

COVENANT WORLD RELIEF

# Ministry Update

*Loving, Serving, and Working Together with the Poor, the Powerless, and the Marginalized.*



Issue #6, Fall 2011



## SAVING LIVES; TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES

**C**ovenant World Relief is the humanitarian aid ministry of the Evangelical Covenant Church. We participate in God's transforming mission in the world in two primary ways—disaster relief and long-term transformational community development among the most vulnerable. Disaster relief *saves lives*; whereas community development *transforms communities*.

We believe that both parts of our ministry are important, but most of our time and money are spent on transforming lives through community development. It is said that for every dollar spent on disaster risk reduction between five and ten dollars are saved in disaster response costs. While our main focus is to see lives changed forever, we recognize the importance of working to reduce the risk of disasters as well as seeking to save lives when disasters do strike.

Community development projects focus on a variety of areas, including food security, access to clean water and sanitation, women's empowerment, medical care, and micro-finance. The goal of community development is to empower local people to forever transform their own lives and also have an impact on their whole community.

*"Thus says the Lord: Maintain justice, and do what is right, for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance be revealed."* ISAIAH 56:1

## HOMES AND HOPE FOR HAITI

After the devastating earthquake that hit Haiti in January 2010, millions of Haitians were left without homes. The problem of homelessness was further exacerbated by the unfulfilled need for clean water and proper sanitation, leading to even more disease and death.

In partnership with Habitat for Humanity, the Covenant World Relief shelter project will provide upgradable shelters for 450 families affected by the earthquake. Haitians have been trained to build these shelters, which provides jobs and benefits the local economy. These permanent shelters have a concrete foundation with plywood walls and a tin roof. As families save money, the homes can be upgraded with concrete bricks. The project also provides communities with latrines, access to clean water and water storage, and promotes proper hygiene and sanitation; all of which will lead to improved health.

Would your family or your church consider sponsoring this Haiti Shelter project? Each home costs just \$4200. To learn more about this project or to give directly to it, please visit our Haiti website at [blogs.covchurch.org/Haiti](http://blogs.covchurch.org/Haiti).



Natasha Aubry in front of her recently completed upgradable shelter.

## SIGNS OF HOPE IN JAPAN

I recently took my second trip to Japan following the devastating 9.0 earthquake and tsunamis on March 11 in northeast Japan. The morning after I arrived in Miyako City we were jolted by a 6.7 aftershock. The tsunami sirens began blaring. The public address system in the city warned people to flee from the coastal area because there was the possibility of another tsunami. I imagined the fear and terror that many must have been feeling as the memories of the earthquake and tsunamis of March 11 came back. Immediately we began praying for the safety of those near the coast and for all who were gripped by terror. In this city estimates are that the tsunami wave on March 11 was as high as 100 feet in some places. The tsunami hit about 30 minutes after the earthquake. Fortunately most were able to flee to higher ground, but more than 2000 people were killed in Miyako City, most by drowning.

Covenant World Relief is partnering with the Japan Covenant Church as they work together with other churches in the 3.11 Network (3/11 is the date of the earthquake). It was wonderful to see how this tragedy has brought churches from different denominations together to serve those most in need. Pastor Kondo, the leader of the 3.11 church network, told me that their goals are to meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the people in the devastated areas.



**Destruction following the devastating earthquake and tsunamis in Japan.**

As we walked through the coastal areas, I was overwhelmed by the degree of destruction and loss. Over 125,000 buildings were destroyed—most of them houses. If not for a good warning system and other means of preparation for tsunamis, the death total would likely have exceeded the 25,000 victims by at least ten times.

Pastor Kondo has built a strong relationship with local government leaders. The leaders have seen the care shown by the 3.11 Network volunteers towards the victims of the tsunamis. The government is providing food and supplies to those living in the evacuation centers. However once the people enter temporary housing, they are pretty much on their own. The 3.11 Network volunteers have been providing food and other necessary supplies to those people. In addition, the local leaders have provided detailed maps and encouraged the 3.11 Network volunteers to care for those who still have their houses but have lost jobs, vehicles and have

limited access to food and supplies.

Along with all of the basic needs that the volunteers seek to address, they are also building relationships with people who have been through unbelievable trauma. Another facet of the 3.11 Network's work focuses on children who survived the disaster. Some of the volunteers are helping to run after school programs for these children, trying to help them work through all that they have experienced since March 11. All the 3.11 Network volunteers, including many from the Japan Covenant Church, are selflessly serving people in the name of Jesus and bringing comfort to those who have been traumatized.

I am thankful for all in the ECC who have given so generously to Covenant World Relief so that we are able to partner with the Japan Covenant Church in all that they are doing to serve those most in need.

—Dave Husby



**Elizabeth, Nyasunday and Nhial in front of their hut in South Sudan.**

## ELIZABETH FROM SOUTH SUDAN

Elizabeth is a 30 year old widow living in Malakal, South Sudan. In addition to her 5 children she is also caring for Nyasunday, (girl in photo) the orphaned daughter of a friend. Elizabeth's first husband was killed during the civil war in 2004 and then her husband's younger brother married her according to the Nuer tribal custom. But then he was killed during violence in 2008. Elizabeth and her oldest daughter carry 5 gallon water jugs on their heads 5 times a day from the Nile River which is about a mile from their tarp covered hut. Her youngest son, Nhial is paralyzed from the waist down and not able to speak. To earn money, Elizabeth sells some of the water she fetches. She also hand-stitches designs on bedsheets. Nyasunday and Nhial are both part of the CWR funded Vulnerable and Orphaned Children project being implemented by the South Sudan Covenant Church.

## SHERAL'S STORY

Sheral fell out of a tree several years ago and as a result is paralyzed below his waist. In spite of the difficulty of getting around the village in the mud during the spring thaw, Sheral came along with us as we visited families who have received sheep and goats through the CWR Kyrgyzstan animal loan project. He is one of 3 young men who are volunteer coordinators for the project in their village. The blue notebook on his lap is where he keeps careful records of the project activities. I asked Janish, the leader of the project, where Sheral's motivation for selflessly serving the poorest in the village comes from and Janish replied, "From his heart."

Sheral works with others to coordinate the Kyrgyzstan animal loan program.



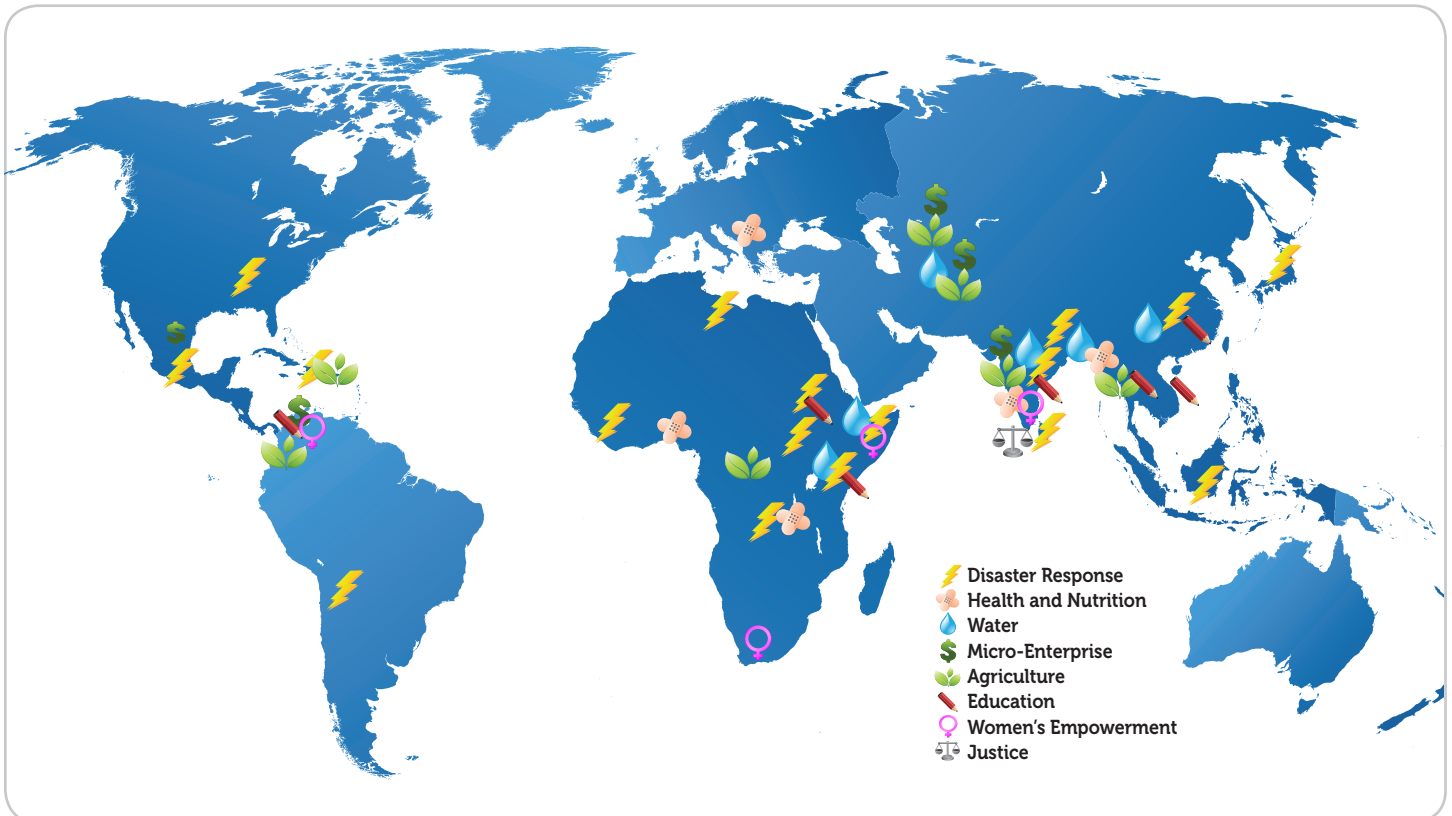
## SEVERE FAMINE IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

Some are calling the famine in the Horn of Africa the worst in decades. Twelve million people in the region are at risk and half a million children are on the brink of starvation. More than 30,000 children have died in three months. Covenant World Relief is partnering with three organizations to provide desperately needed relief. Medical Teams International is working both inside Somalia as well as with refugees who have fled just across the Kenya border. The Evangelical Covenant Church of Kenya is providing much needed relief to people in Isiolo in northern Kenya. World Relief International is utilizing CWR funds to address the critical needs of people in Turkana, in the northwest part of Kenya. We are thankful for all who have generously responded to those who are suffering.



A woman waits for relief in Somalia.

## CWR PROJECTS AROUND THE WORLD



## STAY CONNECTED

You can stay connected to the work of Covenant World Relief year-round through our facebook page, blog, website and quarterly updates. You can also call or email us anytime with questions or for help finding the resources you need.

## CONFERENCE CALLS

CWR will be hosting two conference calls this fall to talk about our projects, answer your questions and talk about what resources are available. Join us on October 27th at noon or November 8th at 2pm. Both calls are central time and the phone number will be on our website and facebook.

## CTC BEQUEST

Have you considered adding Covenant World Relief to your estate plan? Now is the time. Contact us (773-907-3301) or Covenant Trust Company (800-483-2177) for more information.

## CWR WILL COME TO YOU

Members of the Covenant World Relief staff and our advocates are available and excited to come visit you. We are available to preach, teach small groups, meet with your mission committee and answer what questions you might have about CWR. Contact us if you're interested.

## NEW PROJECTS

In addition to 20 ongoing community development projects, CWR has several new projects this fall. These new projects include fistula care for women in Eastern Congo, clean water for another community in Ethiopia, women's empowerment in South Africa, clean water and micro-enterprise in Kenya, micro-finance in Mexico, and two projects providing women's empowerment and vocational training in Colombia. To learn more about these projects, please visit our website.

**A group of people receive clean water in Ethiopia.**



## GIVE SANDALS, SHEEP, SEEDS, OR SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Have you wondered about making a tangible gift to Covenant World Relief? Here are some of the ways your donation to CWR makes a difference:

\$3 buys a pair of sandals for a vulnerable or orphaned child in Sudan

\$10 sponsors one vulnerable child's vocational training for one month in Vietnam

\$13 provides one meter of fencing needed for our agriculture project in Ecuador

\$55 provides school supplies for one Congolese refugee student living in Kenya for one month

\$60 purchases one sheep for a family in Kyrgyzstan

\$170 provides seeds for one farmer in Haiti

\$400 provides the medicines for one mobile medical clinic serving the internally displaced people (IDP's) of Burma

\$450 provides fistula surgery and care for one woman in Congo.

If you'd like to make a gift to CWR to one of these projects, give online through our website or send a check to our office with a note in the memo line with information on what project you are choosing.

## HOW TO GIVE

Traditionally, CWR receives the majority of its funding during the fall and winter after the CWR Fall Campaign. However, the reality is that poverty and disasters have no season, so we ask you to consider giving year-round. We have several ways you can give. You can:

Give by automatic monthly withdrawal, by check or online

Designate to a specific project

Designate to a specific ministry area

Include CWR in your estate planning.



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**Give:** Online, by check, by electronic funds transfer