



ELCA World Hunger
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 God's work. Our hands.



Reproducible Stories 2020



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ELCA WORLD HUNGER

More than 820 million people in our world today are undernourished. As members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we are called to respond. Working with our neighbors in the United States and in more than 60 countries around the world, we start by listening and learning about how we can accompany them to help break the cycle of hunger and poverty – for good. From water sources to animal husbandry, microloans to health clinics, your gifts to ELCA World Hunger support innovative solutions that get at the root causes of hunger. And they don't stop there. Through ELCA World Hunger, Lutherans engage in advocacy and hunger education to act and speak in ways that make a difference. All this relies on your gifts. ELCA World Hunger is funded solely by gifts from ELCA members and congregations such as yours. Thank you for making this work possible through learning, action, prayer and giving.

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A place for connection

ELCA.org/hunger

Em Musa has spent her whole life working for the good of her family and community. She was married at age 20 and had four children over the next decade. Although her family was most important to her, there were larger forces at play that called Em Musa to action. She chose to work toward justice for her people through the Palestinian resistance movement. To this day, she bears the scars of this decision – a wound on her forehead and a shot in her left thigh. Em Musa spent almost a year and a half in prison, and after her release, when her youngest child was just two-and-a-half years old, her husband passed away. This was a very hard time in Em Musa's life.

Despite these difficulties, Em Musa continued to strive for justice in her community. Her job has sustained the family, and all four of her children are thriving. In recent years, she has found community by participating in Meals on Wheels, a program of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land. Every Tuesday at the Arab Women's Union of Ramallah, West Bank, Palestine, Meals



PALESTINE

on Wheels offers hot meals and an inviting community to isolated people. The program, supported by ELCA World Hunger, provides 25 to 30 meals, mostly to senior women but also to some senior men and some younger women with cognitive disabilities. Meals on Wheels also delivers food to homes, facilitates doctor visits and distributes medications.

Through Meals on Wheels, Em Musa receives a good meal and maintains strong friendships. She is still active in the community through her church and other organizations. Meals on Wheels provides an environment where individuals such as Em Musa can come together despite the limitations on movement that accompany aging or cognitive disability.

Asked if she is lonely, Em Musa said, "Akid la" ("Definitely not"). With a fierce inner strength, Em Musa has found resilience in vital relationships with her family and, through the Meals on Wheels program, with her community.

WHF20

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Restoring a river basin, restoring a community

ELCA.org/hunger

"Before this ELCA project, I did not have the perspectives I have today," says Miguel Angel Calderón Barahona, president of the La Granja Communal Association.

The project Miguel mentions is restoring the microbasins of three rivers in El Salvador. Decontaminating these river basins will ensure that the water is safe, improving the livelihoods of families from eight different communities. The project, supported by gifts to ELCA World Hunger, includes educating and organizing the local communities about their right to safe water and working with local government agencies to make sure regulations are followed and the river basins are managed sustainably.

Miguel and the communal association work hard at the river basin. They have planted trees, conducted trainings and led tours to the basin of the San Antonio River. But they don't stop at their own region – they are always searching for ways to develop nearby communities by strengthening leadership. "By the time the project arrived in this community, it taught us that it is not enough to work in a single community,



EL SALVADOR

but that it is necessary to go outside where there are also communities that do not have the same possibilities and bring the same opportunities that we have now."

The project is also supported by the Salvadoran Lutheran Church, a companion church of the ELCA. "Having the support of the Lutheran church is important," Miguel says, "because this way we have managed to get many people involved in the petitions of communities and schools."

Miguel has worked on this project for more than a year, and he's passionate about what it has brought to his home. "My life changed from the moment I decided to be a part of this project. Why is that? Because I have had the opportunity to reach beyond my perspectives as a member of the community or as a member of [the communal association]. I have had the opportunity to leave my community and reach out to other communities ... as well."

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Investing in a local leader

ELCA.org/hunger

Cacilda Rodrigues Barcelos has built her whole life around being a compassionate volunteer. Born in São Borja, Brazil, she was 13 when she and her family moved to the metropolitan region of Porto Alegre. Her mother raised 11 daughters and sons on her own, and died on her 50th birthday. Cacilda was only 22 at the time and relied on the support of her community in her time of grief. Grateful for and inspired by their generosity, Cacilda wanted to give back, so she set up a soccer team called Foot by Foot for boys living in unstable situations. "I saw that phrase on a boy's shirt, and I thought, 'This is how you go when you need to go far.'" To pay for uniforms and tournaments, the eight members began to sell food and crafts at fairs.

While participating in a fair, Cacilda met a representative of the Fundação Luterana de Diaconia (FLD, the Lutheran Diakonia Foundation of Brazil) who invited her to join the Fair Trade and Solidarity Network. Now she is part of the network, which consists primarily of women entrepreneurs such as her, and helps with decision-making, training and fairs. Recently, she helped organize the Solidarity Economy and Agroecology Fair at the sixth Latin American Congress on Gender and Religion



BRAZIL

in São Leopoldo. There, she attended a workshop on economic viability. "Before, I knew more or less [how] to calculate price," she says. "Then we took the course and the income of the women [in the network] of the enterprise increased about 50%. We forgot to calculate working time. For us, it seems to be a bit expensive, but we have to learn to value ourselves."

Cacilda's work with her community doesn't stop at the fairs. Cacilda also volunteers with the Peace Service and the Network to Combat Violence Against Women. Today, at age 63, she wants to build a communal kitchen where she can teach people how to cook to generate income. "I already have a separate space in my house for that. I want to teach and make the environment and machinery available to those who don't have it."

Thanks to your gifts to ELCA World Hunger, of which FLD is a companion church, dedicated community members such as Cacilda are equipped with the tools to grow their organizations and address the needs in their communities.

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