

Catholic Relief Services and National Council of Catholic Women



Haitian refugee in the Dominican Republic, Yvrose Dolcy, 32, in her bedroom with her three children in their Santo Domingo home.
Photo by Sara A. Fajardo CRS

Catholic Relief Services and the National Council of Catholic Women have worked in partnership since 1946, when Council women worked with CRS to support the refugees of World War II. Their work has continued together to support programs that benefit women and children by assisting women to improve their health, income and education in order to provide a better life for their families.

As a result of our ongoing partnership, NCCW and CRS work together as messengers communicating the needs of our family around the world. NCCW members support the Church's global social mission and the work of CRS through their prayers, donations and legislative advocacy. They also educate dioceses, parishes and individual Catholic women about global social justice issues.

The National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW) is a member-based organization whose activities are centered on the principle that all people, regardless of nationality or background, are entitled to be treated with respect and to have access to the key elements of a just and humane life—sufficient food, clean water, shelter, the opportunity to earn a living, education and health care.

Works of Peace and Reconciliation

Through Works of Peace and Reconciliation, an effort created by Catholic Relief Services and the National Council of Catholic Women, Catholic women demonstrate their solidarity by supporting CRS programs in developing countries. This partnership supports four funds that provide sustained development efforts and emergency assistance where necessary. The funds are Madonna Fund Water for Life, Refugee Women Emergency Fund and Help-A-Child. NCCW members contribute to these funds individually and through community fundraising projects sponsored by their parishes and dioceses. NCCW members invite all people of good will to join them in financial support of these efforts to address global poverty, maternal and child health care, clean water and sanitation, refugee and emergency assistance, micro-economic development, and education.

Madonna Fund



Photo by Jennifer Lindsey/CRS

The Madonna Fund Plan funds projects that empower women by improving the well-being of mothers and expectant mothers in the areas of health, education and financial security. In Guinea-Bissau, the Madonna plan has supported the Maternity Without Risk program. Maternity Without Risk works to reduce maternal mortality by increasing community capacity to prevent delivery complications and increasing access to quality maternal health services among pregnant women, particularly those considered to be high-risk. The project supports two houses for mothers so that pregnant women at risk receive care. A number of community members are also trained to be community health agents and traditional birth assistants and to provide care and support for pregnant women.



Water for Life



Photo by Joe Lapp for CRS

The Water for Life fund makes clean, safe water available to families which improves their lives and health. Access to safe water can improve food production and overall health. In Ethiopia, NCCW has supported a watershed management program that focuses on providing community access to clean water and helping neighboring

communities conserve natural resources. Hillside terracing and sustainable land use planning helped to naturally replenish exhausted water supplies. Communities have gained access to more water, which has increased crop production, generated more income and improved overall health.

Help-a-child



Photo by David Snyder for CRS

Help-A-Child funds assist children through family and community-based programs with an emphasis on providing food and medicine, schools and training for teachers, health care and immunizations, youth centers for teens, and help for disabled and vulnerable children. According to a United Nations report about half of global under-five deaths occurred in just 5 countries in 2009: India, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Pakistan and China. UNICEF indicates that the burden of war has taken an enormous toll on Congolese children. Each year, more children under 5 die in the DRC than in China (a country with 23 times the population), and in all the Latin American countries combined. The goal of the child survival project in the DRC, which received support from NCCW, is to reduce morbidity and mortality in children under 2 and pregnant women in targeted, underserved rural Health Zones of the Kasai Oriental Province of the DRC. The program works to improve the health of children between the ages of 0 and 23 months and the health of pregnant women by providing malaria prevention, control of diarrhea, expanded immunization for children and pregnant women, and improved access to health care in rural areas.

Refugee Women Emergency Fund



Photo by Sara A. Fajardo/CRS

The Refugee Women Emergency Fund supports women and children who are refugees, internally displaced or victims of natural disasters and provides food, water, medicine, shelter and opportunities to secure future jobs and income for them.

Even before the earthquake in January 2010, Haitians migrated daily to the Dominican Republic to find dignified work and meet their families' basic needs. According to official Dominican government statistics, between 500,000 and 1 million Haitians resided in the Dominican Republic before the earthquake. Only 5 percent had entered the country legally. Many groups and individuals in communities have attempted to address this issue by providing Haitians with basic services and by raising awareness to reduce the incidence of violence and discrimination. This project ensures that Haitian repatriates/deportees receive the care, protection and support they need while helping to prevent abuse, exploitation and violence. Particular services will include education, birth registration and placement with foster families for homeless repatriated children.

If you would like to support Works of Peace and Reconciliation. Make checks payable to ACCW. Memo line ~ please write the name of the chosen fund.

Send your donation to:



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