
Editor's Introduction, with a Tribute to Chad Hayward

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The current issue of the *CRDA* journal comes out at a time when we are still mourning the passing of Chad Hayward just a few short months ago on January 27, 2024. Chad had served as the Accord Network's CEO for 17 years and was instrumental in getting *CRDA* adopted as the Accord Network's official journal. By virtue of his position, Chad served on *CRDA*'s executive board right from the inception of the journal in the summer of 2019, and he was a constant source of enthusiastic encouragement, prayer, and support for all that we were doing. He is sorely missed by all of us.

We think Chad would be particularly pleased by this issue of the journal, not only because of the specific articles that anchor its content, but also because it is the first issue in which we are publishing curated content from follow-up webinars focused on articles published in this journal. These webinars have become a central feature of the way we try to promote continuing reflection and discussion on the insights and topics raised in these pages, and, based on attendance, appear to be appreciated by our community.

The current issue leads with an article by eight authors from Tearfund who played important roles in Tearfund's rigorous evaluation of its church and community transformation (CCT) program in Africa. This synopsis of the evaluation discusses both the results of the study and the methodology, and we hope that their account leads to vigorous conversation leads to vigorous conversation among the Christian NGO network about how best to undertake the work of serving Christ's community the world over.

The second contribution to this issue is a retrospective reflection on the state of the creation care movement and efforts of the Evangelical Environmental Network (EEN) over the last thirty plus years to promote and shape the movement. The author, Stan LeQuire, founding director of EEN in 1993, finds that the movement is flourishing. He is especially hopeful because of the energy and commitment he sees from youth-led organizations like Young Evangelicals for Climate Action (YECA) and the ongoing engagement of NGOs like Plant with Purpose and A Rocha.

The issue also includes polished transcripts of the two webinars organized by the Accord Research Alliance (ARA), a subgroup of the Accord Network. One was a follow-up to the *CRDA* special issue (5[1]) on decolonization. It opens with reflective comments from

practitioner Maria Fernanda (Mafer) Madriz Bolaños and academic Charlotte Bray, followed by a moderated discussion that includes four of the authors from the special issue and two webinar participants.

The second webinar discussion refers back to Richard Slimbach's provocative article, "[Asking Tough Questions About Transformational Development](#)," from *CRDA*'s Winter 2023 issue (Slimbach 2023). Three practitioner/scholars were invited to respond to three sets of questions revolving around (1) the relationship of Christian faith to development in general, (2) macro issues of political economy, and (3) the character and management of field partnerships. The questions Slimbach poses are ones that Christian development workers must continue to wrestle with over the course of their lives. Definitive, final answers are not the point. Instead, Slimbach pushes us all to "live the questions" in the continuing hope that "organizations will give them sufficient airtime in honest conversations around conference tables or virtual tables to build more nuanced understandings, strengthen relational bonds, and ultimately help shape more thoughtful, inclusive, collaborative, dynamic, and impactful organizations" (62). We invite you to read the thoughtful comment and to join the conversation.

This issue offers only one book review, which is on former *CRDA* editor Stephen Offutt's book, *Blood Entanglements: Evangelicals and Gangs in El Salvador* (New York: Oxford University Press 2023).

We conclude with a brief overview of Accord Network history to highlight how *CRDA* became its official journal, and then to report on what happened at OneAccord23 in October of 2023.

In the next year we expect to publish special issues on both peacebuilding and gender. Other special issues in various stages of development will address the following topics: The church's role in transformational development, WASH, microfinance, and agriculture. If the Spirit moves you to write something that explores the relationship between Christian faith and our global mission to love our neighbors, we welcome your ideas.

References

- Slimbach, Richard. 2023. "Asking Tough Questions About Transformational Development." *Christian Relief, Development, and Advocacy: The Journal of the Accord Network* 4(2): 51-63.