

## PROMOTING NONVIOLENCE IN HONDURAS

The UN refers to Honduras as the most violent country in the world, and San Pedro Sula has been called the “murder capital” of the western hemisphere. Femicide (targeted killing of women) and political violence are on the rise, and police corruption is rampant. But on a recent visit, CRT found that Honduras is much more than these headlines suggest. From San Pedro Sula to the mountains of Locomapa, we witnessed a spirit of solidarity and activism in a country blessed with natural beauty and resources.



*Circle of Nonviolence from Piedra Gorda Workshop*

Honduras has long been one of the poorest countries in Latin America. It was considered the “sleepy sister” of Latin America, lulled by a strong US financial and military presence into a kind of political lethargy. Although economic progress was being made, a coup in 2009 left Honduran society in turmoil. But the unpopular coup also gave birth to a growing multi-sector, inter-ethnic and inter-religious protest movement.

This past year, CRT awarded our first Latin American minigrant to the Dream Weavers project in San Pedro Sula. Dream Weavers works with some of the

poorest women in the city. Trauma healing and income-generation activities are woven together with workshops teaching cooperative action and nonviolence. In May, with CRT support, Dream Weavers launched a similar program in an indigenous mountain village called Piedra Gorda, or “Big Rock.”

Piedra Gorda has no electricity and exists through subsistence farming. The children ride a bus for two



*San Pedro Sula Women Making Crafts to Sell in Market*

hours to attend school. But more than a dozen women, ranging from nursing mothers to grandmothers, turned out for the two-and-a-half-day workshop. They discussed their experiences with violence, citing harsh childrearing practices, domestic violence, and economic and political oppression. They did exercises designed to identify their own strengths. They practiced new ways of responding

## THIRD ROUND OF MINIGRANTS FUNDED

CRT has recently awarded minigrants to six projects.

**Dream Weavers** will conduct a series of workshops on Trauma Healing and Alternatives to Violence with women in two of the poorest neighborhoods in San Pedro Sula, Honduras.

**Center of Holistic Attention to Women and the Family** will train staff at two locations in Ecuador to deliver Trauma Healing and Alternatives to Violence workshops. Both sites serve Afro-Ecuadorean and Mestiza women, and both report high levels of gender-based violence.

**Shin, the Israeli Movement for Equal Representation of Women**, will expand the Young Women’s Parliament to three additional Jewish towns and two additional Arab villages. Shin is currently working with the Israeli Ministry of Education to introduce the project to local schools systems across Israel.

**Eppie Kreitner** will lead a project at David Yellin College of Education in Jerusalem, bringing Palestinian and Israeli teachers together through voice and movement.

**The Galilee Healing Sisterhood Project** will use Somatic Experiencing, Non-Violent Communication, mindfulness, and listening circles to help Jewish, Muslim, Christian and Druze women heal trauma and transcend fear and mistrust. The women will also learn to use video for healing and advocacy.

**The Equals Program for Women’s Empowerment and Coexistence** will create an ongoing Jewish-Arab student group at David Yellin College of Education in Jerusalem. The group will explore women’s rights, feminist theory, and the relationship between women’s empowerment, human rights and social change in the stratified Israeli society.

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## News from CRT

### **Institute for the Future**

**Highlights Tarpon Springs.** In May, CRT board member Robin Saenger spoke at the annual meeting of the Institute for the Future, where Peace4Tarpon was cited as representing the “wave of the future” in health care and social services.

### **Ibrahim's Peace House Begins Renovations.**

With funds raised through the online “Peace for Ibrahim” campaign, renovations to the house on the Mount of Olives have begun. New plumbing and bathroom fixtures and re-plastered and painted walls are planned for the Peace House.

### **WIN Launches Website.**

The Women's Interfaith Network of Sarasota-Bradenton, now numbering more than 100 members, recently launched its own website. <http://www.womensinterfaithnetwork.org/>

### **Kenya Micro-Enterprise.**

Working to end violence against women was just the beginning for the women of the CRT-sponsored Obigama Project in Kisii, Kenya. The women pooled their resources to buy plastic chairs to sit in, then started renting them out for public events. Small groups of women are now purchasing milk goats, passing one kid a year to another group of women.

**Abrahamic Reunion Event.** On August 6 Eliyahu McLean and Sheik Ghassan Manasra hosted an interfaith Ramadan Iftar in Nazareth, attended by Jewish, Muslim, Christian and Druze leaders. The Abrahamic Reunion has been organizing interfaith peace events in Israel since 2006.

## PROJECT BRINGS ISRAEL SCHOOL CHILDREN TOGETHER

Children Building Peace, supported with a 2012 CRT mini-grant, brought 20 Jewish Israeli students from Hadar Hasharon elementary school in Tel Mond together with 20 Arab Israeli students from the El Najach school in the nearby town of Tira. The idea was for children from the same area to get to know each other and learn about each other's culture – and hopefully to reduce stereotypes and fear. They began by hiking from one school to the other (4 kilometers) while stopping and learning about the trees and geography as well as the history and ecology of their shared land. After their walk and refreshments, the children played and juggled together. In later sessions, the children learned about the “Poles for Peace” project and watched a presentation of peace poles from all over the world. They painted, decorated and signed their “Peace Poles” in both Hebrew and Arabic. The poles were placed in the schoolyards, and the children planted butterfly-attracting bushes and flowers in the surrounding areas. According to one of the children: “I talked with my new friends, I learned about a different religion and not to be afraid of it and that Arabs are not so different from me...we have a lot in common.” The project was carried out by the Association for the Commemoration of Bat-Chen Shahak.



*Arab and Israel Schoolchildren Walk Together*

## NETBALL COMES TO JISR AL ZARQA

The women of Jisr al Zarqa in Israel have been working hard in their Women Reborn literacy and empowerment classes. Now for the first time they can blow off steam playing netball – thanks to program coordinator Watfa Amash and an Israeli colleague who have introduced the sport to the Arab village.



*Women From Jisr al Zarqa Play Netball with Israeli Friends*

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to violent situations, and they worked on group cooperation skills. When asked what she had learned, one woman responded “I discovered my intelligence, that I am capable to face any challenge, and that I can ask for help when I need it.” Another said that she had learned “to care for myself, value myself and other women who share my journey, and not to be violent.” When asked what's next, they said “More workshops please! We want to become facilitators so that we can take this to women in other villages.”

Dream Weavers works closely with the Mercy Sisters, a Catholic group in the forefront of the struggle for women's rights and human rights in Honduras.