

## Food security and health

2016 IS A YEAR of transition at PWRDF. It marks a significant shift, but also a continuation of business as usual. For almost 60 years, The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund has worked around the world partnering with communities to ensure that people in those communities have enough to eat, access to health care and to accompany them as they improve their lives, livelihoods and communities.

For the past two years, and through this year, PWRDF has focused attention on the Fred Says food security campaign. Through "Fredisms", videos, education events, and more, we have invited you to learn more about and support PWRDF projects to help make sure people have enough good, healthy food to eat all the time.

Last year, PWRDF began working with the Government of Canada and partners in Burundi, Mozambique, Rwanda and Tanzania on a \$20 million 5 year project called All Mothers and Children Count. The goal of this program is to improve the health of pregnant women, mothers and children under the age of five in these countries.

On the surface, these look like very different programs. And yet, there is a lot of overlap. PWRDF did not suddenly begin addressing hunger with the Fred Says campaign. Nor will its food security work stop when the campaign wraps up this year. Our work in maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH) is also ongoing work, and will continue long into the future after the All Mothers and Children Count program finishes.

One of the disturbing facts of world hunger is that a majority of the people who are hungry in the world are farmers, and many of those are women. These are often the same women who benefit from our MNCH programs. In fact, proper nutrition and an adequate diet are two of the simplest ways to improve the health of mothers and children.

In this issue of Under the Sun, you will read stories about the intersection of MNCH with nutrition and food security from our partners within All Mothers and Children Count as well as beyond that program. And you will see why, for all that this is a year of transition, it is also one of staying the course in our long-term development work.

We hope you will join us in that work—praying, giving, and acting to support the millions of people who benefit from PWRDF's programs in nutrition, food security and MNCH.



**The goal: healthy mothers and babies**

PHOTO: ZAIDA BASTOS



# Overcoming malnutrition and stunted growth



**Vitamin supplements during pregnancy help mothers give birth to healthy babies.**

PHOTO: VILLAGE HEALTH WORKS

OF THE FOUR countries that are part of PWRDF's new All Mothers and Children Count (AMCC) program, which is funded in conjunction with the Government of Canada, Burundi has the most challenging levels of malnutrition and stunted growth. According to the World Food Program, 58% of Burundians face chronic malnutrition, and the World Bank reports that 53% of Burundian children's growth is stunted.

To combat this problem, PWRDF partner Village Health Works (VHW) is working on improving nutrition and access to food for mothers and their children. This work begins by providing vitamin supplements to pregnant women for three months before their child is born. This helps the mother to be stronger and healthier as she gives birth, and also strengthens her child.

"The first 72 hours after birth are the most crucial," said Richard Librock,

PWRDF's external funding program manager. "Babies who are strongest at birth are the most likely to survive."

VHW supports Community Health Workers (CHWs) in the villages of the program who accompany pregnant women through their pregnancy, birth, and the early childhood of the children. The CHWs ensure that mothers receive at least four pre-natal check ups during their pregnancy, teach them about the importance of good nutrition and how a kitchen garden can help to provide the necessary healthy fruits and vegetables for mothers, children, and the entire family.

VHW also runs a teaching kitchen, where they bring mothers to learn to prepare healthy meals for their families.

As AMCC continues, these interventions will help to reduce the alarming levels of malnutrition and stunting in the villages of the program. ■

## Bringing nutrition education to the people

PWRDF HAS PARTNERED with the Diocese of Bujumbura in Burundi for almost 25 years. Our current work with them, funded in conjunction with the government of Canada, is focused on Maternal, Newborn and Child Health. One of the issues the Diocese is helping to address is malnutrition and stunted growth in children in the program area, work that is being echoed by our new partner, Village Health Works, in the All Mothers and Children Count program (see *Overcoming malnutrition*, above, for more on that program).

One of the contributing factors to malnutrition and stunting that the Diocese has identified is a cultural pecking order around food. First the husband eats, then the wife, then the children. If there isn't enough food (which there often isn't), then the children are the ones who do without.

Changing this kind of cultural



**Mothers gather with their malnourished children to learn and cook together.** PHOTO: ZAIDA BASTOS

norm takes time, so the Diocese has instituted a program that is helping to work around the issue as they conduct workshops, information sessions and more to try and change the attitude.

Community workers from the Diocese in conjunction with the Burundian government build FARNs (Foyer d'apprentissage et réhabilitation nutritionnelle), which are simple wooden structures that can be quickly assembled and disassembled, in the village, and use these shelters as a venue to teach the mothers about good nutrition using ingredients that the mothers bring from their own gardens. They prepare a meal together, and then feed it to the children.

This simple program ensures that the children are receiving a full meal, separate from the rest of the family, and is helping to alleviate the issue of stunting and malnutrition in the villages. ■

## Thank you

Thank you to all Anglicans who make the work of PWRDF possible. Your ongoing generosity supports partners in Canada and around the globe as we strive to create a truly just, healthy and peaceful world. Thank you also to all the diocesan and parish representatives, bishops, clergy, board members and youth who volunteer their time, energy and enthusiasm as ambassadors for PWRDF. Supporting the work of PWRDF improves the quality of daily life for vulnerable populations by promoting global justice and self-sustainability. Your commitment is transforming lives.

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