



Global Justice



Our Global Justice Fund at work

Project:

Radio Libertad "La Voz de los Sin Voz" (Freedom Radio: Voice of the Voiceless), Guatemala

Supported jointly by:

CUPE National Global Justice Fund and CUPE Local 1281, Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG: McMaster, Carleton, Windsor).

Goals:

- Establish an independent media outlet in the community of Salvador Frajardo,
- Build community democratic participation, and
- Strengthen Radio Libertad (skills building, infrastructure, equipment).

Activities:

The Alliance for Life and Peace is ever improving the quality of Radio Libertad programming through greater community involvement; meetings to discuss local issues; and developing relevant, creative programming ideas on issues such as hydroelectric dams, mining, genetically-modified seeds, violence against women, etc.

Programs share information about independent community organizing and events such as farmers markets that help alleviate poverty and promote alternatives to high cost imported food.

Support from CUPE's National Global Justice Fund assists with political and technical training, workshops on program development and equipment upgrades.

Background:

The partnership with CUPE and OPIRG began in 2005 under the theme "Agua, maiz y tierra son nuestros" (Water, corn and land are ours).

Guatemala-based partners include Alianza por la Vida y la Paz del Peten (Peten Alliance for Life and Peace) and the Centre for Research and Popular Education. The Peten Alliance for Life and Peace was organized in 2002, to resist the neo-liberal agenda of globalization behind agreements such as the Plan Puebla Panama (PPP), the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and the Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA).

Case study #2

This is just one project made possible with support from CUPE's National Global Justice Fund. To find out about others, and how to get involved in international solidarity work, visit www.cupe.ca/globaljustice.

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These are youth from a children's program Mundo Infantil. Maco and Nidia have recently joined the radio team. Rosita and Marta are showing them how to select music in the computer and transmit it.

Issues:

Mainstream mass media promotes corporate control and neo-liberal economic policy. This means the impact of those policies are masked and alternative voices are drowned out and unheard.

Popular organizations can empower community members to "talk back" and present alternatives to the harmful economic and development policies that affect all of our lives. That is what Radio Libertad has done. They provide programming that appeals to the population, but also strengthens the struggle for a more democratic and just society; one based on a shared vision of respect for Mother Earth, rights of workers and autonomy of indigenous peoples.

Outcomes:

Guatemalan organizers have been successful in their goal of building an independent media outlet.

Radio Libertad has contributed to the "democratization of the airwaves" by supplying vital information to local communities through broadcasting and to the global community via internet streaming. As a result, coordinated actions and conscious participation have improved in the Alliance for Life and Peace against the neo-liberal corporate agenda. <http://www.vidaypaz.org/> (Spanish only)

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