

Citizen Empowerment for the Transformation of Urban Communities

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by **Irene Zepeda**
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Together World Renew and CRWM are supporting the Association for a More Just Society (AJS) in the work of citizen empowerment for the transformational development of urban communities. This process is focused in the areas of education and health through a social audit of government services provided in both areas. Currently, as a result of this process, improvement plans have been created for public health centers, and these contribute substantially to the development of four of the poorest and

most violent neighborhoods in the Honduran capital, Tegucigalpa. These communities are Flor del Campo, Los Pinos, Villanueva, and Nueva Suyapa. The process of organizing and training people to participate in social audits in their own communities has been considered as one of AJS's most significant recent achievements.

One of the objectives was to carry out a community assessment in each health center located in the four communities, identifying the needs of each health center, compiling a report, and developing improvement plans. These plans were delivered to the deputy minister of health at a public event, and a commitment was made to prioritize compliance with the plans of each community.



Pray for Honduras

- Pray for an end to violence and insecurity in Honduras.
- Pray for the young people and women in Honduras, who are the most affected by violence and crime.
- Pray for Honduran migrants and their families who are currently living in uncertainty and at risk of being deported from the United States.

Vegetable Gardening and Increased Food Security

A Story of Transformation

by Cesar Mejía, *Diaconia Nacional*

The Ramos family lives in the community of Guacoca. Anibal and Yadira, the father and mother, and their two children, Jose and Nayeli, are actively involved in the Sustainable Livelihoods program developed by World Renew's partner Diaconia Nacional in the Olancho region. In particular, the Ramos family has been involved in sustainable agriculture training and has successfully implemented what they have learned through the program.

The Ramos family has been participating in the program for over a year. Diaconia Nacional has supported this family, as well as others in the community, with training in various methods of sustainable agriculture, such as planting and cultivating vegetables and producing organic fertilizer. The family has established an impressive home garden in which they are growing cucumbers, onions, green beans, cabbage, green peppers, tomatoes, cilantro, pumpkin, sweet potatoes, and celery. They have also managed to grow maize, beans, soybeans, and a papaya tree.

The Ramoses have had good harvests so far. Some of the vegetable

produce is sold to other people in the community. Sometimes the family will also give vegetables to their neighbors. The Ramoses attest that their family diet has improved, and they are proud that their children are consuming food that they have grown themselves. Both Anibal and Yadira understand that the consumption of vegetables will contribute to the health of their children.

Through this program the Ramos family has been able to plant crops that they did not know about before. Diaconia Nacional has provided technical assistance so that families can properly plant and maintain these new vegetable crops. The program participants are also able to gain extra income from the sale of vegetables, and that is especially helpful for meeting the expenses of their children's education.

"We are very happy and grateful to our God for giving us this opportunity to harvest vegetables in our garden. Many thanks to all the people who support this great project," say Anibal and Yadira Ramos.



Starting 2017 with a Bang!



by **Rolando Pinzon**
Constituency Bridger
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A lot has happened in just two months as I hosted six amazing work and ministry teams from North America. I feel so blessed to see communities of Hondurans and North Americans come together, work together, play together, worship together, and live together. Every time a church group comes to visit, I am reminded of how Nehemiah went to repair the walls and gates of Jerusalem and how the people worked together to complete that project (Neh. 2-3). During the visits everyone works hard and serves and enjoys God together. Women work hard (side by side) to prepare food; the people at the worksites labor in the hot

sun (side by side) to get the projects done; the teachers, children, and team members also play (side by side) in recreation together; and all of us praise our Lord and Savior together, side by side.

I also participated in three project inauguration ceremonies and saw how the members of the communities expressed their gratitude first to God and then to our brothers and sisters from North America for their great support and for loving them. The team members also thanked the people of the communities for their love and care during their visits.

People keep asking me, How do you do it? How do you continue your work alongside some of the most impoverished people you will ever met? It's sim-



ple, really. I am encouraged by their rich faith in God. Their faith is so strong that they just tremble in joy before God, and seeing their faith pushes me to work hard for them. I ask you to please pray for their strong faith to continue and grow.

Delighted in God and blessed to be part of all these blessings!

Rolando

