



MISSION NEWS

Canadian Jesuits International (CJI)

Vol. 52 No. 1 | Winter 2017



Blessing and struggle:

My work with refugees in urban Africa

Teddy Salimo Akolonge is a social worker with Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) in Nairobi, Kenya

Hassan Mohamed and his son are refugees from Somalia. Hassan fled his country 12 years ago and was in a refugee camp in Dollo Ado, Ethiopia, before going to Kenya. His young son has been kidnapped twice by men intent on grooming him to be a child soldier one day. Happily they are together now with their family in Nairobi, where Hassan has a business that he began with a loan from JRS.

My name is Teddy Akolonge, and I've been working for JRS in Kenya since February 2009. I am married, with three children, and am also a student of counselling psychology. I began with JRS as a volunteer appointed by St John the Baptist Catholic Church. JRS partners with Catholic parishes to assist refugees in urban areas. While the parishes provide workers, along with office and storage space, JRS provides support services and materials for distribution.

Looking back ...

During my first three years with JRS (2009 – 2011), donor funding was high. There was a budget for almost every need presented by the refugees. Our shelves were well-stocked with food and other items. There were many new refugees then, especially from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In my job, I welcomed new refugee beneficiaries every month, and at the same time had to phase out a similar number of refugees who no longer required as much assistance. Once a year, preschool and secondary school

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The vision & mission of CJI

The vision of Canadian Jesuits International is a world of peace, justice and integrity of creation, transformed through active commitment and finding God in all things.

The mission of CJI is to love and to serve by working with people struggling for social justice and dignity in the world. Together with Jesuit and other partners, CJI responds in solidarity, through awareness-raising and advocacy in Canada and supporting partnerships in the Global South.

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A word from Madeline Lunney, *CJI Director*

The theme of this issue of *Mission News* is “Looking forward, looking back.” It features the reflections of some of our partners in the Global South who have years of experience and dedicated service. It also features a reflection by our own Jesuit Provincial, Peter Bisson, on the recent 36th General Congregation and what this means for CJI. And not least of all, it includes an insightful interview with Director Jenny Cafiso. CJI welcomes Jenny back from her six-month sabbatical in the new year.

The pace of change in our world has greatly accelerated since 1946, when CJI was founded as the Mission Office of the Jesuits in English Canada. We’ve been constant in our efforts “to love and serve by working with people struggling for justice around the world.” But threats to peace, justice and the integrity of creation persist. Globalization has brought increased inequality. Climate change threatens our natural world and the quality of life in communities across the globe.

And yet much has been accomplished. Organizations working in international development are more aware of the complexity of addressing problems in different parts of the world and the need to work with local people. People participating in the projects we support are increasingly empowered to define and implement their own solutions. With the generosity of donors from across Canada, we’ve helped to increase access to education and viable livelihoods, and to improve health and environmental stewardship.

Positive social change should be happening faster and more completely, but it *is* happening. We’re doing our best to honour our historic relationships while creating new opportunities to support effective social justice work.

Soon you’ll see a new name for this newsletter. But it will continue to share CJI news and feature articles from our overseas partners. We foresee continuity and continued progress in our work, but also expect many challenges ahead. Whether you are a long-time donor or a new supporter of CJI, we thank you for joining us on the journey!

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Blessing and struggle: My work with refugees in urban Africa

scholarships were also provided. Rent support for the most vulnerable refugees was available throughout the year, and kits for expectant mothers were distributed. Access to medical services in those days wasn't a problem, especially for asylum seekers.

Changes ...

In November 2012, we began to face new challenges after the Government of Kenya introduced its "encampment policy," following a series of violent incidents. This policy required all refugees to move to designated camps and limited their rights to employment and movement. It adversely affected all urban programs for refugees and led to a decline in donor funding for them. At the same time, we experienced an influx of refugees from DR Congo, South Sudan and Somalia.

JRS and other agencies came together to challenge the government's encampment policy in court. They argued that it contravenes refugees' rights, and were able to prove that refugees are not a burden but rather a resource. However, until now the policy remains in effect.

The new situation forced JRS to reduce the period that families are served in our food program by more than half, and we no longer carried non-food items for distribution. The number of scholarships was also reduced both for preschool and secondary school, and rent support for vulnerable refugees was cut back. Financial assistance to refugees at the parishes stopped, and for a while access to medical services was also stopped.

In addition to less funding and fewer resources, refugees sometimes had to wait for services. Some could not understand why they could not get certain things. Others accused me of favoritism, not realizing that there are criteria for placing or phasing out people in our programs. One of the most challenging experiences for me personally was when we began receiving LGBTI refugees from Uganda in 2014. It was very difficult for me to listen to them, and I had many questions in my mind, but I provided them with assistance just the same.

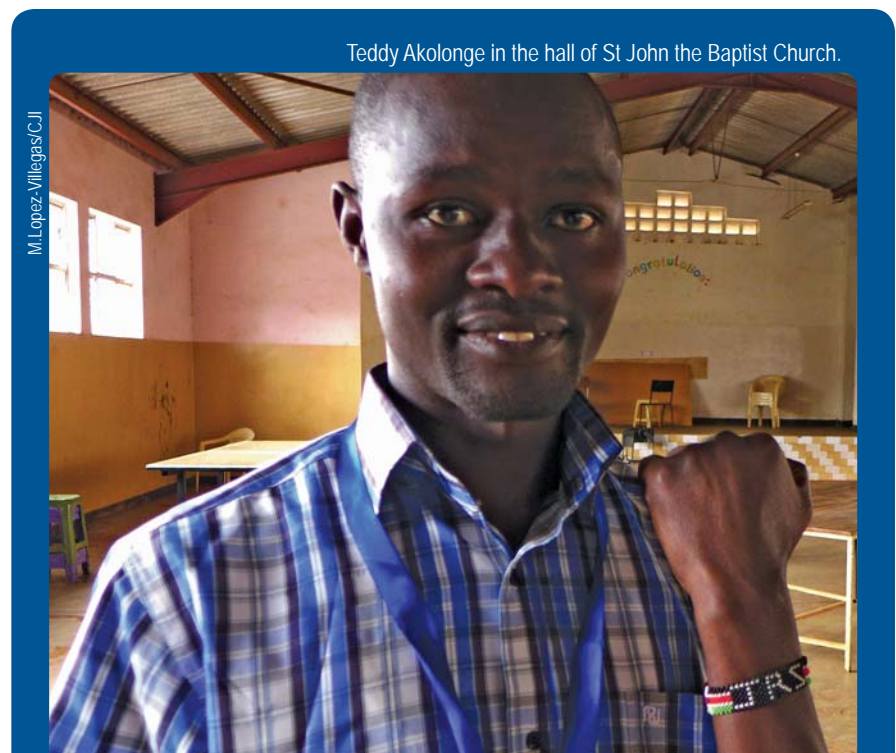
Through all these challenges, I felt rewarded by seeing refugees leaving my office with smiles on their faces because they had received a service they needed so badly. Children jumped up and down saying "thank you" because they knew they were not going to go hungry for a while. Such responses, whether for food, scholarships, or help with a business start-up or employment, still make me happy.

Going forward ...

The changes that I've described have meant that JRS has had to make very difficult choices about which of its services are critical and which must be dropped. This year, for example, we had a proposal for helping refugees more holistically: when they came for food assistance they would also become part of a livelihood program, which would then provide a good exit strategy. But while we received funding for food, we did not get funding for the livelihood component.

One positive development in the JRS program in Nairobi has been the introduction of university scholarships. Although the numbers are small, it is a good move.

After years of working for JRS, this year I and my fellow social workers were taken on as JRS staff and given contracts to sign. This brings many benefits. Best of all, our morale has risen and we've become more energetic serving refugees. ■



Teddy Akolonge in the hall of St John the Baptist Church.

M. Lopez-Villegas/CJI

In Zambia: Looking back ... looking forward

Paul A. Desmarais SJ is Director of Kasisi Agricultural Training Centre (KATC) in Zambia

Let me start by introducing myself. My name is Paul Desmarais and I am a Canadian Jesuit Brother. I grew up on a farm in southwestern Ontario, and I started my novitiate training in 1964. After taking my vows, I attended the University of Guelph and graduated with a BSc in Agriculture in 1971. That same year I was missioned to Zambia. Canada sent six Jesuits to work in Zambia in response to a request from our Father General in Rome. Now I'm the only one still here. The local people say I was young when I first arrived!

I was asked by the major religious superior in Zambia to work with the farmers around Kasisi Mission. And as they say, the rest is history. Initially I actively promoted hybrid seed, fertilizers, pesticides and mechanization. However, after about 15 years working with small-scale farmers, I realized we were on the wrong path. A good colleague of mine, Fr David Shulist SJ, suggested I look at organic farming. At first I thought he was talking rubbish! But after visiting organic farms back in Ontario, I thought there might be something in it. Slowly we transitioned to organic farming.

We've been growing vegetables organically at Kasisi now since 1990, and I can say with confidence that all vegetables can be grown this way. Some people erroneously

believe that organic farming does not require much planning. *Au contraire*. Successful organic farming requires practical experience, an understanding of science and a keen eye to observe what is happening in nature.

In our first years at KATC, we were training farming families in a two-year residential program, but were limited to 10 families. Now we offer mainly 5-day residential sessions and are training 600 to 1,500 people annually. KATC has trained people from across Zambia, from NGOs and from government ministries. KATC has also trained instructors and farmers from neighbouring countries, including Burundi, Malawi, Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

In the early years it was much easier to obtain funding from Canada for projects. Now it is demanding work! There are many documents to be filled in and stringent government regulations. We are very appreciative of the help we've received over the years. Today KATC is well recognized within Zambia, and people associate the name Kasisi with organic farming.

KATC is now looking to generate much more of its own income and resources. We want to add value to our products. At the end of 2016, we began adding value to our milk by making yogurt, soft cheeses and cream. In 2017, we will make rolled oats and groats and also mill wheat using a stone mill. Eventually we also want to extract oil from oil crops and use some of it as biofuel.

I've enjoyed my work over the 45 years that I've lived here. I would encourage young people, both

lay and religious, to be bold and courageous – to do great things for the Lord. Don't be bashful! There will be hiccups along the way but you must not get discouraged. Please visit our website at <http://www.katczm.org>. ■

Br Paul Desmarais SJ today.



Br Paul Desmarais SJ as a young man.



Accounting and loving kindness in Cambodia

Ms Ol Sokhem is Finance Manager for Jesuit Service Cambodia (JSC).

I started working with JSC in August 1999; it's been 17 years already! I began as an intern in JSC's finance office, but soon after there was a vacancy for an accountant. I applied and was accepted. In 2006, a lay missionary from Hong Kong recommended me for a scholarship to study for a bachelor's degree in Accounting. It went well and I graduated in 2009. More recently, I was able to get my master's degree in Financial Management.

A number of things have changed at JSC over my years here. For example, there have been improvements to our personnel policy, accounting system and staff capacity building program. These developments are important because they help to improve the quality of our work, including our professionalism and accountability.

Working at JSC has taught me a lot: not only about technical skills but also about relationships and communication. I enjoy working closely with my colleagues and solving important problems. One of my biggest challenges was learning to speak in public. I also had to

get used to speaking English with visitors and expatriates, including those from the Korean Jesuit Province who oversee our work.

For me, working at JSC isn't just about earning a salary. It's also about working with love and kindness. I'm learning more about this through the fourfold Cambodian ideals of Metta (loving kindness), Karuna (compassion), Mudita (sympathetic joy) and Upekkha (equanimity). At JSC we have a strong desire to accompany and serve communities, to recognize people's abilities, diversity and creativity, and to respond to their needs, including education.

CJI supports the work of JSC, which focuses on disadvantaged communities and people living with disabilities. ■



C. Dawson

Ol Sokhem at Jesuit Service Cambodia.

General Congregation 36: From sauerkraut to Spirit

Peter Bisson SJ is Provincial Superior of the Jesuits in English Canada

Winston Churchill once quipped about a certain ally, "They can always be trusted to do the right thing, once all the other possibilities have been exhausted." It was in a similar way that 215 Jesuits – gathered in Rome late last year for the 36th General Congregation – came to recognize the Spirit acting in our midst: we fumbled our way into collaborating with the Spirit of God.

Early in our assembly, the five-day process of electing a new Superior-General (Fr Arturo Sosa of Venezuela) was a powerful, communal experience of meeting the Spirit by prayerfully engaging with one another. Nevertheless, when we got down to more ordinary business we found ourselves mired in discussion and debate. One priest remarked it was like pedalling a bicycle in sauerkraut! Finally, after experimenting with a method of exchange called spiritual conversation, we retrieved the earlier quality of encounter. We got out of the "sauerkraut" and into the Spirit.

(continued on page 6)



D. Doll SJ

Peter Bisson SJ greets Pope Francis at GC 36.

Past and future with Jenny Cafiso

Anne-Marie Jackson, Director of the Jesuit Forum, interviewed CJI Director Jenny Cafiso, who was recently on sabbatical, about how she views her time with CJI, and the challenges going forward.

When did you begin working at CJI and what experience most prepared you for your job?

When I came to CJI in 2003, I had been working for some years with international solidarity and social justice organizations, including in Latin America. But most significant for my work with CJI were my 8 years with the international office of the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) in Rome. That experience helped me to appreciate first-hand the immense network of people and initiatives of the Society of Jesus around

GC 36 (cont'd from page 5)

This fumbling passage to Spirit exemplified what I see as our chief learning at GC 36. Whether in the main decrees or in the extraordinary morning spent with Pope Francis, the primary lesson was not what to do but how we do it. This means better appropriating our charism and identity, the spiritual tools that unite us to God for mission with Jesus. It means seeking greater coherence between the values that we as Jesuits promote in our ministries and how we live together. And it means reading the signs of the times – such as people's search for meaning, the forced displacement and migration of people, the marginalization of many groups by globalization – in terms of the ongoing need for reconciliation.

What does this mean for CJI? It means to be more deeply CJI! And to do so in solidarity with those who share our mission and values, and with others who are of good will. ■

the world. I learned the importance of working collaboratively, Jesuits and lay people bound by a common purpose. And I had the privilege of meeting people who are poor, marginalized, excluded, victims of war; I was moved by their courage. Their faces, their hopes and dreams, which I still carry in my heart, have inspired me to believe in the work of CJI and its importance in bringing about a world of justice and peace.



Jenny Cafiso

How have things changed over the years?

When I arrived, CJI was going through a major transition. Born as the “mission office” to support the work of Canadian Jesuits overseas, it was discerning how to respond to a new context: a new understanding of mission as partnership and solidarity; new local leaders in partner countries assuming responsibility for the work from the missionaries; a universal call by the Society of Jesus for mission offices to be agents of change and social justice in partnership with Jesuit initiatives in the Global South.

Internally, CJI faced declining revenue and an aging donor base.

It was also deciding whether to follow the US model of merging mission offices with Jesuit development offices or to follow the European model of separate non-governmental organizations focusing on solidarity and education for justice. We opted for the latter. But our staff at that time consisted only of me and a half-time administrative assistant.

And what is the organization like today?

Today we have 4 full-time and 4 part-time staff. CJI is part of an international network, working in partnership with Jesuit initiatives globally, seeking together to work for social justice.

CJI has not forgotten its roots; it is still working in the areas where it has been historically active, and is supporting strong local leadership. It has also developed partnerships in new regions, as well as greater outreach in Canada to schools, churches and other communities.

What are the challenges now?

They continue to be many: how to be relevant as a small organization when much larger actors are doing significant and often good work; discerning our specific character and contribution; ensuring we meet current standards of transparency, accountability and excellence, while maintaining our spirit, flexibility, closeness to the people and strong sense of mission. We speak of mission as encounter – encounter among equals where we all have a voice. ■

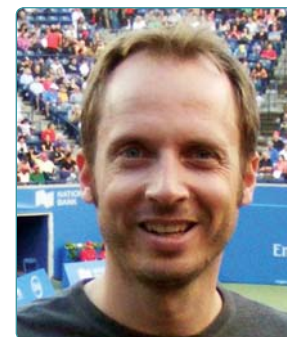
New board member

CJI is pleased to welcome Ted Penton SJ to its Board of Trustees. Originally from Ottawa, Ted obtained a master's degree in philosophy before spending two years with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps in North Carolina, where he worked with migrant farmworkers. In 2005, Ted graduated from Harvard Law School, and then worked in Ottawa for the Human Rights Law Section of Canada's Department of Justice.

Ted entered the Jesuit novitiate in Montreal in 2009 and took his vows two years later. Recently he spent

three years working for the Ignatian Spirituality Project in Chicago, where he helped with retreats for men and women experiencing homelessness and recovering from addictions.

Ted is currently studying theology at Regis College in Toronto. CJI looks forward to the gifts and experience he will bring to its Board. ■



Ted Penton SJ

A. Suski SJ

Eastern Canada school outreach

Uju Umenyi, CJI's Youth and Outreach Coordinator, visited schools in St John's and Halifax from 19 to 23 September. She gave presentations and led workshops on CJI's work and partners in the Global South. Topics included education for refugees and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Father Abraham Day

The City of Halifax declared 26 September "Father Abraham Day" in honour of Fr J. Murray Abraham SJ, who was raised in Halifax but worked for over 60 years in Darjeeling, India. To mark the occasion, CJI hosted a reception at Halifax Hall and was represented by Uju Umenyi, Isabel Perez-Doherty and Fr David Creamer SJ. For more, please see www.canadianjesuitsinternational.ca/?p=5546.

Xavier Network meeting

International Programs Coordinator Miriam Lopez-Villegas participated in the Xavier Network (XN) meeting held at St Cuthman's, Horsham, UK, from 12 to 14 October. People from 12 Jesuit NGOs and mission offices discussed strategic partnerships and received updates from XN's working groups, including the Programs Working Group, which CJI joined this year. During the

In brief ...

meeting, XN also initiated its emergency protocol for Haiti in response to Hurricane Matthew; see www.canadianjesuitsinternational.ca/?p=5748.

Newsletter name

The contest to find a new name for CJI's newsletter closed on 15 October. In accordance with the rules, the Board of Trustees was presented at its fall meeting with the top five names as chosen by CJI staff, but chose not to proceed with any of them. We are most grateful for the encouraging response to the contest and want to thank everyone who participated! Please watch for our new newsletter name, as chosen by the Board, coming soon.

Canadians at the Teach-In for Justice advocate publicly for immigrants.

Teach-In for Justice

CJI led a delegation of 25 Canadian students and educators to the Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice, held in Washington DC from 12 to 14 November. Champion College, Loyola High School, St Bonaventure's College High School and St Paul's High School were all represented among this year's 2,000 participants. The Teach-In theme was "Mercy in Action." See www.canadianjesuitsinternational.ca/?p=5955.

Go for Dollo campaign

For Giving Tuesday on 29 November, CJI held the "Go for Dollo" campaign. We raised \$50,000 to repair the roof of the Skills Training Centre for refugees in Dollo Ado, Ethiopia. Special thanks to the schools that supported this campaign, and to The Pindoff Family Charitable Foundation. See www.canadianjesuitsinternational.ca/?p=311.



U. Umenyi/CJI

Fr Debrework visits Canada

The Regional Director of Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) in Eastern Africa, Fr Endashaw Debrework SJ, had a full agenda for his three-day visit to Canada in November. It proved most beneficial to those of us who were privileged to spend time with him. Fr Endashaw oversees the work of JRS in five countries – Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, South Sudan and Sudan – and is a global advocate on issues pertaining to refugees and displaced persons.

In Ottawa, Fr Endashaw met with government officials to discuss the complexity of migration patterns and the needs of refugees in eastern Africa. In the Toronto area, Fr Endashaw visited schools and met with the media. He also spoke at a public event on 29 November at St Michael's College in Toronto. It was entitled "**Hosting 9 million displaced people: The response of JRS in East Africa.**" Those in attendance heard first-hand what JRS is doing in the region and greatly appreciated his insights on root causes of forced migration and the responses required of the international community. For more, please see www.canadianjesuitsinternational.ca/?p=5953. ■



C.Hircks/CJI

Fr Endashaw Debrework SJ speaks about hosting refugees.

NEW YEAR APPEAL

Please support CJI – your contribution will bring positive change to marginalized people in the Global South in the year ahead!

All donations are tax deductible. All personal information is held in accordance with Canadian Government Privacy Policy.

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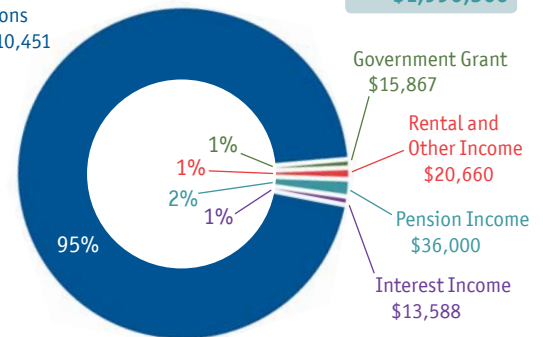
Thank you for your support!

Canadian Jesuits International Statement of Operations 1 July 2015 – 30 June 2016

OPERATING REVENUE

Donations
\$1,910,451

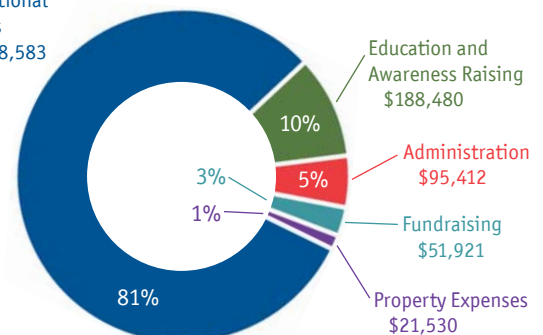
Total Revenues:
\$1,996,566



OPERATING EXPENSES

International
Projects
\$1,528,583

Total Expenses:
\$1,885,926



The amounts reflected in the graphs above do not include gains or losses in the market value of CJI's investments. Most CJI investments are earmarked for specific projects. This provides some stability for the ongoing work of CJI's partners in the field. The sale of the building owned by CJI is not indicated in the Operating Revenue, as it was a capital event that will provide a reserve for operations.