

Mission Moment

Be the light for leaders like Orfelina

Orfelina Portillo is an agricultural technician working with families in northern Honduras. She teaches sustainable approaches to growing crops; monitors water projects; shows women in the community how to prepare more nutritious meals for their families; and leads workshops for things like creating organic fertilizers and sprays.

Your contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing connect those who are doing ministry—leaders who are empowered to form partnerships to create programs like Project Green, where Orfelina shares her knowledge and skills to address food security, thanks to Church World Service (CWS) and the Mennonite Social Action Commission (CASM).

Orfelina has been light for communities in the Santa Bárbara region for 16 years—sharing her skills side-by-side with over 750 families. As a hands-on leader, Orfelina is often seen carrying sacks of food, delivering supplies, checking on crops and animals. Orfelina supports and encourages her communities—bringing God-colors to those seeking to improve their lives and support their families.

Orfelina proclaims, “This is what I am passionate about: teaching. My profession is a very important part of my everyday life. My work is my joy...I am part of the strong hand that feeds the world.”



Through your gift to One Great Hour of Sharing, Orfelina is empowered to be the light for her region. She is making a difference, transforming communities, and spreading God’s light and love.

Be the light for leaders like Orfelina. Give to One Great Hour of Sharing!

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YWCA of Palestine – Jalazone Kindergarten and Community Center

What better way to support a more sustainable and hopeful future than to support and educate future generations? The YWCA of Palestine, a United Church of Christ partner through Global Ministries and supported by One Great Hour of Sharing, has engaged local Palestinian communities since 1893.

Today, it offers programs of economic empowerment, women's rights, youth leadership, and children's education. An example of the latter is the YWCA's nursery schools and kindergartens in refugee camps, schools the YWCA has run for decades. In addition to regular classes, the YWCA offers skill-based camps such as photography and sports, as well as other extra-curricular activities at its schools.

In the occupied Palestinian West Bank, roughly one-fourth of the 900,000 Palestinian refugees registered with the United Nations live in 19 refugee camps. The YWCA kindergarten in the Jalazone Refugee Camp near Ramallah is a sign of hope for a community that has endured over 75 years of displacement.



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YWCA of Palestine – Jalazone Kindergarten and Community Center (Continued)

The school and connected community center address the needs of over 80 children and their families within the camp. In a place that is often subjected to raids and night-time patrols by the Israeli military, children are not immune from the trauma the residents of the camp experience. As a result, the YWCA has added awareness and counselling sessions to regular classes to help improve the psychological well-being of the children there.

The opportunities that the YWCA affords the community through the kindergarten benefit the children, their families, and the teachers as well, providing a safe space for play and employing techniques to cope with the stress of daily life living in sub-par circumstances of a refugee camp under military occupation.

The pride the children have when they dress up for their graduation ceremony is palpable. They enjoy the celebration of their accomplishment, and anticipate their next stages of education and life better able and prepared for the challenges they will face.



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The Council of Churches in Sierra Leone (CCSL)

The Council of Churches in Sierra Leone (CCSL) has made significant strides in empowering women and supporting communities through transformative programs. Serving approximately one million church members and nearly three million beneficiaries annually, CCSL is committed to breaking barriers and promoting women's leadership across various sectors.

A key initiative is the Women's Desk, which focuses on training, mentorship, and enabling women's active participation in church capacity building, community development, leadership, and economic sustainability. Through this platform, CCSL equips women with the essential skills needed to take leadership roles in society.

One notable program is the Council's microcredit initiative, established in 2020, which supports participants in the Village Savings and Loan Groups (VSLGs). This program includes 20 groups and empowers women to establish small businesses, provides finance education, improves access to clean water, and promotes community development. The microcredit program has proven to enhance women's leadership, business skills, and literacy.



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The Council of Churches in Sierra Leone (CCSL) (Continued)

In Kamara Town, women from the VSLG worked together to build a church and a school, which were previously unavailable in the community. Because of the lack of educational infrastructure, children had to travel long distances to attend school and often started school later than usual. With a school now in their community, children can begin their education at the appropriate age, and parents find peace knowing their children are safe and learning close to home.

In Campbell Town, a widow faced significant challenges after her husband's death, particularly around land ownership. Through the microcredit program, she secured a loan to formalize her land ownership. With the necessary documents now in hand, she proudly owns the land and has built a small house.

The program's impact is profound, with 70% to 90% of women contributing significantly to their households' welfare. These women not only focus on their personal growth but also dedicate themselves to supporting and mentoring other women in their communities. This shared commitment to uplifting others is a core value of the VSLGs.

