

This series looks at the work of EPES in Chile.

No 19: November 2018



ON YOUR MARK, GET SET, GO... FOR EPES HEALTHY EATING PROGRAMS!

This past September, Man Kaur, India’s 102-year-old track star, shared the dietary secret of her extraordinary longevity and athletic prowess (she only started running 10 years ago at 93): whole grains, fruits, vegetables, soy milk. And, she added emphatically, “Don’t ever eat junk food!”

Favoring whole wheat bread, veggies, and fruit — and cutting out the junk food — EPES’ nutritional health program coincides perfectly with Man Kaur’s recommendations. Through a dynamic calendar of public actions and workshops, EPES is working to improve eating habits and modify food environments in vulnerable populations, a line of work the organization activated seven years ago.

In the last three months the El Bosque municipality has been bustling with activities. On June 5, the two one-month-long “Recovering our Nutritional Health” workshops held certification ceremonies. Organized in joint efforts with the JUNJI national public kindergarten system, participants included kindergarten principals, teachers and parents throughout El Bosque. The women of the *Siembra y Cosecha* (Sow and Harvest) Health Group, formed in 2016 by EPES, took part as workshop facilitators. At the graduation ceremony, participants not only received diplomas but also packets of seeds to plant vegetable gardens in their homes and the “ABC Popular Cookbook: Easy, Low-cost and Balanced Meals” published by EPES. Financed by competitive funds made available through the government’s Social Development Ministry, the program also included the creation of six murals promoting the right to healthy food in neighborhoods of El Bosque.

EPES’ Nutrition and Justice Program also ventured for the first time to Cerro Navia, a municipality with a high proportion of low-income residents in northwestern Santiago. In cooperation with the Cerro Navia Municipal Health Administration, on August 13 and 14 EPES held a course attended by 21 staff persons of four community health clinics. The course concluded with

Above left: Workshop participants celebrate with EPES cookbooks.

Above right: Community action shows the amount of sugar in different common snacks.

Right: Nutrition health promoters participate in VI March for Land and Water in Santiago.



participants drawing up community action plans to implement nutritional eating projects in each neighborhood clinic.

To the courses in El Bosque and Cerro Navia, EPES brought a perspective based on popular education methods and social determinants of health, aiming to equip people with tools for promoting and recovering community-wide nutritional health. Nutrition and Justice Program coordinator Susana Jiles explained what this means on a practical level. She said, “What we eat depends on the social, economic, political and cultural conditions we live and work in.”

To address these multifactor conditions, in September EPES launched a community-based campaign “For the right to quality and sustainable food” to share the results of the citizens’ monitoring project, an initiative led by EPES in 2017, with the participation of community members, to monitor the food-labeling law in public educational and health establishments throughout El Bosque. Community members, health professionals and educational professionals have since organized activities and meetings with the municipality to raise awareness about the high presence of unhealthy food environments, calling for the local government to make structural changes to protect the community’s nutritional health.



Message from the President



Dear friends of EPES and AHA,

As you will see in this Update, EPES is tireless in its commitment to health and human rights—in the Nutrition and Justice Program; in Valparaiso, where communities that are still recovering from devastating fires in 2014 are now facing personal tragedy; in training workers of Chile's National Disability Service; and in Puerto Rico, where EPES staff shared lessons from their earthquake recovery experience with communities affected by Hurricane María.

This important—more than important, *essential*—work would not be possible without your continuing support. Heartfelt thanks for your solidarity. I wish you peace and health in 2019.

Christina Mills

Christina Mills MD FRCPC

President, Action for Health in the Americas



HFAW IN KENYA CONTINUES TO WORK TO END FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

In September, Hope Foundation for African Women from Kenya (HFAW) led a workshop on Popular Education and Social Change to End Female Genital Mutilation for 30 participants at the Emmanuel Centre for Women and Children, Gamasara, Tarime in Tanzania.

For HFAW, this was the first training delivered in Swahili and also the first among the cross-border community of the Kuria ethnic group.

Dr. Grace Mose and her staff of the Hope Foundation were all participants in EPES' International Training Program and continue to use the training they received in popular education and participatory strategies to address gender based violence.

ELCA LEADERS EXPERIENCE EPES ON ITS OWN TURF



Above left: ELCA Global Mission leaders Rev. Jaime Dubón and Gustavo Driau participating in a group exercise with community health promoters and EPES staff.

Above right: Rev. Dubón and Gustavo Driau looking at a presentation developed by the Circle of Women Health Team about their history and current activities.

Right: ELCA Global Mission Personnel in Chile, Karen Anderson with Rev. Dubón and Gustavo Driau donning EPES 35th Anniversary t-shirts.



The Rev. Jaime Dubón, ELCA's new Global Mission director for Latin America and the Caribbean, paid an inaugural visit to EPES and to Chile in mid-May. Accompanied by Gustavo Driau, Global Mission's Regional Representative for South America, Rev. Dubón became acquainted with EPES' work.

In Santiago, he met with the EPES Foundation's educational and administrative staff. During an afternoon spent with community health promoters at the Llaleta Health Team's community center, he experienced EPES' methodology on site, also gaining understanding of the social context that gave rise to its mission.

Experiential learning comprises the cornerstone of EPES' outlook and, in that belief, energetically welcomes visitors to experience its programs in Chile first-hand.

EPES is deeply grateful to ELCA for its continuing support over all these 36 years.





Top and Right: EPES staff, family members and Las Cañas Community Center team come together for Mauricio and Camila at a weekend grief support retreat. Above: The EPES team has been participating actively in the campaign Justice for Amelia.



JUSTICE FOR AMELIA!

The Las Cañas Community Center has become familiar to Update readers, as the fulcrum for rebuilding human lives and a community, after fire swept through the impoverished hillside neighborhood of Valparaíso in April 2014. EPES has had a notable presence there through its Comfort for Kids program, women's leadership training, community fire prevention and other initiatives. None of these efforts would have been possible without the visionary leadership of the center's director Mauricio Salazar and his partner Camila Jorquera, graduates of the EPES International Training Courses of 2012 and 2015, respectively.

Three months ago tragedy struck Mauricio and Camila's own family. On July 4th, their daughter, Amelia, at the age of one year and nine months, died at a public hospital in Valparaíso, due to medical negligence and the consequences of the great inequality the Chilean society faces in accessing quality healthcare.

Amelia's untimely and preventable death is under investigation. In the meantime, Las Cañas neighbors rallied around Mauricio and Camila, launching the "Justice for Amelia" campaign. Their efforts resulted in an agreement with the Health Ministry to reconstruct and equip the neighborhood clinic with community

participation. This resilient community is determined to once again turn tragedy into an opportunity for social change.

EPES has been accompanying Mauricio and Camila during this difficult time. In September, thanks to the support of Global Ministries of the Disciples of Christ and UCC, EPES was able to organize a retreat for self-care and grief support for Mauricio, Camila and their families and the closest friends of the Las Cañas Community Center.

Sharing the pain and anger of Camila, Mauricio, and the entire community of the Las Cañas Community Center, EPES wanted to help create a space for families to be together, rest, share, and collectively process their pain to continue their struggle in the context of "Justice for Amelia." We were grateful for facilitators of Tremonhue, the mountain retreat center for spirituality and healing, who led the workshop with love and sensitivity.

EPES' heart goes out to Mauricio and Camila and joins hundreds of thousands of people throughout Chile and abroad to shout - JUSTICE FOR AMELIA and to redouble our efforts to build a country where there is dignified health for all.



Above left: Workshop attendees participating in a group exercise. **Above center:** Dr. Lautaro Lopez, Vicky Norambuena, and Aurines Torres with workshop participant, Rev. Ivette Salgado. **Above right:** Puerto Rican community leaders learn how to help children recover from post-hurricane trauma.

PUERTO RICAN-CHILEAN COLLABORATION IN THE WAKE OF “MARÍA”

A little pigtailed girl stares at debris around her house, where palm trees have crashed through the roof. A wide-eyed boy fills a large plastic container with water. A family happily reads by the light of a lantern, while another family enjoys a game of dominos, for one instant forgetting the destruction around them.

Puerto Rican children colored these and many other scenes familiar to them in their “My Hurricane Story” notebooks, a key tool for psycho-social recovery brought by EPES staffers Dr. Lautaro López and Virginia Norambuena, who run the EPES office in Concepción. Lautaro and Vicky were in Puerto Rico in August to share the lessons they gained following the earthquake and tsunami that struck Concepción in February 2010 and the Valparaíso fire of 2014.

Sixteen women from the towns of Loiza, Vieques, Dorado and Caño Martín Peña traveled to San Juan for the workshop August 7 and 8 to learn how to help children in their communities recover from the catastrophic aftermath of Hurricane María. The program draws from a model Mercy Corps International has used in several countries.

EPES International School graduates Aurines Torres, Elda Guadalupe, and Aida Edwards coordinated the workshop together with EPES. Workshop assistants

The beautiful workbook, *Mi historia del huracán*, (*My Hurricane Story*) was adapted by Aurines Torres and her team for the post-hurricane reality in Puerto Rico. The workbook is for children between 6 and 10 years old and is based on a model developed by Mercy Corps (and adapted by EPES for our post-earthquake work in 2010 and post-fire in 2014) which allows children to process trauma through narrative, drawing and share with others who have lived the same experience.



included the Lutheran Rev. Lydia Morales, Lutheran post-hurricane spiritual guide Nancy Falcón, and Pastor Ivette Salgado, another graduate from EPES International School.

The determination of these Puerto Rican communities to overcome an adverse situation is an inspiration for us. The bonds of solidarity forged between EPES and our Puerto Rican friends in Hurricane María’s wake will continue to nurture new forms of collaboration in the future.

FORMER EPES BOARD MEMBER FABIOLA LETELIER RECEIVES THE NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD

On Monday, July 23, in a stirring ceremony held at the National Museum of Fine Arts, the director of the National Human Rights Institute, Consuelo Contreras Largo, presented the National Human Rights Award to attorney Fabiola Letelier, “for her career in the defense and promotion of human rights in Chile, especially in the quest for truth, justice and reparation for thousands of victims of human rights violations during the dictatorship.”

With great emotion and joy EPES staff participated in this deserved and significant award ceremony. Fabiola was part of the first EPES Foundation Board of Directors from 2001 to 2007 and has been a close friend of EPES for over 30 years.

Congratulations Fabiola for your commitment, courage and tireless fight for human rights in Chile.



EPES staff members, Lutheran pastor Rev. Marcelo Huenulef and health promoter Valeria Garcia with Fabiola Letelier after the ceremony in which she received the National Human Rights Award.



Workshop participants from the National Disability Service carry out community actions to create awareness about creating a more just and inclusive society.

THIRD TERRITORIAL COMMUNITY COURSE FOR THE NATIONAL DISABILITY SERVICE

June 4 to 7 EPES held its third Territorial Participatory and Community Strategies Course for the National Disability Service for professionals who work in municipal government offices that serve persons living with disabilities. Thirty people attended the course that combined theory with practice, employing EPES' well-honed popular education methodology and tools, alternating between lectures, group work and experiential learning. The course included two on-site visits with community health teams, culminating with community actions in public spaces intended to create greater awareness of the need to advance towards a more inclusive society.



SHARING STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS HUMANITARIAN DISASTERS

In the context of the project, "Sharing approaches and experiences in emergency responses in South America/Pacific Coast," the Ecumenical Service of Pastoral and Communication Studies of Peru and the EPES Foundation team in Concepción held an exchange program to share methodologies and strategies for humanitarian disaster response. The initiative was supported by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The actions of EPES in the area of humanitarian support in situations of natural disasters and the effects of climate change seek a participatory, coordinated, timely and effective response, that incorporate a gender-based approach, the protection of human rights, and is aimed at establishing links with churches.

Activities in Concepción included a field visit where members of the Committee of Health and Environment of Villa Montahue, in Penco, shared the work they did after the earthquake of February 27, 2010 and the community fire prevention project in 2017.



The group **Newen Domo** calls for the organization and mobilization of women as a central task to denaturalize gender violence. The mural was created on November 24, 2017 in front of the EPES office in Santiago, in the context of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, with the purpose of installing in public spaces the urgent need to eradicate machismo from our lives.

MESSAGES OPPOSING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN PUBLIC SPACES

Community Action Group **Newen Domo** and Fundación EPES carried out the restoration of a mural opposing violence against women which calls into question the structures of patriarchy. Newen Domo means "strength of women" in Mapudungun, the language of the Mapuches.



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EPES was created in 1982 to promote health with dignity for the poor through empowerment, mobilization and collective action. It began as a program of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile (IELCH) and maintains close ties nationally and internationally with the Lutheran church and is an ELCA Global Mission supported ministry. EPES became an independent, non-profit Chilean foundation in 2002.

THE EPES TEAM

Founder: Karen Anderson, Director, EPES International Training Course (ELCA Global Mission). **Board of Directors:** Hanni Grunpeter, public health specialist; Rev. Oscar Sanhueza, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile; María del Carmen Cortés, director IES Santiago, international exchange program; Adriana Gómez, journalist and women's health advocate; Andrea Muñoz, professor of public health at the University of Chile School of Dentistry, Universidad de Chile; Jorge Olivares, EPES staff representative. **Executive Committee:** Sonia Covarrubias, Executive Director; Dr. Lautaro López, Director EPES Concepción, María Eugenia Calvin, Director of Planning; Rosario Castillo, education team; Virginia Norambuena, education team.

Administration/Education: SANTIAGO: Marta Acuña, accountant; María Teresa Fuentealba, secretary; Angelina Jara, educator; Susana Jiles, educator, Jorge Olivares, librarian; Héctor Reyes, office manager; Isabel Díaz, communications coordinator; María Stella Toro, educator; Katie Bubriski, educator; Paulina Rojas, educator. **CONCEPCIÓN:** Sofía Uribe, educator; Maritza Provoste, administration.

LEARN ABOUT OTHER EPES ACTIVITIES AT:

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Action for Health in the Americas (AHA) is the non-profit North American partner of EPES.