



2020 PROJECTS

Responding to the needs of the most vulnerable during the COVID-19 crisis



Thiciano Pareja Saucedo, 8, washes her hands at El Comedor de Niños, an after-school program for children in the Montero area of Bolivia. One of its main goals is to improve nutrition and health outcomes in the community by teaching children about healthy eating, gardening and hygiene. MCC photo/Matthew Sawatsky.

The coronavirus pandemic has harmed countless lives around the globe, robbing many of life and upending the best-laid plans. Yet in these losses, God is at work. As job layoffs mounted in mid-March, VMissions organized a Coronavirus Immigrant Care Fund to address pressing needs in the Harrisonburg community and beyond. Administered by a team that includes VMissions church planters, staff and local church leaders, the generous giving by partners has helped 58 families buy groceries and meet their rent obligations during a difficult season. Among these families were recent believers in a Latino congregation, the newest VMC church, who expressed gratitude for the tangible expressions of God's love they received from their new church community after all family members had lost their employment.

The continuation of essential work, however, presented other challenges. Responding to the health concerns of Latino sisters and brothers who continued to work in poultry plants during the height of the crisis, VMissions organized the production and distribution of more than 2,500 masks during a time of short supply, a partnership that spanned processing plant management and the Old Order Mennonite community.

Building on existing relationships from relief aid following an earthquake late last year and in partnership with local believers,

MCC is well positioned through its ongoing water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), health and food programs to address the threats of COVID-19 for some of the world's most vulnerable people, including people displaced from their homes. Many MCC partner organizations bolster health efforts by providing training about nutrition, hygiene and disease prevention; and by strengthening access to food and clean water. MCC also supports several hospitals and clinics that serve people already at risk.



**Mennonite
Central
Committee**

"Much of the work that MCC does around the world with vulnerable populations is helpful in a pandemic like COVID-19," says Paul Shetler Fast, MCC's health coordinator. "The principles of MCC's work in WASH are helpful across a broad range of infectious diseases, including epidemics like COVID-19," Fast says.

Your gift to My Coins Count will help MCC distribute locally purchased supplies to vulnerable and displaced people around the world as MCC workers and partners identify needs.



VMissions spearheaded a campaign to supply local poultry plants with cloth face masks during the height of the pandemic. Over 2,500 were distributed. VMissions photo/Jon Trotter.

VMissions workers in Albania approached government leaders in order to explore ways of caring for their communities. The Roma community had been hit especially hard as their sources of income evaporated during a strict shelter-in-place order that lasted for more than two months. VMissions partnered in the distribution of weekly food packets to more than 50 families for a period of two months during the time of closures, work that opened the door to sharing good news in a community with an emerging Christian presence.

Your gift through My Coins Count will help VMissions to engage in ongoing relief efforts among neighbors near and far. Join us in showing the compassion of Christ in the communities where our workers and partners live and serve.



vmmissions.org/how-to-help/giving-projects/my-coins-count/

What is My Coins Count?

My Coins Count (MyCC) is a fun way to raise money for projects of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and Virginia Mennonite Missions (VMissions). It is the program formerly known as *Penny Power*. **Funds raised will be shared evenly between VMissions and MCC.**

Collect coins in a container in your church, school, home or business. Tape the label onto a jug, jar or can. Blue water jugs are the most popular option, and can be picked up at Virginia Mennonite Missions, 601 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, Va. After the relief sale, keep your jugs for next year, or collect for *My Coins Count* throughout the year!

Place promotional materials in a prominent spot in your church or organization near the jug(s). Then simply drop your coins into the container and watch it fill up!

Bring the containers to the Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale on Friday evening or **no later than 9 a.m.** on October 3 at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds near Harrisonburg.

The coins are sorted by volunteers and counted in machines from Park View Federal Credit Union, whose staff calculate the total value of each congregation's coins. Currency and checks are also welcome.

Checks should be made payable to "Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale," designated for *My Coins Count*. Put checks in your congregation's jug or bring them by 9 a.m. to the *MyCC* building.

How can we promote it?

Here are just a few ideas:

- **Designate *My Coins Count* as the offering project** for Sunday school classes or Vacation Bible School.
- **Have a special church fundraiser** for *My Coins Count*.
- **Highlight MyCC during your Sunday morning worship service.** This could be every Sunday or just once a month.
- **Have children fill a small container with coins at home,** then give them a reward for each full container of coins they bring to church.
- **Match the amount of your church's contribution!** Match \$250, \$500, \$1,000 or the whole amount your congregation raises. Make it a contest!

Bring coin containers to the
Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale
at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds

October 2-3, 2020