**Christian World Service report to the 2018 General Synod/Te Hinota Whanui of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa and Polynesia.**

We have seen the world become a lot more fragile over the last two years. In a very short period, the hard work of people and years of careful community development were lost to drought in East Africa and Hurricane Matthew in Haiti. Violence and inequality between people have intensified conflict over resources in small coastal villages in South India and within nations like South Sudan. Record numbers of refugees put pressure on land and host communities for want of peace.

However the work of our partners give us hope: again and again they turn moments of tragedy into movements of hope. This is why we chose as the theme for our 72nd Christmas Appeal, Make Hope my Story. For 72 years, CWS has been listening to the voices of those who have changed their community’s story from loss and despair to one of hope.

**Visits to Partners**

Over the last two years Christian World Service staff and volunteers have visited or met with partners from Uganda, South Sudan, India and the Middle East.

International Programmes member and consultant Rob Wayne visited the Centre for Community Solidarity in southern Uganda and a number of the local associations of caregivers with whom they work. He also met Wadalla Peter, Director of South Sudanese partner, the Maridi Service Agency. Wadalla had braved nine military checkpoints to meet him in Kampala.

I visited five partners in India working with Dalits (sometimes known as Untouchables), Tribal people and fisher folk to improve their livelihoods and access to essential human rights. In August 2017 I went to Nicaragua to visit Consejo de Iglesias Evangelicas Pro Alianza Denominacional (CEPAD) whom CWS has supported since 1986.

Trish Murray, International Programmes Coordinator, visited the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees (DSPR) working in East Jerusalem, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and the West Bank. The work with Syrian and Palestinian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon is supported by the New Zealand Government. Trish has also made regular visits to Tonga to meet with our Tongan partner, Tonga Community Development Trust Ama Takiloa.

Visits to partners are important because it keeps the partnership alive. We try and visit our partners at least every three to five years. CWS supports 28 partners working with some of the most vulnerable communities in 25 countries.

**Operation Refugee**

The plight of refugees and other displaced people has been top of the CWS agenda. In its second year, Operation Refugee proved a successful new fundraising initiative for Syrian refugees and an opportunity to focus on our global responsibility for the 65.6 million people who have fled their homes.

In 2017 Operation Refugee raised $55,000, a 67% increase on the previous year. 140 people took part in the two or five day challenge to raise funds for Syrian refugees. 43% of participants were under 20 years of age. The Auckland Cathedral entered a very successful team. For the first time several schools took part, these included both Church and State schools.

The funds raised support DSPR’s work with Syrian Refugees in Jordan and Lebanon. CWS has received two significant grants from the Government for this work.

Operation Refugee won two New Zealand Fundraising Institute awards. The Premier Award for Excellence in Fundraising in 2017 and an Award for Excellence in Fundraising Events 2017.

Operation Refugee will be held in 2018 from the 16-20 June. We encourage churches, individuals, schools and youth group to be part of the lifeline to Syrian refugees. Please contact David Lawson (Relationships Coordinator) [david.lawson@cws.org.nz](mailto:david.lawson@cws.org.nz) for more information on this year’s challenge.

**UN Security Council Resolution 2334**

At the conclusion of New Zealand’s term on the United Nations Security Council, in December 2017, CWS welcomed the passage of UN Security Council Resolution 2334 which condemned Israeli settlements as ‘a flagrant violation of international law’ and reminded the international community of the need for increasing efforts for peace in the Middle East.  In a letter to then Foreign Minister Murray McCully, I passed on a message from Constantine Dabbagh retired executive director of DSPR Gaza. Constantine wrote in ‘appreciation and gratitude … for the firm stand of New Zealand… on the issue of the illegal establishment of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian territories’ and the need to uphold previous UN resolutions as a basis for long term peace.

**Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

I met with representatives of most New Zealand political parties to discuss the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), agreed at the 2015 General Assembly of the United Nations. The seventeen goals build on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and form the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The MDGs halved the number of people living in poverty and gave 2.6 billion people access to improved drinking water. The SDGs apply to developed and developing countries. Victoria University is hosting the inaugural Summit on the Sustainable Development Goals for New Zealand on 23 April 2018.

**Change of Government**

CWS was pleased to see that Labour, The Greens and New Zealand First specify that poverty reduction would become the focus of New Zealand’s aid vote in their party platforms - a much welcomed change from the previous government’s narrow focus on economic development. The change of focus is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals: Goal One is No Poverty.

We have written to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Rt. Hon Winston Peters. In the letter we reminded him of his visit to CWS in 2014 and requested that he consider raising the aid vote to 0.3 per cent (the level he achieved when he was last Foreign Minister) in the short term and eventually to 0.7%. Despite massive demands for more humanitarian aid, that level has now fallen to 0.23 per cent of Gross National Income (GNI), one of its lowest levels ever.

In the letter we said that CWS believes development assistance should be a separate pillar of our foreign policy alongside defence, security, trade and diplomacy. In this way, the Ministry can employ people with the specialist skills needed to ensure a strong focus on poverty reduction appropriate to local contexts.

**CWS as part of the ecumenical movement**

CWS hosted the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, Rev Dr Olav Fyske Tveit when he visited Christchurch in October 2016. We also organised a public meeting for Rev. Francois Pihaatae, General Secretary of the Pacific Conference of Churches in November 2016. He spoke on a number of issues facing the Pacific including climate change and self-determination for West Papua.

CWS is an Observer at the National Dialogue on Christian Unity.

CWS is a member of the ACT Alliance (Action by Churches Together) which is the third largest aid and development agency in the world.

**Income**

The Christmas Appeal continues to be our major fundraiser and in 2016 it exceeded budget. Many thanks to Rev Carole Hughes for preparing the worship resources for the 2016 Appeal and to all churches and individuals who continue to support this vital fundraising effort. In 2017 CWS established a Legacy Fund to channel earmarked donations and bequests to increase interest income for CWS’s programme around the world, which in turn guarantees support for our partners.

**Governance**

Long serving Board member Graeme Nicholas retired after 13 years on the Board. In the current year, Claire Hart, Rev Dr Jenny Dawson, Ian Lothian and Tara Tautari have been appointed to the Board. Claire has since been elected Board Chair. Edwin Boyce, Christchurch Diocesan and Anglican Centre Manager, joined the Finance Committee.

**Conclusion**

CWS is grateful to Diocesan staff and publications as well as Anglican Taonga and the Anglican Missions Board for including stories and news of our appeals. We would like to acknowledge those Synods who had displays of our material at their meetings and the invitation to David Lawson to speak at the Auckland Synod in September last year. We welcome Michael Hartfield to his new role and look forward to working more closely in the future.

I wish to thank the Rev. Michael Hughes the General Secretary of the Anglican General Synod for his collegial support and Professor David Fielding for representing the Anglican Church on our Board. David gave a presentation to our annual Supporters’ Council meeting about aid trends and how some countries that need aid the most are missing out.

Most of all we are grateful to the many CWS supporters in Anglican and Cooperating parishes throughout the country. For more information about the work of Christian World Service, please go to our website: [www.cws.org.nz](http://www.cws.org.nz)

Pauline McKay

National Director

9 February 2018