

SEEK & SERVE

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

A PUBLICATION OF EPISCOPAL RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT • SUMMER 2018 ISSUE

PROGRAM FOCUS: Clean Water and Sanitation in Angola

Clean water and proper sanitation are such basic facts of life here in the United States that most of us take them for granted. Yet many communities in other parts of the world lack these fundamental necessities.

The country of Angola has one of the world's fastest growing economies in the world, thanks to its vast mineral and petroleum reserves. But the nation's wealth is concentrated in a small sector of the population, and the standard of living remains low for most people. Indeed, life expectancy in Angola is among the lowest in the world, and infant mortality is among the highest.

In 2016, Episcopal Relief & Development launched its Water, Sanitation and Hygiene program in Angola, with the aim of improving sanitation and hygiene, and reducing the number of deaths from diarrhea, malaria and other diseases – particularly among children, who are the most vulnerable. Working in partnership with the Anglican Diocese of Angola, the program's immediate goals are to increase access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities, and to improve household hygiene in high-need areas. The long-term goal is to reduce the frequency and severity of water- and sanitation-related diseases, so that children and their communities can thrive.

The program's primary strategy is to mobilize local leaders to establish community structures, such as Water and Sanitation Committees (WSCs) to oversee the management of water and sanitation facilities. Training health and community activists is also integral to success. As these women and men take ownership of the program, they raise awareness

and build community cooperation and trust. This sustainable approach empowers the communities themselves to address the water, sanitation and hygiene challenges through a behavioral change process known as "community-led total sanitation."

In Quimussungu, a rural community in northwestern Angola, a resident named Domingos was one of the first people to volunteer for the local Water and Sanitation Committee. A husband and father of five, he soon saw how his household's practice of open defecation had a negative impact on the health of his community, and he set out to build a sturdy, sanitary mud-brick latrine near his home. "He did not rest until our own latrine was ready," his wife, Rosa, said.

"I never liked going to the bush but had to live with it because that was the only means available," Rosa said. "Now that the latrine has been constructed, I can keep the dignity that I want."

Before the project began, nearly 60% of households were practicing open defecation, but with the continuing work of the WSCs to raise awareness about sanitation, 233 families like Domingos and Rosa's have decided to build household latrines. By the time it's fully implemented at the end of 2019, the program will reach 81 communities and train over 1,200 volunteers. A total of 8,300 households – 40,459 people – will benefit from a new or improved water supply and the resulting improvement in sanitation, hygiene and health. Peoples' lives and communities – through our partnership and their own actions – will be transformed forever.



Making Change Sustainable

As caring people of faith, we don't simply wish to live in a world where love, equality and justice prevail – we strive to create such a world. We do this by embodying God's love in our actions, and by trying to ease the suffering of our brothers and sisters wherever we meet it. This is, of course, a tall order, and we won't always succeed. But Episcopal Relief & Development offers a powerful opportunity to express God's love on a global scale by empowering people to build a better life for themselves, their families, and their communities.

One of the core principles of the work we do is promoting transformation from within, leading to change that is sustainable. For many years “development” was understood to be something that was done for the poor. But Episcopal Relief & Development has long understood that sustainable development must start at the grassroots level and focus first and foremost on leveraging local assets. This is the way that change will take root and flourish, not just for a season or two, but for generations.

This is not to say that external resources aren't important or even vital—they surely are. But those resources need to be paired with local leadership, ingenuity and commitment. For us, as Episcopalians, this partnership provides us with a chance to express our love for our fellow children of God, helping them build the capacity to improve their own lives and chart their own destinies.

Episcopal Relief & Development is not a large organization in the field of international development, but our impact is great – both abroad and at home. That is because of the power of our faith, the generosity of our spirit, the global reach of the Anglican Communion and other faith-based partners, and, as you will read in this newsletter, the rigor we bring to measuring results to maximize positive outcomes.

Each day I am honored to be a part of this uplifting mission, and I am grateful that you are with us. I hope that as you read this issue of *Seek & Serve* you are buoyed by the lasting health and opportunity that you are helping create around the world.



Yours faithfully,



Robert W. Radtke
President and CEO

PROGRAM FOCUS: Measuring for Success

It takes planning, hard work and a shared commitment to implement transformative programs in countries around the world. Once these projects are up and running, it may seem like the end of the story. But in fact, it's only the beginning. Accurately measuring a project's success is an integral part of facilitating change. How can we know if our efforts are having the desired outcomes if we don't measure them? And how can we improve the places where we fall short if we don't know what these places are?

Episcopal Relief & Development is investing in an expansive approach to program *monitoring, evaluation and learning* (MEL). Using standardized indicators for measurement, we are working with our program partners to capture detailed information at the family level to better understand what contributes to transformative change over time. To do this, we are training our partner teams so they can gather this information using mobile technology, building on our strong partnerships and powerful volunteer network. And we expand on the data collection practices established during our flagship malaria program, *NetsforLife*®.

For any development organization, understanding the impact of the work is a challenge. It can take

many years to see significant change, and it's not always easy to assess outcomes. At Episcopal Relief & Development, however, our unique position and solid partnerships at the grassroots level give us a leg up in measuring progress.

Before a project begins, people in the community and local project staff ask themselves: What is our vision for the future? Then progress towards these goals can be assessed in practical, user-friendly ways, and everyone can learn in the process. The elements that are working can be expanded, and those that aren't going well can be addressed and improved. Over time, results can be affirmed and the impact can be broadly shared. The communities get to celebrate and discuss the progress as they see their dreams gradually becoming reality.

Through this emphasis on assessment and learning, we hope to deepen our understanding of the change happening within our partner communities. We expect to see and understand the data-driven narrative more clearly so we can all continue to share, learn, grow and improve.



A REFLECTION FROM BETSY

Working at Episcopal Relief & Development, I am so privileged to meet many donors, worship with congregations and visit our partners in the U.S. and abroad. I see firsthand this incredible human web of compassion that we create and how each person's prayers, gifts and actions make a lasting impact. Starting in this *Seek & Serve*, I'd like to share a simple reflection with you. May it honor and encourage you as a valued partner in this profound work.

Today, I'm reflecting on my visit to Zambia where I saw community members volunteer many hours to help their neighbors, and I think about how my financial support can measure up to their commitment. It's hard to say who benefits more – the one who receives or the one who gives. And in the end, I see the abundant bounty it creates as each of us steps out in faith. I am so grateful for the gifts that each of us shares.

BETSY DEISROTH,
VICE PRESIDENT,
ADVANCEMENT



PROGRAM UPDATE: Puerto Rico: Moving Forward After the Storm

Our global disaster assistance in 2017 was unprecedented – responding to earthquakes, floods, fires and the most damaging hurricane season in recent history.

Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria left a trail of destruction across Florida, Texas, the Virgin Islands, and other parts of the Caribbean. In Puerto Rico, the U.S. territory had its share of challenges even before last September's one-two punch of hurricanes. The island was in an economic crisis with unemployment more than twice the average of the mainland United States.

In Puerto Rico, first Hurricane Irma struck, followed by the far more damaging Category 5 direct hit of Maria. It was the island's most destructive storm in over 80 years. Maria ripped apart homes and buildings and severely damaged over 75 percent of

the island's agriculture. The cost to rebuild has been estimated at \$95 billion.

Episcopal Relief & Development's assistance to Puerto Rico began even before Maria hit, providing funding for the acquisition and storage of emergency food, water and essentials for survival. Diocesan leaders in San Juan have repeatedly expressed their belief that without this initial aid, people could have died. In the weeks after, technical support and funding continued, including the provision of a massive generator at the Diocese's distribution hub in San Juan. Supplies were delivered to parishes across the island, and local teams even forded streams and climbed through mudslides to reach people in isolated mountain communities. In Ponce, we continue to support volunteer medical brigades that leave Hospital Episcopal San Lucas to attend to those in need of medical help. In a single day, more than 1,500 people receive care.

As we turn to long-term recovery Episcopal Relief & Development is providing direct support to vulnerable households, emotional support for caregivers and assistance with volunteer management, vital networking and advocacy.

We know the future will bring hurricanes to Puerto Rico, so a key part of our work is in disaster preparedness. For Episcopal Relief & Development and the Diocese of Puerto Rico, long-term recovery means we're in it for the long haul – measured in years, not months – and evident in the resilience of the people.

PLANNED GIVING: CONTINUE YOUR STEWARDSHIP WITH The Matthew²⁵ Legacy Society

You can ensure that the urgent work of responding to the world's suffering continues for many years to come when you make a bequest or other planned gift to Episcopal Relief & Development through our **Matthew 25 Legacy Society**.

Society members sustain the work of Episcopal Relief & Development through planned gifts such as bequests, life income gifts and charitable trusts. These gifts deepen and

strengthen the work of Episcopal Relief & Development across the globe in a lasting, transformative way.

Planned gifts are what make it possible for us to stay in communities when those places or issues are no longer in the headlines. Your legacy gifts allow us to strengthen the capacity of our partners, to support them in piloting cutting-edge approaches, and to do the research, monitoring and evaluation that allows us to continually improve.

TO LEARN MORE, CONTACT US AT 1-855-312-HEAL (4325). YOU CAN ALSO FIND INFORMATION AT episcopalrelief.org/plannedgiving.

