

A close-up portrait of an elderly woman with a green headscarf, looking slightly to the left. The background is blurred.

**LATIN AMERICA
SOLIDARITY CENTRE**

STRATEGIC PLAN
2006 – 2009



In Latin America LASC recognises and seeks to challenge the uneven and unjust concentration of wealth, land and political power in the hands of a few; the persisting discrimination of the rights of indigenous groups; the submission of the rights of the people to the rights of minority economic interests including both multinational companies and national private companies; the continuing tradition of military and police violence as a response from government to demands for social change; the intrusion of foreign powers in national affairs and the widespread acceptance of neo-liberal political and economic policies.

Background & History

The Latin America Solidarity Centre (LASC), founded in 1996, is an initiative for development education, campaigning solidarity and cultural action, linking Ireland and Latin America.

The LASC management committee embarked on the current strategic planning process in May 2005 and contracted a facilitator. The facilitator has met with the management committee on a number of occasions including a weekend meeting in Wicklow. The facilitator also met with LASC members so their input would be included. The strategic plan process was completed in November 2005.



Our Vision

LASC believes in a Latin America and an Ireland based on equality, social justice and an equal expression of cultural, social, political and economic rights for all human beings.

Our Mission

LASC's mission is to expose and challenge the current economic, social and cultural injustices in Latin America and Ireland, through public awareness raising, education, information exchanges and campaigns in solidarity with the people of Latin America who resist oppression and struggle to create a fair and inclusive society.

Our Ethos

LASC works for real social change in Ireland and Latin America. We believe that peace with justice and equality for all can come only through genuine participation of everyone in society's decision making. Thus, we encourage the opening of the traditional exclusive political systems of Latin America to new forms of participatory and direct democracy, and we oppose the long tradition of foreign intervention in Latin American affairs.



LASC, while campaigning for the respect of everyone's basic human rights, focuses primarily on groups that experience oppression, exploitation, disadvantage and marginalisation.

LASC's solidarity is an expression of empathy and common purpose with those in struggle for social justice, equality and genuine freedom. LASC demonstrates this through active engagement as equals with those working for these changes in Ireland and Latin America.

LASC believes that a critical analysis of the causes of global poverty and justice is essential for real change. We want to learn about, and raise awareness of, issues linking Latin America and Ireland, as we understand that the mechanism that creates inequality and oppression are global ones. We recognise that education is a key component of change and we believe in an educational process that places the learner at its centre and that uses participatory methods.

LASC welcomes those who wish to work in solidarity with people resisting oppression in Latin America. We are committed to stand together with the popular movements that in the countryside, slums, poor communities, workplaces and educational centres struggle for social justice, and we rejoice with them in their achievements.

LASC activities and projects will reflect its mission and vision.



1 Campaigning Solidarity

LASC is primarily a campaigning organisation aimed at organising solidarity in Ireland with the people of Latin America and the Caribbean in their struggle for independent development and control of their resources.

- Campaigning is a tool to bring changes in the attitudes, policies and practices of individuals and institutions. As such, it has identified goals, targets and projected outcomes, which should be in harmony with the ones of the Latin American people we choose to support.
- LASC is committed to stand together with the popular movements that in the countryside, slums, poor communities, workplaces and educational centres, struggle for social justice and we rejoice with them in their achievements. Our actions must be led by them, responding to needs identified by individuals and communities, especially ones that experience poverty and marginalisation.
- We recognise that our activities are not taken only “on behalf of” people experiencing oppression in Latin America and Ireland, as we understand that a fairer, more egalitarian world is better for everyone: materially, psychologically, morally and spiritually, enabling us all to achieve our full potential as human beings and as moral agents. But we acknowledge the huge opposition that we face from privileged sectors that benefit from the current injustice, and for this reason, our solidarity goes primarily to people who experience oppression and exploitation.

2 Development Education

LASC realises that development education is essential for effective campaigning and awareness raising. LASC will provide the tools for analysis of the development issues raised, and encourage learners to participate in finding solutions to them, including the possibility of participating in LASC campaigns.

- LASC will provide a wide range of education opportunities in both formal and informal settings, which will be set out in our Operation Plan.
- LASC will ensure participatory methodologies in all education activities to promote the attitudes, skills and knowledge necessary to develop an active, aware and informed constituency for change.

- LASC development education initiatives will include critical analysis of the macro and micro systems and structures that affect the people of Latin America.

3 Cultural Action

- LASC values cultural diversity and engages in activities and actions which raise real awareness of Latin American cultures.
- LASC wishes to reflect the true multi-faceted nature of human experience in Latin America and celebrates the expression of the resilience and survival of its peoples.
- LASC will engage with cultural actions which are consistent with and feed into the campaigning and development education work.
- LASC recognises that, for many people, cultural activities provide a non-threatening, open first point of contact with Latin American issues.
- LASC endeavours to use modes of cultural expression such as songs, murals, theatre of the oppressed and other new methodologies as tools for change.

4 Organisational Development

LASC will continue to develop itself as an efficient and effective organisation by:

- Strengthening the management committee, including further clarification of roles and responsibilities.
- Ongoing development of internal and external communications structures and systems.
- Increasing and encouraging the active membership base.
- Ensuring best practice and equality in staff employment.
- Securing and diversifying our funding base to secure independence.
- Developing up-to-date financial management systems to ensure transparency and accountability at all levels of the organisation.
- Further capacity building to achieve aims and objectives.



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STAFF MEMBERS

Coordinator: Azucena Bermudez
Education officer: Rachel Dempsey
Administrator: Aline Sobole
Membership and Volunteers Officer: Louise van Bruggen

LASC also has an Information Officer and an Events & Publicity Officer. These positions are filled by interns funded by the European Union through the Leonardo De Vinci mobility programme.

LASC would like to extend thanks to its members and friends who have volunteered over the past 10 years. Your commitment is invaluable and much appreciated.

FUNDERS

LASC receives funding from Irish Aid, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trocaire. LASC wishes to acknowledge and thank our funders for past and ongoing support.

LASC MEMBERSHIP

If you would like to be a part of LASC's work, you can become a member for €25 or €10 (unwaged). Please contact LASC at the above address for more information.

If you would like to subscribe to LASC's email list, send an email to info@lasc.ie

