



World Neighbours Canada

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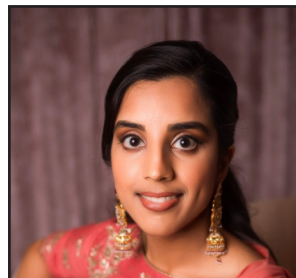
Spring 2024

Building Resilience Amidst Hardship

This past February, World Neighbours Canada had the privilege of hosting Carlos Vijil Moreno, the Executive Director of Vecinos Honduras. Touring communities across southern B.C., Carlos emphasized in his talks that the way in which the impacts of climate change will be felt, and even addressed, by people in rural Honduras must be understood in the broader context of rural poverty. This context is informed, in part, by economic and political structures that offer little opportunity for people to take an active role in tackling the injustices that shape their lived experiences. Adding to this, some farmers must adapt to the drying climate by adopting new techniques to conserve moisture or choosing hardier crop varieties, while others must choose to seek other sources of income. Indeed, recognizing that farming alone may no longer offer a liveable income to many people, Vecinos Honduras has been training people to run their own businesses in motorcycle repair, sheet metal working, and carpentry. In making such pivots, the people in rural Honduras exhibit remarkable resilience, and a keen determination to work together to ensure that their communities' basic needs for food, clean water, education, and income are met.

At World Neighbours Canada, we believe that Canadians can contribute to lifting up communities who, like us, seek to build an environment that offers lives of peace, prosperity, and dignity to all. It is within our power to support this goal. In Burkina Faso where people in rural regions have been ordered to leave behind their homes as the army sweeps the region for terrorists, women are working hard with the support of APDC, our partner organization, to find new ways to apply the knowledge and skills they learned in their previous sheep-fattening training. The emphasis that this prior program put on training in entrepreneurship and basic financial management skills has given women the confidence to pilot different means of income generation. This is yet another example of the resilience and adaptability that life in such circumstances may demand.

The progress achieved thus far has been made possible by the many Canadians like you who have supported the common dreams of peace, prosperity, and dignity voiced by those around the world confronting unthinkable obstacles. World Neighbours Canada is grateful for your ongoing support! We would like to ask that you continue to lend support to World Neighbours Canada, and to our partner organizations, by contributing to the fight to build resilience in the face of formidable hardship. To work towards the shared goal of alleviating poverty, please send us your donation today!



Sincerely,

Bruce Petch, Executive Director (Volunteer)
Gurleen Grewal, Board Member (Volunteer)



Emergency funding: Wildfire destroys village homes in Nepal

By Gordon Carnes, World Neighbours Canada Nepal Coordinator

On March 14, a forest fire encroached on the village of Tahar in the Ramechhap district of Nepal.

Most of the villagers were away at a local market, but all the houses and animal sheds were destroyed, and sixty livestock perished.

Luckily there was no loss of life, but the fire victims were in dire straits with loss of their clothing, household possessions, and all their wealth.

World Neighbours Canada (WNC) and Tamakoshi Sewa Samiti (TSS), our partner organization in Nepal, had previously worked with this village in building a gravity-fed water system and toilets (fortunately, these survived the fire). TSS requested emergency funding for the fire victims to purchase food, blankets and cooking utensils.

An amount of \$1,600 was immediately transferred by WNC to



Victims of the Tahar fire with TSS staff.

purchase and distribute the items.

The local district government is coordinating relief efforts to rebuild homes; TSS and WNC are monitoring the situation to see if there is more that we can do to assist.

Because of climate change, seasonal droughts are becoming more severe and fires such as this are occurring

more frequently in Nepal. Coupled with flammable thatched roofs, the results are catastrophic to villages such as Tahar lacking fire protection infrastructure.

Climate change is also affecting agriculture, and adaptations such as agroecology and irrigation systems are becoming priorities.

Climate change and social justice - experiences from Honduras



Carlos Vijil Moreno, Executive Director of Vecinos Honduras, presenting to a community gathering in Oliver.

By Bruce Petch, World Neighbours Canada executive director

World Neighbours Canada had the pleasure of hosting Carlos Vijil Moreno, Executive Director of Vecinos Honduras, for a week in February. He toured several communities in southern B.C. to tell people about the impact of climate change in rural Honduras.

Carlos' itinerary included Kamloops, Kelowna, Oliver and Vancouver. He spoke to a high school class, two university classes, and community groups along the way. The last presentation, in downtown Vancouver, was hosted by the BC Council for International Cooperation, which also helped to organize the tour.

Carlos has over 50 years of experience as a leader in rural development in Honduras. He explained that climate change cannot be viewed in isolation from the broader context of rural poverty. Poor people have already been struggling with economic and political forces that leave them with few livelihood opportunities and no power to address the injustices they face.

Environmental impacts from mining, industrial agriculture, hydroelectric schemes and deforestation cause a

Continued on Page 2...



Responding to new needs in Burkina Faso: Assisting displaced villagers

By Judy Gray, World Neighbours Canada director

Our partner organization in Burkina Faso, APDC, has recently shifted the focus of its activities due to actions of the military government. In an attempt to deal with the growing number of terrorists in the Eastern region of the country, the army ordered that inhabitants from a number of villages leave their homes and move, at least temporarily, to the city of Fada. This included several of the villages APDC has been working with over the past 15 years.

With support from a donor (Laurentian Bank Securities), World Neighbours Canada was able to send extra funds to permit APDC to help some of these displaced persons. Approximately 35 vulnerable and internally displaced women, and one adolescent young man, have received training and equipment to allow them to process and market a number of local products. These products include the production of soap, soumbala (a very popular condiment), peanuts, and local culinary dishes (including soy brochettes and yellow corn couscous). Everyone was trained over a period of four days. After the initial training sessions, each participant received a kit containing all the materials necessary to implement the activity for the first time. Agnes Yonli commented: "I suffered a lot in the past; no-one was willing to offer us this knowledge, but thanks to APDC I have acquired this knowledge for free. I'm so happy because I'm going to produce good quality soap, sell it and earn a profit, it's great!!"

In a recent report, APDC program coordinator Rebeka Tankoano explained that "for this support, the choice of beneficiaries was focused on very vulnerable people; those living in our intervention zone who had never received

support from APDC in the past. Our executive director explained that the emergency support was not for those who had already received support from APDC or other organizations, but for the most needy: abandoned people, widows or widowers, the disabled, orphans and the poorest. He said that those who have benefited from previous APDC support are more resilient than those who have never received assistance; and also mentioned that APDC chooses new beneficiaries so that people do not think that APDC is 'discriminating' in its actions."

Charles Tankoano, the Executive Director also added, "APDC works for all the vulnerable people in our intervention zone."

Once again, we note how flexible APDC staff is in its ability to respond to the changing needs of the community.

Honduras visitor tours B.C.

...continued from Page 1

degradation of watersheds, drinking water and farmland. Vecinos Honduras faces these challenges by first helping people to meet their basic needs for food, income, clean water, healthy children and knowledge.

Over several years the program strengthens local leadership capabilities and people learn to advocate for their rights. Carlos conveyed this information in a thorough and thoughtful manner, and everyone who attended his presentations left with a deeper understanding of the complexities of climate change in rural Honduras.

Carlos' tour was sponsored by Spur Change, an initiative funded by Global Affairs Canada.