

GLOBAL LINK



Giving
Hope
Today

TERRITORIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE WORLD MISSIONS DEPARTMENT IN CANADA AND BERMUDA

SUMMER 2019



Children enjoying activities at the Army's child development centre in Gualache, El Salvador.

LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS By Major Donna Barthau

El Salvador is the most densely populated country in Central America and is known for its coffee and long stretches of sandy beaches. Gualache is a small town that lies in the mountainous, central-east region of the country. This community is largely ruled by gangs and many people are struggling with poverty and water scarcity. Youth flee the country to resist being recruited by gangs and in hopes of finding better job opportunities. The Salvation Army, with help from its **Brighter Futures** sponsors, runs a wonderful and supportive child development centre in the heart of the town.

"This program is a blessing for the community," says one grateful mother. "My child is two years old and what I've learned in the parent meetings has been very useful and interesting. I'm thankful to God and to The Salvation Army because my child has

good, nutritious food to eat there. He has gained weight, is not shy anymore and interacts well with his peers and the adults."

Luz writes on behalf of her daughter, Ashley. "Thank you for supporting the Child Development Centre. Sometimes it's impossible to find healthy food for my daughter to eat, but my girl tells me that she eats very richly [at the centre]. This support for Ashley is very significant."

Rasel sums up the joy of all the children attending the centre. "I like to come to the dining room where the Captains make delicious food and I enjoy coming to the church. The captain speaks to us about the Bible, we pray, we sing and I feel happy. Thank you for helping us all in so many ways!"



HOPE FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

By Major Donna Barthau



I am always amazed by people's resilience in the midst of disaster, drought or disease. As I travel to many countries where The Salvation Army is actively working, I am privileged to meet individuals whose personal agency has, for one reason or another, been negatively affected.

What is it that causes someone to rise above adversity? What is it that causes us to put one foot in front of the other? There are probably many answers to this question, but I believe that within each one of us there exists a faith or belief that a better day lies ahead and, with it, a desire to keep going.

Hope propels us forward. For the Ebola-affected individual in Liberia, the fact that someone cared and provided tools and seeds so they could get back to their farming livelihood gave them a sense of hope. For the mudslide victim, hope came in the form of basic necessities for survival that includes food, clothing and shelter. No matter how difficult life gets, we are intrinsically moved when others reach out in support so that we can thrive. Resiliency is rooted and takes growth in community.

As you read the articles in this issue of the *Global Link*, reflect on how you can be a source of hope and support to someone in your community.

Sincerely,

Lt-Colonel Brenda Murray
World Missions Director



In Canada we are fortunate to have access to good health care, physical therapy and accommodation for children with disabilities. But in developing countries where poverty prevails, the situation can be very different. In East Africa, The Salvation Army was a pioneer in education for children and youth with disabilities. The children's sponsorship program was the backbone of this ministry and **Brighter Futures Children's Sponsorship** continues to support specialized schools today.

Albinism Awareness Day is celebrated on June 13 each year. Children with albinism are extremely vulnerable to sun damage and have deteriorating eyesight, which renders many legally blind. Unfortunately, children with albinism are also at great risk of human trafficking. There is a huge market for children with albinism, who are used in witchcraft rituals, and traffickers make great profits from snatching these children off the streets. Many vulnerable children have been rescued from traffickers or have been brought to Salvation Army children's homes and schools for protection. On these secure compounds, the children are provided with quality education and a chance to live and study alongside their peers. Our **Brighter Futures** sponsors assist children with albinism at schools for the blind in Kenya and at Matumaini School for the Physically Disabled in Tanzania.

The Salvation Army Likoni School for the Visually Impaired offers both elementary and secondary school education. Canadian sponsors assist the students with their tuition fees so they can continue their education, pursue further studies, and contribute to their family and community. At Likoni, the children have access to great extracurricular activities, including a top-level school choir, which has won many national singing competitions and has sung for the Kenyan President. Some members have had the privilege of travelling internationally. For an impoverished child from a remote village, this broader view of the world is of great benefit to them and their community.

At The Salvation Army Matumaini School for the Physically Disabled in Tanzania, children with albinism make great friends with the youth who are physically disabled, each one assisting the other in numerous ways. **Brighter Futures** sponsors ensure each child has the skin lotion, sun glasses, hats and specialized visual equipment they need.

Children with albinism are especially vulnerable to discrimination, health issues and physical harm, but thanks to your generosity, compassion and the practical support they're receiving, they can flourish. Thank you!



STRENGTH IN FREETOWN

By Kathy Nguyen

On August 14, 2017, Freetown, Sierra Leone, was met with catastrophe and heartbreak as a mudslide tore through the community, devastating everything in its path.

Musafa was on his way to work when the mudslide wiped out his home. Fortunately, his wife and son were also away and not harmed. However, the mudslide took the lives of his brother-in-law and one of his workers—the same fate of close to 1,000 people who lost their lives that day.

Those who were saved suffered the loss of both their homes and loved ones, leaving thousands of displaced orphans and families with nothing to eat or wear and nowhere to live.

The Salvation Army improved conditions by purchasing and distributing basic necessities such as bags of rice, gallons of oil, hundreds of blankets, and donating clothing to 1,750 people. The Army also reduced psychological trauma through counselling—ensuring that hope was never forsaken.

Fast-forward to 2019, and the community has shown signs of recovery. The land was bulldozed and flattened and several small trees were planted. As the trees grow, the roots help to prevent erosion and future mudslides—a true symbol of growth and resilience in the face of insufferable loss.

Thank you to our donors who continue to support the international emergency response work of The Salvation Army. You have all played a part in sowing the seeds of strength in Freetown.



POST EBOLA RECOVERY

By Ruth Hobbis



Farmers in Mount Barclay

On March 23, 2014, cases of Ebola were discovered in rural Guinea, the first signs of what would quickly become the largest Ebola epidemic in history. Liberia was one of the countries hit hardest by the virus and, when the Liberian government announced a state of emergency, entire communities were forced into quarantine.

“When Ebola came it wasn’t easy,” remembers Mamre, a farmer who lives in Mount Barclay, Liberia. “There was a shortage of food and we were isolated from one another so we wouldn’t spread the virus.” Quarantined inside their homes, farming activities came to a complete halt and families were forced to eat reserved seeds and food in order to survive.

When Liberia was declared Ebola-free, families grieved for their lost family members, friends, and workers, and emerged from isolation to find food reserves depleted and farming equipment and tools damaged due to being abandoned in the fields.

While the farmers in Mount Barclay and Cotton Tree were struggling, they remained hopeful that with support from The Salvation Army, they would be able to rebuild. “The Salvation Army provided seeds and tools so we could continue our farming,” says Mamre. Soon, farming activities were back to normal, families had enough to eat, began to rebuild their reserves and could send their children back to school. “It’s still not easy, but this has helped a lot,” says Mamre. “Thank you so much for your support.”

DAILY BREAD

By Ruth Hobbis

In Sri Lanka, The Salvation Army supports small business owners through its ongoing Safe Water and Livelihood Development (SWALD) project. With help getting their businesses off the ground, families increase their earnings and break free from the cycle of poverty.

Mrs. Irangani and her family rented a three-wheeler to take a few loaves of bread and baked goods into town to sell. With only a small kitchen and a few pieces of equipment, the family was limited in how much they could produce. Earning little from their small business, they were unable to get enough food to eat and pay for other basic necessities, so they approached The Salvation Army for help.

With additional kitchen equipment provided by The Salvation Army, Mrs. Irangani produced more loaves of bread and baked goods. The family worked hard and, with more to sell, brought in enough earnings to put away a small amount of money each month. Over time, their savings grew and they bought their own three-wheeler and rented a small shop in town.

Mrs. Irangani expressed her gratitude to The Salvation Army and donors from the Canada and Bermuda Territory for their support and encouragement. Breaking the cycle of poverty is not easy, but with a little help and a lot of hard work, her family expanded their business and achieved their dream of owning a bakery.



Photo: Joe Johnson



Brighter Futures

THE SALVATION ARMY CHILDREN'S SPONSORSHIP

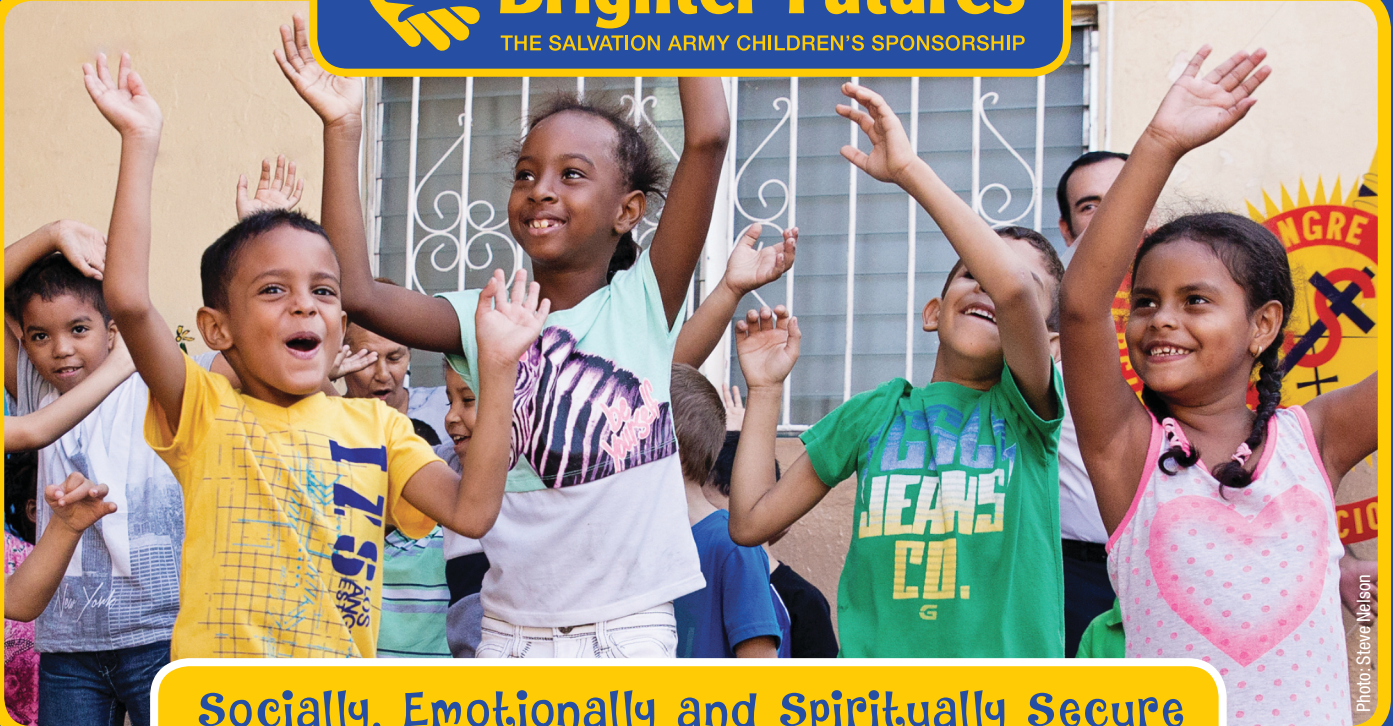


Photo: Steve Nelson

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