



On June 24 we arrived in the northern Nicaragua city of Somotillo for a series of meetings and community visits with Change for Children partners El Bloque Intercomunitario Pro-bienestar Cristiano (the Christian Inter-community Block for Well-being). The purpose of our visit was to observe the progress that had been made in the communities since the devastation of Hurricane Mitch and CFCA's subsequent support of El Bloque through our emergency relief fund. We were also to begin discussions about potential new project initiatives that El Bloque might be willing to undertake with CFCA support.

What we heard about upon arriving, however, was something very different. The mood at the offices of El Bloque was one of concern and sadness. The El Bloque leaders informed us that northern Nicaragua was in the midst of a severe drought. The crop loss in the areas where El Bloque works was virtually 100% in the first harvest. The situation did not look any more positive for

Crisis in Nicaragua



Community gathering in Jiñocua, Nicaragua - a rural village in hit hard by the drought

the second harvest, which usually happens in November. The farmers had no food to sell or consume, and had no money to purchase food. Every morning there was a line-up of 100 or more people outside the offices of El Bloque, asking for whatever food or money they could get. There were already reports of people in the communities dying of starvation. There were other reports of heads of families committing suicide because they could not stand the fact that their children and families were starving and there was nothing they could do. Farmers were selling whatever they could in order to obtain some money to purchase food – including livestock and parts of their land. Mass migration to the cities and neighbouring countries had begun. The picture they painted for us was dire, and it was clearly

not going to improve any time soon.

In fact, in the two months that have passed since our visit, conditions in Nicaragua have gone from bad to worse. The rainy season has now passed without any significant rainfall in the region. Drought conditions now exist throughout Central America, with Honduras and Nicaragua being the hardest hit. It has now become evident that the November harvest will yield even less than the first harvest of the year did, and the impact on the people of the region is beginning to reach famine proportions.

In Nicaragua, the problems of the drought are being exacerbated by two other factors. First, the glut on the world market of cheap Asian coffee – Nicaragua's primary export crop – and the result-

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ing drop in world coffee prices have meant a virtual freeze of Nicaragua's coffee plantations. Plantations have no money to pay workers, and as a result workers have no money with which to purchase food. Stadiums and public parks in cities like Matagalpa have been turned into make-shift refugee camps where coffee workers beg for food and receive medical attention. Children and the elderly are dying of starvation in ever-growing numbers, and the majority of people are living exclusively on a diet of green mangoes.

The second exacerbating factor is the fact that Nicaraguans will be heading to the polls on November 4 to elect a new President. How does an election contribute to the problem? Nicaragua's current President, Arnoldo Aleman, has been unwilling to even recognize that the country is in the midst of a crisis because it might hurt his party's chances of re-election. Clearly, if there is starvation and famine under your administration, it does not bode well for your electoral possibilities. Instead, Aleman has insisted over and over that the current situation is being exaggerated by Mayors from the Sandinista Front (the main opposition party) for political gain. He refuses to declare a state of emergency – which would free up a significant portion of the national budget for relief services – even though neighbouring Honduras has already done so. Instead, he claims that what hunger there is is a result of poor administration and corruption by the Sandinista mayors in the affected region.

The numbers, however, speak for themselves. The World Food Programme (WFP) reported in August that the drought was affecting some 1.4 million people across Central America, including



A coffee farmer in Nicaragua

more than 775,000 in 'critical conditions'. The WFP went on to lament that they only had sufficient resources to provide emergency assistance to approximately 50% of those in dire need. They are currently working with UNICEF, other UN agencies and numerous world governments to secure more food resources for the region.

In response to the declarations of the WFP, President Aleman's office re-iterated that "There is no famine in Nicaragua. This is borne out by the fact that the price of staples such as rice, beans and corn have not gone up – not one cent.... This is all a fabrication of the Sandinistas."

The El Bloque leaders and the farmers in the area told us that this attitude is nothing new. They firmly believe that, if it weren't for the international aid that arrived after Hurricane Mitch, Aleman's government would have been perfectly content to sit back and let them all die. They also told us, however, that ecological phenomena have made it impossible for them to recover completely from Mitch. They have not had a crop cycle produce at anywhere near 100% since before the hurricane. Every year they have been hit by flooding or drought. They see this drought as the final blow – many of them are at their wits end – and are prepared to abandon their farms and head for the barrios of Managua in search of food and work.

Despite these odds and frustrations, El Bloque continues to pursue their mandate of improving the quality of life in the communities where they work. During the drought, they have been organizing mayors and producers in the various communities to facilitate sharing and exchanges of what few food resources are available. While we were in the area, we heard of five truckloads of plantains being delivered from a plantation in a better-off com-

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NICARAGUA & EL SALVADOR RELIEF FUNDS

In response to the current situation in the region, CFCA has re-established our Nicaragua and El Salvador Relief Funds. We are currently accepting cash donations which will be forwarded to our partner organizations for use in their relief activities. Donations should be made out to Change for Children (please specify for which country), and mailed to 10545-92 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T5H 1V1.

EL BLOQUE PRESENTATION IN YOUR COMMUNITY

A member of El Bloque will be touring Alberta in November, 2001, to speak about both the drought and the larger issue of ecological sustainability. To host a presentation by this speaker in your community, please call us at (780) 448-1505.

...and in El Salvador

We were hoping to include an update on earthquake reconstruction efforts in El Salvador in this newsletter. But our partners' modem was struck by lightning and we lost communication for a time. This article was adapted from the August Bulletin of the Centro de Intercambio y Solidaridad in El Salvador. For a full, in-depth report on the situation, contact CIS@netcomsa.com

The first rains fell on May 13. Ten days later it stopped raining. The next time it rained was on August 21, 91 days later and as a result of Hurricane Chantal that hit the south of Mexico. In addition to causing a loss in the harvests, the drought has caused debts in the pockets of farmers, hunger and malnutrition, an increase in electric bills, and a 90% increase in the price of basic grains. According to the World Food Program (WFP), the drought has affected 200,000 people in El Salvador. The drought and following famine have been considered the gravest tragedy to affect Central America as a whole since Hurricane Mitch. This is yet another disaster to add to El

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munity to one of the worst-hit communities and distributed free of charge. This is the kind of action that El Bloque is facilitating in response to the inaction and apathy of the central government. El Bloque is also working to secure whatever assistance they can through their international supporters, and distributing it to those areas that have been worst hit.

– Ricardo Acuña

Salvador's already long list.

The National Meteorology Center explained that the drought is due to the presence of an anticyclone in the Caribbean. This anticyclone has re-routed the rains that were supposed to fall over the region, thus inflicting great damage upon the thousands of farmers that work the earth in order to survive and do business. This year's drought is not an isolated case but rather it has been occurring since the 1950s and has become intensified during the 1990s.

In El Salvador, there is talk of a recognized agricultural collapse. Official sources such as the Ministry of Agriculture documented \$290 million dollars of agricultural losses due to the first earthquake and \$6.3 million due to the second. Since July 6, there has been \$157 million dollars of losses in the coffee sector alone. The real effects of the drought will not be known until October when it will be known who has replanted and who has not.

A more profound analysis of the agricultural collapse shows what place the sector has in the Salvadorean economy. [The government] only looks toward neoliberal globalization [which] only uses the natural resources in a pragmatic and immediate manner, looking for the maximization of profits in the shortest time period possible. The situation becomes worse when nature is added to the socio-historic reality, which is to say that when events such as Mitch, the earthquakes, the floods, the droughts take place they cause great deficit in the pockets of the farmers. The WFP points out that the drought "has affected the poor whose crops are of a subsistence nature and their plots are only about an acre".



This image of a campesino on a church wall in rural La Noria speaks volumes.

Many Salvadorean communities are undertaking grassroots initiatives to improve conditions for themselves. The La Maroma Cooperative in La Noria is a good example. With support from Change for Children they were able to purchase and install an irrigation system, facilitating their self-sufficiency through crop diversification and a reduction in water wastage. Projects such as this are made possible through your generous donations.

There is also to consider the type of land that El Salvador has. Much land that is apt for foresting is used for agriculture, cattle raising, or it simply isn't used because it is too eroded. Land that is apt for agriculture is used for cattle raising and other non-agricultural uses. 80% of the natural vegetation of El Salvador has been eliminated. Furthermore, El Salvador has only 2% of its natural forests. According to the OAS, 77% of the country has been seriously affected by erosion.

The drama of the drought is something more than an isolated natural event. First, the neoliberal governments have not taken care of the agricultural sector. And second, there is no sign from the government of an agricultural reactivation. There is no hopeful plan of action for the rural population of the country.

Preserving the Forest in the Face of Poverty

"Buy my cat!" a little five year old girl called out to me as I made my way through the indigenous community of Raiti in Northern Nicaragua, "I will give you a good price". I looked down to see an ocelot kitten, freshly stolen from his forest home and about to enter the illegal trade in tropical animals.

Many rare and endangered animals are plucked from their forest homes in Nicaragua and sold for a song by people who have few options in their struggle for survival. In the case of ocelot kittens, the mother is killed in order to obtain her litter. The cats are passed on to traders who take them to the capital city of Managua, where they are sold at the street lights to rich people who buy them for the equivalent of about \$10 and keep them as pets.

A similar trade exists for toucan birds, macaw parrots, alligators, turtles and iguanas. Most of these animals originate in Nicaragua's largest forest "Reserve" called BOSAWAS. Known as the 'Lungs of Central America', the BOSAWAS forest Reserve, along with its Honduran counterpart reserve Tawaska, comprise the majority of Central America's tropical forest. This is the largest tract of tropical forest north of the Amazon basin and as such, plays an integral role in regulating the earth's climate.

BOSAWAS is home to the Miskito and Mayagna indigenous peoples of Central America, distant descendants of the ancient Mayan empire. The name BOSAWAS is derived from the names of the three rivers (Bocay, Salaya and Waspuk) for which the forest reserve forms the watershed. The BOSAWAS forest Reserve became a UN biosphere



Reserve in 1996 and is an incredibly diverse ecosystem, home to thousands of species of plants and animals, many of which are still undiscovered by western science.

Hit hard by hurricane Mitch, the Miskito and Mayagna peoples continue to struggle for survival. In Nicaragua, the statistics for inaccessibility to health and education for the general population are shockingly high. In BOSAWAS, the figures double. The statistics for maternal mortality, infant death, and illiteracy, for example, are twice as high in the indigenous communities of BOSAWAS than for the general population of Nicaragua. The indigenous peoples of BOSAWAS are marginalized, both because of their isolated location and because of the fact that they are indigenous peoples. The Nicaraguan government provides practically nothing in terms of education and health services to this region.

After Hurricane Mitch, foreign aid arrived but mostly in the form of infrastructure: schools and health posts were built, but remain unstaffed. Although the

situation in general has improved since Mitch, the real tragedy in these communities is that the people are dying of simple and curable diseases simply because of the lack of medicine and basic health knowledge.

The community medicine chest project that Change for Children is currently considering would help to provide basic medical attention to these communities. It includes public education for the communities about issues such as general hygiene, drinking water precautions and latrine use. It will train health promoters in each community to handle basic problems such as diarrhea, dehydration, dengue, malaria and other common ailments that often become critical if untreated. There is also a strong component emphasizing natural medicine to strengthen the use of the tropical herbs that have helped to cure these peoples for thousands of years.

Helping these people to help themselves is the first step towards their ability to protect their territories, live sustainably and, in turn, protect the forest – a forest that is important to us all.

– Lorraine Swift

Lorraine currently works with the Centro Humboldt in Managua. The Centre works with local communities, national coalitions and international networks promoting sustainable development.

CFCA is seeking seed funds to support the Community Medicine project. If you would like to contribute to this project, please contact Ricardo at 448-1505 or send in the donation form on the back of this newsletter. Thank you.

The Struggle to Reclaim Dignity

"There was a lot of smoke, and it stank. So we went to see. So many people were there among the rushes, on the river banks. Some still had life in them, but we couldn't do anything for them because they were losing so much blood. Other people's hearts were still beating."

Case 2295, Lajcholaj, San Rafael Independencia, Huehuetenango, 1981.

This is one of many quotes collected from victims in The Recovery of Historical Memory Project conducted by Bishop Juan Gerardi and the Catholic Church. It refers to a time when violence fell like a fury upon rebels and Mayan civilians in the northern Highlands of Guatemala. In the 23 months between October 1981 and August 1983, 132,000 people were massacred. By comparison, the entire 36 year civil war claimed 200,000 lives. The Church's report indicated that the Guatemalan military was responsible for more than 90% of the deaths.

When Bishop Gerardi presented the church's findings to the public in April 1998, he concluded with the following quote from Genesis:

"Cain, where is your brother?"

"I don't know," he answered.

"Am I my brother's keeper?"

Yahweh replied, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground."

Bishop Gerardi, dozens of workers and thousands of witnesses put their lives at risk in order to produce this report and reclaim the dignity of their fallen brothers and sisters. Two days after the report was presented, Bishop Gerardi was dead.



Monument to the "disappeared"

In the first six months of 2001, those moved by the echoes of those cries continued to struggle against horrible obstacles. Death threats against human rights workers escalated substantially; in May, a U.S. nun was killed during broad daylight in the streets of Guatemala City; in June, an attempted kidnapping took place involving a representative of Amnesty International; also in June, a declared State of Emergency brought troops to the streets after 78 convicts escaped from a high-security prison (this situation caused great tension amongst human rights activists); finally in June, a remote village of returned refugees, Los Cimientos, was attacked by 50 former army-sponsored civil patrollers – 82 of

86 buildings were burned to the ground, 3 women were raped, their animals were killed or stolen, and 7 children were taken. Rigoberta Menchu, Nobel Peace Prize laureate, felt moved to issue a public condemnation of these developments. It was a terrible and depressing first half of the year.

Incredibly, a genuine surge of hope also emerged in June. For the first time in Guatemalan history, 3 high-ranking military officials were convicted to 30 years each for their part in the murder of Bishop Gerardi. Several judges, prosecutors, church and human rights defenders put their lives at risk in order to open people's eyes to the truth – the dangerous, glaring, redeeming truth.

People on the ground indicated that the role of international pressure was an important component to the outcome of this case. By supporting and participating in actions of solidarity, by heeding those whose blood cries from the ground, we return to them a semblance of their lost dignity. Perhaps we also enhance our own self-dignity and help to reclaim a piece of the lost dignity of humankind.

– Randy Kohan

URGENT ACTION • GUATEMALA

Workers at two factories in Guatemala have been harassed, attacked or have received death threats because they were exercising their right to form trade unions. The factories, Choishin and Cimatextiles, are assembly processing plants that produce for Liz Claiborne Inc. The larger of the two plants, Choishin, is being monitored by COVERCO, a trusted local monitor, as part of a pilot project on independent monitoring by Liz Claiborne. **YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE** by writing to the governments of Canada and Guatemala, to Liz Claiborne Inc. and to the assembly factories in Guatemala. For more information visit the Canada/Guatemala Solidarity Network website (www.gcsn.org) or email cfca@web.net.

The G-8: Secrecy and Broken Promises

The G-8 is a group of finance ministers and central bank governors of the eight major industrialized countries, including Canada. They met in Genoa in July of this year, and are preparing to meet again in Kananaskis, Alberta, in June of 2002.

Sir Nicholas Bayne of the London School of Economics and Political Science, states that "The summits aim to provide collective management of the world economy... reconcile the tensions of interdependence... and generate political leadership". Although set up to assist in promoting "international financial stability" and ensure prosperity in "emerging markets" by reviewing economic policy, they remain committed to carrying out the globalized economic policies of the IFIs (International Financial Institutions) which have time and time again proved detrimental to the Majority World, even though claims are made to the contrary.

These economic policies are guided by the ideology that a removal of "barriers to trade" is ultimately good. Policies generally support a decrease in the sovereignty of governments as multinational corporations and the IFIs possess more power and capital than countries. Countries fear penalties imposed by the World Trade Organization (WTO) after corporations claim government protectionism, which leads to less enforcement of labor, environmental and financial laws, and the loosening of those laws. Increasing interest rates means that small farmers and businesses can't get loans to stay afloat. Small farmers may have to sell their land to rich landowners and corporations, and work as tenants or move to worse lands. Small



Policies of IFIs have proved detrimental

businesses shut down, leaving workers unemployed and willing to work for less. In the Okinawa meeting of 2000 the G8 vowed "unwavering commitment to structural change... and more adaptable labour markets". In fact, in 1997, the UN conference on Trade and Development reported that unskilled wages in poor nations that had "liberalized" had fallen by up to 30%. The only "progress" is towards more poverty.

Policies often decrease regulations on foreign ownership of resources and businesses. This way, multinational corporations can buy local industries easily. Countries compete for foreign investment by offering tax breaks, low wages, and free trade zones, and promise not to enforce democratically-created labour and environmental laws. Control of entire sectors of economy can shift to foreign control. Lowering tariffs and cutting subsidies for basic goods raises the cost of food and items needed to survive, and policies that re-orient economies from subsistence to export markets give incentives for farmers to produce cash crops (coffee, cotton, etc.) for rich nations instead of food for the Majority World. It also encourages the development of low-paying, low-skilled jobs in manufacturing. Encouraging foreign investment and lowering

trade regulations leads to unregulated mining, drilling, clearcutting, and other displacing, destructive, exploitative practices that are profitable for rich nations but do nothing to develop poor ones.

Although the G8 has repeatedly promised debt relief to the most heavily indebted countries in the world, very little has been given. "Promises have been broken. Only a fraction of the \$100bn [in debt relief] promised at the G8 Summit in Cologne two years ago has been delivered. Most poor countries are paying more in debt servicing than on vitally needed health care or education programmes" says Henry Northover, Debt expert at the Catholic Aid agency CAFOD. In 1999, the most highly indebted poor countries repaid US\$1.68 billion more back to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) than they were receiving in new loans. The G8 "debt cancellation" program has many stipulations for these indebted countries. So many that Laos and Ghana have decided that keeping their debts would mean less suffering than meeting those conditions!

Commenting on the G8 final Communiqué from Genoa, Jessica Woodroffe, Head of Policy at the World Development Movement said: "Ultimately these summits must be judged by the benefits they deliver to the world's poor. The result this year has been an anti-poor trade plan, nothing on debt and a feeble fund." The G8 final Communiqué is at www.genoa-g8.it/eng/index.html and the WDM response is at www.wdm.org.uk/cambriefs/Debt/g8resp.pdf

Although the G8 group has pledged to improve the regulation

and transparency of global financial sectors, they still start from the severely flawed premise that these IFI policies lead to global "poverty reduction". The G8, as well as the G20, are closed to public input, and are not accountable to citizens. "Decisions that will have a profound impact on billions of people around the world are being left to a narrow group of 'experts', with no provision for public or civil society input" (Halifax Initiative Faq Sheet).

There IS an Alternative

Global financial reform is desperately needed. The Halifax Initiative, 50 Years is Enough, and numerous other non-governmental and civil society groups are advocating for a rights-based approach that puts the interests of the poor at the heart of the economic rule-making process. Currently, decisions made on global financial policies are controlled by financial, corporate, and political elites. International agreements like NAFTA or GATT should be circulated openly and given a fair debate. Development needs to be led by the people at a grassroots level, not directed by "specialists" out of touch with the day-to-day realities of the poor. Global policies should ensure the enforcement of civil, political, economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights. Referencing these rights in a preamble to an agreement is not enough.

These policies need to be monitored by an international commission separate from the World Trade Organization, a commission that has the ability to ensure people-based sustainable development policies are followed by multinational corporations and national governments. Funding needs to be allotted to allow civil society to seek justice when corporations violate people-based

investment policies.

Investment should be in stable production, not speculation. Speculative financial transactions need to be taxed, as suggested by the "Tobin Tax" (named after James Tobin, a prominent monetary economist and Nobel Laureate). The revenues from a Tobin tax (conservatively estimated at US\$302 billion a year from a 0.25% tax) should be administered by an independent United Nations agency and used for social and economic development. (When the government of Canada tried to talk about the Tobin Tax at the Halifax G-7 meeting, pressure from the U.S. Treasury quickly squashed the idea).

www.un.org/esa/ffd • www.halifaxinitiative.org • <http://g8.activist.ca>
www.geocities.com/arthursank/faq.html • www.whirledbank.org
www.library.utoronto.ca/g7/g20 • <http://g8.market2000.ca/sponsors.asp>

– Cherie Klassen

Get Involved

Information on the G8 for this article was taken from several sources. For more information please check them out (below).

Join a campaign. The Halifax Initiative is taking the lead in Canada with the Tobin Tax Campaign. Write your member of parliament and call for more participatory and inclusive policy decision-making and debate in Canada and globally.

Come together with activists that are speaking out about the G8 meeting in Kananaskis next year. To join the mailing list, email g8-announce-on@list.nisto.com.

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Views From Overseas

Rene Guerra Salazar, Brazil:

After only a month in Northeast Brazil, it became obvious that Brazil has pretty much everything required to be a "first-world" nation – an industrious population, abundant natural resources, plenty of fruitful land, cutting edge technology, etc. But in Mangueira and other barrios of the "periphery" of Brazil's largest cities, as well as many forgotten rural towns, the "trickle-down" of the country's material wealth is as rare as rain in the drylands of the Northeastern Sertao. Still, despite this, communities like Mangueira, Bebedouro, and Canudos produce gems like Esquisito, Lua, and Romero and many others like them struggling against and resisting economic, political, and social injustice.

And of course, the rhythm of the struggle is authentically Brazilian – that is, full of laughter, heated debate, music, and dancing. In Bebedouro, a bairro in Maceio, capital of Alagoas, resistance manifests itself in the beat of Afro-Brazilian percussion groups, while in Canudos the struggle is made loud and clear in the fiery and politically liberating sermon of a Catholic priest. In Mangueira, Salvador, Bahia, the struggle and resistance is exemplified by the life of Senhor Aluisio, who has dedicated every day for the last 30 years to this community in solidarity with other colleagues in the Free Association of the People of Mangueira (ALMM) like Sergio, Ricardo, and Ayri.

That it's an uphill battle is certain, and this is reflected every time an Afro-Brazilian, representing at least 50% of the national population, flicks on the tube to see white people exclusively



A child plays in Mangueira, Brazil

telling her how to live and what to buy. But, just as he ran up a sand dune near the coast of Jaua, leaving me behind struggling for breath, the 64-year-old Aluisio and the multitude of community, cultural, and political activists like him are engaged fully in that uphill battle for justice. I know I will learn much from them, and, in time, hope to contribute to their struggle.

On my first day here, Esquisito (the strange one), the most mature and charming 12-year-old I've met to date, asked me what I think of Brazil. I can safely say that Brazil is a country that has everything, including the prosperous and just future the ALMM and other organizations like it are securing for bright and capable children like him.

Kaia Kjar, Nicaragua:

As the elections shine or loom in the near future (depending on how optimistic one feels) I consider myself very fortunate to be here at this time and to be able to wit-

ness the many faces of Nicaragua. In the last few months, the current president, Aleman, has repeatedly denied that there is any hunger in Nicaragua. (See cover story.) In the same breath he has stated that if foreign countries (who have formally recognized this state of emergency) really want to help the hungry people of Nicaragua, then they should send cash – to be 'distributed' by the government – rather than grain donations. The donations of grain and medicine that have been sent are being stamped with the Liberal logo and given away as part of the Liberals' campaign strategy. The latest news is that they are also stealing cedula (official ID cards) from the people to prevent them from being able to vote.

Aleman's further claims that there is no violence in Nicaragua is both comic and deeply saddening. Just three weeks ago an innocent young boy was seriously injured by a bomb that was thrown at him by local gang members here in Esteli, and the very people I work with are afraid to leave their houses after 9:00 at night for fear of being attacked and beaten or worse. According to my work colleagues, such gang violence has only arisen in Esteli in the last 10 years as unemployment has increased, social and community programs have been cut, and opportunities for youth have gone down dramatically.

There seems to be a constant tension here between the joys and struggles of everyday life, between hope and celebration for small successes and anger, frustration and fear over continuous political disappointments. Some react as above with violence, addiction and depression, while others push forward in the struggle for change. Luckily I have the privilege of working with and learning from the latter group.

The openness and community spirit of FUNARTE is uplifting. Their constant eagerness to learn, their willingness to change together, their ability to overcome, is inspiring, not only with the educators but with the children and the youth that I work with. Their maturity and level of awareness is astounding, much of which is due to the continuous efforts of FUNARTE to instill a more critical consciousness. And then there's the indescribable fulfillment that comes from looking into the eyes of a child or adult after they've painted for the first time. The pride that comes not only from painting but from having been asked for their thoughts and opinions, and from having been heard, valued and respected – privileges that we take for granted in Canada.

UPCOMING EVENTS

RHYTHM OF THE STREETS **October 30**

7:00 pm at the Princess II
10337 - 82 Avenue, Edmonton
Tickets \$10.00, at the door
A film about Nicaraguan street children.
Director Bill Moore Kilgannon will speak about the making of the movie and its purpose.

JUST CHRISTMAS **November 16-17**

Friday, November 16, 6:00 - 9:30 p.m.
Saturday, November 17, 9:30 - 4:30 p.m.
The Prince of Wales Armouries
10440 - 108A Avenue, Edmonton
Admission is free (but donations encouraged)
Quality crafts and other worldly goods,
live entertainment, delicious finger foods & refreshments from not-for-profit organizations supporting international development projects.

CFCA OPEN HOUSE **December 14**

4:00 – 9:00 p.m. Visit old friends, meet new ones, and see what we've been up to!

Youth Action Opportunities

YOUTH SUMMIT 2001

November 20 & 21, Junior High
November 22 & 23, Senior High

This two-day Summit will be a highly interactive exploration of "Sustainability". Hands-on workshops and discussions will look at issues such as climate change, globalization, fair trade, and civic responsibility. Additional activities may include a Sustainable Lifestyle Fair, a Fair Trade Fashion Show, and an 'Eco-Jam' with a prize for the best original song. The Summit is presented by Change for Children Association, The Learning Network and the YMCA, with support from many other Alberta organizations. Information and registration packages will be available in early October.

2002 YOUTH TOUR TO CENTRAL AMERICA

Change for Children will once again be leading a youth tour to Central America. Participants will experience first-hand what life is like for the majority of people in 'developing nations.' They'll visit both urban centres and rural areas to discover what our Southern partners are doing to create sustainable communities, from farming cooperatives to an environmental research centre. The tour is open to youth between the ages of 16 and 22, and will take place in the summer of 2002. Applications will be available in early October.



Youth tour members in rural Nicaragua

CLASS ACTION

In this school-twinning project, Alberta students support their counterparts in rural Nicaragua both materially (through fundraising) and personally (through letter-writing). This project will soon be extended to Guatemala and El Salvador.

For more information call Chris at (780)-448-1505.

Celebrating 25 Years of Solidarity

Together many of us celebrated 25 years of working in solidarity on the weekend of June 25th, 2001. What a wonderful celebration it was, with our A.G.M. on Friday evening, a celebration dinner and evening of music on Saturday, and culminating with the Painting Peace mural unveiling on Sunday. It was a weekend that we will remember, one that brought friends together for rejuvenation, renewal and celebration.

CONGRATULATIONS to those who were honoured for their contributions to CFCA over the years: Hank and Tillie Zyp (our founders), Jenny and Clarence Visser, The Garcia Family (Marina, Jose, Delmy, Dinorah and Roger), Lucy and Mario Acuña, Pat Sears, Al Gerwing, Ed Carson, Mary Burley, Bill Bourne, and St. Michael's School.

As Delmy Garcia-Hoyt, President of the Board of Directors, so eloquently reports in the 2001 annual report: "After 25 years of existence, the vitality, energy, consciousness and commitment of friends, supporters and staff of CFCA is thriving." (Please call the office if you would like a copy of the annual

report.) The annual general meeting, chaired by Delmy, heard reports from all of our working committees, from our interns, and from the Painting Peace project. As well, Section 21 of the CFCA Constitution was changed to include: "**Any candidates running for positions on the CFCA board of directors must be a paid member in good standing for at least 14 days prior to the annual general meeting.**" This will take effect on January 1, 2002. The meeting ended with a very informative presentation by Lorraine Swift, a past CFCA intern now working for CUSO in Nicaragua. (See page 4.)



Thanks were expressed to board and staff members leaving CFCA. **THANK YOU** and much gratitude to Ron Berezan who gave his heart and soul to CFCA for five years and whose fabulous

ideas, enthusiasm and commitment to justice changed the course of our education program forever. We wish Ron well in his new job with Canada World Youth. **THANK YOU** as well to: Brenda Allan, Belle Bertrand, Randy Kohan, Heloisa Modesto (whom we wish well in her new job in Ottawa), Sharon Strong, and our two board members who left the board to join the staff: Chris Peters, whom we are delighted is the new Education Coordinator, and Joseph Lee Son, who coordinated the Youth Summit.

The Board of Directors for 2001/02 are: Delmy Garcia-Hoyt (President), Pat Sears (Vice-President), Margo Nelson (Treasurer), Eugene Ulmer (Secretary), Lucy Acuña, Colleen Duffy, David Fath, Melle Huizinga, Erin Kelly, Doug McIvor, Laura Roberts, Marguerite Watson, and Gustavo Zayas.

If you'd like to join our Finance, Education, Projects, or Personnel committees, please call the office.

Upcoming Board Meeting Dates are Sept. 22, Oct. 20 and Nov. 24, at 9:30 am.

— Pat Sears

Show your Solidarity with CFCA!

For our 25th Anniversary, we introduced the following CFCA merchandise. Please see the order form on page 11 for sizing and prices.

- Waterbottle (blue plastic with white logo)
- Bandana (blue with white logo)
- Plastic travel mug with lid (green with silver logo)
- T-shirts - 100% heavy cotton short sleeved t-shirts, orange t-shirt with royal blue logo or stone t-shirt with navy logo on breast
- Golf shirts - 100% preshrunk cotton, herringbone textured pique golf shirts, navy shirt with natural logo or natural shirt with navy logo embroidered on sleeve cuff
- Fleece Liner Vest, navy with silver logo embroidered on breast

CFCA Endowment Fund

In order to ensure our long-term viability and commitment to our Southern partners, CFCA has established a reserve fund. If you would like to make a contribution to this fund, please check the "endowment fund" allocation box on the donation form at the back of this newsletter when you enclose your donation. For more information on how to make a bequest to the organization, please contact our office at (780) 448-1505.



Peace Calendars Available

This 16-month calendar (September 2001 - December 2002) features lively and colourful art from Change for Children's *Youth of the Americas Peace Mural*. The peace mural is a collection of paintings created by youth from Alberta, Nicaragua, and El Salvador, based on the UN's *Culture of Peace* initiative and UNESCO's *Manifesto 2000*. The calendar notes international observances in the areas of peace, human rights, environmental and other issues, along with historic events. Each month also showcases one of Change for Children's project partners in Latin America, with photos and descriptions of their work and communities.

Also available: A series of six full-colour, 16" x 22" Painting Peace posters featuring panels from the mural and the *Manifesto 2000* pledges.

RESOURCE LIBRARY

Change for Children has an extensive collection of videos and books available to the public. Topics range from Latin American history to women's issues, globalization and media studies.

CHANGE FOR CHILDREN PRESENTATIONS

COMING TO A VENUE NEAR YOU! We would be happy to join your community group, church, school, or group of friends interested in finding out more about our projects in Latin America and the Philippines, global and social justice issues, or ways to get involved with CFCA.

For more information, call (780)-448-1505.

The calendars are available for individual purchase or **may be used as a fundraising tool for your school, NGO or community organization.**

Our thanks to CIDA's Development Information Program for their support in producing the calendars.



Merchandise Order Form

Please make cheque or money order payable to Change for Children Association. Please allow 8 weeks for delivery.

Thank you for your support!

Waterbottle(s)	.....	Quantity	_____	.....	\$4.00 ea.	= _____							
Bandana(s)	.....	Quantity	_____	.....	\$4.00 ea.	= _____							
Travel mug(s)	.....	Quantity	_____	.....	\$7.00 ea.	= _____							
Painting Peace Posters (set of 6)		Quantity	_____	.....	\$15.00 ea.	= _____								
Peace Calendars (not for resale)		Quantity	_____	.....	\$15.00 ea.	= _____								
Orange T-shirt	Size/Quantity	S	_____	M	_____	L	_____	XL	_____	2XL	_____	3XL	_____	\$15.00 ea.	= _____
Stone T-shirt	Size/Quantity	S	_____	M	_____	L	_____	XL	_____	2XL	_____	3XL	_____	\$15.00 ea.	= _____
Navy golf shirt	Size/Qty. Ladies'	S	_____	M	_____	L	_____	XL	_____				\$45.00 ea.	= _____	
		Size/Qty. Men's	S	_____	M	_____	L	_____	XL	_____	2XL	_____	3XL	_____	\$45.00 ea.
Natural golf shirt	Size/Qty. Ladies'	S	_____	M	_____	L	_____	XL	_____				\$45.00 ea.	= _____	
		Size/Qty. Men's	S	_____	M	_____	L	_____	XL	_____	2XL	_____	3XL	_____	\$45.00 ea.
Fleece Liner Vest	Size/Quantity	S	_____	M	_____	L	_____	XL	_____				\$45.00 ea.	= _____	
Painting Peace T-shirt	Size/Qty.	S	_____	M	_____	L	_____	XL	_____				\$15.00 ea.	= _____	

I will pick up **OR** Add shipping fee: \$4.00 orders less than \$20.00 / \$6.00 orders over \$20.00 = _____

Name: _____ Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Street Address: _____

City/Town: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: (_____) _____ Email: _____

Finding Hope...

In a broken world of Materialism, Power, Money and Competition, one needs to be in contact with people who have a different world view, one of Compassion and Sharing. It is those who have a circular, all inclusive view with All people and with all the created world – rather than a life of clamoring, pushing, and climbing up the ladder only to boast “I Did It!” – that bring hope into our lives. Change for Children continues to draw many gifted peo-

ple and especially young people who believe in this philosophy. Through experience, lives change when we hold hands with those who do not have material THINGS and we find richness, solidarity, a celebration of TOGETHERNESS. We may not be able to FIX things, but together we can make a difference. So I continue to need Change for Children – it is with these people that I find HOPE.

– Jennie Visser

Your Voice: September 11, 2001

As with all people around the world, many members of the CFC community have been gathering to share our feelings of shock and horror over the attacks in the United States. We are also trying to understand what this means for the world in a larger context. We invite you to share your thoughts, which may be published in our next newsletter. Please write, fax or email us at the addresses to the right.

BUILDING Bridges

is published three times annually by Change for Children as part of its education program. The views expressed by the publication are not necessarily those of Change for Children Association. • *Editing and Design: Chris Peters*



While Change For Children Association (CFCA) highly values its partnerships with communities of various religious and political persuasions, we are a non-sectarian, non-partisan society. Our development projects are located primarily in Central and South America, Mexico, and the Philippines. Types of projects, their cost and priority are determined by the indigenous co-operants living in these communities, according to their current needs.

We appreciate receiving your comments, suggestions or criticisms about this publication or its content. Please mail, fax, or e-mail us at:

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Edmonton, Alberta, T5H 1V1
Fax: 780-448-1507 • email: cfca@web.net

For more information, please call us at 780-448-1505 or visit our website:
www.changeforchildren.org

Registered Charitable Organization No. 11884 9496 RR0001

Please support CFCA's Important Work with a CHARITABLE DONATION

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

- \$ 15.00 To purchase a 2001 Change for Children membership (non tax receiptable)
- \$ _____ Undesignated - to be used as needed by Change for Children Association
- \$ _____ Your general project account (supporting a variety of projects as required)
- \$ _____ Your projects in the country of _____
(current projects are in Mexico, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Peru, Brazil)
- \$ _____ Your Development Education Program here in Canada
- \$ _____ Helping to start an Endowment Fund
- \$ _____ **Total Amount Enclosed**

Please make cheques payable to Change for Children Association

Name: _____
Address: _____
City/Town: _____ Prov: _____ Postal Code: _____
Phone: _____ 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