

## WHAT THE FUTURE NEEDS



### Planning for the Long-Term Sustainability of KAIROS

*April 22, 2009*

#### **REFLECTION**

*God will be what the future needs  
but.....will we be the churches and disciples that tomorrow requires?*

We don't know what the community of Christians of tomorrow will look like, but we can **be certain** it will not look like the past, and that we have a role, however humble, in shaping its future.

As church, how will we be relevant, transformative, and empower ourselves as a community? It is hard not to focus on our diminishment as churches and organizations, to glue our attention to the numbers of people who do not join us, or go to church.

We do have capacity to effect change. And KAIROS is one aspect of our churches' relevance in the world.

As the leadership of KAIROS, in a moment of crisis, we listen deeply to the needs of our ecumenical community. At the same time, we hold with great respect our staff, their lives and work, and the work of volunteers across the country – all they have achieved so far.

This is God's time. How do we accept the grace in the moment, and let it lead us forward?

#### **A. SPIRIT OF THE EMERGING COALITIONS**

Between 1967 and 2000, twelve inter-church coalitions emerged out of the need to respond ecumenically to justice issues as diverse as apartheid in South Africa, the coup in Chile, the Mackenzie Valley pipeline, wars of liberation in Central America, the restructuring of world economies by the Bretton Woods financial institutions. It was a time of activism, optimism, collaboration and creativity.

There was momentum and effectiveness in the work of the coalitions. However facing financial challenges throughout the nineties, member churches had less money and staff time to contribute to them. There were also some concerns about the coalitions being stretched too thin over too many issues for their limited resources.

In 2001, the churches merged the following ten coalitions into KAIROS, with a new vision and justice mandate: Aboriginal Rights Coalition, Canada-Asia Working Group, Ecumenical Coalition on Economic Justice, Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights in Latin America, Inter-Church Committee for Refugees, Inter-Church Committee on Africa, Inter-Church Action, PLURA, Taskforce on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility, Ten Days for Global Justice.

The program that emerged out the early months included policy development, education and advocacy concerning: Aboriginal rights; corporate responsibility; ecology, international human rights; poverty in Canada; refugees and migration; trade, debt and international finance. KAIROS had partnerships with church and civil society groups in Canada, Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East.

This very richness and breadth of justice issues inherited from the ten coalitions have been a challenge for KAIROS to focus effectively during our first eight years.

## ***B. VALUE AND IMPORTANCE OF KAIROS***

The strengths of KAIROS and the grace of this challenging moment will carry us now into our future.

KAIROS affirms its important role in the ecumenical social justice movement in Canada and internationally. As churches working together, KAIROS achieves a unity of action that has often eluded our churches.

Individual KAIROS Members, acting together, increase their ability to influence issues that are a priority for them, in which they benefit from the research, advocacy and lobbying skills of KAIROS, and where they can at times achieve ecumenically a more prophetic stance than they might take as individual denominations.

Together, we have the legitimacy and credibility of seven major Canadian churches. The last census that asked Canadians to identify their church affiliation was in 2001. In that census, almost 18,000,000 people, approximately 64% of the Canadian population at the time, identified themselves as affiliated with KAIROS member churches. Another 4.5% identified themselves as "Christian" or "Protestant" but did not name an affiliation.

This picture has changed, but the scope of our influence and our capacity to mobilize for change are still very important. As KAIROS, we bring our faith perspective and an explicitly moral stance into the social movements' work for change. For many groups and NGOs in the broader social justice movement, KAIROS is seen as contributing valuable expertise and constituencies to justice work in Canada.

## ***C. THE CURRENT CONTEXT***

KAIROS has managed many financial challenges throughout our first eight years. We worked creatively and found new sources of funding to replace many cuts.

However, the last quarter of 2008 was more than anyone could have predicted. When Deer Park Church closed, KAIROS found that even smaller rental space more than doubled our rent. This was added to ongoing trends of increases in program and staffing costs on the one hand, and continued contributions cuts from our founding Members.

Since the autumn of 2008, the global financial crisis has affected Canada in ways that are still emerging. We are not protected from the river of change surging around us. Like other NGOs, and our Member churches and organizations, investments on which KAIROS depends have severely decreased our revenue. The financial resources of our member churches are diminishing due to reduced congregations/communities and parishes, and are currently being affected by the financial meltdown, the repercussions of which continue to unfold. No one knows how long this will continue.

Apart from investments, diminishing revenue and growing costs are not temporary but structural. We are not increasing revenue enough each year to keep pace with steadily increasing costs.

The KAIROS Finance Committee asked KAIROS to respond – not with a plan for surviving 2009, but with a plan for long-term financial sustainability (ideally for the coming decade).

At its Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008 meeting, the KAIROS Board discussed “The KAIROS We Want”. The Chair invited Board Members to identify the basis of the ecumenical project our Member churches and church-related organizations have created in KAIROS. Among the values identified:

- **that there be a deeper and more focused program;**
- **that KAIROS be faith-based in every way – its identity, its program, its commitments – keeping Members funding strong so that our faith-based voice is not overly influenced by grants, CIDA funds, etc.**
- **that KAIROS be more connected to the denominations at the local church level;**
- **that KAIROS retain its theological courage;**
- **that KAIROS be integrated with the social movements in the South.**

The Board then approved a consultation process for Member churches and organizations.

The consultation noted that KAIROS no longer has the resources to undertake all the areas of work carried in from the coalitions in 2001. Individual Member priorities for KAIROS, as well as their own resources and needs, have evolved since July 2001. Denominations were asked to name what each of them most needs KAIROS to do in the coming years.

The Board received consultation input at its Feb 24, 2009 meeting. Then it considered individual member input in the light *what KAIROS as a whole needs to do*, and affirmed a set of consensus priorities for KAIROS. Response to the consultation lifts up priorities in a way that could be considered part of a re-mandating within our overall mission, a process regularly undertaken by the former coalitions.

#### **D. BOARD DECISIONS Of FEB 24, 2009**

In the consultation results, two areas of work received support of the Members beyond all others – **Indigenous Rights and Ecology**, followed closely by **education and grassroots education**. The Board affirmed five program priorities (see motion 2 below) but did not prioritise them in relation to each other.

##### **MOTION 1**

**That the Board affirm the interconnectedness between global issues and how they are lived out in Canada.**

**Affirmed**

##### **MOTION 2**

**That the Board affirm the following program priorities, and directs Management to build an integrated program from these priorities:**

- **human rights – economy and ecology**
- **Indigenous rights**
- **ecological justice**
- **education and grassroots advocacy**
- **human rights – conflict and peace-building**
- **human rights in Canada (migrant justice/anti-poverty)**

**Affirmed**

An extended discussion on the last item in this motion resulted in the decision to include this priority as a human rights lens to focus work on poverty, which may include addressing migrant justice (although this will not in itself be a priority area).

### **MOTION 3**

**That the Board affirm that KAIROS discontinue refugee work as a program priority.**

**Affirmed**

Implications of this decision include the significant loss of a Christian voice on refugee issues. KAIROS' member Churches will continue their refugee work as they undertake justice ministries.

### **MOTION 4**

**That the Board affirm that International Debt and Trade, Corporate Social Responsibility and Debt and International Finance cease to be program priorities.**

**Affirmed**

Discussion on this motion focused on the difference between treating these areas as full-fledged programs and recognizing the benefit to KAIROS of retaining some expertise in these fields in order to contribute to the effectiveness of the work affirmed in Motion 2

### **MOTION 5**

**That the Board re-affirm that KAIROS submit its 2009-2013 proposal for global partnerships and education.**

**Affirmed**

In affirming this motion, the Board noted:

- The research and analysis that informs KAIROS advocacy are shaped by realities in the Global South;
- Concern about the large proportion of CIDA funding relative to other funding sources.
- Desire for future Board and Member discussion about alternative ways to administer and arrange funding for overseas funded partnerships.

## ***E. THE CHANGE WE NEED***

KAIROS will not be paralyzed by a financial crisis, or diverted from our mission. KAIROS will fulfill its mission with reduced revenue.

What we need now is the requisite organization to deal with projected deficits to 2013. But even that will not be enough. More importantly, the change we create now needs to be the first phase in preparing KAIROS for the next decade.

This plan is a beginning. The resources available and program priorities approved require restructuring. However structure in itself will not make KAIROS vibrant and effective in fulfilling our mission for the future. Momentum for the future depends on our passion and powerful commitment to transforming the world.

So the follow-up to the changes in structure will entail several years of renewal beginning with a special three-day retreat in September 2009 (see the transition plan).

## F. THE REQUISITE ORGANIZATION TO CREATE SUSTAINABILITY

### **KAIROS is Member churches working ecumenically for justice.**

The January consultation has been a time of renewed engagement and clarity on the part of Members that KAIROS is their ecumenical voice, delegated work by them and on their behalf.

This is also a *kairos moment* of crisis and opportunity that invites and needs recommitment of its Members. Member support and governance remain fundamental.

Members ask for recognition that their own resources are diminishing. Member funding is, and has to be, supplemented by support from other sectors such as unions, foundations, government and the public (who often find us through the Internet). However, Member financial support remains fundamental to the nature and mission of KAIROS.

#### **Action for Making KAIROS Sustainable**

- 1. Change how we work:** Focus the work on fewer issues, more integration between global and in Canada work and more effective strategies for change.
- 2. Generate significant new revenue.**
- 3. Cut costs.** Program and staffing will be reduced.

**1. Change How We Work.** KAIROS will focus on fewer issues; increase integration between work in Canada and the global context; more effectively link education, policy development and advocacy strategies for greater impact.

1.1 **Sustainability and Rights and Dignity** are presented as two major program areas of work and involve both the **global** context of our work, and our work in **Canada**. Our work will be theologically grounded in the themes of Creation (sustainability), and rights. This plan holds sustainability in creative tension with rights, which is a commitment to justice for people oppressed by conflict and unjust political and economic structures. KAIROS embraces the Christian perspective of God's economy as the vision to which all human economic and political systems are accountable. Within this overall context, human rights is an approach that uses national and international human rights covenants and laws as instruments for promoting justice and dignity.

Two teams will be organized around these areas of work. These themes are also foundations of KAIROS' CIDA plan and funding proposal for 2009 —2013.

1.2 **Global Partnerships Staff** will be part of either team depending on the predominant nature of the partnerships they coordinate. There will also be a CIDA **Partnerships Cluster**.

Education/campaigns staff will be part of either team and there will also be a **Movement Building Cluster**.

### 1.3 Rights and Dignity

Rights and Dignity here names a human rights context with an explicit anti-poverty approach. It includes basic human rights such as the right to work, food and a decent standard of living.

**Indigenous Rights** were given very high priority by Members in our Jan. 2009 consultation. KAIROS has a long history of solidarity with Indigenous people – through Project North, followed by the Aboriginal Rights Coalition, the Jubilee Initiative and now KAIROS Indigenous Rights work from 2001 to 2009. KAIROS will provide leadership for ecumenical action based on the churches' commitments to right relations with Indigenous peoples, the ecumenical coalitions work on inherent Indigenous rights, and the right to free prior and informed consent to corporate activity that affects their communities.

While keeping our global work and analysis, KAIROS will increase its focus on urgent issues in Canada for Indigenous peoples. Our goal will be to work in collaboration with Indigenous peoples to educate and engage a much greater number of non-indigenous Canadians in this work.

**Human Rights Research/Analysis** Human Rights is an important area of KAIROS expertise and will focus primarily on strengthening the work of the Rights and Dignity Team. While there will be responsive work, many of the urgent actions will be led by partnerships staff, with support as needed from the research positions.

### 1.4 Sustainability

**Energy Justice/climate change.** KAIROS will continue working to help Canadians reduce their carbon footprint. We are urging our federal government to stop subsidizing fossil fuel and to use those funds, and much more, to support development of green energy alternatives (which create 5 times as many jobs). We focus on the environmental impacts of current, unsustainable energy policies while addressing important issues of equity in Canada and in the South.

**Resource Extraction.** Canada has one of largest mining industries in the world, with little accountability for ecological and human rights impacts or the right to free prior and informed consent of local communities and Indigenous peoples to mining where they live. Canada needs policies that respect principles of ecological sustainability and the human right to free, prior and informed consent of local communities.

**Just and Sustainable Livelihoods.** Sustainability includes people's ability to survive. Survival is already the major challenge for a large sector of Canadians. This is even more devastating with the global financial crisis that has been unfolding since the last quarter of 2008. In the continuing global financial crisis, we are seeing massive job loss in Canada - with no long-term plan for sustainable livelihoods. The number of people being thrown into poverty is increasing all around us.

Working with KAIROS anti-poverty networks, and allies including unions, we will prioritise a few pivotal issues in order to respond to the current context.

Pressing Canada for an economic model with sustainable jobs will be critical as we move forward. In this context, the right of migrants to just work will be addressed, although this work will not be a separate priority.

KAIROS will continue its capacity building projects in which local activists learn to use human rights instruments (such as the International Covenant on Economic Cultural And Social Rights and international protocols) by applying them to advocacy in concrete struggles that they define as critical for ending poverty.

#### **1.5 Economic Research/Analysis/Advocacy**

Economic justice is an important area of KAIROS expertise and will focus primarily on strengthening the work of the Sustainability team.

#### **1.6 Building the Ecumenical Justice Movement in Canada**

The goal of our education/animation work is change. This was given very high importance by the Jan. 09 Member consultation.

Our primary constituency is the constituency of our Members. This means that it will remain urgent that KAIROS Members help KAIROS strengthen our ways of mobilizing together for change.

Education and campaigns will be an integral part of each team, helping to link **grassroots education and mobilizing** → **with policy development** → **and work with key decision-makers.**

### **2) Add Resources For Generating Revenue**

New resources will be devoted to organizational profile, fundraising and movement building. The "**New Media Coordinator**" will design and implement interactive use of combined audio, video, and electronic text as powerful tools for social movements. This will be a powerful boost for KAIROS in educating and involving a much greater number of people in working for change. The use of streaming, blogs, facebook, text messaging and other methods is evident all around us and played a significant role in electing Barack Obama to the U.S. presidency.

KAIROS will add a senior **Resource Development** contract. We will seek someone who has raised major revenue and has significant experience in developing and implementing successful long-term fundraising strategies. The expectation is that this person will raise major revenue or the contract will end. Once we are assured that this person can raise several times salary and benefits, the job may be made permanent.

The resource development expert and the executive director will work with the management team to create a five-year strategy for generating revenue. This will include: personal approaches to major donors; a planned giving program; applications to major national and international grantors; and individual donations. Individual donations may come from electronic or mail appeals and some events. The work is cumulative so full impact may take several years.

There will be a new position entitled **Partners and Networks Associate** working with global partnership coordinators to plan tours and public events and engage KAIROS networks in regional activities that support our work.

### **3) Cut costs. KAIROS will have less staff and fewer program areas.**

The restructuring process has actually had several parts. In December 2008, the Board decided, with great regret, to end the **KAIROS Anti-Poverty Fund** grants program. This was a first step towards a sustainability plan.

A new CIDA proposal for 2009-2013 includes cuts to **Global partnerships**. This was done when KAIROS was informed that CIDA would not fund the number and scope of partnerships KAIROS currently has.

The third stage of restructuring is the result of the January 09 Board consultation, followed by Board directions. This stage will include further **program and staff cuts**.

The consultation with Member churches and organizations has led the Board to decide that **Refugee** work will not be continued by KAIROS. The churches will continue their work, which is largely congregational, and also work through the Canadian Council for Refugees.

International **Debt and Trade, Corporate Social Responsibility** and **Debt and International Finance** cease to be full-fledged program priorities in themselves. KAIROS will retain some expertise in these fields and apply that to program priorities. Some implications of this decision are that KAIROS will discontinue formal work on trade and debt cancellation and will not lead direct shareholder activism with corporations.

KAIROS will have **less management** (one less manager).

#### **4) Living Into These Changes**

KAIROS will need to keep growing into these changes and shaping our program. We start at today in our current strategic plan. We are also in the process of a new round of strategic planning.

In September, staff will be engaged in a three-day program-oriented staff retreat. This will include participation of two Southern partners an Indigenous person and one member each of KAIROS regional and anti-poverty networks.

Funds have been allocated for “formation” during the coming years, including teamwork, strategies for change and issues staff feel are most important as we move forward.

Each year of this plan, we will evaluate our work in the context of this new model.

This is a difficult time for KAIROS, and the beginning of a new path.

*We water seeds already planted,  
knowing that they hold future promise.  
We lay foundations that will need further development.  
We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities.  
We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation  
in realizing that. This enables us to do something,  
and to do it very well.*

*Prayer of Oscar Romero*

## RESTRUCTURED PROGRAM AND STAFFING FRAMEWORK

