



# CoCo Program *Update*

## Fall 1993

### **New Life Water Program**

The New Life Water Program (NLWP) is a major project being launched by CoCo to bring potable water to repopulated villages in different regions of El Salvador over a period of several years. Beginning this Fall, the NLWP will target the Guazapa Valley in Cuscatlan with the goal of drilling wells to benefit 20 to 25 villages within a one year period. In coordination with Lifewater International, a California-based organization, CoCo will send drilling equipment to El Salvador and train a local team of Salvadorans in using and maintaining the rigs.

The first year of operations for the NLWP will cost approximately \$75,000. To help meet this goal, groups and individuals in the U.S. are encouraged to raise \$1,500 to fund the drilling of Wells of Companionship, which will bring plentiful, safe drinking water to Salvadoran communities for years to come. Opportunities will be available for contributors to host representatives from the Salvador communities, or to visit El Salvador on a delegation or work brigade.

### **Seeds of Learning Project (SOL)**

The Seeds of Learning (SOL) Project invites educators and students throughout the U.S. to engage in activities in support of community education programs in El Salvador. During the '93 - '94 school year, the SOL Book Project aims to provide quality Spanish text books to community schools in regions that were most affected by the war. SOL is also providing grants to support community teachers this year in the regions of Cabañas, Cuscatlan and Northern Usulután, and completing the construction and reconstruction of two schools in the Guazapa Valley.

A SOL delegation travelling to El Salvador next Spring will be an opportunity for people from the U.S. to visit community schools, meet with education committees, and study the current education system and issues in El Salvador. U.S. schools can also get involved through a pilot project called Compas de SOL, in which U.S. and Salvadoran classes will share special class projects with each other, and support the El Salvador Book Project.

## **Beans, Tortillas & Prayer Covenant**

The Beans, Tortillas & Prayer Covenant is a challenge to individuals, families and faith-based groups in the U.S. to raise \$500 of support for development in El Salvador while having regular reflection times and taking steps towards living a less consumer-oriented lifestyle. This year, the Covenant aims to help *campesinos* (rural villagers) in Valle Nuevo, Cabañas purchase 300 acres of land from which they were threatened with eviction.

A U.S. tour of Valle Nuevo residents and a work brigade to El Salvador will be part of the Covenant activities in 1994.

## **¡Viva La Clinica!**

The Health Program of Northern Cabañas aims to benefit residents of over 30 rural villages that have never had access to adequate healthcare. Currently, 12 community health committees have been formed in the region to promote health education and provide basic medical care.

A major step forward for health in Cabañas will be the construction of the Santa Marta Health Center, which is the focus of the ¡Viva La Clinica! campaign. Never at a lack for creativity, the Takoma Park (MD) - Santa Marta Companion Cities Project has taken the challenge of raising \$10,000 for the clinic over the next year, building a model clinic on their town's library roof as they approach their goal. The Dumbarton United Methodist Church in DC has also committed to contribute to this effort. Other contributors to the Health Center include the Presbyterian Church and Jesuit Relief Ministries.

## **Reforestation Brigades**

El Salvador's environment and diverse ecosystems have been devastated by the highest population density in the Western Hemisphere, intensive and extensive use of the land for agriculture and urban development, and most recently a devastating civil war. The rural valley north and east of Guazapa Volcano in Cuscatlan was repeatedly and extensively burned by ground and aerial military operations during the conflict. To begin reversing this devastation, a new Salvadoran organization called Eco-Guazapa has elaborated an extensive reforestation and ecological restoration program and is seeking financial and technical support.

This Fall, CoCo will begin planning Reforestation Brigades which will travel to El Salvador to join Eco-Guazapa and the communities of the region in planting trees for the Forest of Reconciliation. The goal is to plant 75,000 trees, one for every Salvadoran killed in the war. Individuals, schools and community groups are encouraged to contact CoCo if interested in participating in a Reforestation Brigade next year!