



The SHARE Foundation: Building a New El Salvador Today

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**Thank you for coming and on behalf of the SHARE Foundation,
welcome to El Salvador!**

A Bit of Background

Poverty in El Salvador is perhaps best understood in the context of the testimonies of those who lived and died in their fight for justice. That fight grew out of faith communities over 25 years ago. During the 1970s many in the Catholic Church made important changes in their commitment to the poor. Progressive priests began to follow the lead of the 1968 Latin American Bishops' Council in Medellín, Colombia, in which the Bishops stated that their pastoral work and accompaniment would begin to take a "preferential option for the poor". In El Salvador, Christians began to form "Ecclesial Base Communities" to study the Bible and reflect on their own reality. Through this process of reading, reflecting, acting, and evaluating, thousands of poor farmers who had been oppressed for years began to find hope in the Gospel's message. The Christian Base Communities would lead the way in the struggle for social and economic justice and for the creation of God's Kingdom on Earth.

During the 1970's, El Salvador still had a near feudal land system. Only 2% of the country's population controlled 60% of the arable land. The economy was based on exporting cotton, sugar cane and coffee, and these crops were grown on the very best land. The poor were relegated to grow corn on hillsides, or were given small plots of land on the *haciendas* where they worked cash crops. At the end of each harvest they were required to give a portion of their crop to the landowner. The gross injustices produced by this system created a tension that resulted in civil war.

Before and during the civil war, which lasted from 1980 to 1992, terror reigned, as death squads tortured and killed those who spoke out for justice. A strong actor in the struggle for dignity was Archbishop Oscar Romero, who was known as the voice of the poorest people in El Salvador. Although he began his position with some reservations, he quickly became aware of the pain and suffering of God's people. He began to speak out against the repression, calling for an end to U.S. military aid to El Salvador. These efforts earned him the love of the people and the hatred of the military. On Sunday, March 23, 1980, Romero said the following in his homily:

"Brothers, you are killing your own brothers. It is high time you obeyed your consciences rather than sinful orders. The church cannot remain silent before such an abomination...In the name of God, in the name of this suffering people whose cry rises to heaven more loudly each day, I implore you, I beg you, I order you: stop the repression!"

On Monday, March 24, 1980, Romero was shot by a professional assassin from the death squads while celebrating the Eucharist. Before his death, Romero said that if he was killed, he would be resurrected in the Salvadoran people. He was right. His life has become a symbol of hope for social justice amongst the poor in El Salvador, and for those in solidarity with the poor all over the world.

Four churchwomen from the United States were also martyred in this campaign of terror. Ita Ford, Maura Clarke, Dorothy Kazel, and Jean Donovan were supporting efforts to assist internal refugees in 1980. The four were raped and killed by government forces who had labeled them as subversives. These martyrs have never been forgotten among those who work for social justice in

El Salvador and beyond. In 2005, the twenty-fifth anniversary of their deaths provided us all with an opportunity to consider their message in the context of today. Their sacrifice calls us to keep our eyes open to the injustices in the world around us and to live as servants to the poorest of the poor.

January 16, 2007 marked the 15 year anniversary of the signing of the Peace Accords which brought an end to the civil war and initiated important changes in the Salvadoran government and society. The Peace Accords allowed opposition parties to participate openly in the political process and purported to demobilize the repressive state security forces and death squads although their demobilization has never been verified. Furthermore, the Peace Accords in practice have done little to address the economic roots that led to the war. Socio-economic components of the Peace Accords such as the redistribution of land, the provision of credit and technical assistance to small farmers and business, increases in social spending, and the elimination of monopolies remain unfulfilled. Today, El Salvador is still marked by inequities that inspired Christians of good faith like Oscar Romero, Ita Ford, Maura Clarke, Dorothy Kazel, and Jean Donovan to struggle for justice here two and a half decades ago.

SHARE works with our partners to develop strategies that address structural issues and to formulate solutions that are long term and sustainable. Following the example of Romero and the four US Churchwomen, SHARE works to give voice to those who are marginalized in El Salvador so that they can create their own answers to poverty and underdevelopment. With this background, we use the following pages to present the current political and economic context of El Salvador, in order to better understand the injustices that still persist and to present solutions.

Politics in El Salvador



Most of the government in El Salvador is still controlled by the ARENA political party. The ARENA political party is well known for organizing the Death Squads in the 1980s. Roberto D'Aubisson founded both the ARENA political party and the Death Squads. The United Nations Truth Commission found him to be responsible, among other atrocities, for the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero. ARENA came to power in 1989 and has maintained their grip on politics in El Salvador ever since. It is important to note that ARENA promotes the interests of the wealthy in El Salvador, many of whom play active roles within the party.

The major opposition party is the FMLN, the former guerrilla group legalized just after the signing of the Peace Accords in 1992. This party is recognized as historically representing the values and needs of El Salvador's poor majority. After a rough start in the 1994 elections, the FMLN fared better in 1997, winning just under half of the seats in the legislative assembly, giving them the ability to make changes at the legislative level by working in coalition with other center and progressive parties.



The 2004 elections were full of twists and turns. A campaign of intimidation and misinformation, (alleging erroneously that remittances from Salvadorans in the US to their families in El Salvador would be cut off if the FMLN won) and supported by high ranking U.S. officials, dominated the electoral process. Although the FMLN was able to double the number of votes it received in 1999,

the ARENA presidential candidate, Tony Saca, still won by a margin of 20% over FMLN candidate Shafik Handal. Due to a lack of access to quality voter education in rural and marginalized urban areas, ARENA controlled most of the vote among the very poor. Also, the highly publicized internal division within the FMLN caused, and has continued to cause a decline in confidence in the party. In addition, ARENA was able to capitalize on the public association of Handal as a leader in the civil war. Since Saca had no previous record, ARENA was able to portray Handal as “stuck in the past” and Saca as the candidate for the future. Finally, the FMLN’s campaign was complicated by the fact that Saca maintains a close relationship with the media. He owns many major radio stations, and is aligned with two newspapers and the three most prominent television stations.

The fourth consecutive ARENA administration has been marked by increasing levels of poverty and immigration. President Saca has taken populist actions in order to minimize public discontent, while at the same time intensifying his publicity campaign to create a virtual reality that exists only in the news media. Every week President Saca presents a new social plan, and a summary of his weekly activities. As a career journalist, he offers frequent interviews to TV and radio stations and to newspapers and has mounted a large-scale publicity campaign advertising his administration as the “government with a human touch”. His image among many facets of society is constantly improving, while extreme poverty and immigration continue to increase.

Economic and Social Realities in El Salvador

To talk about economics in El Salvador today is to talk of contradictions. At the macro-economic level everything seems as though the nation is prospering, but the majority of the population is still living in poverty! Some people call this rising poverty the “economic bullets” that kill Salvadorans today as opposed to the physical bullets, which used to kill them during the war. Of course it is harder to recognize these bullets, but people are dying just the same as a result of hunger, lack of employment and desperation.

A term that is heard a lot in El Salvador is “neo-liberal economics.” In theory, neo-liberal economic policies are meant to increase overall national wealth by increased foreign investment, flexibilization of the labor market, a transition from state to private ownership, and a shift in the role of the state away from being a provider of basic services. In the Central American context, these practices sometimes increase the Gross Domestic Product of nations, and almost always exacerbate the huge disparities between the rich and the poor. These economic policies are currently being sponsored by the U.S. government as well as international agencies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Circumstances that Affect People’s Livelihoods

Poverty in El Salvador is mainly concentrated in the rural sector. There are three interconnected problems that confront rural dwellers today: The first is a major change in the dynamic of rural economies. From 1980 to 2000 rural employment in non-farming activities rose from 39% to 53% and is now a larger portion of the economy than farming activity. In this dramatic shift,

agricultural exports generated only 11% in 2000 contrasted by 80% in 1978. This change has a lot to do with a lack of access to land and the flexibilization of the labor market. Unfortunately, most people in rural areas do not have the education to be upwardly mobile and are left with the option of working in the *maquiladoras* or sweatshops, migrating, or remaining unemployed without livelihoods.



The second major challenge facing Salvadorans today is the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). CAFTA is a series of bilateral agreements with five nations in Central America that was passed in El Salvador in December 2004 and in the United States in July 2005. There are several specific aspects of CAFTA that alarm SHARE's sisters and brothers in El Salvador. CAFTA, like most free trade agreements, makes it illegal for governments to charge a higher tax to foreign companies than it does to domestic companies. While this may encourage more foreign investment, it also lowers the revenue of the national government, which leads to a decrease in social spending. The absence of taxes also means that prices on goods produced in the United States will no longer be higher than those produced in El Salvador. Therefore, farmers in El Salvador will be competing on the same playing field with farmers from the United States. However, land ownership, access to credit, and subsidies give some large U.S. Agro Corporations major advantages over Salvadoran farmers. So although prices may be equal, the competition will be very unequal.

CAFTA also diminishes the ability of the state to improve the lives of its citizens by making privatization of various services obligatory. This can have devastating effects on the poor because some basic services are left to unpredictable shifts in market prices, and can become financially unfeasible for the very poor. These among other aspects of CAFTA make it threatening to the poor of Central America. Currently, Costa Rica has yet to ratify the agreement. SHARE continues to monitor the trade agreement as it is put into place, and to support the fight against CAFTA in Costa Rica.

The third aspect which puts additional pressure on Salvadoran families is the precarious situation that remittances create. Remittances are payments sent from Salvadorans working abroad (in the United States or elsewhere) to their families back in El Salvador. To send remittances to their families, one member will cross (often illegally) into the United States to work. This is a perilous journey that many never complete. The ensuing situation is extremely hard, both for the individual who leaves and for the family who is left behind. Ironically, remittances are what give ES a somewhat gilded appearance of wealth. With one-fourth of Salvadorans living abroad, (90% of whom are in the United States) remittances are the number two source of foreign exchange for El Salvador. Remittances may be providing a measure of material wealth for people right now, but they are not a sustainable foundation on which to build a society.

Circumstances that Demonstrate the Vulnerability of the Poor

Throughout El Salvador, environmental degradation is an enormous problem. Deforestation, contaminated rivers, unwieldy garbage problems, industrial pollution and heavy use of pesticides by small and large farmers alike are just a few of the things that put the delicate eco-system at risk. Only two per cent of El Salvador's virgin forests are left, and the UNDP has declared it the most

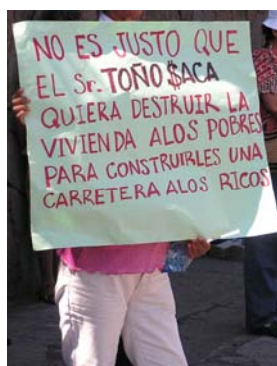
deforested nation in the world. In addition, mismanagement of hydroelectric dams further exacerbates issues of flooding in river basins all over El Salvador. With most of El Salvador's poorest citizens living in rural areas, their dependence on the environment for livelihood makes them the most vulnerable to the costs of environmental degradation.



In early October of 2005, this vulnerability was demonstrated when the southern and western regions were hit by Hurricane Stan. The disaster began with the hurricane, but this precipitation, when paired with already saturated land and erosion caused by deforestation, caused countless mudslides, especially in marginalized communities. These mudslides resulted in 65 deaths. Natural disasters like Hurricanes Mitch in 1998, earthquakes in 2001, and Hurricane Stan have demonstrated the real disaster: that the Salvadoran

government and the global economy have shunned the poor.

An initiative being undertaken by the governments of Central America and Mexico and financed by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) currently threatens to further damage the environment, as well as the livelihoods of poor people in El Salvador, while neglecting to address the infrastructure needed for sustainable development in the region. Stretching from Puebla, Mexico through Southern Panama, the Plan Puebla Panama (PPP) is a 25-year, \$10 billion plan that consists mainly of highways running north and south along the coastlines (known as "Dry Canals") or connecting highways running east and west through Central America and major cities, as well as deep water ports that support heavy freighters. These construction projects will create the infrastructure that is necessary to turn the region into a large import-export center. In other words this is a plan to literally pave the way for CAFTA to be implemented.



These projects will be helpful for the growth of multinational companies which will help the very rich in Central America and in the United States. However, they will do little to help the poor. The projects that have already begun have caused extensive environmental damage. In El Salvador, the "San Salvador Beltway" construction has caused mudslides that have destroyed homes and communities. Popular resistance has grown against the destructive nature of this undertaking. The way that these grand scale infrastructure projects can literally plow over the lives of poor people to pave the way for the wealthy is evidence of the low importance that this government places on its poor citizens and deteriorated environment.

(Pictured at left, a woman protests the San Salvador Beltway with a sign that says "It is unfair for the president to destroy the homes of the poor in order to build a highway for the rich.")

The latest push in El Salvador toward implementing the PPP has come in the form of the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA), and is President George Bush's latest model for foreign aid. This grant will provide \$461 million to El Salvador of which 60% is destined for the construction of a longitudinal highway across the northern sector of the country. To date, an

environmental impact study for this project has not been done which is very worrisome to Salvadoran civil society.

Another threat to El Salvador's fragile environment and to the health of thousands of its people is the powerful mining industry. In 2005, various mining companies from the US, Canada and Australia secured mining licenses to explore for precious metals such as gold, silver, and copper throughout the northern region of the country. Community members in these areas assert that mining will jeopardize their long term economic and social situation. Employment that would be produced by mining would be temporary. Only two percent of the profits made from mining would stay in El Salvador; 1% for the municipal government and 1% for the national government. Mining would also have severely detrimental impacts on the natural environment. Waste from the mining process would leave land and water resources contaminated by arsenic, cyanide, and aluminum, putting the health of nearly 10,000 people at risk, and adversely affecting the already fragile state of local agriculture and fisheries. The communities of the northern El Salvador, along with national and international allies have united to resist mining. As a result, a law which would ban all metallic mining in El Salvador has been formulated, and should come before the National Assembly sometime in 2007.

The majority of poor Salvadorans today still do not have adequate houses, the proper tools to farm, or access to dignified jobs. One of the strongest signals of injustice is that people who work very, very hard, cannot get ahead! Here people work from sun up to sun down - but salaries are not enough to get by, much less save up for a rainy day. In ES you will pass through urban and rural slums. Poverty is vivid - people living in shacks made of tin, cardboard, and sticks. You will see dirty drinking water, children with distended stomachs from disease, and hunger in many faces. But you will also see incredible mansions, imported cars, US restaurants, and stores. This provides ample material for reflection. Why do a small minority have a lot of material wealth, while the overwhelming majority live in abject poverty?

Circumstances that Threaten Human Rights

Although the Peace Accords sought to remedy the disregard for human rights before and during the civil war, the state of Human Rights in El Salvador has been steadily deteriorating in recent years. This has been exemplified by the increase in politically motivated violence and intimidation, and a lack of transparency and institutionalism within the National Civil Police and the judicial system. These conditions have resulted in impunity for many crimes. US intervention in Salvadoran political and security policies has also been on the rise. These factors taken along side direct threats against the Office of the Human Rights Ombudswoman in El Salvador makes for a troublesome human rights panorama.

With roughly 13 homicides each day, almost twice as many people are dying per day in El Salvador than during the war years. Robbery and non violent crime are also increasing. The government has responded by creating the Anti-Maras (gang) Act, or the "Supermanodura" (hard handed) laws as they are often called. These laws give more freedom to the police to make arrests on suspicion rather than probable cause. They also allow fines for anyone found who does not have their identification on them or youth who happen to be in groups of five or more. In addition, they allow children to be tried as adults. The political weight that these laws hold is affecting the

ability of judges to act independently of influential politicians. Many of these laws not only violate provisions made in the Salvadoran Constitution, but also break international treaties that were made during the peace accords through the United Nations.

The enforcement of these laws has resulted in a prison crisis, and there is no more room to put all of the prisoners. This situation has been exacerbated by the deportation of many Salvadoran American gang members to El Salvador by the U.S. authorities. The combination of a generation of youth who have grown up in a war torn country and the failure of the Salvadoran government to create economic opportunity for impoverished youth has created a monster, but the government is fighting back with laws that set a precedent of disrespect for the constitution and international law.

Some reactions to this social violence have fostered more violence. During 2005 many institutions, including the University of Central America (UCA), FESPAD (an NGO which monitors legal rights in El Salvador) and the Office of the Human Rights Ombudswoman have publicly stated their suspicion of the existence of “social cleansing” or “extermination” groups that operate similarly to the way the death squads did during the civil war. These groups target marginal populations such as sex workers and gang members, sometimes torturing and murdering them.

Despite such a sad history throughout the civil war, politically motivated crime has not stopped in El Salvador. Many deaths occur each month that seem to have a political flavor to them, and these crimes often go without sufficient investigation. Some examples of these incidents include the following:

- In November of 2004, a Salvadoran-American Teamster going to Central America to visit his family and organize container workers, José Gilberto Soto - was killed in his family's home.
- Then, in late January of 2005, Manuel de Jesús Martínez, a guard at the Lutheran University, which has often been recognized for its work towards social justice, was tortured and then hung in the entryway of the university.
- Also in January, a family was massacred in El Porvenir, a community in San Vicente. Then, on March 15, El Porvenir was terrorized once again when a heavily armed and masked police brigade stormed into the community around 3am and raided several homes. As they were leaving, they arrested three men, among them Francisco Lopez, the President of the regional grassroots organization, CRIPDES San Vicente, charging him with preposterous accusations of cattle theft and drug trafficking.
- In July of 2006, the parents of a former guerrilla radio announcer, Francisco and Juana Monjarás Manzanares were tortured and summarily executed in their house on a busy Sunday morning in the sleepy tourist town of Suchitoto.
- On November 4, 2006 two Lutheran pastors, Jesus and Francisco de Carrillo, known for working religiously and politically for social justice were assassinated as they closed up their chapel in Jayaque, La Libertad after leading a worship service.

These killing and suspicious arrests, along with many others, indicate that politically motivated intimidation is still alive and well in the country.

In early summer of 2005, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced that plans are underway to create an International Law Enforcement Agency (ILEA) in El Salvador. In the past, many such agencies have been established in geographic areas where US intervention has had a much lower profile. They provide training for police officers as well as other judicial officials. The US State Department has attempted to establish an ILEA in Panama and in Costa Rica in recent years, but both of these efforts failed. After learning of the proposed agency in El Salvador, a coalition of Salvadoran activists and organizations rallied outside the national assembly and officially proposed that National Assembly overturn the law that allows the ILEA to be there, but on July 25th, trainings began without authorizations from the National Assembly. SHARE remains active in the process of monitoring this initiative.

Perhaps the most important figure in El Salvador when it comes to human rights is Beatrice de Carillo, the Human Rights Ombudswoman. Dr. Carillo is a lawyer, author, and university professor. Together with the late Jesuit priest, Fr. Ignacio Ellacuria, she founded the internationally renowned Department of Law at the Central American University (UCA). Over the course of the past year, the Dr. de Carillo has been the target of ongoing death threats and public slander. Despite the risk, she continues to be a tireless advocate for human rights in El Salvador and the Americas. In March 2005, SHARE sponsored a tour with Dr. de Carillo to the US Congress. As a result of that tour, 36 members of Congress from both parties have supported a “Dear Colleague letter of support to the US Ambassador” directed to the US Ambassador to El Salvador, Douglas Barclay, denouncing these death threats and asking him to commit the U.S. Embassy to support for the Ombudswoman’s work.

Signs of Hope

With the disheartening panorama, it is easy to get frustrated. But El Salvador’s people and those who care around the world continue to be at the forefront of a grassroots movement that is capable of moving mountains! Here are examples of their accomplishments:

Emerging Civil Society: One thing that builds democracy is a variety of arenas from which differing opinions can be expressed. Examples in the United States are clubs like Social Justice Committees, Political Action Groups, the Rotary Club, and even Student Governments. Also, movements like the women’s or civil rights movements and labor organizing have asked for more inclusion on political discourse, challenging how many nations have conceptualized democracy. These arenas help to build civil society by fostering leadership, and a diversity of viewpoints. There are several facets of civil society being created in El Salvador today.

At the most grassroots level, organizations like CRIPDES, one of SHARE’s primary counterparts, is a nationally and internationally recognized grassroots organization with a base of approximately 300 rural communities in El Salvador, which works to support community, regional and national organization for policies, practices, and resources which promote increased access to development, basic services, employment, and improved living conditions for inhabitants of El Salvador’s countryside. As one example, CRIPDES has been especially active in the National Coalition Against Mining, both at the national level in pushing for legislation to ban mining in El Salvador, and at the local level, in giving educational trainings on the effects of mining, and organizing peaceful protests against the initiative.





Civil society organizations in both the United States and Central America were key in the two-year long advocacy fight against CAFTA. Although the vote was lost, the debate was won: it is striking that CAFTA was passed by a mere two votes, in spite of intense pressure from the White House. Most news services are covering the vote not as a victory for pro-free trade advocates, but instead as a harbinger of even closer votes when Congress turns its attention to future trade agreements, such as a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), which is a free trade agreement that would encompass all the countries in Latin America. This could not have been accomplished without the incredible network of solidarity that was created in both the US and El Salvador.

Civil society has also been extremely effective in responding to disaster situations, often picking up where the government has left off. After the 2001 earthquakes, the Tecoluca Municipal Development Committee brought international recognition to its devastated municipality. It not only accepted the challenge of reconstruction, but also decided to use the opportunity to implement a 25-year plan to build a new and stronger Tecoluca, with more employment and income opportunities, more stable homes, and better services for its inhabitants, and heightened citizen participation and municipal democracy. More recently, in the wake of Hurricane Stan, less affected communities and CRIPDES regions banded together to support their brothers and sisters in devastated areas; collecting supplies and providing support through their organizational connections. SHARE strongly believes in the role that civil society plays in building a just future for El Salvador and beyond.




Fair Trade: SHARE believes that there are viable alternatives to free trade, and we promote fair trade. A just trade balance would consist of several changes to the way trade agreements are currently written. One important pillar of that balance would be the enforcement of international labor standards designated by the United Nations. A second part would involve making important changes to export subsidies on the part of US and other first world countries' agricultural sectors. These subsidies allow companies to "dump" goods on foreign economies and therefore could never be thought of as "fair". Finally, democratic involvement of all parties that would be affected by trade is indispensable. A fair trade agreement must include protection of local power to control investment, labor, and environmental conservation within its borders. We envision a fair trade model as an alternative that could be both profitable and just for Central America and beyond.

It is very helpful to look at the success of fair trade coffee when we consider the potential of fair trade. To demonstrate the process of fair trade as opposed to free trade, the diagrams below show the path of coffee as it goes from the farmer to your cup.

A Pound of Free Trade Coffee

-  Farmer receives about **25 cents** from buyer
-  Coffee is Imported to the U.S. for about **61 cents**
-  Coffee is Roasted and Sold to the Coffee Company
-  Your Retailer buys it from the Roaster and sells it for about **\$10.00**

A Pound of Fair Trade Coffee

-  Farmer Receives **90 cents** from Cooperative
-  Cooperative Sells to Fair Trade Company for **\$1.26**
-  Fair Trade Company Roasts Coffee and Sells it to you for **\$6.00**

On the whole, fair trade is one response to the threat that unchecked free trade poses to the rural poor of El Salvador. It is also something tangible that you can do to show your solidarity with El Salvador. While in El Salvador, you will have the opportunity to purchase fair trade materials at a market at the University of Central America. See the end of this document for ways to buy fair trade coffee as well as artisan materials and other products when you get back home.

With this background, it is clear that despite the hardships and challenges, this is a period of much hope for El Salvador. As we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the SHARE Foundation, we are remembering the roots of our own involvement in the struggles for justice, and we are reaffirming our commitment to build a just and more peaceful future for the next generations. We are united in a belief that a better El Salvador, indeed, a better world, is possible.

What will make a difference for El Salvador?

“Those who wish to treat with charity that which must be treated with justice make a caricature of true loving action.” - Archbishop Oscar Romero

To empower the poor is to accompany them physically and spiritually, financially and politically as they create their own solutions to change the structures that keep them poor. This has been SHARE’s mission for almost twenty-five years.

We believe that accompaniment through creation of friendship, sharing faith traditions, and building relationships is transformative and sustains the struggle for justice. When partner delegations come to visit their sister parish or community, people establish a relationship - a sense of knowing that there are others in a different part of the world with which they have an intimate relationship based on faith and friendship. This is particularly important for the Salvadorans who may feel like they have been forgotten - that nobody is concerned about the poverty, the continuing violence and the aftermath of war. An important role of the SHARE sistering partnership program is to accompany Salvadorans and to create a link of understanding and compassion with people.



Another important way SHARE walks with the Salvadoran people is through advocacy accompaniment. During the war years, our responsibility was to demand respect for basic human rights, to stop US funding to the Salvadoran military and government, and to pay attention to the social and economic causes of the war. Today we continue to advocate with our partners for policies that will change the structural underpinnings of poverty. This may mean challenging the multilateral lending institutions or the Salvadoran government to include the voices of the poor in their decision-making processes.

Sometimes the needs of communities or regions call for a material response, such as money gathered to support a community organizing project, to pay for a teacher or to provide sewing machines for a craft- training project. There are many important material needs that our solidarity can support. Whenever we pursue these actions, however, we must first ask ourselves two questions: First, are our children going to have to return in 15 years in order to replace the material support we would provide? Second, who is ultimately responsible for providing those things for this community in any nation? Who should provide basic services for the population? Is it our responsibility? When we look at the root causes, we see a larger responsibility – that of the Salvadoran Government and our own government.

For example, Maria Madre de los Pobres is a poor urban community that has inadequate access to health care, education, housing, and roads. SHARE may suggest that this is an opportunity to accompany this parish by supporting a community project and a chance to advocate with the community as they articulate their own needs for structural change. We would stand together with our sisters and brothers as they addressed the Salvadoran government and let them know that they have a responsibility, which is to provide basic services and infrastructure for hard-working people so that they can live with dignity. SHARE is unique in promoting this model of accompaniment as opposed to more traditional charity.

About The SHARE Foundation: Building a New El Salvador Today

SHARE's model for development manifests itself in many forms. On the ground in El Salvador, we have our Local Development and Advocacy Programs. They are focused in two fixed geographical areas. Our first target zone, where we have worked for a decade, is the Bajo Lempa, located in the departments of San Vicente and Usulután in southern El Salvador. In 2001, we began to work in a new target zone, Chalchuapa, Santa Ana and Atiquizaya, Ahuachapán located

in the northwest part of the country. The advocacy program also works in San Salvador in solidarity with the Association of Communities Affected by the San Salvador Beltway (ACAP), the MPR-12 and other local partners. These programs work to fund local initiatives that promote women's empowerment, leadership development, and citizen participation.

Our Grassroots Program in El Salvador works to partner churches, schools and groups in the United States with our four rural regions in central and southern El Salvador. These regions are organized by our counterpart, CRIPDES. In each region, we support the work of youth and women's committees that are creating new opportunities for the empowerment of their members and communities.

In the U.S., our grassroots work centers on advocacy and organizing in the Washington D.C. Office. From there, SHARE works to monitor policymaking as it is happening, and keep folks in the U.S. informed on what is going on and how it may affect our brothers and sisters in El Salvador. This office works to provide educational materials, such as our electronic newsletter, which allow those in the United States to stay involved with El Salvador. In addition, we build and maintain relationships with other organizations working toward similar goals. This grassroots advocacy work makes it possible for SHARE to make its voice heard to Congress and multi-lateral financial institutions in support of the people of El Salvador.

The National Office for the SHARE Foundation is located in San Francisco and is the central point where fundraising and administration for all three offices takes place. This office provides support for all of our work in both the United States and El Salvador. Finally, our three and several programs work together with a united vision to promote economic and social justice that will help bring a better future to El Salvador.

Now that you have learned about the economic, social, and political context of El Salvador, and have a background on the vision and method of SHARE, you are ready for a journey that is sure to be exciting, challenging, and maybe life-changing! We are very excited that you have chosen to experience El Salvador with SHARE, and will do anything in our power to be sure that you have an enjoyable stay. **On behalf of the entire SHARE Foundation, thank you for your visit and your commitment to "El Pueblo Salvadoreño" (The Salvadoran People)!!**



Partial Glossary of Organizations in El Salvador

ACAP (Association of communities affected by the San Salvador Beltway) a network of several communities and parishes that work together to protect those who are harmed by the construction of the San Salvador Beltway and to protest the Plan Puebla Panama

ACAMG (Cattlewomen's Cooperative)- One of SHARE's long time partners in the Bajo Lempa, this group began with a few women who wanted to make a living after the civil war. Through trial and error, they were able to build a micro credit cooperative where each woman works to fatten cows and sell them for profit. They currently have over 200 members.

CDR (Rural Development Committee) - national ad hoc committee originally promoted and convened by USAID and other donor agencies (UN Development Program, International Development Bank...) to forward dialogue on rural development policy. Currently this is one forum (or roundtable) for discussion amongst a cross-section of organizations on agriculture and rural development interests. Participants currently include the following:

-**MAG** - Ministry of Agriculture

-**CAMAGRO** - Agricultural chamber of commerce representing primarily large agricultural business interests

-**FUSADES** (Salvadoran Foundation for Development) - a politically conservative research foundation; generally associated with large capital interests in ES

-**FUNDE** (National Foundation for Development) - a politically progressive research foundation; generally associated with the popular sectors in ES (see below)

-**FORO Agropecuario** - Agricultural forum representing small farm and cooperative interests (see below)

CIS (Centro de Intercambio y Solidaridad) - works to strengthen the ties of solidarity from people to people and contributes to the building of a new El Salvador. CIS has diverse programs including a popular Spanish language school for international students.

CISPES (Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador) - U.S. - based organization founded in the early 1980s to provide solidarity support to the people of El Salvador. They work predominantly with trade unions.

CONFRAS-(Confederation of Federations of Agrarian Reform in El Salvador) This confederation oversees the work of 7 federations that represent 141 cooperatives. It began in the early 80's and provides assistance in production and fundraising, while also giving political strength and representation to the cooperatives it represents.

Consortium of Human Rights - a coalition of NGOs working in the area of human rights.

CORDES (Foundation for Community Cooperation and Development in El Salvador) - an NGO currently focused on providing technical assistance and support for production efforts in rural communities.

CORDES works closely with CRIPDES, covering five regions of the country: Chalatenango, Northern San Salvador/Northern La Libertad, Southern San Salvador/Southern La Libertad, Cuscatlan and San Vicente.

CRIPDES (Corporation of Rural Communities for Development in El Salvador) - national grassroots organization which organizes in and represents local communities from six regions of El Salvador: Chalatenango, Northern San Salvador/Northern La Libertad, Southern San Salvador/Southern La Libertad, Cuscatlan, San Vicente and San Miguel. CRIPDES is SHARE's partner for sistering with rural communities in ES.

CRISPAZ Christians for Peace in El Salvador, was founded in 1984. They are a faith-based organization dedicated to the mutual accompaniment with the church of the poor and marginalized communities in El Salvador. In building bridges of solidarity between communities in El Salvador and those in the United States, they strive for peace, justice, and human liberation. As an organization, they are politically non-partisan and committed to nonviolence.

FEDECOOPADES Network of cooperatives in Santa Ana, currently represents 27 different cooperatives, sixteen of which have women's committees. SHARE is partnering with FEDECOOPADES in order to promote the success of these committees by providing training in baking, literacy, and gender.

FORO Agropecuario (Agricultural Forum) - coalition of over 30 different organizations representing small farmers and cooperatives in ES. FORO membership includes: CRIPDES, organizations of excombatants of the Armed Forces and the FMLN. The primary objective is to secure national agricultural and rural policies that foment economic and social prosperity for rural inhabitants.

Foro De La Sociedad Civil para la Reconstrucción - A primary coalition that brings together Hurricane Mitch victims from all over El Salvador working for reconstruction that addresses structural issues behind Mitch-like disasters.

FUNDAUNGO – Organization dedicated to promoting civil participation throughout El Salvador. In SHARE's new target zone, this organization is promoting efforts to enforce a new law that supports higher citizen participation in politics.

FUNDAHMER (Foundation Hermano Mercedes Ruíz) is an organization that works for sustainable development in rural communities. It grew out of the Christian Base communities movement, and works in sustainable agriculture, education, solidarity, and community development.

FUNDE (National Development Foundation) - research and advocacy institute focusing on researching and elaborating alternative proposals for development and policy in El Salvador. SHARE works with FUNDE in two primary areas: 1) local/regional development, and 2) agricultural/rural policy.

IMU (Institute de Investigación, Capacitación y Desarrollo de la Mujer) - a woman's organization which has been very involved in supporting efforts of rural women to develop a woman's platform. In 1997 IMU contributed to the founding of the Permanent Commission for Rural Women.

ISD (Social Initiative for Democracy) - NGO specializing in citizen's participation efforts. Although ISD began with a focus on voter education, ISD work now includes both ongoing promotion of citizen's participation in local government as well as election-related citizen's education.

MAM (Movimiento de Mujeres Melida Anaya Montes) - plays a lead in the participation of women from diverse sectors of society and are especially involved in the building of a democracy without discrimination.

Mesa Permanente de Mujeres Rurales (Permanent Commission on Rural Women) - a national commission established by a coalition of organizations working with and representing rural women. The Mesa Permanente developed the first rural women's platform, which was presented publicly in the first semester of 1998. CRIPDES is an active member of the Mesa Permanente.

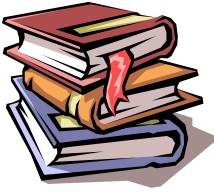
MPR-12 Popular Resistance Movement 12 of October. The MPR-12 played a key role in mobilizing Salvadoran civil society in opposition to the privatization of public health care and free trade policies. The MPR-12 employs direct action and elite advocacy through activities such as organizing gatherings of protesters, peacefully demonstrating in the streets, and meeting with the United States Congress and Salvadoran Legislature

PROCOMES (Corporation of Community Projects of El Salvador) - NGO specializing in micro-credit with a strong emphasis on women. SHARE is working with PROCOMES in the context of our women's empowerment work in the target area.

SHARE Foundation: Building a New El Salvador Today is an international non-profit organization that accompanies poor communities in El Salvador as they work for economic justice, democracy and sustainable development alternatives at the local and national levels.

Sister Cities - A North American-based grassroots organization working to connect U.S. communities with communities in El Salvador in the spirit of accompaniment and solidarity. SHARE works closely with Sister Cities in its sistering and advocacy programs.

UCA (University of Central America) - the Jesuit University where the six priests and two laywomen were martyred. Home of the Romero Center.



BOOKS, VIDEOS, AND OTHER RESOURCES FOR INFORMATION ON EL SALVADOR

The following are suggested resources that you can access before and after your delegation. We encourage you to look to Salvadorans/Latinos in your community, folks that have traveled to El Salvador, local organizations working with El Salvador, your local library, and universities with Latin American study programs for more resources!

BOOKS (Alphabetical by Author's Last Name):

1. Barry, Tom; Murray, Kevin. *Inside El Salvador*. Albuquerque, NM: Interhemispheric Relations, 1995.
2. Benitez, Sandra. *Bitter Grounds*. Hyperion, 1998
3. Benitez, Sandra. *The Weight of All Things*. Hyperion, 2001
4. Berryman, Phillip. *Stubborn Hope: Religion, Politics and Revolution in Central America*. Orbis, 1994.
5. Brackley, Dean. "Remembering the UCA Martyrs: Ten Years Later," *Conversations*, Fall 1999.
6. Dalton, Roque. Anything written by this author would be interesting.
7. Danner, Mark. *The Massacre at El Mozote*. 1994. Penetrating account of the war and the U.S. through the lens of the El Mozote massacre.
8. Dennis, Marie and Swedish, Margaret. *Like grains of Wheat: A Spirituality of Solidarity*. Orbis: 2004.
9. Diaz, Nidia. *I was Never Alone*, A prison diary from El Salvador. Ocean Press, 1992.
10. Ellacuría, Ignacio and Sobrino, Jon. eds. *Systematic Theology: Perspectives from Liberation Theology*. Orbis, 1996.
11. Galdámez, Pablo. *Faith of a People: The Life of a Basic Christian Community in El Salvador, 1970-1980*. Orbis, 1986.
12. Gill, Lesley. *The School of the Americas: Military Training and Political Violence in the Americas*. Duke University: 2004.
13. Golden, Renny. *The Hour of the Poor, The Hour of Women: Salvadoran Women Speak*. New York: Crossroad, 1992. Women and the church of the poor in El Salvador.
14. Lopez Vigil, Jose Maria. *Rebel Radio*. The story of El Salvador's Radio Venceremos. Crossroads Press.
15. Manlio, Argueta.. *One day in the Life of El Salvador*. Vintage International
16. Marmol, Miguel. Anything by this author would be interesting.
17. Montgomery, Tommie Sue. *Revolution in El Salvador*. Westview Press, 1995.
18. Nelson-Pallmeyer, Jack. *School of Assassins: The Case for Closing the School of the Americas and for Fundamentally Changing U.S. Foreign Policy*. Orbis, 1997

19. Janet Schnek. *Faces of the Revolution*
20. Noone, Judith M., M.M. *The Same Fate as the Poor*. 2d edn. Orbis, 1994. The Story of Maryknoll sisters Ita Ford, Maura Clarke and Carla Priette
21. Robinson, William I. *Transnational Conflicts: Social Change, Central America, and Globalization*. Verso, 2003.
22. Romero, Oscar A. *The Voice of the Voiceless: The Four Pastoral Letters and Other Statements*, Introductions, commentaries and selection of texts by R. Cardenal, I. Martín-Baró and J. Sobrino. Orbis, 1985. This is the best introduction to Romero's homilies and writings in English.
23. Romero, Oscar A. *The Violence of Love*. Compiled and trans. by James R. Brockman, S.J. San Francisco and Toronto: Harp & Row and Whiteside, 1988; reprinted Farmington, Penn.: Plough Publ., 1998.
24. Sheehan, Thomas. "Friendly Fascism: Business as Usual in America's Backyard," in *Fascism's Return: Scandal, Revision, and Ideology Since 1980*. Richard J. Golson, ed. (Lincoln, Nebraska, and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), pp. 260-300. Perhaps the most trenchant account available of U.S. complicity in state terror in El Salvador.
25. Sobrino, Jon. Ignacio Ellacuría, et al. *Companions of Jesus: The Jesuit Martyrs of El Salvador*. Orbis, 1990. Essays by and about the UCA martyrs.
26. Wright, Scott. *Promised Land: Death and Life in El Salvador*. Orbis, 1994. Stories of hope and tragedy among the poor during the war in El Salvador.

VIDEOS (In alphabetical order by title):

Enemies of War, a film by Esther Cassidy (1999), covers the legacy of the martyrs in El Salvador during the last 9 years. It should be aired by PBS, but you can get an uncut version from Esther even now at: <amerinda@spacelab.net>.

“Good News from El Salvador, Fr. Jon Sobrino, S.J.” Reflections on the murder of six Jesuit priests and two women in San Salvador in November 1989. The address covers such issues as keeping the martyrs alive and solidarity. Produced by Catholic Relief Services (USA)

Innocent Voices Luis Mandosky, Oscar Orlando Torres (2004) A story about young boys coming of age in the midst of the civil war in El Salvador.

Killing Priests Is Good News. BBC, 1990. Features J. Sobrino, W. Ford and D. Brackley.
A new video has been produced for the tenth anniversary of the UCA martyrs and can be acquired by contacting the Jesuit Curia in Rome.

“Massacre at El Mozote.” 60 Minutes documentary, ca. 1993.

Romero. Starring Raul Julia. Vidmark Entertainment video. 105 minutes

Roses in December. The story of Jean Donovan by Ana Carrigan and Bernard Stone. Available from Maryknoll World Productions. Tel. 1-800-227-8523.

School of Assassins, narrated by Susan Sarandon, 1995 Academy Award Nominee. Available from Maryknoll World Productions.

SHARE Video (The). Produced by the SHARE Foundation. 1997 Available in English and Spanish at the SHARE San Francisco office (415) 882-1530.



Websites for information

Media

Diario CoLatino: www.diariocolatino.com

El Diario De Hoy: www.elsalvador.com

La Prensa Grafica: www.laprensa.com/sv

National Catholic Reporter: www.natcath.com

PROCESO, UCA weekly journal: www.uca.edu.sv

Organizations

Alliance for Responsible Trade: <http://www.art-us.org>

CISPES: www.cispes.org

EPICA: (E-mail address) EPICA@igc.org

Global Exchange: www.globalexchange.org

Institute for Policy Studies: www.ips-dc.org

Latin American Information Center: <http://info.lanic.utexas.edu>

Latin American Working Group (LAWG): www.lawg.org

North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA): www.nacla.org

The ROMERO Foundation: www.romero.org

The SHARE Foundation: www.share-elsalvador.org

Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA): www.wola.org

Sites for Fair Trade Coffee Shoppers

Equal Exchange: www.equalexchange.com

Catholic Relief Services: www.crs.org