



CWS

@world

ACTION AGAINST POVERTY

Spring/Summer 2012



Land grabs and land rights

Plus

Christmas Appeal preview
Cranes, planes and progress Partners

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Cranes, planes and **progress...**



By Pauline McKay, National Director

It's been a hugely busy time for CWS in a very changed city.

The Christchurch skyline is now dominated by cranes dismantling the buildings that used to form the city backdrop.

It is a continuous reminder of the transient nature of humanity and our need to have larger goals than just buildings and material goods.

As the city stage is cleared we have also been very active in our national and international involvements, both in aid and development and ecumenical matters.

Not that the two are that far apart. One of the roles CWS plays in the aid and development community is in trying to foster the same collegial sense of shared vision that is part of the ecumenical movement.

Nationally we have been working with other aid and development groups on developing disaster and risk reduction exercises in Vanuatu, Tonga and Fiji.

I have also been involved in the work of CID, the Centre for International Development as the current chair.

Then in July on World Council of Churches' business I had to go to Bossey, Switzerland to take part in the Assembly Planning Committee meeting ahead of the global WCC Conference to be held in Busan, South Korea, next year. The WCC paid for transport.

Our forward planning for CWS in the future got a big vote of confidence when the Methodist Church of New Zealand made the welcome decision to establish a cornerstone endowment fund of \$100,000 for CWS.

This will enable us to build on this base and set up a larger endowment fund that will provide future insulation from fiscal shocks and changes such as those of recent years in Government funding.

On that subject while CWS made the decision to work toward becoming a fully donor based organisation again we have also made a very deliberate call to stay actively engaged with the Government funding process.

This has been both to make sure our voice continues to be heard, and also because we see no reason why CWS should not continue getting support based on our excellent track record and

continuing partnership projects.

In that context it is good to report that we are on track to get funding for one of our projects under the new Sustainable Development Fund (SDF). The Tongan project application is for (NZ) \$500,000 over three years.

Because it is a Pacific based project it will also gain from a welcome change back in funding policy where the 4 to 1 ratio will again be available.

This is particularly welcome news as the Tongan Community development Trust project is an upcoming joint project from the Methodist Women's Fellowship and Presbyterian Women.

Finally, a tip off to Christchurch-based supporters of CWS that next year we will become a welcome addition to the exhibitors at the Ellerslie International Flower Show. We are likely to be looking for volunteers to staff the plant stall so mark it in your diaries now.

(Perplexed non-Cantabrians take note. Ellerslie started out life as a hugely successful Auckland flower show that was eventually bought by the Christchurch City Council and is now an iconic part of the Christchurch gardening and social calendar).

I hope you enjoy this Spring/Summer @world.

Pauline McKay

COVER PHOTO

In our cover photo you can see Azalea and her brother on the porch of their home in the Villa Maria Informal Settlement, one of 15 homes housing a total of 25 families. In Villa Maria the people living there have finally got agreement on their land tenure one hundred years after their forbears arrived there for a building project.

In Fiji, Christian World Service's partner the

Ecumenical Centre for research, education and Advocacy (ECCREA) is working to improve conditions for people living in the informal settlements.

In the case of Villa Maria the new stability about tenure means they can look forward to building more permanent homes, getting regular electricity supplies and improved access to education for their children. Photo: Trish Murray CWS





Land grabs and rights in our sights...



CWS has never been afraid to fight the “good fight” against wrongs even if popular support takes a while to catch up.

From funding Cuban needs in 1963 after America banned support from their churches; to giving money to the Mississippi freedom marchers in 1964 to back civil rights.

We were supporting students in apartheid South Africa and helping with reconstruction work in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia in the 1970's.

CWS helped make the moral stand against apartheid in New Zealand and in recent years has been highlighting some of the wrongs of globalisation and neoliberal economics.

With this edition of @world we're letting you know well ahead of the Christmas Appeal that another issue of right and wrong is in our sights.

This year we will be casting the spotlight on the moral wrong of land grabs, an unfolding scandal that has managed to escape wide public attention and outrage until now.

This theme was not our original idea when we began this year by planning

to build our communications around the sustainable food support partnerships we have been highlighting in recent years.

Instead what we found along the research road was a global story so stunningly unfair that we felt morally driven to make this the focus of our Christmas Appeal publicity efforts.

Put simply we found that in the last ten years the equivalent of eight New Zealand's worth of land (or 200 million hectares) has been “bought” or leased in Africa and Asia in the last decade.

Much of this land is what used to be called the “commons”, that is land owned by communities and tribes but used by everybody.

With land grabs what happens is that the common lands are taken out of public ownership and use and put into private, often foreign, ownership.

It happened here to Maori and the shock waves and results are still playing out now.

Close to home in Papua New Guinea, foreign companies from Malaysia, China and Singapore have taken control of 5.2 million hectares, or over 11 per cent of the entire country.

Much of this was community held forest which is then felled by the new “owners”

to plant crops like palm oil.

Naturally it's not the poor land that is being stolen, it's the best bits, leaving people to try and survive on the margins of what was once their land.

Quite often the land is used either for monoculture or to produce biofuels at the expense of local populations and ecosystems.

In other places like Fiji it's not land grabs that cause the problem, rather the lack of clear title and clarity around land.

The children in our cover photo are the first generation to be able to officially live where they do, one hundred years after their forbears were bought to Fiji for a building project.

Land titles also are the villain behind the lack of visible results for Haiti's homeless where a clear legal title to land is the exception, not the rule.

It's a complex problem that in the case of land grabs we believe needs to be systematically exposed and dragged into the court of public opinion.

We start that journey here and serve notice that it will be central to this year's Christmas Appeal. ■



Photo: ACT Alliance / Bread for Life.

When development isn't really development.....

Progress in Sierra Leone has yet to trickle down to these children who still have to queue for hours to get water for their families.

CWS concerns about land grabs are part of a global groundswell of alarm as people realise the extent aid and development has been harmed by alienation of land.

It is an issue of major concern to CWS global partner, ACT Alliance.

ACT Alliance Secretary General, John Nduna said recently that land grabbing is a scandal that undermines the right of poor people to food, water and self determination.

"It is an affront to natural justice to see commonly owned land taken and used for monoculture that produces food and fuel for nations with obesity epidemics while the true owners of the land hunger," John Nduna said.

Swiss-based ACT Alliance partner group Bread for All has been sounding the alarm bells about land grabs and the flaws of bioenergy and investment banks recently.

This article and the accompanying photo have been supplied to us courtesy of Bread for All.

They have studied the Addax Bioenergy project in Sierra Leone and shown the fallacy of claiming projects such as this as sustainable.

Sierra Leone is not food self-sufficient, one third of the population are affected by malnutrition with one of the world's highest mortality rates.

The Addax deal added to a mix of land lease agreements that total up to 1 million hectares, or 18% of land suited for cultivation in foreign control.

The Bread For All study also shows that the economic and environmental benefits of the ethanol project in Sierra Leone also run counter to good development guidelines.

"Regarding the environment, the study also reveals that ethanol from sugarcane has an environmental impact three times higher than petrol (because of air, soil and water pollution as well as resource consumption) and that 4000 hectares of bush will be cleared.

"Regarding water use, the Addax project will use 26% of the river flow during the driest months (February to April),"the report says.

Whereas New Zealand ties with Denmark and Singapore for first place in non-corrupt nations with a score of 9.3 out of 10 in the Corruption Perception Index Sierra Leone is ranked 134th with a score of 2.4 out of ten.

The report also points out that this project is 52 % financed with money from development banks, including the African Development Bank. "These banks have a shared responsibility in the impacts linked to this project," it says.

"Because they finance these projects, development banks threaten food security and sovereignty as well as access to water for local populations "

They urge development banks to better evaluate the projects they finance and their impacts, a call CWS supports. ■

Fighting land grabs in India....

Land grabbing is not as easy as it could be in Tamil Nadu, India thanks to the feisty women who work with our partner group, Neythal.

Here's a story from Mrs Kalaiyarasi, a 30 year old mother of three who is a sangam leader in her area and president of the Nagai District fisherwoman federation.

Her group has campaigned against land grabbing, alcohol abuse, domestic violence and for better water distribution. .

The Pillai Perumalnallur power plant in their area has hastened sea erosion, restricted access, ruined drainage systems and taken housing land from two villages.

This damage galvanised them to pull out the stops for any further power plants, including local lobbying and mobilising political support.

"As a strategic intervention we filed a Public Interest Litigation in the National Green Tribunal," she said.

"We organised rallies, hunger strikes and public protests before the District Administration. We put large numbers into a public hearing.

"We learnt that the tribunal has suspended the clearance given to Chettinad power plant and directed there be a full environmental impact assessment.

"We are happy about it, but we need to sustain the struggle till we get the final verdict," she said.

Through the Neythal CWS partner scheme she says she has been able to find her voice, her inner strength, improve her communication and public relation skills and become braver and more self-assertive. ■



Mrs Kalaiyarasi, President of the Nagai District Fisherwoman's Federation associated with CWS Tamil Nadu partner in India , Neythal.



Whetting the appetite for food justice

Finding enough food to eat in poor communities is central to many of CWS's partner programmes.

CWS believes it is time to pay more attention to the deeper issues surrounding food and why one in seven people go hungry each day. Changes in the way that food is produced, distributed and consumed are contributing to hunger rather than ensuring that more people have what they need for a good and healthy life. The need for food justice for all people is urgent. It is time for reflection and action. October 14-21 is an opportunity to find out about food justice issues. As a member of the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance, CWS is supporting the Churches' Week of Action on Food. An Action Guide, Liturgy, Quiz and other resources are available for those who would like to join this global effort.

Long term Challenges

- Global grain production is rising, but not as fast as global demand for food, animal feed and biofuels.
- Smallholder farmers are trapped at the bottom of the food chain where the intermediaries, merchants and transnational corporations take the larger share of the profit.
- Developing countries are producing less food as a consequence of free trade policies.
- Increased diversion of grain crops from human food to animal feed as demand for meat and dairy has steadily risen

since the 1960s.

- The lack of investment in agriculture has led to stagnation in food production.
- Increased corporate concentration, ownership and control over all aspects of the food chain.
- Smallholder farmers are less able to cope with the shocks like unpredictable costs and land tenure issues.
- Land used to grow biofuels and rising oil prices.
- Crop failures caused by increasing climate disruption and the degradation of arable land.
- Increased volatility in food commodity markets.
- Land grabbing.
- Water rights.

CWS wants:

- Food Justice.
- All people everywhere to have adequate food that is sufficient, safe, nutritious and culturally acceptable.
- Increased support for agro-ecological food production and fairer international trade rules.
- The right to food is central to government policies and practices, including Official Development Assistance and trade policies.
- People to think about where their food comes from, whether those who produce it are fairly compensated and whether it is sustainable. ■



Making natural pest control.

Growing Food Better

Finding enough food to feed one's family is the daily focus of the day for far more people than it should be. Small padi farmers like Ms Jothi in Tamil Nadu, South India worked harder and harder but found it increasingly difficult to manage. Learning how to grow rice organically at a Farmer School organised by CWS partner SAND has made the difference. "Earlier our input cost was high because of the use of pesticides and fertilisers. But after switching to organic farming, we use less expensive (natural) inputs. This has increased our profits," she says.

It is a familiar story for many CWS partners running similar training programmes based on improved traditional farming practices and new ecological practices. Managing limited water supplies and developing compost systems and natural pesticides are keeping families better fed – just not enough. Family farmers throughout the world are losing their land and their livelihoods, often not by choice. The focus on large scale investment in agricultural production has come at the cost of small farmers who can produce a more diverse and reliable output with the right support.

Justice/peace issues will be centre stage at World Council of Churches Assembly

Justice issues like land grabs and peace issues like reunification of Korea will all be on the menu for the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Busan, South Korea next year.

The Assembly has the theme of "God of life, lead us to justice and peace."

CWS national director, Pauline McKay attended one of the last planning meetings for the Assembly in Switzerland on a WCC funded trip as the representative of the Specialised Ministries. (Specialised ministries are aid and development wings of church

groups such as CWS).

Korea was selected to host the Assembly because of the unique ecumenical "horizon" that the witness of the Korean churches offers the wider ecumenical movement.

It will be the first Assembly of the World Council of Churches to take place in Northeast Asia and the broader Asian context will have significant influence on the meeting.

For the Korean church community it represents a public acknowledgment of the power and ecumenical clout of the



Korean churches who jointly issued the invitation.

The Christian church has grown rapidly in Korea where nearly a quarter of the population is now Christian. There is also a strong Christian community in North Korea. Korea is third in Asia for Christian populations. ■

I was walking past the cold meats' section of Countdown when Pauline rang to offer me this job in February. It was a 'kairos' moment that will remain with me as I wondered what and where my next ministry calling would be. The day I'd applied for this job, I'd been visiting a Palestinian refugee camp outside Bethlehem without understanding why I'd felt so deeply about the obscenity of the nearby Separation Wall, or the sadness from seeing the rusted door keys of those who'd been forced out of their houses by the Israeli soldiers in the 1947/8 war. These refugees had told me that after 65 years in exile, they still longed to return to their homes, their place. These keys had become symbols - to unlock past injustices - to open new lives - to offer new freedoms and new hopes for their families.

Back in Christchurch, I realised I'd lived almost as long as those refugees who had been displaced from their homes. I could now identify more closely with them, being in limbo, unemployed, widowed, homeless, a wandering pilgrim displaced from a yellow-stickered home in a broken city, feeling my way back into the community after



A new challenge

serving the ecumenical life of the Irish churches over the previous eight years. The cold meats section probably held a special poignancy in my life.

Now six months down the track, I still can't believe it's all true. So much to learn about CWS, its history, its overseas partners, the gifts of colleagues, the generous commitment of loyal donors, the stark realities of a new funding environment, the new challenges and opportunities, the changing ecumenical scene in NZ, the unique role that CWS

offers to NZ churches in a much more competitive market for the same donor income.

Yet the hard core that motivates CWS' witness and ministry remains the same as when I briefly served on its Board ten years earlier. While there have been many changes of staff, Board members and office location and this small agency has changed its branding identity to CWS, its heart, its ethos, its values and its radical prophetic witness continue to lie firmly within those three key words: Christian World Service. That has been the key part of any talk, presentation or sermon I've given.

Jesus lived amongst the poorest people of his day. He chose his senior management team from amongst those who knew the realities of poverty, homelessness, injustice about factors beyond their control, being marginalised/forgotten/excluded. He offered them hope and made radical changes in transforming their lives, as well as those he encountered. He

described an upside-down ministry that challenged the worldly values of the day; one that offered all people fresh hope, greater justice and a more inclusive vision that was grounded in Jesus' prayer that 'Your Kingdom come - on earth as it is in heaven'.

CWS stands in that same tradition and has continued to faithfully serve the NZ churches in its overseas mission for the past 67 years. This mission doesn't give priority to handing out Bibles, converting people, paying salaries of staff overseas, or inviting child sponsorship. Its focus emerges from developing long-term relationships with overseas partners, who determine local programme priorities. They are making a huge difference in the lives of local people who know the daily reality of absolute poverty, food and water shortages, discrimination, unjust land grab and being marginalised; taking small steps to develop self-reliance, human rights, hopeful communities and eliminating the sins of greed, economic

**By Michael Earle Church and
Donor Relations Coordinator.**



and coffee meeting with hundreds of church and lay leaders – congregations – forums – and women's fellowship groups around the country, with an emphasis on the four main centres. A trip to meet church leaders in Napier was cancelled due to the volcanic ash cloud. A road tour to meet and engage with smaller rural communities around both islands is planned over the next 12 months.

My particular focus has been to raise new income through Direct Partners. This invites 44 faith communities to enter a more direct relationship with a partner they have chosen to raise funds for. A parish is invited to raise \$5,000 from their local community to support one of our partners building either water cisterns in Palestine, a women's food security programme in rural

It's been an extraordinary privilege to meet and reconnect with members of our historic Protestant churches, as well as church leaders from Asian, Coptic, Korean, Pacific Island and other migrant churches in our communities.

and wanting to be part of contributing towards poverty elimination, using their creativity to find better community solutions in sharing God's gifts, blessings and resources.

There's been a preference to do this denominationally rather than ecumenically, but I'm open to whatever works. I'm not a fundraiser, all I can do is to present as best as I can and leave the Spirit to nudge people's minds and pockets. This ministry is about sharing information and building relationships of trust, not marketing or strategic management control.

We all know that NZ churches are under enormous pressure today with increasing insurance bills, ageing membership and buildings, competing interests for time, commitment and financial support. There are many pressures to look inwards rather than outwards. Yet there are so many glimpses of new ways of being church together in every community. I recently created ecumenical space for the national churches to share with each other what each was doing and planning in their overseas mission programmes. We need to offer more of these spaces to address common issues, encourage creativity and more intentional partnerships with each other as we serve together as members of the same Body of Christ in this country.

There is much to be thankful and joyful about the Good News that we share. Being on the edge rather than at the centre of mainstream community life involves both loss, but also opportunity to be counter-cultural and alternative in promoting Gospel values of God's love, justice and freedom to live differently and more simply. CWS will continue in that tradition, offering keys to open doors to new hopes for our brothers and sisters living overseas in poverty, *"for just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it for me."* (Matt 25.40)

And that can apply to wherever that new challenge comes from, even in the cold meat section of your local supermarket. ■

Despite the pain of Palestine life goes on as these Palestinian children at play in Gaza remind us.

injustice and global poverty.

CWS not only raises funds to support their work, but advocates on the global issues that impact on their lives. CWS listens to their challenges about the unfairness of the current global greed over our stewardship of God's creation and our mis-use of the bountiful supply of resources that are freely given to us. We have so much to learn from our overseas partners about simplicity, sharing and developing new models of 'just relationships'.

My role is to communicate this to the 1100 parishes around New Zealand who have given an ecumenical mandate to CWS to undertake this on their behalf since 1945. As a roving fieldworker, it has already involved many cups of tea

Nicaragua, or an advocacy campaign to protect livelihoods and land rights of fisher folk in Tamil Nadu. A special interest of mine has inevitably been Palestine, but the richness has been the interactive discussions and sharp questions which encourage me to dig deeper for the next presentation. This is a living challenge.

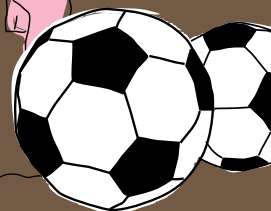
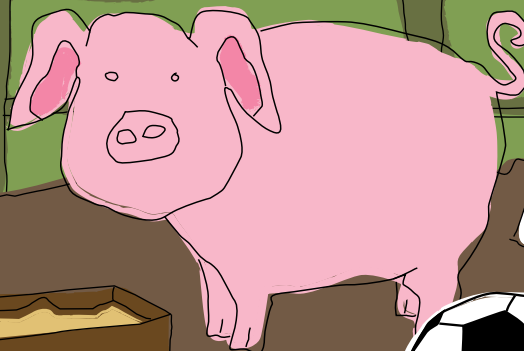
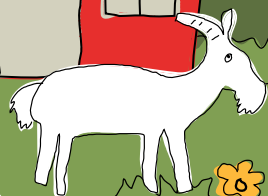
It's been an extraordinary privilege to meet and re-connect with members of our historic Protestant churches, as well as church leaders from Asian, Coptic, Korean, Pacific Island and other migrant churches in our communities; with university and theological students, farmers and businessmen, those in professions, unemployed, at home or retired. All involved in local churches

Photo: Paul Jeffrey ACT Alliance.

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Christian World Service has been doing a world of good since 1945. Established by the New Zealand churches to help in war torn Europe, we now assist groups around the world – helping communities survive disaster, overcome poverty and build dignity and self-reliance. We stand up for the powerless and campaign for social and environmental justice. CWS provides help where it is needed – regardless of race, region or religion.

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