
February 2013

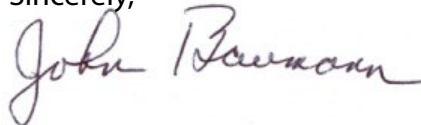
Dear PICO people,

We are excited to share with you the work of PICO International in Rwanda and Central America, and to introduce our new PICO International Project in Haiti.

Through the enclosed 2012 Report, you will see that grassroots leaders are making unprecedented progress in response to their top priorities, including health, crime and safety, economic development and resources for youth. They are building and maintaining strong relationships with public officials and key stakeholders. They are rebuilding civic society and putting their faith into action.

To strengthen mutual, multicultural, and multinational relationships and provide support and assistance to PICO in Rwanda, Central America and Haiti, we formed the PICO International Advisory Committee this past year. There are many forms of involvement and we welcome your participation. Please contact me if you want more information.

Sincerely,



John Baumann, S.J.
PICO Founder & Director of Special Projects

Introducing PICO - Haiti

Introducing PICO Haiti

January 2013

PICO International is launching a new international organizing project in 2013, through the leadership of Francois Pierre-Louis, an experienced PICO director and consultant. He is introducing the PICO model in Haiti as a tool to restore equitable systems that value and include the voices of Haitians, starting in the Northeast Department. Many of the residents live with daily poverty and marginalization, and through PICO Haiti, they will gain the tools to take action through faith, ultimately improving their quality of life.

Since June 2012, several meetings have taken place with the Catholic bishop, clergy and lay leaders in the Northeast Department, to develop a process for building their organization. These meetings have resulted in workshops on how to conduct one-to-one meetings to identify the needs of local residents, research to build relationships with public officials, and a calendar of activities which will culminate in a Covenant Assembly to launch the organization in June.

Please check our website at www.picointernational.org, where updates on progress will soon be posted. For more information, contact John Baumann, S.J., Founder and Director of Special Projects at 510-655-2801 or via email at jbaumann@piconetwork.org, or PICO-Haiti Director, Francois Pierre-Louis at fpierrelou@aol.com.



PICO - Rwanda 2012 Year-End-Report

(Formerly Congregations Rebuilding Community in Rwanda)

PICO Rwanda is excited to report that the first-ever health center in Mumeya is now completed, with 30 plus rooms and inpatient capacity, because of the hard work of hundreds of Mumeya residents from Lutheran, Catholic, Baptist, Seventh Day Adventist, and Anglican congregations. These grassroots leaders have participated in ongoing leadership training led by Executive Director Pastor John Rutsindintwarane, and involved hundreds more in community development action from the five villages located in the region. Villagers held many one-to-one conversations to bring people together and identify their top priorities: out of these conversations their top need was for a local health center.

Mumeya leaders have also set a new precedent in grassroots organizing in the past year, they met twice with Rwanda's President of the Senate Dr. Ntawukuliryayo Jean Damascene (something they never imagined they could do), and secured his support for funding to finish health center construction. As a result, the health center now can serve the entire community of 30,000+ villagers. They have gotten almost all villagers to sign up for health insurance, and the center has inpatient capacity and a pharmacy. Over twenty Mumeyans were employed to complete construction, and several have been trained as health workers for the center.

Now leaders are moving ahead to get clean, piped water and electricity to the region, and they recently received the commitment of Dr. Damascene and Kirehe's mayor that water and electricity will be in place by June 2013. Fueled by their success, Mumeya leaders have begun construction of a community center. Scheduled for completion in 2013, the building will include a restaurant serving the health center to build the financial base for the community, and a training and community meeting room.

Mumeya leaders begin construction of a second building that will include a restaurant, training center and crop storage



We are also inspired by progress being made by PICO-Rwanda in Nyange, (Central/West Rwanda). About 40 residents have participated in leadership training, often provided by Mumeya leaders, and held many one-to-one conversations as a first step in taking action regarding their needs. Out of these conversations, improved roofing emerged as their top priority. They are moving forward quickly, locating a source of high quality local clay soil and getting government officials to provide roofing tile machines. PICO Rwanda has also begun introductory trainings at the Regina Pacis Catholic Parish, St. Ignatius Jesuit School and the Centre Christus in Kigali.

The mission of PICO-Rwanda is to empower communities to take charge of their own development. PICO-Rwanda seeks to unlock the potential of Rwandan families and faith-based communities by turning their faith into action, promoting a culture of peace, democracy, unity, and reconciliation where equal human rights are afforded to all. Through individual and collective accountability, PICO Rwanda helps transform people and organizations to promote justice rather than division or discrimination.

Highlights of activity in 2012

Senate President Dr. Ntawukuliryayo Jean Damascene met with ten Mumeya leaders to discuss the government's commitments to complete their health center. Mumeya leaders achieved the following agreements:

1. Dr. Damascene donated FRW 1,000,000 to the health center.
2. He agreed to collaborate with the local government and the Mayor of Kirehe, to insure construction of the remaining health center rooms by June 2012.
3. He committed to make sure that the local government and mayor of Kirehe fulfill their promise for water access and electricity in Mumeya before the end of 2012.

The health center is now completely built, with the capacity to serve all five villages – over 30,000 people! A large garden has been planted near the health center, increasing access to fresh produce for the villagers as well as a source of income. The Local Organizing Committee, an elected group of experienced Mumeya leaders, is pursuing next steps, including getting clean, piped water to their villages, along with electricity. They held many one-to-one conversations to build understanding and support for these new projects.



(Top) Mumeya leaders meet with Senate President Dr. Damascene; (Bottom) The health center is completed

The communities of Mumeya also began construction of a training center for community empowerment and a restaurant as an income generating project. Mumeya leaders are taking on greater responsibility regarding their own work, keeping track of their organizing to hold themselves accountable and leverage support from public officials. Here’s an example of their reports:

VILLAGE	1 - 1s CONDUCTED	AMOUNT FRW CONTRIBUTED	NEXT STEPS
Mumeya	105	150,000.00	More 1 - 1s
Cyiha	250	62,000.00	More 1 - 1s
Kageyo	289	180,000.00	More 1 - 1s
Musaza	600	4,000,000.00	Opened EWSA electric co. account; coordinated with mayor for company site visits

PICO Rwanda leaders in Nyange are tackling the need for decent roofing for their homes.

Nyange leaders, after conducting 1-to1 meetings, surfaced their community’s top priority – the need for better roofing. Mumeya leaders have traveled in pairs to Nyange to build momentum and provide training in this rural community, and Pastor John regularly visits Nyange to train new leaders and help them work through the development model that served Mumeya so well. Nyange leaders faced a setback last July, losing one of their strongest leaders, Madame Akimana, who died as she was being transported to a hospital after giving birth to her child.

Since then, leaders are pursuing a new economic development project to make their own roofing tiles that will improve their houses. They see great potential in this work: residents will learn new skills to improve local housing, and there is the opportunity to create economic and employment opportunities as well. Nyange leaders are arranging for training of five men and five women in roofing tile production. They are researching manufacturing methods that are environmentally friendly, opportunities to market tiles in Kigali and how to design a financial model to determine potential markets, costs, etc., that will result in a long-term tool to reduce poverty and prevent the potential for future conflict in the area. Once trained, it is expected that a



Nyange leaders report back on one-to-ones, and begin plans to make roofing tiles

person would be able to make 100 roofing tiles a day. A small house of 6 m x 9 m is roofed by 3,500 roofing tiles. Their goal is to roof 20 houses in 2013.

PICO Rwanda expands to Kigali, Rwanda's capital city.

In Kigali, with the assistance of Fr. Innocent Rugaragu, PICO Rwanda began introductory meetings and trainings with the St. Ignatius Jesuit School and with youth at the Centre Christus. Fr. Elisee Rutagambwa works with a group of youth at the Centre, and over twenty young people attended a workshop that introduced the PICO model. Through one-to-one conversations, the young people began to share their experiences with each other and identified their top concerns: unemployment and poverty, lack of or poor judgment, and the negative effects of globalization on youth, including a loss of Rwandan culture. Fr. Elisee traveled to California in July to participate in the PICO National leadership training. Fr. Innocent and Pastor John also met with Fr. Consolateur, whose parish is Regina Pacis in Kigali. He is very excited to bring the PICO/Rwanda work into his parish and additional schools.

The PICO Network and PICO International

Non-partisan and multicultural, PICO is one of the largest, most diverse grassroots community efforts in the United States, active in 19 states, involving over 50 religious denominations and faith traditions, and working in two international settings: Rwanda and Central America. Since 1972 PICO has provided an opportunity for people and congregations to translate their faith into action by supporting the development of low and moderate income leaders. Ongoing training builds these leaders' capacity to identify issues and engage large numbers of community members in gaining commitments for equitable resources and policies, working on health care, housing, education, safety and local quality of life issues. Please visit our website and photo slideshow at www.picointernational.org. For more information, contact John Baumann, S.J., Founder and Director of Special Projects at 510-655-2801 or via email at jbaumann@piconetwork.org, or PICO-Rwanda Director Pastor John Rutsindintwarane at jruksi@gmail.com.



(Top and Middle) Training youth and residents in the PICO model in Kigali.
(Bottom) A home roofed with ceramic tiles – the Nyange community's goal is to roof 20 homes in 2013

PICO Central America

(COFOA: **Comunidades de Fe Organizadas para la Acción**)

COFOA (Comunidades de Fe Organizadas para la Accion) is the first congregation-based community organizing project in Central America and the first international project developed through sponsorship of the US-based PICO Network. COFOA builds grassroots leaders among low-income Central American residents through leadership development that encourages people to identify their dreams and translate their faith into collective action in their congregations and communities.

In 2012, COFOA leaders in El Salvador and Guatemala continued to grow in their ability to bring important change that improves their communities. Hundreds of low-income people participated in ongoing leadership trainings, and together they are sustaining a strong, respected, locally independent organization in El Salvador, and they have expanded to two congregations in Guatemala in response to an invitation by Catholic Bishop Pellecer.

Because of COFOA's geographic growth and numbers of leaders, late in 2012 seventy-two leaders from El Salvador and Guatemala participated in a three day retreat in San Salvador. The theme of the training was "Power is in the Relationship," offering COFOA leaders an opportunity to reflect on their public ministry, consider how to build intentional public relationships, and learn a set of practical tools and principles that guide their faith-based organizing. The leaders had a unique opportunity to meet and talk with each other, and they represented a remarkable cross-section of Central Americans who share a desire to empower people to improve their communities.

COFOA El Salvador is working with the following member congregations: Santiago Apostol parish in Santiago Nonualco; Santa Catalina de Alejandria parish in Cuyultitan; San Pedro Apostol parish in San Pedro Nonualco; San Juan Evangelista parish in San Juan Tepezontes; San Luis Rey de Francia in San Luis Talpa; Santa Cruz in Paraiso de Osorio; Jesús del Rescate

COFOA leaders participate in regional retreat



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in Barahona; Nuestra Señora del Perpetuo Socorro, in Rio Blanco; La Resurrección, Astoria (all in the Laz Paz district); San Nicolas Obispo in San Nicolas Lempa, San Vicente; Anglican Episcopal Church Christ the King Mission, El Calix in Baja Lempa, Usulután.

Expansion efforts are underway to add additional congregations in other departments and to bring in more Catholic dioceses. Recent meetings with Bishop Medardo Gomez of the Lutheran Church and Bishop Martin Barahona of the Anglican Church were fruitful and it is hoped that some of their congregations will join in 2013, as well as a number of evangelical congregations.

COFOA Guatemala is working with two member parishes: San Antonio de Padua in San Antonio Aguas Calientes, Sacatepequez and San Dionisio Aeropagita, in the City of Pastores. Two additional congregations are actively exploring membership.

At a recent convening of bishops from across Central America, a commitment was made to identify a church in Honduras where we will begin working in 2013.

Highlights of 2012 work

Youth and leaders from San Pedro Nonualco, El Salvador, held a large peace march with over 600 people, and formed a broad coalition to promote cultural, educational and democratic events that reduce violence and improve the quality of life in their community. They obtained agreements from public officials to create a Strategy and Dialog table to reduce violence, bringing community members together with local authorities and institutions to lead this effort. They were successful in getting commitments by public officials and government agencies to improve coordination that increases safety efforts, and promote community and educational activities for families.

COFOA San Pedro Nonualco leaders are holding a series of workshops focused on violence, including harassment, domestic violence, gang involvement, family communication, migration and violence aimed at



(Top) COFOA leaders hold gang prevention workshop (Middle) Youth lead peace march in San Pedro Nonualco (Bottom) Father Onestini opens a Candidates Forum

women, attended by around 1,300 San Pedro citizens. These workshops are part of the safety campaign launched by the Canton Center Community School in rural Canton La Comunidad, led by the Strategy and Dialog table. A September workshop was attended by 150 parents and students regarding gangs and youth gang involvement. Parents asked that they have assistance from mental health specialists to improve their ability to communicate effectively with their children, especially teens, around these issues.

This June, leaders from San Pedro Nonualco opened their second store through an association they formed called the Foundation for Community Development (FUDECO), with a goal to attract and serve larger numbers of the Sanpedrana community sector. They are holding a listening campaign across the region to introduce the store and their broader goal of reducing poverty through economic development.

The plan for the new store is based on lessons learned after opening the first store in 2011. It is managed by the Pastoral Ministry of the Church of St. Peter the Apostle and members of COFOA. It will distribute 50% of any profits towards community development, such as establishing a childcare center, scholarships for local students, participation with the local government in infrastructure projects (paving streets and providing electricity, drinking water, etc.).

COFOA leaders in four congregations organized nonpartisan Candidates Forums attended by over 1000 people

COFOA leaders saw a priority to encourage people in their congregations and towns to vote in the March elections. Four COFOA congregations decided to hold mayoral candidate's forums. Nearly 600 people attended the first of these events, held at San Luis Talpa, our newest member congregation. In San Juan Tepezontes, an even smaller town, 550 showed up for their first forum of this kind. San Luis Talpa leaders prepared for the forum by holding one-to-one conversations and house meetings, and administering a survey during mass, to identify the top concerns of the community. They presented their top issues to all candidates and got their commitment to work with COFOA. Issues that emerged included the need for road repairs, electricity generation, and improved access to clean water.

(Top) COFOA leaders and staff celebrate their second store (Middle) COFOA brings out residents to a Candidates Forum (Bottom) El Calix residents receive medicine



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In September, COFOA Cuyultitan leaders invited the mayor and city council members to an accountability community reunion with 100 church leaders, to give a report about the three issues presented to the mayor in the Candidates Forum, and he reported back about progress regarding safety, garbage management, and alcohol control.

Health care remains a top issue

In August 2012, COFOA leaders from El Calix in Bajo Lempa, Jiquilisco municipality, Usulután, held a health fair that provided medical assistance for 200 people from the communities surrounding Calix. The event was organized by COFOA member congregation the Anglican Episcopal Church Christ the King Mission.

El Calix residents held one-to-one conversations in six communities, and surveyed 160 people regarding their health needs. Most people expressed that although health care is good in the local Health Unit, the services aren't enough. Sometimes there is no medicine, and poverty prevents them from going to the clinic for medical attention. There is also a lack of specialized treatments for common diseases including high blood pressure, diabetes, and malnutrition. These problems resulted in leaders from the Christ the King Mission holding a health fair to meet the immediate health needs in the community, providing medical consultation and free medication to low-income people in the area.

Strong relationships were forged with health ministry officials of the Dept. of Usulután, and a number of doctors and nurses volunteered their time to provide medical care. A range of pharmaceutical laboratories donated medication in response to a request by the congregation. Leaders are aware that immediate assistance is important, and they are also seeking improvements in the health system in the area and in the country. They have planned a series of workshops on health, and are holding research meetings with departmental and national officials to learn more about the functioning of the health system in El Salvador.

The newest COFOA member is Nuestra Señora del Perpetuo Socorro. Leaders have participated in COFOA



(Top) Cuyultitan mayor and city council at accountability reunion (Middle) Teacher Eduardo Ramirez, COFOA leader (Bottom) Calix residents in the waiting area

trainings using the PICO community organizing model. After a listening campaign, they identified the need for a bridge that connects the majority of the El Socorro community school children as their top priority, so that they increase access to their school center. During the rainy season, passage to the school is very difficult for the children, teachers, and cars: the most important concern is to assure that there is safe passage for all to get to the school, and to prevent any loss of life. COFOA leaders are now holding research meetings with public officials, to explain their concern and make sure that governing bodies are aware of the issue, and will respond to their needs.

Guatemala progress

In January 2013, Guatemalan leaders from Pastores City held an important meeting with public officials and local institutions to establish a broad coalition of institutional and elected officials as part of an action committee to organize a march for peace in February 2013. Over 12 institutions signed a covenant to be part of the peace march and work with COFOA leaders in a permanent safety campaign.

Two PICO delegations visited COFOA leaders and Communities in El Salvador and Guatemala in 2012

In August, eight PICO USA staff and leaders shared an intensive two-week immersion in PICO Central America's work in Guatemala and El Salvador. They met with leaders, church representatives (including bishops in both countries) and public officials, and witnessed the work of Local Organizing Committees firsthand in Antigua, Guatemala and the Diocese of Zacatecoluca, El Salvador.

In October, a delegation representing the PICO National Board of Directors, including Father Michael Mandala, Father John Baumann, Hank Goldstein, Jose Debasa and his wife Pauline visited COFOA staff, clergy and leaders in El Salvador and Guatemala.



(Top) Adults, children and elders get medical attention (Middle) Pick up crossing the empty river before the rainy season (Bottom) Children crossing the bridge without any protection

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Each delegation received a warm welcome and had opportunities to visit numerous Local Organizing Committees, hear testimony from COFOA leaders and clergy, and learn about the depth of the problems that COFOA leaders are tackling, including safety, violence, health access, transportation, economic development, and resources for youth. COFOA leaders shared that they were amazed that they could have meetings with public officials and get the changes that are needed in their communities. PICO staff who participated in the August delegation commented on the deep level of ownership they observed by leaders in the local organizations of COFOA. They found their commitment inspiring, and were struck by the similarities with the work they are doing in the United States.

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Please also visit our website and photo slideshow at www.picointernational.org. For more information, contact John Baumann, S.J., Founder and Director of Special Projects at 510-655-2801 or via email at jbau-mann@piconetwork.org, or PICO-Central America Director Alberto Velazquez at avelazquez20@aol.com.



(Top) Guatemala leaders plan a safety campaign (Middle) PICO Board members meet COFOA leaders (Bottom) John Baumann SJ, COFOA staff and leaders at the regional training