



## MINUTE FOR MISSION

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### Presbyterian Hunger Program

#### SEEDS OF SUSTAINABILITY

“At the end of the day, it’s not just about bean and corn seeds,” says Doris Evangelista, RUMES national coordinator. “We’re sowing the seeds of hope, of community, and of resilience.”

“It’s getting hotter and drier every year. Many of my neighbors have lost crops due to drought, and some have decided it’s simply not worth the risk to even plant,” explains Silverio Morales, himself a small-scale farmer who grows the Salvadoran staple crops of corn and beans, as well as a variety of fruits and vegetables on a shared plot of land near his home.

For the second year in a row, El Salvador is experiencing severe drought conditions during what should be the rainy season. The effects have been devastating, threatening the food security and the very livelihoods of farming families across the country. Silverio, however, is an exception. With native seeds, organic fertilizers, and agro-ecological farming practices, Silverio and his family have enjoyed an ample corn harvest and are preparing to plant a second, late-season corn crop as well.

Red Uniendo Manos El Salvador (RUMES), the Presbyterian Hunger Program’s Joining Hands Network partner in El Salvador, works closely with farmers like Silverio in their struggle to produce local, healthy, and sustainable food for their families, their communities, and the country. RUMES connects farmers and farming communities around the country to share their experiences, exchange ideas, and to learn from one another about the ancestral techniques and accessible technologies that can help to increase crop yields and mitigate the effects of climate change.

As farmers, communities, and agricultural organizations come together, they recognize they are not alone in their

struggles. RUMES and PHP’s Joining Hands partners in other countries accompany communities in working with local leaders, as well as national governments, to ensure policies are in place to preserve and protect native seeds and to promote agro-ecological, organic, and sustainable practices in food production.

U.S. Presbyterians also come alongside RUMES to learn from the experiences of Salvadoran partners and support them through advocacy, adding their voices in favor of agriculture, trade, and development policies that build up local, sustainable food economies. Last year, thanks in part to advocacy efforts by Presbyterians, Salvadoran corn farmers were able to provide the seeds distributed to 400,000 subsistence farmers as a part of the Salvadoran Government’s Family Agriculture Plan. This purchase of national seeds from local farming cooperatives meant significant investment in local economies, and enabled numerous rural families to make a dignified living as vocational farmers.

This is just one example of how the Presbyterian Hunger Program connects communities, partners, and Presbyterians through the Joining Hands Network to address the root causes of poverty and hunger, and you are a part of it! Your gifts to the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering have a huge impact on the lives of our sisters and brothers in places like El Salvador.

**Please, give generously to One Great Hour of Sharing to help others like Silverio.**