

# PROGRESSIO

news views and updates



## Water for life

Add your voice to our new 'Waterproof' campaign

### 2012 issue one

What we've been up to	page 2
Stories of change	page 6
Point of view	page 10
What you've been up to	page 12
What you can do	page 14

## >Welcome to your new-look magazine

You'll notice we've made a few changes to your magazine. We want to celebrate the achievements of the people and communities we work with – and the invaluable contribution that you, our members and supporters, make. We couldn't do it without you!

Please do tell us what you think of the magazine – we value your opinions! Please write to us at the address on the back page or email [magazine@progressio.org.uk](mailto:magazine@progressio.org.uk)

You can read more on some of the stories in this magazine at our website [progressio.org.uk](http://progressio.org.uk) – or if you'd like more information in print form, please contact us at the address on the back page.



### A magical adventure

Fernando Ruiz (above left) is leaving Progressio after 10 years as a development worker in Ecuador and Honduras. "These years have been a magical adventure that has changed me and filled me with joy and satisfaction," he told us. Fernando worked with indigenous communities, who he says are "joining together to demand their rights: they know that only through acting as a community will they have the strength to achieve a good life". He is pictured above with Abraham Salazar of the Indigenous and Peasant Farmers' Movement of Cotopaxi, Ecuador. Read more of Fernando's story at [progressio.org.uk/blog/news](http://progressio.org.uk/blog/news)

## Round-up

In January 2012, we had 65 development workers in place – 13 in the Dominican Republic and Haiti, 10 in Honduras, 9 in Timor-Leste, 7 in each of Somaliland, Yemen and Zimbabwe, 6 in El Salvador, 5 in Nicaragua, and 1 in Peru.

In the six months from April-September 2011, we worked with 526 local organisations to build their capacity, skills and effectiveness.

And in those six months, 21,015 people received training from our development workers, and 54,970 people in poor communities directly benefited from our work.

64 young people have already completed their 10-week International Citizen Service (ICS) volunteer placements with Progressio – and we currently have another 11 volunteers in El Salvador, 13 in Peru and 12 in Malawi. To find out more about ICS Progressio, read Zoe's story on page 10, and visit [progressio.org.uk/empower](http://progressio.org.uk/empower)

Santiago Serrano/Progressio



### Thirsty cobs demand water justice!

#### 👉 Yemen

Despite the serious levels of internal conflict Progressio continued to support our partner organisations to promote citizen participation in local governance. In November we placed six new development workers in Yemen to build on our work there. Our country representative Abeer Al-Absi says: “One of the objectives of the Arab Spring is to have real democratic systems which encourage poor and marginalised people to participate in the decisions that affect their lives. This is a great opportunity for Progressio to work under this theme in Yemen as this is the current need.”

You've heard of a flash mob, but what about a flash cob? Progressio campaigners dressed as giant corn on the cobs took to Central London church and government locations armed with their watering cans to demand fair access to water for poor people in the developing world. They attracted a lot of attention from the rush hour and tourists and even managed a radio interview! See pages 6 and 14 for more on the Waterproof campaign, or check out [progressio.org.uk/waterproof](https://progressio.org.uk/waterproof)

#### 👉 Illegal logging

Did you campaign with Progressio on illegal logging? If so, have you been wondering whether it made a difference? In December 2011, an independent review of Progressio's policy and campaigns work on illegal logging praised our contribution to achieving the “remarkable outcome” of new EU legislation prohibiting the sale of illegally logged timber in Europe. The review said that the combination of policy/advocacy work and public campaigning led to “a very strong outcome for Progressio and for those whose livelihoods are blighted by illegal logging”. Find out more at [progressio.org.uk/transparency](https://progressio.org.uk/transparency)



## Haiti two years on

Much has been achieved in the two years since the earthquake, but huge challenges remain. We believe these will only be met with better coordination between the Haitian state, Haitian civil society, and the international community – and that's what we're working to achieve.

We're playing a key role in promoting UK engagement with, and support for, Haiti – including supporting the establishment of a new All Party Parliamentary Group for Haiti. And in Haiti, our partner CERFAS (Centre for Research, Reflection, Training and Social Action), and Progressio development workers, have been monitoring reconstruction efforts with a focus on involving the most vulnerable sectors of the population. Read more at [progressio.org.uk/blog/news](https://progressio.org.uk/blog/news)

On the ground, we're working directly with those vulnerable communities. We have four development workers in Haiti, and six based in the Dominican Republic but working on cross-border projects, including improving Haitian access to markets in Dajabon, and agro-forestry and sustainable farming projects. Read more from our development worker Juan Carlos Gonzalez at [progressio.org.uk/blog/development-worker](https://progressio.org.uk/blog/development-worker)

## Somaliland

Our partner organisation SONYO's (the Somaliland National Youth Organisation) six-year advocacy campaign achieved a ground-breaking change in the law to reduce the minimum legal age of election candidates from 35 to 25 years – opening the way for young people to participate in decision-making at all levels.

## 👉 Honduras

Jubenal Quispe, our development worker with OCDIH, has trained indigenous people from the Maya Chorti community in using traditional agricultural knowledge and practices to adapt to the impacts of climate change. And Oscar Davila, our development worker with Popol Nah Tun, has trained people from the Plan Grande community in agro-forestry techniques. Instead of burning forests to clear land for agriculture, they are growing banana and yucca in harmony with the forest; and they care for the land using organic fertilisers.



### Growing more, earning more

In Zimbabwe our development worker Cliff Maunze helped farmers learn techniques for growing crops in water-scarce conditions. No water is wasted – when you wash your hands, the water irrigates the plant underneath! Working with partner organisation Environment Africa, we've helped set up 26 Farmer Field Schools in Zimbabwe, while in Malawi our development worker Innocent Ogaba organised training for 354 farmers – over 200 of them women – leading to increased yields and more income from selling produce in local markets. Read more on these stories at [progressio.org.uk/blog/development-worker](https://progressio.org.uk/blog/development-worker)



### Giving the grassroots a voice

How do you give ordinary men and women a voice in the elitist process of policy-making? In Zimbabwe, “policies did not represent the poor,” says Progressio development worker Christopher Mweembe (above left). So we joined forces with the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Zimbabwe and NANGO (the National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations) to tackle the problem. The project aims “to get the ideas, understanding, beliefs, desperations of ordinary people into policy-making,” says NANGO’s Machinda Marongwe (above right). How? By working with grassroots organisations to produce policy options that they can use for advocacy. And it’s already getting results: the first report on the national Youth Service “influenced a key decision that was going through Parliament at that time,” says Chris. Read more at [progressio.org.uk/blog/development-worker](https://progressio.org.uk/blog/development-worker)

# Water for life

Progressio's new Waterproof campaign calls for people to be at the centre of decisions about meeting their own water needs. But what does this mean in practice, and how is Progressio helping people bring about change in their own lives?



Progressio development worker Sonja Bleeker works with our partner organisation Aquafondo in Peru

## What is everyday life like for the communities you work with in Peru?

"The communities I work with are small holder farmers, who grow food partly for themselves and partly for selling in markets. Because of the lack of basic facilities (above all the lack of good education facilities for the children), and because of environmental problems which affect agriculture (climate change, lack of water, poor soils, erosion), levels of migration to the cities are high. Traditions in agriculture and cultures get lost bit by bit. The work on the land is hard, especially for the women."

## How has climate change affected life there?

"Changes in the climate are really obvious in the mountains of Peru. Temperatures rise, and the rainy season gets shorter, but with very intense showers. Among the effects are more erosion and soil loss; more pests and crop disease. This leads to smaller harvests, so reducing incomes and undermining food security. And it leads to conflicts about water, which has a major impact on the many people who depend directly on agriculture for their livelihoods."

## What does your work involve?

"In my first job as a development worker with Progreso I worked with Centro IDEAS, in the north of Peru, where we promoted the introduction of native crops and agro-ecology (a sustainable approach to farming) as a strategy for adapting to climate change. That work helped reduce the vulnerability of 40 Andean communities.

"Now at Aquafondo, one of our first aims is to create Water Users' Councils (*Consejos*) that involve the participation of small holder farmers. The new Peruvian Water Law promotes the creation of these *Consejos* and the involvement of small-scale water users, such as farmers, in decision-making about water. However, so far most of the *Consejos* have been set up without the participation and knowledge of all rural communities, meaning they are unrepresentative and lack local support.

"Aquafondo is tackling this problem in the areas covering Lima's watersheds (of the rivers Rímac, Chillón and Lurín). This requires awareness-raising and organisation of more than 80 communities spread over 70 districts.

"The project so far has received very positive feedback. For many farmers this is the first time they have been consulted about their needs and opinions in water-related issues."

**The project so far has received very positive feedback**



Manuel Cuadros Jiménez is a member of the city council of Huamantanga

"Here in Huamantanga, as in other parts of Peru, the water we have is getting less and less each year. We have to create awareness that without water we cannot cultivate our land and we could not continue to live here in Huamantanga.

"For us, having water means having food and a little bit of income. But for the big companies such as mines and hydroelectric power plants water means a lot of money, and because they have more power and money, the government allows them to use the water we need so badly.

"The creation of the *Consejos* is a very positive initiative. At least we can now have a dialogue with the government, the private companies and all the other types of water users, and we will have a vote in the decisions that are made.

"As small farmers, we have to use this opportunity to finally become involved in decision-making about water, because until now nobody ever asked us our opinion about the way water should be managed."

Aquafondo is also working to revive traditional water management techniques, including an ancient system of drainage channels. These increase the amount of surface run-off water that is captured and absorbed into the water table during the rainy season – so ensuring more groundwater is available during the dry season.

This pool, in the watershed of the Chillón river, is about 1.5 hours horseshoe from Huamantanga. The pool is fed by a small stream and also collects rainwater. Water from this pool will be diverted into drainage channels restored by the Aquafondo project. This water will then filter into the water table, recharging natural springs to provide water during the dry season.

Marcelino Flores Espinoza (above right) is president of the Irrigation Users' Association of Barrio Anduy, Huamantanga

“Huamantanga has a very dry environment and we farmers depend on water from the rain that falls in winter (the rainy season). In winter, the valleys capture quite a lot of water. The community has made drainage channels in different places to facilitate the infiltration of this water into the soil, so that the springs lower in the valley increase their capacity.

“During recent decades the water quantity has decreased a lot. Therefore, we need to restore this system of drainage channels so we can save and store more water.”



María Yolanda Rojas Ávila, from Antioquia in the watershed of the Lurín river, took part in a workshop about the local Water Users' Council

"I use water basically for two things. For my household I need water for domestic tasks such as washing and cooking, and for personal hygiene. I also give water to the animals I have around my home.

"Besides this, my husband and I use water for irrigating our land. The local irrigation committee charges a fee for that. However, in this area, farmers use irrigation water very inefficiently and every time we have less water available. Sometimes this causes conflicts between neighbours.

"To me, water means life. Without water the people, animals and crops cannot live. If we didn't have water for irrigation, we would depend on the rainy season and only have one harvest per year, which would mean less income for my family.

"I'm taking practical steps to make sure my grandchildren inherit a better world. I try to participate in activities such as the *Consejo* (Water Users' Council). This gives small water users an equal voice in the management of our watershed, because until now it is the big companies and the State who make all the decisions, and we are not even told about what they decide.

"I hope we will have enough water in the future. This is something that keeps us all worried.

"World leaders meeting in June should really listen to all the poor people in the world and not ignore us, because I think everybody in the world should have the same chance to have a good and decent life."

### 👉 **Let's Waterproof development!**

Please support our campaign to put water for food and farming firmly on the agenda at June's Rio+20 conference – see page 14 or go to [progressio.org.uk/waterproof](http://progressio.org.uk/waterproof)

# Living the changes



**Zoe Lavery, an ICS volunteer, discovers the true meaning of solidarity during her time with Progreso in El Salvador**

This week we were invited to do something very special within the community with which we have been working: to release the baby turtles, which have been protected by a conservation project, back into the sea.

When we arrived at the centre I was surprised at how tiny and vulnerable the turtles seemed given that we were about to send them straight into the powerful waves of the Pacific. Thus, I was even more surprised when we put the turtles down onto the sand and without any hesitation they ran straight for the water, into the waves, and were gone.

It may sound like an obvious metaphor but this experience really did make me reflect on all we had seen since arriving in El Salvador, and to consider how underneath the immediate impression of vulnerability there is a strength within the communities and people to survive and combat all that life throws at them.

I had already seen this in many ways: for example in the continuing party spirit which can be seen in the community in which we live, despite the recent tropical storm, and in the determination of those with whom we live to show us the beautiful and fun side of El Salvador to contrast the destruction and sadness we have seen after the storm.

This determination was demonstrated most strongly in the annual UNES (Environmental Movement of El Salvador) conference, during which Dr Angel Ibarra said that people across the world are fighting for the same thing and it is time to globalise the fight; the people of El Salvador cannot wait any longer.

He said that the rich countries are denying that climate change is their fault and refuse to change. He also said: "When people think about climate change they worry about the polar bears. We are the polar bears. Here we are living the changes."

**Zoe and fellow volunteer Afraa Ali (far left) help carry emergency supplies being distributed by our partner organisation UNES following the tropical storm**

The call to the conference participants was to mobilise and organise themselves. Despite this resolve, however, it is not yet clear to me how the vulnerability of those in El Salvador can actually be overcome. Unlike the strength of the turtles against the waves of the Pacific, it seems that the waves created by climate change, poverty, and the acts of the international community are just too powerful to overcome.

Perhaps the answer is in working together. All of us need to take action on climate change in order that those whose daily existence is threatened by the changing climate can survive.

It is up to us as individuals to look at our own lives and consider how our daily actions and decisions keep others

in poverty, whether it is from the food and products that we buy, to the bank which we invest our money in. These may only be small steps but at least it would demonstrate an act of solidarity and show that we are willing to stand alongside those who are literally fighting for their lives and the continuing existence of a beautiful and amazing country.

Progressio is one of the organisations funded by the Department for



International Development to run the International Citizen Service volunteering scheme. ICS Progressio enables young people from the UK interested in faith and international development to volunteer in a developing country for 10 weeks, and to use this experience to inspire social action on global issues here in the UK.



👉 **Watch a video** of Zoe and the ICS Progressio team helping to release the baby turtles at [progressio.org.uk/turtles](https://progressio.org.uk/turtles) and read more stories from our ICS volunteers in their blog at [progressio.org.uk/blog/empowered](https://progressio.org.uk/blog/empowered)



**Helping us change history**

Thank you so much to everyone who gave to our Christmas appeal which focused on empowering women in Timor-Leste. Because of your support we have raised more than £6079, a fantastic result. If you haven't already it's still not too late to give to the appeal, simply visit [progressio.org.uk/give](https://progressio.org.uk/give)

Thank you also to all those who took part in The Big Give campaign in the run up to Christmas. Although we did experience a few teething problems with their website we did still manage to raise another £3881 to support our work in Timor-Leste. Thank you for your patience and for your feedback; we really appreciate all your efforts!

**Full post bag in Timor-Leste**

We've been bowled over by the solidarity cards sent in by Christians Aware supporters to our development workers in Timor-Leste and the communities they work with. See the messages at [progressio.org.uk/timorsolidarity](https://progressio.org.uk/timorsolidarity) and leave your own message too for the great work happening in this small but troubled nation.

**ICS Progressio in action**

In the past few months we have had the pleasure of getting to know our International Citizen Service volunteers who have been working alongside communities in Malawi, Peru and El Salvador. Having had first-hand experience of community development, bringing new ideas, perspectives and skills to help local partners, our volunteers have also been making an impact here in the UK. They have been doing anything and everything to raise awareness and raise money to support our work with poor communities. A big thank you to them all for their hard work, weird and wacky ideas and most of all their commitment to people powered development. Here's a taste of what they've been up to:

- **Saad Ghaus** faced his fear by 'leaping into the abyss' in a sponsored bungee jump – raising a massive £740 for Progressio!
- **Laura Packer** (along with her Dad) took part in a sponsored 26-mile walk, raising over £300 before Laura headed off to volunteer for Progressio in El Salvador.
- As well as charging people to attend her own birthday party, **Malaika Carr-Haji** also designed and made bespoke mobile phone covers and has raised more than £430!
- **Mark Chambers** had a 'virtual leaving drinks' before setting off to volunteer in Peru. By asking friends and family to donate to Progressio to send him on his merry way and wish him well he managed to raise over £200.
- **Anna Jerzykowski** set herself a huge challenge for Progressio. She promised to run one mile for every £10 raised by her family and friends – and they raised more than £290!



**Waking up to water**

More than 60 students at Cardinal Newman College, Harlesden, took action for water and livelihoods during their all-school mission in December. After finding out about the water we all use every day, the students chose one thing they could do differently to be more mindful of the water we all take for granted. If you'd like to book us for a workshop, please email [campaigns@progressio.org.uk](mailto:campaigns@progressio.org.uk)



**Walking the talk**

We'd like to say a big thank you to Peter Coates who recently held a talk on water in support of our new Waterproof campaign. Thanks to everyone at the St Henry Walpole Church in Burnham Market, Norfolk, who raised a fantastic £275 for Progressio. Peter said: "The parishioners of St Henry Walpole Church in Burnham Market believe in and support people powered development, and send their best wishes to all Progressio staff and the people they are helping." Thank you so much to everyone who attended!

### 👉 Get organising!

If you would like to organise an event for Progressio please do get in touch and we will send you a pack to help you on your way. Go to [progressio.org.uk/fundraise](https://progressio.org.uk/fundraise) or email [pamela@progressio.org.uk](mailto:pamela@progressio.org.uk) or call 020 7288 8667 and we will do all we can to help.



### Let's waterproof development

Our new Waterproof campaign has one aim: for poor and marginalised people to get fair and sustainable access to the water they need for their livelihoods. We need to act, step by step, and make a real difference.

#### Next step: Rio!

We've got to act NOW to make sure water gets on the agenda when the world meets in June 2012 for Rio+20: the UN Conference on Sustainable Development. World leaders must recommit to sustainable development and this time they have to talk water! So take our brand new action and add your face to our gallery of support at [progressio.org.uk/rio](http://progressio.org.uk/rio) We'll be handing in all your pictures to Caroline Spelman, the Minister responsible, in the run-up to Rio+20. Please take the action before the end of May!

#### But don't stop there

- Get up to speed by reading our Rio+20 briefing and our new, essential guide to water and development
- Find out more about Catholic social teaching and water by watching the slide-show on our website
- Spread the message about Rio and water to your community – see our website for ideas for action (and a few fundraising options too!)



➤ All this and more is on our Waterproof resources page at [progressio.org.uk/waterproof](http://progressio.org.uk/waterproof) – or if you'd like more information in print form, please contact us at the address on the back page.

**Boys running at a camp for internally displaced people in Timor-Leste**

Marcus Perkins/Progressio



### Run for Progressio

#### Share the secret

If running is not your thing then how about holding an event for us? A quiz night or a coffee morning with friends would be an excellent way to help us spread the word about Progressio's work as well as make a few more friends along the way. Find out more at [progressio.org.uk/fundraise](https://progressio.org.uk/fundraise) or contact [pamela@progressio.org.uk](mailto:pamela@progressio.org.uk) or call 020 7288 8667 for a fundraising pack, and we'll do everything we can to help out!

We've got five people running for Progressio in the Great Birmingham run in October – but it's not too late to put your name down for other sponsored events! Whether you're involved in a sponsored walk, run, hike or swimathon, why not do it for Progressio? You could help us raise vital funds to support our projects. In return, we can provide you with a Progressio t-shirt or running vest. Find out more at [progressio.org.uk/fundraise](https://progressio.org.uk/fundraise) or email [pamela@progressio.org.uk](mailto:pamela@progressio.org.uk) or call 020 7288 8667 for more details.

what you can do

## WATERPROOF

Sign up for our Proactive email bulletin – we'll be targeting MPs and MEPs in the coming weeks. Sign up at [progressio.org.uk/waterproof](https://progressio.org.uk/waterproof)

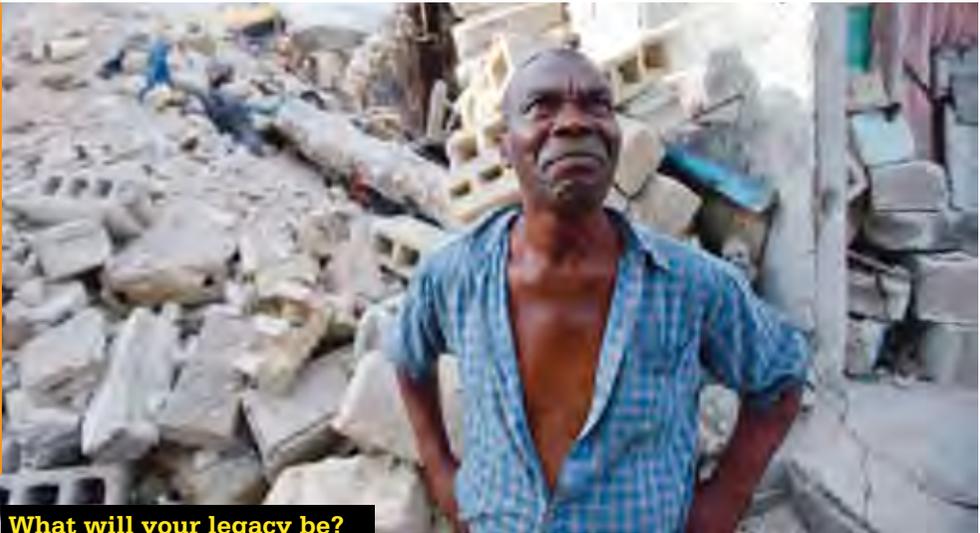
Get urgent updates on your phone: just text WATER and your NAME and EMAIL address to 87070 (texts cost your standard network rate)

Follow Lola the Llama on Twitter – she loves water! [twitter.com/llamalola](https://twitter.com/llamalola)



### Volunteer overseas

Are you aged 18-22 and looking to broaden your horizons? Or do you have family or friends aged 18-22 who might like to volunteer overseas? We still have places left on our ICS Progressio programme for departure to Zimbabwe and Malawi at the end of March. To find out how to apply just visit [progressio.org.uk/empower](https://progressio.org.uk/empower)



### What will your legacy be?

Progressio's work is all about long-term change. We work alongside people and communities so that they can empower themselves to improve their own lives – now, and into the future.

By leaving a legacy to Progressio, you can make a lasting difference to the lives of people like Wilbert Joseph (pictured above) in Haiti, by giving them the power to overcome poverty and build a better future for themselves.

Please remember Progressio in your will – your legacy could make an impact on people's lives that will live on for generations.

To find out more please go to [progressio.org.uk/give](http://progressio.org.uk/give) or contact us at the address below.

### ➤ We're moving!

In March 2012 Progressio is moving its head office to Brixton in south London.

We'll pay less rent but have similar facilities. And we're pleased to be leasing the offices from CAFOD – one of several ways in which Progressio and CAFOD are working closely together at home and overseas. Please check our website in March for the new contact details or call us on 020 7354 0883.

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Front cover photo: María Yolanda Rojas Ávila plants crops with her son, Eduardo, in Antioquia, Peru (photo © Thomas Müller/SPDA)