



# Coping with a changing climate

How poor communities are adapting for survival

- Helping children recover in Gaza
- Meet CWS's new director



## @world a changing climate

Welcome to the first @world of 2009. The spotlight is on the environment as CWS launches its new climate change campaign and featured partner Developers Foundation in the Philippines helps coastal communities restore the mangroves they rely on for food and income. See page 7 for an update on Gaza. Please make a donation so CWS can continue to take action against poverty, provide emergency relief and protect the environment.



## The UN has designated 2009 as:

- the International Year of Natural Fibres. Natural fibres (renewable fibres from plants or animals) are an important source of income for farmers, especially in developing countries, but have faced years of competition from industrially manufactured synthetic materials. CWS partner the Tonga Community Development Trust is helping women grow their own pandanus for weaving and mulberry for tapa. Not only does this save women spending money on materials, they can earn extra income from selling their products.
- the International Year of Reconciliation. In Sri Lanka, CWS partners have spent years working on peace building between Sinhalese and Tamil communities at a grass roots level. Exchange visits bring together people caught up in the ongoing civil war to discuss their experiences, share aspirations and meet as equals rather than dehumanised enemies.



## CWS welcomes new National Director

In February, Pauline McKay joined CWS as national director. Well known to many New Zealanders in her roles with the anti-apartheid movement and YWCA from the 1970s to the early 90s, Pauline has spent the last 15 years in Geneva working for the World Council of Churches, YWCA and the World Health Organization (WHO). She has come home to a challenging new chapter in her impressive social justice career.

As the daughter of a Methodist minister, Pauline has always known about CWS. Her first political action was collecting pine cones for Biafra, which her bible class sold for an emergency appeal. It was the anti-apartheid movement, however, which gave her a real baptism of fire into social justice. She became national chair of Hart just before the divisive 1981 Springbok tour. She describes the anti-tour protests as an extraordinary time when everyday places became battlegrounds. Yet when the protests were over, life went back to normal. She remembers how protesters quickly reverted to being law-abiding. "People who had moments earlier been involved in civil disobedience blocking a road to traffic were patiently waiting for the green pedestrian light so they could cross the road."

A career highlight was in the early 1990s, while working at the Africa Information Centre in Wellington, when she assisted the New Zealand government to build a stronger relationship with the African National Congress (ANC). Other highlights include organising a service at Westminster Abbey, London, to commemorate the YWCA centenary in 1994 and the 1998 WCC general assembly in Zimbabwe, which she believes gave Zimbabwe's opposition Movement for Democratic Change international recognition.

CWS will be another career pinnacle. CWS enables people to put faith into action, says Pauline. "It is an important vehicle for New Zealand churches to express acts of solidarity." She has always admired its analytical base and hopes CWS can gain greater recognition for the excellent work it undertakes.

Already Pauline sees several pressing issues affecting this work. As the global economic crisis worsens the situation of poorer communities, it is critical governments respond and maintain pressure to meet the Millennium Development Goals. Although the goals have made patchy progress, Pauline saw through the WHO their effectiveness on all of the health-related goals.

## Meet a partner: Developers Foundation, Philippines



# “One day I hope to be redundant.”

While millions around the world fear for their job security amid the current global economic crisis, Tet Naraval (pictured above) is aiming for redundancy. As director of Developers Foundation, she hopes the rural communities her organisation works with, will soon be able to manage and fund their own development. “Developers’ objective is to give them the power to change their situation and sustain their effort,” she says.

Developers Foundation, supported by CWS since 1993, began in response to women’s concerns about feeding their children. The Aklan area is one of the poorest in the Philippines, with over half of all families living in poverty. Most people are dependent on subsistence farming or fishing. The programme quickly expanded to address a range of needs including health, nutrition, livelihoods and environmental protection. Today Developers works at three levels. First is family livelihoods, building confidence and helping women grow enough food for their families, teaching vocational skills like weaving, gardening and fishing, and supporting small groups to sell surplus produce in local markets. Average household incomes have now increased by 22 per cent.

Developers’ second level of work is capital, training and support to set up businesses to expand production.

These are mainly agricultural, especially vegetable growing. Finally, Developers is assisting community cooperatives to manage larger enterprises such as piggeries, cloth and furniture making, and crop trading. These businesses will ultimately fund other needs of the community. “Outside funding will not remain forever,” acknowledges Tet, “so the communities must become sustainable.” Already, communities are tackling infrastructure and environmental problems that should be the government’s responsibility but are not being addressed through corruption and lack of funding.

This is one of the best achievements for Tet: “Seeing people really doing something for their community.” People who were illiterate, poor and lacking in confidence now meet with government officials about their concerns. In one isolated village, the lack of a road caused difficulties getting children to school, produce to market, and sick people to clinics. The women’s group lobbied the local government to no avail. But they didn’t give up. They went to the next level of government to secure funding, negotiated with landowners and got a road built.

It is just one of many successes and signs of hope for poor rural communities. “The inner spirit of people is what keeps everything going.”



## Mangroves in Trouble

Protecting the environment is a critical part of Developers’ programme. Development must be in harmony with the environment, says Tet. The destruction of Aklan’s mangroves shows just how important this is.

Mangrove forests have been annihilated in the Philippines with over two thirds of coverage lost to industrial development and commercial fish farming. In Aklan, 90 per cent have gone. Mangroves are important for coastal eco systems and protection. With the loss of mangroves, fish stocks have declined, erosion has increased and storms and high tides cause greater damage. Each hectare of mangroves provides over 1 tonne of fish and fishery product. Now many fish species have disappeared and the remaining ones are getting smaller. People are eating juvenile fish which never used to go on sale.

Coastal communities see “protecting and restoring mangroves as critical,” says Tet. Developers assists with environmental education and mangrove restoration, and supports community organisations lobbying for permission to replant. The good news is that it takes only five to ten years for mangrove planting to make a real impact. Developers will then work with communities to create income opportunities linked to them. Coastal communities need a healthy environment as “it’s their life and security for their children, their families,” Tet says.



# Spotlight on Climate Ch

## Poor will suffer most

Climate change is now a critical development issue. It risks making poverty permanent in many areas and igniting conflict over increasingly scarce resources. Environmental changes will disproportionately affect poorer countries with the most marginal land, vulnerable food production systems and least resources. Their ability to adapt to different climates, higher food prices and to recover from disasters will worsen.

One of the biggest challenges is the increasing unpredictability of everyday weather. The world is experiencing more extreme weather events such as drought, floods and storms. Two-thirds of the world's poorest people are farmers who rely almost entirely on the weather, says Christian AID, UK.

However, they no longer know when rains or drought are going to come. Generations-old knowledge about when to sow, plant, restock herds or move to different pastures is rapidly becoming redundant. For people whose entire way of life depends on such knowledge, this is catastrophic. In recent years there have been significant increases in crop failures, livestock deaths, and hunger; fighting over dwindling water supplies; and migration of young people from the countryside to the cities, where they face unemployment.

According to the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation, hunger and malnutrition will increase as the new environmental realities worsen living conditions for farmers, fishers and forest-dependent people already facing food insecurity. Changes in mean

temperatures, rainfall and sea levels will affect land use, health of forests, coastal erosion, water supplies, incidence of pests and diseases and sustainability of ecosystems.

The economic and social costs will be huge, and developing countries do not have the resources to meet them. The cruel injustice is that they have done the least to contribute to climate change. Places like Bangladesh and Kiribati – areas losing their land to rising sea levels – emit only 0.3 metric tons of carbon dioxide per person. Compare this to New Zealand at 7.7, Australia at 16.2 and the US at 20.6.

## What will happen?

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says average global temperatures will rise 2°C by 2050. As a result:

- 250 million people will be forced to leave their homes.
- 1-3 billion people will face acute water shortages. Water supply will not meet demand.
- 30 million more people will go hungry as agricultural yields fall and food prices rise.
- Warmer, wetter weather will see malaria, which currently kills up to 3

**Climate change poses challenges at many levels. In a divided but ecologically interdependent world, it challenges all people to reflect upon how we manage the environment of the one thing that we share in common: planet Earth.**

UN Human Development Report, 2007-2008

**LEFT: drought is increasing, putting pressure on traditional small farmers.**

million people a year, spread to new territories – it has already encroached into highland areas of Rwanda and Tanzania.

- Sea levels will increase up to 95cm by the end of the century. This would submerge 18% of Bangladesh alone, creating 35 million environmental refugees.
- The earth will experience extreme weather such as droughts, floods and storms more frequently.

## Is it too late? Act NOW

As the news on climate change worsens, it is easy to feel it is all too hard. The message from CWS partners is that it is not too late – but for all our sakes we need to act now.

# ange

Pacific church leaders are speaking out for communities already affected by climate change. In Kiribati people are losing their homes and livelihoods as cyclones and floods become more frequent and intense. The rising sea level means salt is killing tree roots and polluting wells. Rainfall, another major source of drinking water, is becoming erratic.

“The storms and waves eat away our beaches and as they continue they will someday eat us,” says Rev Baranite Kirata. People are moving inland, but it is not a sustainable solution. “If we don’t



**Community coastal clean ups are part of the environmental programme of Developers in the Philippines.**

end up in the lagoon, we will end up fighting each other over land, food, water.”

As a member of a World Council of Churches (WCC) delegation to the UN, Rev Baranite said he wants the rest of the world to heed what is already happening. “It is now too late to do something for Kiribati, Tuvalu and the Marshall Islands; but together, we are the world, and it is not too late to do something for us all.”

The WCC is calling on governments to act now and take drastic action to cut carbon emissions. It wants “a future global climate policy regime built on the ethical imperatives of justice, equity and solidarity”. This would include the responsibility of polluter pays and prioritising support for the poor and most affected by climate change. “It is our conviction that what is needed for getting negotiations moving and people changing is a convincing argument on the feasibility of climate-proof, sustainable societies and lifestyles that will enhance life with dignity,” the WCC says.

## Climate Change in the Philippines

“We are experiencing it now,” says Tet Naraval, of CWS partner Developers Foundation, when asked about climate change. “People cannot believe how quickly sea levels are rising. The coastline is rapidly moving closer.”

Aklan, in central Philippines, is becoming more disaster-prone as the course of typhoons change. In the past, Aklan has been subject to only category one storms. “These are fairly normal,” says Tet. “You can go about shopping and do normal things.” In June 2008 that all changed.

Typhoon Frank was “the shock of our lives”. It took out power and communications so nobody in the area was warned of the increasing intensity. Strong winds toppled century-old trees. Houses were destroyed as roofs blew off. Even though the roof of the Developers’ office stayed on and the windows were closed, Tet says it was “like a jungle inside with branches and leaves coming in”. Heavy rains loosened soil, leading to landslides. These dammed the rivers, which caused widespread flooding. Infrastructure and livelihoods were destroyed.

“Everybody became victims,” says Tet. “There were no authorities to go to as everyone was immobilised.” When the storm was over, “there was an air of desperation and total loss. Mud covered everything.” She said the only good thing was that it happened at the weekend so families were together. Otherwise people would have been at work, children at school. How would they have found each other?

“At first there is self pity. Seeing your belongings are gone, you can’t get food for your baby and so on. But the survival instincts kick in. You have to learn to survive.” Developers quickly moved from being victims to providing relief. With the help of a grant from CWS, they distributed food, water and shelter kits. Their local knowledge and work building community organisations made them the most effective network in the region for getting aid to where it was needed most.

**As frequency of natural disasters increases through climate change, CWS partners will need more assistance to provide emergency relief and help prepare vulnerable people. Please donate to help them help their communities.**

## What are we doing?

### CWS is

- funding environmental restoration and protection programmes that uphold peoples’ rights to protect their communities
- committed to reducing its carbon footprint
- advocating strong government policy to reduce carbon emissions and increase assistance for the most vulnerable people
- supporting Walk for the Planet, Lent 2009, as people walk from Stewart Island to Wellington or in their communities sharing news and actions of people responding to climate change around the world.

**Keep watching [www.cws.org.nz/take-action/climate-change](http://www.cws.org.nz/take-action/climate-change) for more climate change information and actions.**



## Swimming through slime

A smelly swim through a layer of slime ended a fundraiser that generated over \$1500 for Nicaraguan development.

Wellington's Fionnaigh McKenzie last year braved pollution and choppy seas to complete the 2.8km Auckland Harbour Crossing. Friends and family sponsored her \$1520, which twenty-seven year old Fionnaigh donated to CWS partner, Council of Protestant Churches (Cepad) in Nicaragua.

The crossing from the North Shore was choppy mid-harbour but not rough enough to be exhausting. The worst part was entering the viaduct where the water suddenly became smellier and the swimmers emerged with a coating of slime.

Fionnaigh finished the race in one hour 18 minutes and 50 seconds, only a few minutes longer than her goal. Strong wind and an inability to swim in a straight line meant a slower finish.

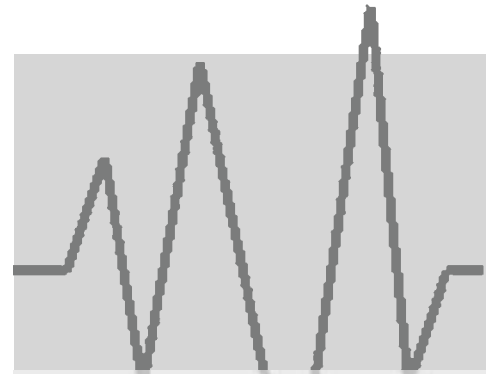
The NZAID worker was pleased to fulfil a personal challenge and extend it to help Cepad's work with over 70 poor rural communities. As a teenager, she spent six months in Nicaragua's neighbour, Costa Rica, where she was shocked by the poverty. In 2006, Fionnaigh heard Cepad director Damaris Albuquerque speak at her church, St Andrew's on The Terrace. She was inspired by the way Cepad lived the gospel by serving poor communities and empowering people to carry out development.

## Volunteers: the lifeblood of CWS.

Without the effort of helpers around the country, CWS could not function. Here, mother and daughter team Nonty and Smilo Mlilo are recovering stamps from envelopes at the CWS office. CWS donates the stamps to the Methodist Women's Fellowship, which sells them to a philatelist. Smilo is 14 and about to start year 10 at Christchurch Girls' High School. Mum, Nonty, is a nurse at Christchurch Public Hospital. Smilo and Nonty are originally from Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, but now live in Christchurch.



If you are interested in joining the CWS volunteer team contact Mandla at the CWS national office: 03 366 9274 ext 113 or [Mandla-Akhe@cws.org.nz](mailto:Mandla-Akhe@cws.org.nz)



## Taking the pulse of New Zealand's young

What is your reaction to learning that half of Zambian children will die before the age of five while in Scandinavia more than 90 per cent of newborns will live to 60? Or that in South India, despite the illegality of caste discrimination, two Dalits are assaulted every hour and that every day three Dalit women are raped, two Dalits are murdered and two Dalit houses are burned down.

At Parachute 09, young people were presented with such shocking facts and given a blood pressure test to see how it affected them. The results? It made them distressed that the world continues to be so unjust. In the mock tests, CWS volunteers played medical roles, with the 'nurse' declaring blood pressure had gone through the roof. "Good news", replied the 'doctor', "that means there is still hope."

Participants wrote ideas on a CWS banner of how they could bring hope to the world and left with a commitment to get more involved. One young woman explained, "I always get angry at the news but people tell me I shouldn't worry about it and just not watch it". She learnt that a righteous anger can be turned into a justice action. That to care about what was happening to others was something she could follow up on with CWS.



## GAZA CRISIS

*"Thanks so much for your concern and for launching the appeal for Gaza. We appreciate this and we feel strengthened by your concern and compassion."*

Dr Bernard Sabella, Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees.



## "People still look to the skies": The toll on Gaza

The air strikes and the shooting have stopped, and the troops and tanks have pulled back but most people in Gaza cannot believe the violence has ended.

Everyone is traumatised. People instinctively search the skies for attacking aircraft before leaving their homes. Once on the street they are scared by loud voices or the sudden moves of others. "Any loud voice stirs a reflection in their faces," says the director of the Al Ahli Arab Hospital, Dr. Suhaila Tarazi. "We need time to restore our normal spirit. If a door slams, you see the fear in our faces."

Israel's 22-day military operation in January shocked the world and devastated Gaza, the most densely populated region on earth. As many as 1,315 Palestinians were killed and 5,500 were injured, including many women and children. Gaza lost at least \$1.9 billion US in assets, including 4,100 homes, 1,500 factories, 20 mosques, 31 security compounds, and 10 water and sewage lines. The attack came on top of an 18 month siege, with Israel maintaining tight control of Gaza's borders and restricting food, fuel, electricity and medical supplies. Even before the attack, 80 per cent of Gazans were living in poverty, dependent on international aid to survive. It is unsurprising that trauma is emerging as a devastating legacy.

The effects of witnessing war and conflict, particularly the deaths of



CWS partners were able to provide food relief during the attacks.

loved ones and friends, can cause lifelong trauma. As over half of Gaza's population is under 18 years old, CWS partners are especially concerned about the long term effect on the next generation.

"It was a real massacre in Gaza. Our homes were not safe, the hospital was not safe, schools were not safe, streets were not safe. The fear they have put in the hearts of the children – it's not easy to forgive but we have to," says Suhaila. "We just hope this will stop, that peace and justice will prevail."

CWS's Appeal for Gaza is supporting counselling and other psychological programmes for children and families experiencing trauma, as well as providing food, water and medical assistance. See [www.cws.org.nz](http://www.cws.org.nz) for more information.

## Campaign Updates:

### Cluster munitions

New Zealand was one of the first countries to sign the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which bans cluster bombs, in Oslo on 3 December 2008. To date 95 countries have signed the agreement but only four have ratified it. Thirty signatories must ratify the convention before it can come into force. Advocacy is now focused on getting governments, including New Zealand's, to ratify the convention, which prohibits the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions. It commits signatories to clear affected areas, destroy stockpiles and provide assistance to victims.

### Check Out Fairtrade

Churches have played a key role in getting the fair trade message out to New Zealanders and this year sales of fair trade products are expected to increase by 60 per cent. A record number of churches took part in last year's Fair Trade Fortnight and reported a keen interest from parishioners wanting to make a difference for the small producers who benefit from fair trade sales. This year's Fair Trade Fortnight will be held 2 – 17 May and all churches are invited to sign up for A Fair Cuppa after a Sunday service during that fortnight. CWS will provide worship and other resources and information about ordering from Trade Aid's warehouse. Contact [cws@cws.org.nz](mailto:cws@cws.org.nz) for further information or watch the website: [www.cws.org.nz](http://www.cws.org.nz)



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Autumn 09

CWS, the development, justice and aid agency of New Zealand churches, acts to end poverty and injustice throughout the world. We fund groups working for better lives and livelihoods in their local communities, support humanitarian relief in times of disaster, campaign against the causes of global poverty and educate within Aotearoa New Zealand. CWS responds to people's needs regardless of race or religion.

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