the circle of friends, the informalities, the unorganized and obvious inconsistency of things, in the middle of poor people, weak, ill, marginalized and oppressed people, with neither a voice or a vote, fighting for survival, with little education, with an infinity of problems. This is a beginning of a permanent weakness that gives strength to this tree already full-grown from the communities". (Carlos Mesters, "A church that is born from the people")



PHOTO BY NICOLE OWCZARZYK

The strength that extends from CFCA comes not from printed pages, glossy pictures, or long articles in the local newspapers; but rather comes from absorbing energy from the commitment to life demonstrated by our partners from the south. With intense determination they present to us those who speak, live and die, and the context of where they work and live. We learn how these communities talk, reflect, doubt, suffer and are persecuted for the work they perform and believe in.

As we branch out to support ourselves our challenges to take note of our roots. If we overlook them we risk losing focus of the foundation of healthy communities. We need to remain humble and open to bear witness and respond to the fragilities of peoples, to delight in their commitment to life, and to find balance without letting go of responsibility for a just world.

*Delmy and Michael Garcia-Hoyt  
Vice-President and Board Member  
of CFCA*

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**ordinary people  
can do  
extraordinary  
things**

– Hank Zyp, CFCA Founder

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# TOWARDS JUST AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

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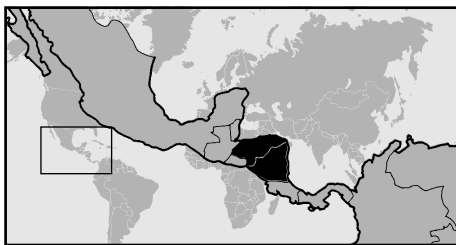


PHOTO: CFCA FILE

## SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:

### **NICARAGUA: Rural Community Water Project in Northern Nicaragua - Phase II**

Access to potable water is a problem for the majority of Nicaraguans living in rural areas. Structural adjustment programs have decreased public expenditures in this

arena, thus diminishing the possibility of providing potable water to the most needy. In 2004, Nicaragua paid over a million dollars in debt services and interest on the national debt, while investing less than one fifth of that into projects related to the provision of potable water.

The problem of access to potable water is one that especially affects women and children who may walk many kilometers daily to secure their water supply. Compounding this problem is the poor quality of the water available: often the

water accessed places the family's already deteriorated health at risk. In addition, extreme poverty in these communities has resulted in elevated levels of malnutrition, causing low immune responses to many water borne illnesses.

The **Rural Community Water Project in Northern Nicaragua - Phase II** incorporates 50 communities in the process of well construction and water system rehabilitation as well as community and municipality capacity building for water management. The project emphasizes water provision as a public utility, the maintenance of the resource with the utmost consideration for public health, guaranteed universal access to water and the preservation of the resource for future generations. The capacity building initiatives of this project are aimed at municipal governments, local leaders and the general public and include education about legal rights and responsibilities for water management as well as information about how to protect hydrological resources and use and administer them in a sustainable fashion.

## CAPACITY BUILDING IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES:

### **NICARAGUA – Indigenous Women's Community Health Promotion**

The Miskito Indigenous Peoples on the Nicaragua side of the Rio Coco prioritize capacity building in primary health as a community need. Healthcare workshops delivered over the past 3 years as a function of the Indigenous Women's association, have served to reduce the occurrence of common illnesses and promote the use of natural medicine. The continuation of this project focuses on further capacity building of the indigenous women's association in health promotion, HIV / AIDS prevention and treatment, natural medicine and women's

participation in the decision making structures of the communities.

### **HONDURAS – Indigenous Land Management and Biodiversity Conservation**

The Miskito Indigenous Peoples that inhabit the forests along the Rio Coco, which runs along the border between Nicaragua and Honduras, live in conditions of extreme poverty. Unlike their indigenous neighbours in Nicaragua, they do not have title to their land nor self government or land-management rights and are subject to extreme marginalization in social services at the hands of the Honduran government.

### **The Indigenous Land Management and Biodiversity Conservation Project**

works with the Miskito Indigenous Association to strengthen community and organizational capacity towards protected area land management and self government. Focusing on human rights education at the community level and capacity building of the indigenous association, the project's main goals include social development, environmental preservation, gender equality and strengthening local community capacity in both economic development and self-government.

*...Projects continued on page 6*

## **RURAL NICARAGUA PROJECT**

### ***Water – the impact of local control***

*Change for Children representative Ed Carson recently returned from a visit to Nicaragua and has been incredibly inspired by the results that have been achieved in two short years in the Wells project in Somotillo. In particular, Carson was moved by the sense of community that has been created from North to South.*

#### **FROM NORTH**

Westwood Unitarian Church in Edmonton, Alberta took the challenge of raising funds for the well in 2005 and surpassed their goal of \$9000 and raised almost \$14,000 for the provision of fresh water in the area so were also able to contribute to reforestation projects in the community that maintain the health of the water table.

"We gave ourselves 2 years to reach our goal and it has been incredibly exciting that we were so successful in our fundraising," said Elaine Roberts of the Social Justice Committee at Westwood. "Our committee felt so supported by our congregation and we have been inspired by the way they reached out beyond the congregation inviting others in the community to participate with us.

20 of the 23 wells are funded by Bishop Croteau, the arch dioceses of the Mackenzie-Fort Smith region and his charitable foundation. In 2002, this inspirational man began working with Change for Children - telling stories of Nicaraguan communities lacking access to potable water, suffering from waterborne disease and spending hours a day collecting water. People responded to the Bishop's efforts and mobilized together to make a difference.

#### **TO SOUTH**

"We Give Thanks for this beautiful project that we have in our community today. This has been like a dream and we are grateful for the mutual relationship between Central Humboldt, El Bloque (CFCA partners) and our community. We are very happy and proud to have this underground spring, this water project. We are happy because in our community we have a school and no one in this area had water, not even the children. We thank the mothers, fathers, children and youth who have worked hard in this sector in order to achieve this goal. We will continue to work together to maintain our well and have water for generations to come" Don Segundo-Community of Ojoche, 2006

## **GUATEMALA PROJECT**

### ***Rebuilding together***

We had not been to Comitancillo in twelve years. This time, we were returning with our two boys, ages six and nine. Traveling up, up the rocky winding road in our chicken bus, we passed a gapping hole in the earth. Almost one year later and men were still at work, repairing what had been damaged by the fury of Hurricane Stan.

During our short stay in Comitancillo, Ruben, AMMID's Coordinator, took us on a whirlwind tour of their impressive projects. We visited an agricultural garden and a weaving project. But the highlight for us was a drive to the remote school built with Change for Children's help. The children of the four classroom school had just received new desks the previous day. Their proud principal had them sing songs for the foreign visitors. Like joyful swallows, their high pitched voices swooped and rose off the walls and ceiling. Eyes sparkled; not all, but many.

When we left the school, making our way back to Comitancillo on the bone-jarring road, I thought of the parents of those smiling children, working in their open fields and their dirt-floor homes; I thought of words like gratitude and vulnerability, and the simple rightness of empowering a community's children.

– Randy Kohan, A member of the Guatemala Canada Solidarity Committee of Change for Children Association



PHOTO BY NICOLE OWZARCZYK

# THE POWER OF COMMUNITY



# POWER OF COMMUNITY

## **EL SALVADOR** ***CEBES From North to South***

What is a Basic Ecclesial Community or CEB (from the Spanish Comunidades Ecclesial de Base)? A CEB is a community of faith and a community experience lived in El Salvador and brought to Edmonton in 1984 by Salvadoreans escaping a bloody civil war. The work of CEBES in Edmonton is to labor and collaborate in projects to improve the life of the most impoverished peasants of El Salvador; especially the peasants that live in the communities and cooperatives of the Lower Lempa in El Salvador.

Some of the key projects involves the following: *Emergency Health Fund* – Funds are used for transportation, hospitalization and the purchase of medication for serious ill and injured. *Payment of the debt on the land* – If the mortgage is not paid peasants will lose their agricultural land. *Monsignor Oscar Arnulfo Romero Cultural Centre* – A facility that helps the community and their leaders actively demonstrate their interest in and support for youth.

Year after year, during the rainy season, government dams in the reservoirs are opened and torrents of water flood through the Lower Lempa communities, ravaging crops and homes. CEBES has been a strong support in ensuring that the communities have money to buy quality sand to reinforce dikes protecting their lands. CEBES also collaborated during recent major earthquakes and hurricanes that left thousands of peasants without a place to live or adequate sanitation. CEBES, with support from CFCA, helped in the construction of many houses in the affected areas.

In Edmonton CEBES is assisting the Food Bank, and bringing food to the marginalized people that attend the Bissell Centre.

To support these communities requires money, and CEBES has found different ways to raise these funds through community action; including monthly pupusa sales, organizing suppers, festivals, cultural concerts, and selling handicrafts at the annual Just Christmas sale. Every penny collected by CEBES is put in the hands of CFCA so with their help our efforts can be matched and doubled for the benefit of the ones in need. CFCA is also in charge of sending the proceeds of these joint efforts south so that the dreams and projects of our brothers and sisters can be accomplished.

– Jose Garcia, Founder and long time member of the CEBES in Edmonton.

## **UGANDA: AINEMBABAZI CHILDREN PROJECT** ***Meeting the needs of children***

Ainembabazi is one of CFCA's project partners working to improve the quality of life for orphans and vulnerable children in Southern Uganda. The situation of children affected by AIDS in Africa is precarious, leaving not only children's lives at stake, but also the future economic and social development of communities and nations. Ainembabazi means 'having grace' or 'having compassion' in Runyankore, the local language.

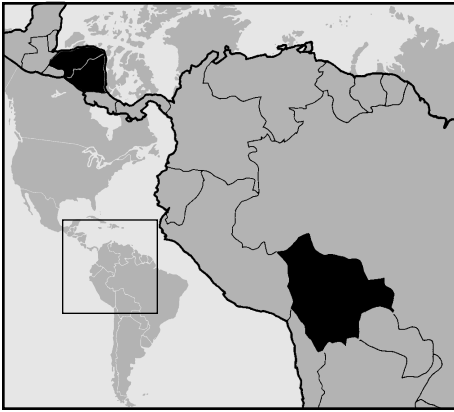
Last spring, Anne Fitzgerald Catholic Elementary School in Edmonton, Alberta, launched the Synergy Art Circuit led by the Ainembabazi Children's Project. Students created artwork inspired by themes they read in books and then displayed their handiwork in the school gym during parent-teacher interviews. Through the donations of parents touring the exhibit, they raised over \$650, which was sent to Anne Fitzgerald's sister school, Kinoni Integrated Primary, in Southern Uganda. Future funds raised by the students of Anne Fitzgerald will be used to support the education of AIDS orphans and other vulnerable children living in this rural community of Africa.

This year we are hoping to add 21 other schools in the Kinoni region, along with many more Edmonton elementary schools, to the Synergy Art Circuit. The inclusion of the Kinoni children's art reminds us that these African children have the ability to actively participate in fundraising projects as well. The Edmonton children benefit when they learn about their capacity to participate as a team. This speaks to the power of 'community' within children at a young age to contribute to global issues.

– Kelly Mills

# PROMOTING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

UPCOMING PROJECTS – Currently Under Consideration by CIDA



## TOWARDS LASTING CHANGE:

### NICARAGUA & BOLIVIA: Children's Rights Education through Cultural Programming

Access to early childhood development education in both Nicaragua and Bolivia is extremely limited. In both Nicaragua and Bolivia, **only 78 per cent of primary-school age children attend school**. In addition, the quality and relevance of the education systems in both these countries is in question. It takes an average of 10.3 years to complete the mandatory six years of schooling, and in Nicaragua, only 29 per cent of children complete primary schooling. Poverty affects school

participation, with many families unable to afford the direct or hidden costs. Poverty also results in child labour, which affects more than 200,000 Nicaraguan children and adolescents and over 600,000 Bolivian children and adolescents, 39% of which do not attend school at all.

For the past several years the Nicaraguan organizations INPRHU, and FUNARTE have been working in their communities to create a truly authentic spaces for youth creativity and

recreation. Providing this safe environment for children and youth to be themselves and act as children is very important, because this environment fosters self-respect, self esteem, and self-worth, thus empowering the children and youth project participants to defend their rights, stay in school and pursue viable vocations.

The **Children's Rights Education through Cultural Programming** project extends the success of the Nicaragua program to our new partner organization CEPROMIN (Centre for Community Development in Mining Areas) which works in Potosi, Bolivia at the foot of the Cerro Rico, Bolivia's largest and oldest silver mine.

The project emphasizes cultural programming and school support for child workers and funds an awareness-raising campaign on the Rights of the Child which uses a variety of mediums to educate youth about their rights. This campaign also engages the general public in the process, increasing their awareness about children's rights as well as other important issues, such as environmental protection and women's rights.



# CHALLENGING VIOLENCE THROUGH THE ARTS

On October 12, 2006 the United Nations released a report documenting violence against children on a global scale. The report states that the violence is often under reported, under recorded, and hidden which makes accurately counting the number of cases, challenging. The report looks at multiple settings and forms that violence occurs against children and calls for all forms of violence whether seen as 'tradition' or to be stopped and prevented. The report also examines the diverse sites of violence such as family, work, educational settings, justice/legal settings, within community and suggests actions for each of the various settings.

The study states that in 2000, 5.7 million children were in forced or bonded labour and 1.8 million had been

PHOTO BY FREDDY MARTINEZ



**Change for Children supported the first annual Artistic festival in Esteli that took place on September 30th and was the result of collaboration between INPRHU and FUNARTE as the culmination of the cultural project. This project directly provides human rights and self esteem training to children and youth, working with those that are most vulnerable.**

forced to work in the sex industry and in 2002, 53, 000 children were murdered who were under 17. The report suggest programs to teach the values of non-violence, education programs that teach children and youth their

rights; better training for those whom work with children to recognize and report violence; to strengthen national and international commitment; and to address the root causes of poverty that makes children and youth more likely to be victims of violence. The report also looks at the gendered nature of violence against children and makes additional recommendation specifically for girls. To see a full summary of the report go to [www.violencestudy.org](http://www.violencestudy.org).

Change for Children works with partners in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Bolivia, and Brazil and to implement projects that strengthen the capacity of and protection of youth through cultural and artistic programming. For more information please contact the office.

# RURAL ROOTS – ALBERTA YOUTH IN ACTION

The Rural Roots Youth Action Project completed another road tour of rural Alberta as the 6th RR tour went on October 17-20 with presentations for high school students in grade 9-12 in Whitecourt, Peace River and Grimshaw. Three Alberta youth will facilitate the presentations (Alex from Bashaw, Chelsey from Airdrie, and Leila is from Bonnyville) and their educational workshops will focus on issues of water and they will also facilitate a half day workshop that provides secondary students with an understanding of the global distribution of resources and raises critical questions about being active citizens and resource sharing. The youth

will also challenge their peers to take a role and get involved in their local and global communities.

The Rural Roots project is in its third year and is connecting and building leadership skills amongst youth across the province. Rural Roots also had the opportunity to visit communities in Fort McMurray and area in May 2006 and the project has now visited 25 rural Alberta communities and hope to visit additional communities throughout the year.

Watch for the Rural Roots Youth Leadership training weekend in the early part of 2007 which precedes the 3rd annual Conference that runs March 30 - April 1st.

*The 2006/07 Rural Roots Youth Action Project is underway with the support of*



Canadian International Development Agency

Agence canadienne de développement international



LEE GLOBAL EDUCATION FUND



PHOTO BY MATTHEW GUSJUL

## JUSTICE DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

### POINSETTIAS:

This holiday season 2006 you can buy a beautiful poinsettia and support Change for Children at the same time. Proceeds will go to international projects. Group orders from your office or organization are encouraged! Poinsettia orders can be made between November 1 and 28, 2006. Please call 448-1505 or email shelaine@changeforchildren.org

### CARD SETS:

Packs of 6 blank cards with beautiful photos from our international projects are available for purchase from our office. Proceeds will support education programming locally and globally. Contact fiona@changeforchildren.org or call 448-1505 to purchase. Sets will be on sale throughout the year.



### JUST CHRISTMAS

#### A Global Fair Trade Market Place:

On November 17 and 18th, 2006 Change for Children will participate in a Global Fair Trade market place. Support Change for Children through the purchase of ethical, fairly traded gifts from our overseas projects. Card sets and beautiful gifts can be purchased at the event as well as our Gift of Solidarity cards

#### Prince of Wales Armouries

10440 - 108A Avenue,  
Edmonton

Friday, November 17

5:30 pm – 9:00 pm

Saturday, November 18

9:30 am – 4:00 pm

Free Parking

Admission by donation  
Food and Entertainment

Change for  
Children's

# ANNUAL CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE

Friday  
December 8  
2006  
5:00 – 9:00 PM

at CFCA, 2nd Floor  
10808 - 124 Street  
Edmonton

### Please support CFCA's Important Work with a CHARITABLE DONATION

All donors who contribute \$10 or more automatically gain membership in Change for Children Association and will receive our *Building Bridges* newsletter three times annually.

#### Please find enclosed a tax-deductible donation to be used in the following areas:

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Undesignated - to be used as needed by Change for Children
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ General project account (supporting a variety of projects as required)
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Supporting projects in the country of \_\_\_\_\_
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ A specific project: \_\_\_\_\_
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Change for Children's Global Education Program in Canada
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ The Change for Children Endowment Fund
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Total Amount Enclosed** *Please make cheques payable to Change for Children*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Pre-Authorized Payment Plan Option

I/We authorize Change for Children Association to begin Automatic monthly withdrawals from my/our bank account as specified on the enclosed cheque marked "VOID." This authority is to remain in effect until further notification from myself/ourselves or Change for Children.

Please make a withdrawal in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

per month on the \_\_\_\_\_th day of each month.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature(s) of Account Holder

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

Change for Children Association 2nd Floor, 10808 - 124 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T5M 0H3 • [www.changeforchildren.org](http://www.changeforchildren.org)

The production and mailing of this quarterly publication, which we consider an educational tool, represents an investment by Change for Children of \$10,850 and we expect to raise from donors on an annual basis the sum of \$250,000. Proceeds will be used as designated by donor on reply form.