



Link between the Executive Council and the World Christian Life Community

Financial Co-responsibility for the Mission

World CLC Day is a great opportunity to be aware again of the grace of being part of a world community. Every year we reflect together on a topic so that we can continue to grow in our identity as CLC. For the 2011 celebration, we propose all communities reflect on the style of community to which we are called-- taking as a reference point our co-responsibility in CLC and especially financial co-responsibility.

Love for One Another – Concrete Solidarity

In simple words, Christians are the followers of Jesus Christ. The Love of God (With Him, Through Him, in Him) was proclaimed by the early Christian communities that, filled with the Holy Spirit, expressed it in concrete actions and behaviors in a new way of being human.

Several letters and documents of the first century say with emphasis that love for one another characterized the early Christians: "See how they love each other", "they love each other almost before they met". Such behavior was the result of Jesus' words: "By this love you have for one another, everyone will know that you are my disciples." (**John 13:35**). The early Christians were known for their actions of mercy, charity, caring for others; they were not just seen as a spiritual community of pious people waiting for their salvation but as a counter witness of Christ to the world around them. They were constituted as an alternative lifestyle for their time.

This way of relating in the early Christian community was specifically expressed through their solidarity with the poor and needy. In **Acts 2:44-45** and **Acts 4:34-35** it becomes clear that the very structure of the community assured that the needs of all members of the community were met. The call of brotherly and sisterly love encourages mutual responsibility of everyone in the community. The dynamic of reciprocity "toward one another" is essentially communitarian because it exceeds the boundaries of individuality and selfishness. In the New Testament the expressions on this issue are plentiful. Moreover, these dynamics among the early followers of

Jesus were not limited only to their own group, but they struggled to breakdown boundaries so they came to serve the needy of their time.

Belonging to a World Community

Being part of a world community is a special grace that enables us to find commonality within CLC with people in over 80 countries across different cultures and languages. We do not know everyone in the Community, but we know that we share bonds of sisterhood and brotherhood. Those who have participated in a World Assembly or any CLC international meeting can attest to this. To protect and strengthen this unity we need to guarantee a minimum common understanding among our different national communities. For example the experience of the Spiritual Exercises must be available to all. They cannot be just a privilege of "solvent" communities that can bear the cost of an eight-day retreat, while others cannot even cover the most basic aspects: transportation, food, etc.

Belonging to a world community also implies becoming aware of the different economic situations, social and, political, faced by our members in different parts of the world. This can help us to better stand in solidarity with the difficult conditions of others. For example, according to the statistics offered by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO),¹ in 2008 some countries affiliated to the CLC and others in the process of membership are among the countries with critical levels of malnutrition.

Moderately high hunger (20-34% of population)	Very high hunger (more than 35% of population)
<p>WCLC Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bolivia - Cameroon - India - Kenya <p>in process of affiliation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Botswana - Congo Brazzaville 	<p>WCLC Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Madagascar - D.R. Congo - Rwanda <p>in process of affiliation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chad - Ethiopia
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nicaragua - Dominican Republic - Sri Lanka 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Zambia - Zimbabwe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sudan - Cambodia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Togo

We can see that growth in community and having an adult faith are positively correlated with having sufficient resources. Financial co-responsibility in a world community becomes essential to growth. Some people may wonder why money is needed in a spiritual group that does not appear to have any cost (eg, the community meeting). When a group meets "gratis" in a parish or a

¹ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. "The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2008"

school that does not charge for it, someone still pays for electricity, water or maintenance of the venue. The fact that no one charged the community for using a place does not mean that it does not cost anything, but someone is financing what we are not paying. Who pays for the place where we meet? Or How are the costs of the National CLC Centre/Secretariat or ExCo activities at national and regional level paid?

It is important to review some habits that impede our growth as an apostolic body. Eg. Do some members not support CLC because of mistrust of people or the structure; do some simply not see the sense of payment or perhaps not feel involved with the community and its mission, or simply neglect to contribute. *Which of these habits or other ones are present in my community?* In our communities, it is clear not all members have the same opportunities and economic needs. The economic contribution capacity can vary widely among my community partners. Therefore, national communities, regional and local ones must find the best system of shared responsibility. Taking into account the diversity of situations, the entire community needs to help CLC to review whether or not we are actually acting according to our possibilities.

Of course, the financial generosity of our members goes far beyond a quota system. In many places, we consider with admiration the sacrificed ministry of many members financed by themselves, self-funded transportation, materials and others. In undeveloped countries, for catechesis or social works, some of our members walk long distances. We are doing a lot and sometimes heroically! Several national communities, sometimes in collaboration with other institutions, develop their own works such as schools, children's homes, NGOs, among others².

How do I contribute - be it through my time and support, be it with money – in the apostolate of my community? How could stronger Financial Co-responsibility improve the mission in my community? How could my community contribute to improving the mission ability of the larger CLC.

In the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius the contemplation to attain love begins with a note: "Love should be put more in deeds than in words". When CLC is fully lived by its members, this will be reflected in many attitudes and behaviors including financial co-responsibility. If instead, co-responsibility it is not evident in the community life then this may be because we still need to deepen in the infinite mystery of God's love. Let us remember: "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt 6:21).

Financial Co-responsibility in CLC

As in any institution, CLC requires financial means to carry out its mission efficiently. For us the means must be provided to serve the mission because our purpose is not simply within the community, but also outside: "We are particularly aware of the pressing need to work for justice

² Just to mention some works of national CLCs: Italy, Uruguay and South Korea have children's homes, France, retreat houses, Philippines, Ecuador and Paraguay, NGOs, Kenya and Hong Kong schools.

through a preferential option for the poor” (GP 4). When we organize structures (global, national, regional or local) and budgets, our goal should be a more humane and divine world especially for the poorest.

Deepening in our financial co-responsibility is important and necessary for the future of world CLC. World Assembly of Fatima 2008 considers (3.14): *“financial co-responsibility to be an essential expression of our belonging to one World Community, and a necessary means for becoming an Apostolic Body. Being responsible for one another is an essential aspect of community life. We recognize the need to develop existing and new ways of financing operating expenses as well as special apostolic initiatives”*.

World CLC manages two kinds of funds:

1. Operating Funds: This allows the operation of the system or the institution of the world community from the Executive Council action. This fund is covered mainly with the dues system of national communities. Given the size of the World Community, the budget is quite modest; however, WCLC struggles to cover it every year and there is an accumulated deficit from several years. This becomes further complicated when affiliated communities do not meet their dues obligations. For example at the close of 2009, 38% of affiliated communities had not yet paid their dues.

The World Community attempts to reflect co-responsibility in the formula that has been designed to establish the dues of each national community in order to cover the operational budget. This formula considers two variables: the number of members and the Purchasing Power Parity (PPP).³ “Responsibility” is distributed according to this formula. A change in any of the variables (eg increase or decrease the number of members in a national community) adjusts the dues of all, reducing or increasing as appropriate.

2. Special Funds: These are mainly used to support the processes of poor communities or ministries that favor the poor. Although these funds are very important for the life of the world community, we have never had a systematic way to sustain and increase them. They depend on a spontaneous gift from a community or a member which happens very occasionally. These funds and their objectives are:

- ***Africa Fund:*** It supports the international meetings and regional activities in Africa
- ***Apostolic Fund:*** This was established out of a recommendation of the World Assembly of Fatima (3.14.c) and supports institutional works or ministries of CLC. In 2010 it supported specific projects in our neediest communities
- ***Formation Fund:*** This funds formation activities. For example, it has helped Magis course in Latin America and two leadership courses in Africa in 2009.

³ PPP is an economic indicator to realistically compare living standards across countries, attending the Gross Domestic Product per capita in terms of cost of living in each country

- **Advocacy Fund**: The fund supports advocacy activities especially in international organizations (such as the United Nations or the World Social Forum).

For World CLC day celebration

Taking into account the points developed in this *Projects 147*, we propose two joint actions to be organized by each community as part of one world apostolic body:

- In a common meeting day all communities or groups are invited to deepen and reflect the meaning of co-responsibility and especially financial co-responsibility in CLC with special emphasis on the questions found in this *Projects 147*.
- For the Eucharist for the celebration of the World CLC Day, we would ask for a collection to support one fund of the World CLC⁴ offered as a sign of Co-responsibility in the mission in the Eucharist for the world day.

Finally, we ask you to share notes and photos of the celebration to e-mail: webmaster@cvx-clc.net
As last year, there will be a special section on this in our website www.cvx-clc.net

United in prayers and service as one world community

Franklin Ibáñez – Sofía Montañez
Executive Secretariat

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President

⁴ Each national community will determine which one (s) fund (s) wants to support and inform it to the World Secretariat exsec@cvx-clc.net