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**Minute for Mission**

**Sowing Seeds of Hope**

Paola Tognarelli’s [Tog-na-rē-le] connection to Mother Earth is sacred. Just like the bond she now shares with the other women in her life through an organization based in Panama City, Panama, called Women’s Meeting Space.

Women's Meeting Space is a non-governmental organization that advocates for the rights of Panama’s women, both Indigenous and from its poorest communities. It helps the women, primarily heads of household who are unemployed, and their families grow food at home to help them overcome the challenges made worse by the pandemic, including high unemployment. This partner organization receives funding through the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP), which is supported by Presbyterians’ generous gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing.

SDOP enters into partnerships with low-income communities, helping them change the structures around them that perpetuate poverty, oppression and injustice.

One Great Hour of Sharing helps neighbors in need around the world and gives us a tangible way to share God’s love — not only through the ministries of SDOP, but also the Presbyterian Hunger Program and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

“I’m not surprised that when we first started working in Panama, we were finding women’s groups,” said Teresa Bidart, bilingual mission specialist for SDOP. “We started in the Dominican Republic in 2007, Belize in 2010 and Panama in 2018. Everywhere we go, most of the organizations we reach out to are women’s organizations because in all these poorer countries, children and families mostly depend on the women for everything they need to live.”

This project — designed to foster knowledge of urban production and boost the capacity of the community to overcome crises — also includes starting an experimental nursery to produce seedlings and installing a community farmstand. Its goal is not only to feed the growers’ families but to sell surplus food to cover the basic needs of workers.

As women everywhere struggle to put food on their families’ tables, Paola and the many women whose lives are being transformed by this project are grateful that the people across the PC(USA) continue to think about them.

“I thank all the women, the managers of Women's Meeting Space and the Presbyterian Church for giving us this support,” she said. “I’m always very grateful to all of you.”

And there you have it … heartfelt affirmation that when we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

***Let us pray~***

*Walk with us, O God, as we serve you and partner with those in need. May our gifts and our prayers support those who work to bring life and hope in their communities.* **Amen***.*