

Christian World Service

Report

1 Introduction

Christian World Service (CWS) is the aid, development and justice agency of New Zealand Churches. It is governed by a Board and responsible to a Council appointed by the national bodies of the member churches. The Presbyterian appointee on the Council is Rev Bonnie Robinson.

2 Governance review

Historically, CWS has been the overseas aid and development agency of the ecumenical movement in Aotearoa/New Zealand. It had no separate governance structure from the National Council of Churches or its successor the Conference of Churches in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Last year the CWS Council asked the Board to prepare a governance review with the aim of clarifying and strengthening the governance of CWS. It was felt that it was important given there is a new generation of church leaders who may not be aware of the history or have the same allegiance to CWS. Recommendations from the board based on the findings of the review panel will be presented to the Council at its meeting in September.

3 CWS development work

CWS supports 29 overseas partner groups in 20 countries as well as the Christian Conference of Asia and the Pacific Conference of Churches.

CWS gives special thanks to the Association of Presbyterian Women which in conjunction with the Methodist Women's Fellowship has continued its strong support for our work. Over the last two years their chosen projects have been the Luru Land Conference of Tribal Communities in the Solomon Islands and the Council of Evangelical Protestant Churches in Nicaragua (CEPAD) and next year they will support reconstruction work in Haiti.

4 Emergency appeals

Funds raised by the Presbyterian Church in response to the Pacific Tsunami and channelled through CWS are to be used for the rebuilding of the Satalo Congregational Christian Church community hall in Samoa and Disaster Risk Reduction activities for member churches of the Samoan Council of Churches.

In April this year Nick Clarke (CWS) and Ben Fraser (Act for Peace – Australia) facilitated a workshop for the Samoan Council of Churches on Building Partner Capacity. The workshop and the ongoing activities initiatives will help the Samoan Council of Churches through its member congregations, to become an even stronger force in helping Samoan communities prepare and respond to disasters.

The response to the CWS Haiti appeal has been one of the biggest ever. These funds have contributed to the Action by Churches Together (ACT) Alliance

appeal. The alliance, which had 12 partners active in Haiti, focused on distributing food, shelter, water and other essentials, immediately after the quake. The focus is now on reconstruction. Funds raised by the APW and MWF in next year's special project will go towards these reconstruction efforts which will ensure that Haitians are better prepared to cope with future disasters such as when hurricanes strike.

In March, CWS Media Officer Greg Jackson accompanied John Nduna the General Secretary of the ACT Alliance to Haiti where he witnessed firsthand the impact of the work of the ACT Alliance in Haiti. CWS Haiti partner group the Institut Culturel Karl Leveque (ICKL) lost their offices but their staff was unharmed.

Some of the other major emergency situations CWS has responded to over the past two years are:

- (a) Persons displaced by fighting between the Pakistani army and Taleban forces
- (b) Tamils in North Sri Lanka who were made homeless by the sustained military fighting
- (c) People struggling to survive in Darfur's refugee camps
- (d) Helping victims of Israeli missile fire in Gaza and restarting a health clinic destroyed in the attacks.

5 New global partnership – Action by Churches Together Alliance

CWS is a member of the newly formed Action by Churches Together Alliance (ACT). The ACT Alliance combined the development and emergency response organisations, ACT International and ACT Development, into one entity on 1 January 2010. While CWS is still independent it is now also sharing in a global partnership aimed at making the churches' work together more effective and visible. Former CWS director, Jill Hawkey is the deputy director of the Geneva based organisation.

6 Government funding

On 19 April we were informed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs that the KOHA – PICD and HAF contestable funds would no longer exist as of 30 June 2010. They are being replaced by two new funds – the Humanitarian Response Fund and the Sustainable Development Fund. At the time of writing this report in late June few details are known about the two new funds. What we have heard is that applications may be for a minimum of \$100,000 and a maximum of \$1 million. It will probably not be a subsidy scheme, i.e. there will be no 1:4 as projects will receive 100percent funding. There are desired geographical targets, to be reached by 2013, of 50percent for the Pacific, 30percent South East Asia and 20percent the rest of the World. These changes could have a significant impact on how much CWS can support its overseas partners. In some cases they may receive one fifth of their previous funding. What is most disconcerting is the lack of information and consultation with the sector.

CWS opposed the re-integration of NZAID into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, in May 2009. In melding the two bodies, the emphasis of overseas development assistance was shifted from poverty elimination to economic

development and tied more closely to foreign policy interests. The desired regional targets and the emphasis on economic development is a clear sign that our Overseas Development Assistance is now strongly aligned with our foreign policy. There was no public discussion and the decision ignored the recommendations of Treasury and a 2005 OECD review that said NZAID was the world's best focused aid programme. CWS, along with many other agencies, argued that NZAID should retain its semi-autonomous focus and mission to eliminate poverty which is in line the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Since we learnt of these changes the CWS office has provided information and analysis on these proposed changes to its governing bodies, church leaders and key supporters. We have received many messages of support and encouragement in these uncertain times and we have very much appreciated getting these messages.

7 Education, campaigning and advocacy

To mark World Food Day on 16 October, CWS will post on its website information about the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance's (EAA) new food campaign. The Alliance is a broad international network of churches and Christian organizations committed to campaigning on common concerns. The current foci are food and HIV and AIDS. Over the next three years EAA will be working to promote the understanding and action on the causes of hunger and food injustice. Fifteen per cent of the world is hungry. "Supermarketisation" in the developing world has meant that farmers are forced to grow cash crops they cannot afford to buy.

CWS participates in the annual Fair Trade Fortnight in early May as it is an opportunity for churches to show their support for a fairer trading system. Christchurch South City New World Supermarket won the award as the most fair trade supermarket in the country and I presented a certificate to them on behalf of the Fair Trade Association. Wellington and Dunedin have become New Zealand's first Fair Trade cities. The range of fair trade products is expanding all the time and now includes Fairtrade bananas and cotton shirts. Fair Trade is an issue which CWS has had a long involvement in promoting and it is growing in public recognition and support.

CWS joined with other development agencies for the nationwide call for a 40 per cent cut in domestic carbon emissions by 2020 and assistance to poor countries adapting to the changing climate. The campaign continues to focus on the link between climate change and food security for all people. Further information about this and all campaigns are posted on CWS website.

8 Youth and schools

At this year's Connect, Katrina Hill, CWS Youth and Schools Coordinator, offered an interactive learning session on 'Good Practice' development. In it participants learnt the basics of 'good community development' – the principles anyone on a mission to service needs to know. She drew on our 65 year experience of service with poorer communities and grassroots initiatives plus

resources and tips for ministry within New Zealand. Katrina said that the workshop informed and equipped young people to live out the Gospel call for justice and enabled them to be good change agents whether in a local or global context.

9 Christmas appeal

The Christmas Appeal is CWS's main fundraiser and has been a tradition in New Zealand since 1945. The appeal runs through Advent, with parishes asked to promote the appeal, partner stories and work of CWS through their services. A Kit is provided to all parishes and aims to be flexible in how clergy choose to use it. After sixty five years we believe that it needs a fresh approach without doing away with the indispensable fundamentals of the appeal which congregations have come to know and love. This year each week in Advent will have a theme, rather than a partner focus, with examples and stories from partners to illustrate the overall theme of Health and Well Being.

To increase the financial support for the Christmas Appeal three "road shows" have been held in Dunedin, Auckland and Wellington. The aim is to reconnect with and reconfirm commitment levels, from our support base and to raise CWS profile outside of Christchurch.

This report highlights some of the major developments in the work of Christian World Service over the past two years and featured where we are working closely with the Presbyterian Church. Presbyterians have always been strong supporters of the work of CWS and many Presbyterian parishes support CWS annual Christmas Appeal. We are very grateful for this support and we could not continue our work without it.

Pauline McKay
National Director