

The Refugee Crisis and Foreign Involvement: The Case of CFCI in Costa Rica

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Published in *Global Missiology*, www.globalmissiology.org, October 2020

Abstract

Missiologists have long debated the effects of foreign involvement, particularly by imperial powers on their colonial soils. Regarding the current refugee crisis in Central America, a brief history is offered in relation to key development markers as well as the humanitarian aid and refugee admission that the United States government has provided to the region. The adverse and positive ramifications that foreign agencies working in these communities can have is addressed. The current crisis of migrants and refugees to Costa Rica is explored, with special focus given to one of the most impoverished neighborhoods located in San José—La Carpio. The dilemma and concerns of how best to help this community in such need are presented as well as how one humanitarian organization, Christ For the City International (CFCI), is serving there. CFCI provides a model to replicate for all who would see that La Carpio and the lives of its peoples improve. This study examines how geopolitical events and insufficient government aid have affected the mass migration occurring in Central America, particularly from Nicaragua into Costa Rica, and offers an example of how outside humanitarian organizations can best impact the poorest in those communities for sustained development.

Key Words: Central America, Costa Rica, humanitarian aid, migration, NGOs, refugees, poverty, servant leadership

Introduction

Central America consists of seven nations; from north to south they are Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama. This article focuses on the closer relationships among the middle five of these countries (Guatemala to Costa Rica) and, in particular, the relationship between Nicaragua and Costa Rica. What effects have the wars, gangs, and violence that have swept through the country of Nicaragua in the last decades had on its neighbor, Costa Rica? In particular, how have governments, humanitarian organizations, and mission agencies addressed the human rights and development of Nicaraguan refugees (predominantly women and children) to impact their status and well-being?

A summary of the recent history of Central America will be offered, elucidating the development markers for these five countries, along with the humanitarian aid and refugee admission that the United States government has provided to the region. Second, the current crisis of migrants and refugees to Costa Rica will be explored and explained, with special focus given to one of the most impoverished neighborhoods located in San José—La Carpio. Reflection is given to address the adverse and positive ramifications of foreign agencies working in these communities. The dilemma and concerns of how best to help this community in such need are presented as well as how one humanitarian organization, Christ For the City International (CFCI), is serving there. CFCI provides a model to replicate for all who would see

that La Carpio and the lives of its peoples improve. This consideration describes how geopolitical events and insufficient government aid have affected the mass migration occurring in Central America, particularly from Nicaragua into Costa Rica, and offers an example of how outside humanitarian organizations, through their incarnational presence, can best impact the poorest in those communities for sustained development.

A Summary of Central American History

While a thorough investigation of the historical, economic, and political factors which affected Central America in the last century is beyond the scope of this paper, a brief summary will be offered. This isthmus has possessed a rich history through the centuries and gained particular outside attention in the twentieth. Obtaining independence from Spain on September 15, 1821, five countries—Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica (GEHNC)—embarked on varied but connected journeys over the past one hundred years.

The twentieth century brought the focused attention of the United States to Central America, first by President Theodore Roosevelt and later by John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan. Teddy Roosevelt intervened in the domestic affairs of Central America to protect the burgeoning U.S. economic interests and private business investments there. Because Central America was dependent solely on the one market of the United States by the 1920s, the 1929 U.S. stock market crash brought about Central America's own economic depression as a result. Growing social ills brought a desire for social change among the populace, but dictators gained rule in all the countries, except in Costa Rica, through the 1930s. The havoc wreaked brought increasing resistance from the populace. While some revolutionary activity erroneously was deemed communist, those championing communist ideals were certainly active. Costa Rica disbanded its army in 1949, and political and social reforms for Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras took place during the 1940s and 1950s. Nicaragua, however, was the only country to experience no such reforms (Foster 2000).

In the 1960s, as the Cold War ensued globally, concerns about communism gaining hold in Central America grew, not least because of Cuba. John F. Kennedy introduced the Alliance for Progress, an organization providing ten years of government aid to Costa Rica, in part to stem communism. The U.S. military presence and protection of its business interests remained strong in Central America. The Central American Common Market was also created in 1960 to economically unify the five countries (GEHNC) but lasted only until 1969 when Honduras withdrew and declared war on El Salvador.

When the world economy plummeted in the 1970s during the oil crisis, Central America was hard hit. After the devastating 1972 drought in Nicaragua, a series of earthquakes and resulting fires that same year destroyed 70% of its capital, Managua, killing 18,000 and leaving 200,000 homeless (United Press International 1972). Additionally, the Central America population doubled from 1950-1980, straining the already small urban land mass competing with lands increasingly used for cattle and crops. By 1973, refugees had consumed ten percent of the arable land in Costa Rica (Foster 2000). The previous decades of dictatorships, incomplete reforms, and abject poverty among the majority of the population fomented continuing unrest.

The civil wars of the 1970s-1990s became one of the bleakest periods in Central American history. While U.S. President Carter cut military aid to Central American countries with human rights abuses, Reagan increased military intervention, especially in Nicaragua. After 40 years of

the U.S.-supported Somoza family's pilfering dictatorship (which owned 25% of the country's assets), the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional (FSLN) launched a guerrilla war and gained control in 1979. They won a contested election in 1984 but were deposed by the U.S.-trained Contras in 1990. The civil wars in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua left wrecked economies, infrastructures, and two million refugees (Foster 2000). With democratization, demilitarization, and diversification of market economies, 1997 marked a new peace for these countries, albeit with vastly embedded political corruption, national debts, and widespread poverty.

Apart from the devastation of wars and economic crippling that Central America experienced in the last century, low literacy rates among the populace and the lack of educational opportunities also have been extremely detrimental. Excluding Panama and Belize, in the 1920s only 2.7% of the population in the remaining five countries of Central America (GEHNC) could read (Foster 2000, 188). By comparison, in France by the late 1700s, 50% of males and 30% of women were literate, and in Britain, literacy rates were correspondingly 70% and 55% by 1850 (Lyons 2003, 313). In New England of the U.S. colonies, male literacy rates were 85% by the mid-1750s. Female literacy rates were at least 48% before the end of the eighteenth century, if not higher (Perlmann and Shirley 1991, 53, 60-61). The gender, though not racial, difference disappeared by the late 1890s (Sutch and Carter 2006). This historical literacy lag among Central American inhabitants profoundly affected their lives and impeded the development of their nations.

Even as recently as 1998, literacy rates were only 55.6% for Guatemala, 71.5% for El Salvador, 72.7% for Honduras, 65.7% for Nicaragua, and 94.8% for Costa Rica (Foster 2000, 271). As of 2015 or 2016 estimates, literacy rates for those 15 or older were 97.8% in Costa Rica, 89% in Honduras, 88.1% in El Salvador, 82.8% in Nicaragua, and 81.5% in Guatemala. Literacy rates had almost no gender difference in Costa Rica, Honduras, and Nicaragua but had an 11% difference between the sexes in Guatemala and a 4% difference in El Salvador (Central Intelligence Agency 2019).

Humanitarian Aid from and Refugee Admission to the U.S.

Apart from its military involvement in the region, how else has the U.S. government been involved in the countries of Central America? The cumulative amount of aid granted in the last decades is staggering. Considering the annual totals in 2017 alone, U.S. foreign aid given to the GEHNC countries was (in millions): Guatemala (\$257m), El Salvador, (\$118m), Honduras (\$181m), Nicaragua (\$44m), and Costa Rica (\$18m). Monies specifically given by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in 2017 were: Guatemala (\$197m), El Salvador, (\$104m), Honduras (\$149m), Nicaragua (\$23m), and Costa Rica (\$4.7m) (USAID 2017). Although they received far less aid, Nicaragua and Costa Rica have benefitted greatly from the billions of US foreign monies since the 1940s, falling under the United States' Strategy for Central America which "aims to secure US borders and protect American citizens by addressing the security, governance, and economic drivers of illegal immigration and transnational crime" (Mack and McNeil 2012).

Also, formally since the Refugee Act of 1980, the U.S. has set the precedent for welcoming the highest number of refugees and asylum seekers of any other country. If granted U.S. protection, these individuals are granted employment authorization and may be eligible to receive other social services. Apart from its refugee program, the United States currently offers a

Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to over 417,000 citizens of ten countries, including three from Central America: El Salvador (60.3% of all TPS holders), Honduras (19.3%), and Nicaragua (1.1%) (Wilson 2019). This benefit typically is designated for a period of six to eighteen months at a time. While not a pathway to lawful permanent residency, TPS individuals can apply for non-immigrant status or an adjustment of status through an immigration petition (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services n.d.).

The U.S. President, in consultation with Congress, sets the annual cap of refugees admitted to the United States. In 1980, over 207,000 refugees were admitted, but the number of refugees has steadily decreased since, apart from the 1990-1993 Balkan bump (Migration Policy Institute n.d.). While funding was boosted in 2016 by the Obama administration, the Trump administration has further heightened immigration enforcement. Trump reduced the original allotment of 110,000 for FY 2017 to 50,000 persons and lowered it to 30,000 for FY 2019. This is the lowest allotment of any President to date. In 2018, the US accepted only 22,491 refugees (Blizzard and Batalova 2019).

For those refugees admitted into the United States, most originate from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burma, Ukraine, and Bhutan. Of the top ten countries of origin from which refugees accepted into the U.S. come, the only Central American country is El Salvador (National Immigration Forum 2019). Trump further withdrew an estimated \$700 million in funding to nonprofit organizations, such as the International Justice Mission, working in the Northern Triangle nations of Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador (BBC 2019). Rather than creating pathways for legal work authorization, the US has pursued refugee resettlement outside of its borders. The resultant burden will shift to surrounding countries such as Costa Rica.

The Crisis of Refugees in Costa Rica

While the migration to the U.S. of Venezuelans, Mexicans, and other residents of Latin America has been widely observed, fewer researchers have analyzed the increasing strain of Central Americans, primarily Nicaraguans, flooding into Costa Rica and how to address it. Given the history of wars in the region and despite extensive US aid, Central Americans are migrating due to violence (particularly against women), corruption, lack of education for their children, and gang extortion of local businesses. For example, Guatemala faces falling coffee prices by 60%, and the Honduran family of Keila Garcia pays more than 50% of their income toward their children's private education (Anderson, S. 2019). Many Nicaraguans fled south during the Somoza dictatorship of the 1970s and again when the conflict ensued between Ortega's Sandinista government and U.S.-supported Contras in the 1980s. With President Ortega's violent response in 2018 to anti-government protests, an average of 200 Nicaraguans sought asylum in Costa Rica daily, not including those who entered illegally (United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner 2018).

With the astounding destruction that military dictatorships, civil wars, and natural disasters wrought, Nicaragua has suffered greatly. When its GDP is divided by the number of its inhabitants, the annual purchasing power parity (PPP) rating per person is \$5800 (2017 est.), the second poorest in Central America (Central Intelligence Agency n.d.). Emigration persists due to ongoing human rights violations domestically. According to the Corruptions Perceptions Index monitored by the organization Transparency International, Nicaragua falls in 125th place (out of 180 countries) in its perceived lack of public sector corruption, while Costa Rica ranks 48th (Transparency International 2018).

Juxtaposed with Nicaragua, Costa Rica is lauded for its neutrality in war, openness to foreigners, biodiversity, and ecological advances. For example, Costa Rica was named the “United Nations Champion of the Earth” for its example in addressing climate change (United Nations Climate Change 2019). Its commitment to social welfare, increase in public assistance, and reception of migrants is exemplar in the region and for the world.

Another reality in Costa Rica exists, though—for the impoverished. Approximately 22% of the population lives below the poverty line, and females head 43.5% of those households (Anders 2016). This poorer population has swelled in Costa Rica from the high tides of immigration from neighboring countries. The fact that 25% of the country is protected as national parks—for good reason—further restricts land use for potential migrant settlement (World Population Review 2020). Approximately 600,000 Nicaraguans live or seasonally work in Costa Rica, comprising 15% of the population. This figure does not include those who have entered Costa Rica without legal documentation. Even with the impressive responsiveness of the Costa Rican government, the nearly 29,000 approved asylum applications have created a backlog: only 8000 work permits have been processed (Negrini and Verza 2019). The sheer scale of administration required to adjudicate these cases leaves the rest with no other option than to wait and try to survive.

Costa Rica has a relatively low population density; however, the capital city of San José has a much higher one—almost 17,000 people per square mile. The overcrowded conditions dramatically worsen in some of the poorest San Jose neighborhoods, such as La Carpio and Triángulo de Solidaridad. For example, La Carpio, adjacent to San José’s landfill, is located on the northwest side between two polluted rivers, Rio Virilla and Rio Torres. Many of its inhabitants are undocumented migrants from Nicaragua, while their children born in Costa Rica are citizens. Approximately 40,000 people live in 1.4 square miles (Evans 2012). Shelters are built with cardboard, scraps, and corrugated tin. Electricity is siphoned illegally and hazardously. Some paved roads and alleyways, plus added sewage and water connections, have improved living conditions. Those who can find work engage in low-skilled labor, such as cleaning, coffee picking, and lawn care. With one main road into and out of La Carpio, others “commute” by crossing the rivers, such as the 50-meter-wide Rio Virilla, to work on the coffee plantations.

The residents of La Carpio, even in a country like Costa Rica, face absolute poverty, inadequate housing materials, living space, and sanitation, lack of health care and educational opportunities, and unsafe living conditions. They face higher rates of gang activity, drug trafficking, and crime, and they bear the social stigma of living in the wrong neighborhood. Education is compulsory for minors in Costa Rica, but this does not apply to the undocumented living in the barrios. The new primary school, opening in 2018, serves over two thousand preschool and primary school-aged children, but no high school is present. Due to overcrowding, the school ran in three shifts where each student received about three hours of teaching per day. This has changed to two shifts with the new building (Rico 2018).

Despite the government taking a passive approach toward La Carpio and isolated acts of xenophobia, Costa Rica as a whole has shown concern for its migrants and poorer communities. For example, the System of Art Education for Social Inclusion (SIFAIS), the Latin American Center for Competitiveness and Sustainable Development (CLACDS), and the INCAE Business School have commenced an annual measurement of progress in La Carpio versus the

municipality of San José as a whole. Factors such as access to water, personal freedoms and safety, health, housing, education, and information and communication are studied (Lang 2018).

But for a small country such as Costa Rica becoming strapped by its own economic vulnerabilities, increased drug trafficking, nominal US foreign aid, and burgeoning refugee populations, what else can be done for its poorest communities predominantly filled with migrants struggling to survive? What can be done locally in the communities where corruption affects governance, and gangs have majority power?

Paternalism v. Servanthood Mission Work in Costa Rica: Making the Right Difference

Foreign involvement has often hurt rather than helped local communities. The imperialistic spirit of colonialism blinded even the best intentioned, such as missionaries. Complicity in land agreements, treaties, and services provided—to the detriment or disadvantage of indigenous parties—have been thoroughly documented. Significant foreign investment can also make little difference. For example, approximately \$2.3 trillion of Western foreign aid was spent since World War II and the turn of the twenty-first century (Easterly 2006, 4), yet 56% of the world's population still lives on less than \$2 per day (Kochhar 2015).

Despite abject failures, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have learned valuable lessons in fostering community development. Corbett and Fikkert describe several considerations. First, they advocate understanding poverty alleviation as primarily the reconciliation of relationships (with God, self, others, and creation) rather than merely the attainment of material wealth. Their goal is to “restore people to a full expression of humanness” (Corbett and Fikkert 2012, 74-75). Second, material poverty alleviation, from pursuing this four-fold reconciliation, is then for people to fulfill their calling to glorify God through their concrete work, thereby sustaining their families. This development model focuses on changing individual worldviews as well as organizational systems and processes. Third, Corbett and Fikkert advocate moving from a needs-based understanding of community development to an asset-based model. The former starts from a viewpoint of what the community lacks. The latter identifies and mobilizes *pre-existing* local assets rather than immediately and directly ameliorating the external situation with foreign resources. This approach frustrates the “North American need for speed” but allows for the precise development of those assets for sustained change (Corbett and Fikkert 2012).

Research also shows that Western involvement in communities has been associated with vastly improved outcomes (Pak 2006; Woodberry 2012). Rev. Dr. Duane “Chip” Anderson is the president and CEO of Christ For the City International (CFCI), an interdenominational Christian mission agency, and offers several insights as to why. Dr. Anderson lived in Costa Rica for 18 years as a missionary before being asked to lead CFCI in 2000. Dr. Anderson shares his experience as a new missionary:

I did play the role of the great white Savior [upon arriving]. I brought in lots of money, lots of short-term teams, and we did everything according to what I wanted to do. When I left the community, it all collapsed.... so I switched to a different model. Basically, that through mutual friendship networks, I found out who could be trusted in communities, and then I would ask them, “What’s *your* vision? What do you think God has called you to do for your community?” Then I would serve whatever that vision was and bring in the resources, only in those areas where they needed the help. Most of the time, they have the

volunteers. They have the materials. They just lack some little catalytic drop of something in order to be enabled and empowered to do it for themselves (Anderson, D. 2019).

For CFCI to enter a community, they commit to remain there for many years. Their commitment is to run programs for multiple generations to allow people to change effectively over time. That is, measuring a community's progress only in terms of economic change is reductionistic. Spiritual richness or emotional wholeness are harder to measure as tangible benefits, but these are extremely valuable in helping individuals, families, and communities develop. Dr. Anderson shares:

[Our] centers are centers of refuge, not just from the economic poverty, but especially for spiritual flourishing. Many times, short-term teams come down, and they lament the dirt. They lament people not having enough food or the right kind of food, but in essence, their richness is of a different kind.... We like to impose our Western mentality and value systems on them, and of course, they are not going to measure up. That's why [some] organizations try to use that to gain political power over people, and then it turns out they only abuse them more. [CFCI is] there to open doors, to provide opportunities, to serve in a humble way—in the name of God—what God has laid on *their* hearts. Once you understand that worldview, then dollars only mean a small portion of what it takes. Mobilizing volunteers, finding those people in the community who have a “God-heart” to serve their community, recruiting them, training them, giving them an opportunity to serve—that's where the real gold is (Anderson, D. 2019).

One objection to foreign, predominantly Western, groups—especially Caucasian white missionaries—is that they impose their views onto the locals of that community. This view certainly has historical and current validity when implicit bias and abuse of power endure. Dr. Anderson again elaborates:

[The naysayer to Western involvement in foreign contexts] wrongly assumes that in these contexts, the government is in control. The reality is that in most slums, the government is not in control. The gangs, and multiple gangs, are in control. . . . Also, despite the Costa Rican government's positive stance toward refugees, it too has laws about illegal immigration. For instance, a non-Costa Rican resident cannot access medical services in La Carpio. However, at the same time, the Costa Rican government will help CFCI as a humanitarian organization to service those people who do not qualify under its laws. For example, we keep the sick people out of their emergency rooms. I think the “colonialism” argument is based on a materialistic worldview, is mono-dimensional, and hijacks the discussion of what it takes to arrive at real solutions that are needed to help others. The CFCI's community development worldview is based on the biblical idea that humankind is body, soul, and spirit. We are not only [material]. The way to best help humankind is to provide opportunities for freedom in each of those areas (Anderson, D. 2019).

With CFCI's emphasis on local leadership driving the discussions and decisions, the above concern is better addressed. When government and foreign aid are insufficient or unable to meet a community's needs, charitable groups, even Western ones, can be useful and wanted. When the poorest—most often women and children—are starving, from what hand color the help comes may not matter to them. CFCI's humble goal, according to Dr. Anderson, is to follow Christ's example in serving others rather than being served (Mark 10:45). CFCI's leaders and volunteers

posture themselves as servants in the community to which God has called them to promote the physical, social, spiritual well-being of the residents and their families.

The Case of Christ For the City International (CFCI) in Costa Rica

The vices of war, domestic violence, drug and sex trafficking, and deportation negatively affect the most vulnerable: women, children, the ill, and the elderly. Multiple state-sponsored and nonprofit organizations labor to better the lives of migrants in Costa Rica. The Costa Rican Humanitarian Foundation (CRHF), for example, manages more than fifty volunteer projects focused on education, community development, and health care throughout the country (Nystrom 2018). In La Carpio, under the direction of Gail Nystrom, CRHF oversees three Family Well-being Centers, food distribution, sewing, and sports programs, and a host of local “collaborators” offering training in the community topics such as health, education, job training, employment, and self-development. Multiple churches minister in the community, such as Lutheran, Assemblies of God, Seventh-day Adventist, Catholic (the San Martín project), and the International Baptist Church. Other organizations serving in La Carpio include Soldados de Jesús (Soldiers of Jesus), Mike Yoo ministries, Young Life, El Banco de Alimentos, La Fundación SIFAIS, Casa Ilori, Encamíname, and the planned Centro de Educación y Nutrición (CEN-CINAI) feeding program.

The Bible urges special consideration and care for the poor and vulnerable (Isa 10:1-2; Prov 14:31, 19:17; Matt 25:35-40; Luke 4:18). Those who follow that God of the Bible are drawn to continue that good work. The colonial aftermath of the imperial powers (e.g. the United Kingdom, Spain, Portugal), as well as current hardships exacerbated by exploitative practices of contemporary world powers (e.g., the United States, China), have taught missionaries many a lesson not to repeat, and most ministry leaders strive to serve in new ways to empower, not overpower, a community’s local citizens.

One organization serving in exemplary ways is Christ For the City International (CFCI). Established in 1995 and located in 18 countries, CFCI has more than 500 workers, of whom over 90% are non-North American and 55% are volunteers. The CFCI Costa Rica base has been operating for 29 years, originally under another organizational name. CFCI does not rely on government funding from the U.S. Twenty-seven projects in different areas of the country are currently carried out, including seven Community Transformation Centers in Tirrases, Pavas, and Renacer, and four in La Carpio: Segunda en Carpio, Renovación, Las Gradadas (Betél), and Reneuvos. Additionally, CFCI runs a free health clinic for refugees, serving 500 patients per month.

A CFCI Community Transformation Center (CTC) is either a specific building or centralized location from which certain ministries and activities are introduced to foster community transformation over time. The Tirrases CTC offers academic assistance, youth sports programs, women’s ministries, and children’s Bible classes, while the CTC in Pavas offers vocational training and a refuge home for those struggling to leave their gangs and addictions. Segunda en Carpio offers academic assistance, ESL, and children’s Bible classes. At Renovación, various programs are given such as a women’s support group and art and music classes for children. Las Gradadas stands at the base of Rio Virilla in La Carpio and offers a safe, positive environment for children and women to learn, play, and eat at least one meal per day. The Reneuvos CTC holds the only green space of 3.2 acres in all of La Carpio with several fields for soccer and children’s play. Its two leaders and 50 volunteers offer a daycare for teen mothers to finish their education,

school tutoring, vocational training, and programs for women and children on a weekly basis. Renacer is a therapeutic center for homeless girls aged 12-17 with addictions. This 15-month voluntary program offers a small-group setting to learn life skills, receive vocational training, and further one's education in order to finish high school. Graduates of the program receive post-program follow-up until age 21, and 92% of graduates do not return to living on the streets. CFCI's composite impact, including pastoral training, touches over 10,000 lives per month in the poorest barrios of San José.

Moreover, the excellence of CFCI is its philosophy of resident leadership, locally-driven ministry, and incarnational presence among the most vulnerable, ministering in neighborhoods where most Ticos (those born in Costa Rica) rarely tread. CFCI invites external partners to adopt a Community Transformation Center as a longer-term investment in the community. While their main emphasis is on education and vocational training, the ministry of CFCI is not reduced to merely social services. Rather, their view is that the best service to the residents should include both social and spiritual components.

Conclusion

Given the political and economic history of Central America and despite the humanitarian aid granted, Costa Rica faces an increasing inability to accommodate the needs of its migrants, namely from neighboring Nicaragua. The number of incoming refugees into Costa Rica has reached a critical level with no apparent reprieve. The poorest areas of its capital city, San José, are particularly the hardest hit with harsher living conditions and fewer infrastructures to improve conditions.

Foreign aid is one answer when a community cannot overcome the dominance of gang activity or the lack of government aid. At the same time, the community possesses within its members the resources to plan, forge, and produce considerable change over time. Incarnational ministry is crucial to help make a daily difference in the lives of individuals seeking to overcome their challenging circumstances of unemployment, illiteracy, and unsafe living conditions. From its localized position, Christ For the City International (CFCI) is an example of such a humanitarian organization. CFCI is striving to contribute in a meaningful and sustainable way to the poorest living in San José, Costa Rica. What governments and neighboring countries cannot do, individuals and small organizations at a grass roots level can.

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