

This note contains updates on projects supported
by the 2015 Poverty and Hope Appeal

Poverty and Hope Appeal

December 2015 update from Argentina



Protecting rights and fighting deforestation in Argentina

Partnered with CMS, supported by Poverty and Hope from 2015

"But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds of the air, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish of the sea inform you. Which of all these does not know that the hand of the LORD has done this? In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind". Job 12: 7-10

"The forest is no longer complete. It does not have the things it should have." Pastor Duarte, a Wichi pastor, made this comment as he and two other pastors (Mateo and Crisanto) prepared a talk to give at the Lausanne Movement's "Creation Care and the Gospel" conference they attended in Cusco, Peru between 8-12 September. As I listened to the pastors talking, I was struck by how clearly they perceive the process and effects of environmental degradation at a local level. That is due to the fact that they and their people live so close to nature and that their wellbeing is directly tied to the integrity of the environment they live in. One might say they have their finger on the pulse of their surroundings.



One of the exciting effects of the Peru conference was that it has enabled the indigenous pastors to learn and appreciate the responsibility and role the church can and should have in caring for creation. They came back expressing a keen interest in doing something.

Discussing environmental concerns at a local level, including with fellow CMS mission partner and Bishop Nick Drayson.

Determining how to effectively support Duarte and other indigenous church leaders is challenging. Whilst indigenous church leaders have a clearer picture than many regarding the environmental issues that affect the diocese, we cannot just assume they understand the theological basis for Christians caring for creation. Therefore, any practical work has to be accompanied, if not preceded, by a process through which they can come to fully understand why Christians must engage in caring for God's gift of creation.

The way forward will involve a church-based survey on how congregations perceive environmental changes, including climate. As the survey is conducted, through informal discussions with individuals and groups across the region, we will aim to simultaneously run events in which we and others more specialised in theology can share the biblical principles for stewardship and what this means in practical terms. The end product will be a report that provides a unique regional view of environmental change based on local perceptions. Whilst this will be a useful tool (end) in its own right, we really feel the actual process (means) of getting there will be equally important.

Criollos in EL Ocular (Salta) receiving legal advice from a lawyer on how to best approach protecting their lands.



This survey work will complement the ongoing monitoring we do on deforestation. We have now gathered data over a 10 year period, and Andrew is busy with his colleague Enrique processing and analysing the results. The work will be written up and published locally. The final product, a catalogue of deforestation projects, will allow readers to identify who was responsible for deforestation in a given region of the Chaco (Salta province), and allow them to identify where and when it was authorised, and where any relevant documentation is located in government archives.

In parallel to supporting churches and other secular organisations in responding to environmental issues, we are moving ahead with establishing the diocesan centre for creation care in La Caldera. We have completed a survey of the property borders and a structural assessment of the old adobe buildings. They are looking good, but will need some antiseismic reinforcements. We will be receiving our first volunteer in November, Jasper Gerhardt, a history graduate and theology student from the USA. He has been working with A Rocha, at Les Courmettes in France, and will be spending a few weeks in Salta before he returns to college, giving a hand in planning how to use the land in La Caldera, especially with regard to vegetable and fruit production.



Andrew explaining to local criollos the location of various plots of land that are being “grabbed” by an unscrupulous businessman in the area of Rivadavia.

Andrew’s part-time consultancy work over the past months has included research on an initiative by the Church of God (Pentecostal) in Argentina and Compassion International to mobilise local churches on the issue of child advocacy. This has included a trip to South Africa for an international conference on the theme, and some trips within Argentina. This work allows us to contribute towards the financial costs of our ministry here in Argentina.

Prayer pointers

- Give thanks for the successful Creation Care conference in Peru, and the positive effect this had on the representatives from our diocese. Pray for the follow up that we must now do.
- Give thanks for the funding that has been raised for La Caldera, and pray that we may succeed in securing support for the initial work to be done on the buildings and the construction of a perimeter fence.
- We have presidential elections in four weeks time. Pray for a fair and peaceful election process.

Poverty and Hope Appeal

August 2015 update from Argentina



Fighting deforestation in Argentina

Partnered with CMS, supported by Poverty and Hope from 2015.

Ema Flores is a Wichí indian chief or *casique*. Sitting by an open fire, in a small village deep in the Chaco forest of northern Argentina, she shares her deep concern about a gas pipeline that is about to be driven through her community's territory. Dr. Andrew Leake (CMS partner with the Anglican Church of Northern Argentina) listens and then explains the technical details of the project, and outlines her people's rights to be properly consulted about the initiative.

The dialogue then moves towards what she and her community can do. Dr. Leake confers with Silvia, a member of a catholic mission organisation that works with the community, and together they suggest that Ema encourage other community chiefs to meet together and demand that government authorities come and talk with them.



A few weeks later government authorities visited the village, made several promises, but then simply proceeded to give the go ahead for the project. Ema's community has since blocked a national main road in protest at the failure to be properly consulted. Together with a lawyer, Andrew proceeded with a legal challenge to the way the government had proceeded. In the meantime the bulldozers have been busy clearing the route for the gas pipeline.

Ema's dilemma is whether to stand her ground and risk not getting any compensation whatsoever, or to give in to the government in return for some small material benefits. Andrew and Silvia's challenge lies in giving Ema and her people the best technical and legal advice possible whilst at the same time sticking to Biblical principles.

Caring for creation is not just a green issue; it is also a matter of social justice. For people like Ema, caring for the forests they need for their survival is very much a matter of life or death. Christian environmental mission represents an increasingly important role in supporting people in such situations.

In last six months, Andrew and his work colleagues have helped influence government regulations on deforestation. The Anglican Diocese of Northern Argentina has resolved to make creation care part of its mission. The global Anglican Communion has made a strong global call to actively engage with climate change.



Please pray for:

- Wichí Indian bishops attending a Creation Care conference in Peru in September (pray for funding and safe travel).
- Pray for the development of a/the diocesan centre for creation care training and networking (funds needed for buildings).

Ema and other Wichí leaders as they struggle on a daily basis with protecting their forests.

Poverty and Hope Appeal

Sept 2015 update from
Commonwork, Kent



Supporting schools in Kent to explore complex global issues of injustice, conflict, peacebuilding and sustainability

Long-term support from the Poverty and Hope Appeal

Commonwork continues to work with four special needs groups on the arts award, work related learning, sustainable choices and global citizenship and aims to increase its work in this area in 2016.

This and next year sees Commonwork partnered with four like-minded organisations in Romania, France and the UK to develop a 5 day training programme for excluded/marginalised people in the community around healthy eating, well-being with the aim of increasing confidence, connection to the community and work related learning.



Apple tree planting at Commonwork with students from a local school

Our work with schools continues and grows with a new project that aims to provide all schools in the London borough of Lewisham the chance to get out of the city and experience a real life working farm whilst learning about where food comes from, purchasing power and the interconnectedness between what we eat and buy and global issues such as poverty and injustice.

Commonwork continues this year to work with local primary schools to embed justice and sustainability into school life and curriculum through supported guidance and dissemination of a model to gauge the impact of teachings in this area on student's attitudes.

From September onwards the Education Team will be partnering up with our Health Team on a project that works with young people in transition providing engaging and confidence building taster days for young people referred from Kent County Council, with the opportunity of them moving onto our 12 week Social Inclusion Project or 2 year Grow to Grow Project.

Commonwork is also looking into work with vulnerable families around well-being and healthy eating whilst also providing families with a chance to get away from day to day life and re-connect together.

Please pray for:

- Justice
- Peace
- Doing the right thing for the next generation.

Poverty and Hope Appeal

November 2015 update from India



Women's empowerment work in Delhi

Partnered with the Us (USPG), supported by Poverty and Hope since 2015.

Delhi Brotherhood Society helpline for violence against women – January to June 2015

The Delhi Brotherhood Society (DBS) is implementing a women's helpline and activities to support the helpline distress calls received. The project seeks to mitigate violence against women through the helpline services, where women can call anonymously and their distress can be heard by a sensitive ear.

The project is mainly focused in the north, central and New Delhi areas. The Helpline is complimented with on-ground activities such as women's councils, and women's rights education. The distressed women, children and their families are helped by providing legal, financial and all other assistance which is needed to ensure a good quality of life.

The helpline phone number is advertised by various awareness campaigns; word of mouth and social workers. This has led to increase in calls. The women in distress are encouraged to seek counselling through telephone between 9 am to 5 pm from Monday to Saturday. If the women are unable to visit the office the project team comprising of outreach workers, counsellor, and community volunteers visit their house to provide support to the women in distress. The helpline attends to 20-25 calls per day and counselling is provided to a varied caseload.

Highlights and successes from the DBS women's empowerment project, January-June 2015 - 20 women have been provided with shelter, 15 women have received legal aid, 50 women and their families have received financial help, 100 children have been helped to attend school and 200 children have received counselling, 72 cases have been resolved fully. These outcomes are seen to be very encouraging as the project seeks to achieve more over the remainder of the year.

The Delhi Brotherhood and Society is deeply grateful to the Rochester Diocese Poverty and Hope Appeal for their continued partnership and generous support.

Prayer Points

- Pray for safety of the DBS Team as they tackle difficult cases of violence and exploitation experienced by women in Delhi.
- For wisdom and discernment particularly when cases involve caste, religion & gender.
- Protection for women who experience violence in the slums of Delhi.

Sunita's story

Sunita's family faced lots of social and economic problems as she lost parents at very early age and she was brought up at the uncle's house. She was married to Vijay last year. Since the beginning she was suspicious of the behaviour of her father-in-law as he used to enter in the Sunita's room whenever Vijay was away for work. One day the father-in-law sexually assaulted her. She screamed and ran away outside of the house. But to her surprise and shock, instead of helping her, the other family members shouted at her saying be quite and don't disclose the matter to anyone else as the dignity of the family would be ruined if the matter was made public. When he returned in the evening she reported the matter to Vijay, but he also shouted at her saying it is all a false accusation. But Sunita ran outside and with the help of some neighbours she phoned to the DBS women helpline and the case was registered against Vijay's father-in-law. The case is now in the hands of the police and Sunita is under DBS women's helpline protection.

Poverty and Hope Appeal

July 2015 update from Myanmar



Women's empowerment work in Delhi

Partnered with the Us (USPG), supported by Poverty and Hope 2011-14.

Brave health workers bringing hope & joy

"If not for the Diocesan village health worker, I would have lost my life after losing my first-born. Ma Ko Aung has given me a second life and a hope to have healthy children in the future", said Daw Karnu, a twenty-year old mother from Be Din Wa village in Sittway diocese.

Be Din Wa village can only be reached by twelve hours walk across hills from Paletwa, a small town on the Kaledan River. Paletwa has a government hospital and health staffs are posted in villages, usually situated along the river. The rest of the villages have to depend on diocesan health workers or traditional birth attendants. The diocesan health workers each cover between five to seven villagers, which are accessible only on-foot. The nearest is two hours walk away.



Health worker of Sittway diocese traveling by boat to remote villages.

One afternoon, Daw Karnu started getting labour pains. The traditional birth attendant tried to assist the birth using traditional methods. She delivered the baby, but used unsanitary methods to cut the umbilical cord. Sadly, the baby died. Making matter worse, the placenta did not come out for another two hours! In panic, Daw Karnu parents ran to get Ma Ko Aung, a Sittway diocesan Health Worker who lives in Wet Ku Thaug village (two hours walk

from Ma Karnu's village). When Ma Ko Aung arrived, the baby had died, and Daw Karnu was in severe pain with her body swollen. At once, Ma Ko Aung used clean linen wrapped around a hot water bottle to clean the mother. She also gave her an anti-tetanus injection and after that the swelling receded slowly. Ma Ko Aung was able to bring out the placenta safely and Daw Karnu was saved from death. "In spite of the tragic incident, I was able to provide health education to these villagers," said Ma Ko Aung with a serious expression. Daw Karnu is now healthy and living a better life, as she has gained knowledge on health and pregnancy.

Sittway diocese has appointed 30 health workers in the diocese with most living in the high hills. Travelling in the area, one has to use small boats and then walk for hours to get to people's homes. The dedication of the brave health workers brings hope and joy to the Chin people. Health worker of Sittway diocese traveling by boat to remote villages.

In last six months:

- Two Medical trips conducted by Mandalay Diocese. Total 684 people were treated for common diseases such as flu, malaria, diarrhoea, dental care, TB, hypertension & cough
- Two medical trips conducted by Myitkyina diocese. Total 762 people received medical care
- Sittway, Mandalay, Myitkyina, Toungoo, Hpa-an and Yangon dioceses organised health refresher training where over 90 health workers benefitted.

The Church of Province of Myanmar is deeply grateful to Rochester Diocese Poverty and Hope Appeal for their partnership and generous support.

Please pray for:

- Safety and security of village health workers
- Pray for the people living in the remote areas of Myanmar to be able to access health care
- Pray for wisdom and guidance to Diocesan Health Coordinators as they lead the health programme