



# CWS Update

FEBRUARY 2017

## FOR YOUR DIARY

17 February—2 March  
Pauline McKay visiting  
Indian partners.



1 March **Seven Weeks for Water** - take part in this Lenten pilgrimage for water justice in Africa with the Ecumenical Water Network.

7:30 pm **Launch of 7 Rivers 7 Walks** in Christchurch

3 March—**World Day of Prayer**—"Am I being Unfair to You?" at your local church.

4 March **River Walk**—Opawaho Heathcote, Christchurch

8 March **International Women's Day**  
#BeBoldForChange

11 March **River Walk**—Rakaia River

22 March **World Water Day**

### CONTACT US

[www.cws.org.nz](http://www.cws.org.nz)

[cws@cws.org.nz](mailto:cws@cws.org.nz)

PO Box 22652,  
Christchurch 8140  
Phone 03 366 9274

Christian World Service is  
a member of the **ACT Alliance** (Action by Churches Together)

## Thirsting for Water Justice



*Women water their new garden plots—impossible without rainwater tanks. Photo: R Wayne*

Like many countries Uganda is struggling to respond to water shortages. Charles Rwabambari from the Centre for Community Solidarity says it is rapid climate change that is creating the disaster. For a third year, the south has been devastated by drought and unpredictable weather patterns. An agricultural adviser, he has watched the rainy seasons shrink and the water sources dry up. He says farmers are confused about planting and are losing crops and livestock. The steep reduction in rainfall is causing food insecurity and the reliance on contaminated sources like the Kagera river means more water related diseases. The water quality was never very good but it is now becoming scarce. Topsoil is starting to disappear without plants to hold it in place.

"CWS's support for the rainwater tanks since 2008 has been a wise investment and has tremendously transformed the lives of the many poor in this area where it is hard to live," says Charles. So far, CWS has been able to pay half the costs for 675 tanks for families of HIV and AIDS orphans. For a region where 85% of people depend on the food they grow for all their needs, the failure of crops and loss of animals is proving catastrophic.

With **World Water Day** on March 22, CWS encourages reflection on the water issues we face. This year the Ecumenical Water Network invites people to share in a pilgrimage of water justice in Africa during the **Seven Weeks for Water**. **CWS encourages individuals and groups to show their support for water by donating to the **Summer Appeal**.**

## South Sudan: Famine

Last week the United Nations declared the first famine since 2011. Already 100,000 people are suffering and a further 1 million are on the brink of starvation. By July the numbers could exceed 5 million as the combination of conflict, drought and a crippled economy destroy livelihoods. Last year inflation topped 800% and people are constantly on the move. Nearly 1.5 million have left the country since war broke out in December 2013.



*Photo: In Uganda, ACT Alliance gives a goat to a woman refugee. LWF/C. Kästner*

Wadalla Peter says even in quieter regions like West Equatoria, people cannot afford food and often miss the one meal a day which has become standard. Maridi Service Agency is assisting people who have fled their homelands and need refuge. ACT Alliance is working with refugee communities on the Uganda border and providing food in famine-affected areas. The National Disaster Relief Forum of which CWS is a member is appealing for more support from New Zealanders. **Can you help with urgent food and other relief? Please support CWS's South Sudan Crisis Appeal.**

## India: One Billion Rising

On February 14, 700 men, women, students and children marched, danced, sang and listened to speeches as part of One Billion Rising, a global campaign to end the violence experienced by 1 in 3 women. EKTA coordinator Bimla Chandrasekar says it was a happy sight to see them dance with all their energy, demanding a violence-free world for all women and girls. Crimes against women are rising in India. A crime against a woman is recorded every 1.7 minutes and a rape is reported every 16 minutes according to the National Crime Bureau. EKTA runs workshops for men, women and students, and campaigns for safe public spaces in Madurai where they are based. Pauline McKay is currently visiting EKTA and other Indian partners.

## Philippines: Seeds of Peace

The National Council of Churches in the Philippines called for renewed peace talks between the government and the Communist Party of the Philippines. Earlier this month President Duterte announced the government was scrapping peace talks. Church leaders say it is the poor who are suffering the most from the conflict, especially those displaced by aerial bombing in the interior.

## ACT Alliance: General Secretary

ACT Alliance has announced the appointment of Rudelmar Bueno de Faria of Brazil as the next General Secretary starting June 1. Rudelmar sees faith communities as sources of life, hope and transformation. He will succeed John Nduna who has held the position since 2010 when the Alliance was formed. CWS is a member of ACT.

## FAO: Food Security in Jeopardy

The Food and Agriculture Organisation says the world needs to produce more food with fewer resources to meet the Sustainable Development Goal to end hunger by 2030. Identifying the pressure on natural resources, inequality and the fall out of the changing climate as key challenges, the FAO says there need to be major transformations leading to more sustainable food systems that better connect farmers in low- and middle-income countries with markets, and ensure safe and nutritious food.

## Summer Story

We have Plans is the latest story from CWS partners working to bring hope and a better life into their communities. Freed from the misery of poverty without water, families of HIV and AIDS orphans are working hard to improve family livelihoods. Please support the Summer Appeal. If you would like a copy, please contact Emma.



## Summer story

## Operation Refugee

CWS is preparing to launch this year's Operation Refugee Campaign. We want to raise as much money as we can for Syrian refugees. Sign up now to find out more about this challenge to live on refugee rations from 16-20 June.



## You Give Us Hope

Thanks for your donations to the 2016 Christmas Appeal. Churches are reminded to send in donations before 31 March so we can send out a tax-deductible receipt. **You can support our dedicated partners by making a gift of hope.**

## About Update

*Update provides news, information and stories. Reproduction of items is encouraged with attribution to CWS. Current and back issues are available.*