The National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW) is an umbrella organization of 5,000 Catholic Women's organizations representing millions of Catholic women across the country. It was founded in 1920 at the request of the Bishops in the United States who had seen the work accomplished by the many separate Catholic women’s groups during World War I and urged them to unite their efforts by forming a federation.

Today, NCCW is composed of affiliated parish or area women's groups, and diocesan and national organizations as well as individual supporting members. The organization acts through these affiliates to support, educate and empower all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership and service.

A strong affiliate of NCCW, Catholic Relief Services' partnership with NCCW spans over 60 years. Through this partnership, NCCW and CRS have introduced community-based programs and solutions called "Works of Peace" and "Works of Reconciliation" that address the specific needs of women and children around the world.

Works of Peace Programs

Help-A-Child programs assist vulnerable children around the world, wherever the need is greatest, by providing nutritious meals, sustaining education, implementing local health care and establishing youth centers that address local issues.

Madonna Plan helps to improve the health of mothers around the world through health programs based on the importance of breastfeeding and childcare, as well as ways to increase the nutritional content of food, and prevent deadly diseases such as diarrhea. In addition, this program offers savings and credit banking programs to encourage women to think about generating income for her family.

Water for Life programs provide communities with resources to build a water system, allowing them access to a convenient source of clean water. Jobs are created and skills in water sanitation are developed.

Works of Reconciliation Programs

Refugee Women Emergency Fund recognized the vast need for relief and compassion to women in emergencies - refugees, displaced persons, and victims of natural disaster. This program was established to ensure that those most vulnerable - women and their children - have access to gender-specific resources over and above what is provided during emergency efforts. This would include adequate food, water, medicines, shelter, safety and leadership training.

Please support these programs through your local Council of Catholic Women collections.