

COVENANT KIDS

Congo

powered by

World Vision



CELEBRATING
10 Years!



10TH ANNIVERSARY NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends,

Ten years ago, the Covenant Church of Congo, the Evangelical Covenant Church, and World Vision asked the question, *“What might happen if we came together as the body of Christ in a bold partnership for the sake of a radically different future for the children in Congo, their families, and their communities?”* In response to that question, Covenant Kids Congo powered by World Vision was formed.

Your faithful partnership in sharing God’s love in Gemena and Karawa, DR Congo, by coming alongside children and families living in poverty makes a life-changing difference. Thank you for providing families access to essentials like clean water, basic education, and healthcare. **Your commitment not only helps to save lives—you help children experience the fullness of life God intends.** When children are sponsored, community-identified initiatives around clean water, nutrition, education, health, and micro-enterprise can develop, benefiting everyone in the community. This is what we prayed for with hopeful expectancy when child sponsorship first became available in the fall of 2012.

Throughout the last ten years, 10,000 children have been sponsored in Gemena (Ledia Area Program), and more than \$8 million has been raised by Covenanters across the US and Canada. But we’re not done yet. **As we celebrate ten years of partnership, we have a renewed call to love and serve our sisters and brothers in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and God continues to do a new thing.**

In 2021, we expanded through Chosen, a unique sponsorship initiative that empowers a child to choose their sponsor. We also expanded into Karawa, the epicenter for Covenant work in DR Congo for many years and where Karawa Hospital, a Paul Carlson Partnership hospital, is located.

It gives us great joy to share with you some of the accomplishments and progress since 2012. Thank you again—these results would not be possible without the generosity of the Evangelical Covenant Church through faithful people like you. As we celebrate ten years, we invite Covenanters across the denomination to celebrate the work God is doing and to see the new things God continues to do through your faithful support.

With you,



Pastor Lyndsey Watson

COVENANT KIDS CONGO MINISTRY SPECIALIST

“What might happen if we came together as the body of Christ in a bold partnership for the sake of a radically different future for the children in Congo, their families, and their communities?”





Six kilometers is the average distance a person in the majority world must walk for clean water.

The Global 6K, held each May, represents this distance, and each registration provides access to clean water for one person. By moving our feet, we help bring the life source of water to people who need it most. This year, 84 Covenant teams, made up of 2,645 Covenanters from throughout the denomination, participated. Together, we raised over \$243,000! This represents access to clean water for nearly 4,900 people. Our goal for 2023 is 100 teams! Will you be one of them? Go to www.worldvision6k.org/ecc to register today!

Why run, walk, or jog?

"I move my feet for clean water because the idea that any mom has to provide her child dirty water to drink, knowing that it could be the drink that leads to serious illness or death is unfathomable. Every time I go out to train or talk to someone about the miles I am putting in, I think about the miles those moms have to walk."

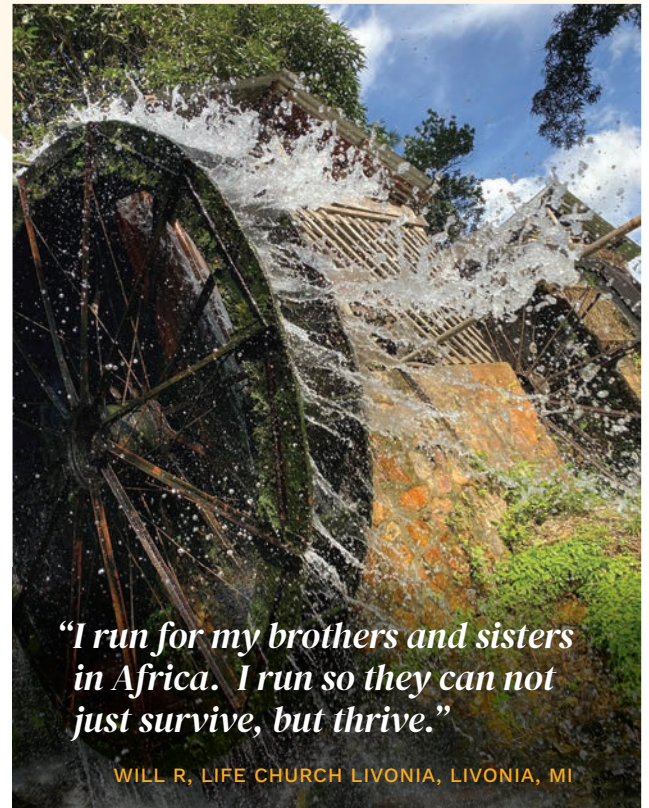
—SUSAN G, CASCADE COVENANT, NORTH BEND, WA

When you participate in programs like Team World Vision or the Global 6K, your movement helps bring clean water to families in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Last year, Covenanters raised nearly \$600,000 for clean water in Congo. A big shout-out to our fundraising churches at the LA marathon: Newsong LA Church, Oceanhills Covenant Church, and Simi Covenant Church. Together, they raised over \$180,000 for clean water in spring 2022!

In the next year, a number of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) projects are planned. In Karawa, we plan to rehabilitate the Mbudi Spring by installing a solar pump and constructing a piped network to connect to an elevated water tank. This spring currently has a massive water wheel providing power for the pump. Constructed in 1969, this water wheel has been serving the area in a limited capacity. It will have even greater power and efficiency with these additions, serving even more people.

In addition, water access points will be constructed throughout Karawa, including 10 new fountains each with three taps at the Bogon Health Center, 12 fountains with three taps each at the Cité and Urban Health Center, and 10 fountains with three taps each as part of the Ndoabili community water system. Officially completed in the spring of 2020, the Ndoabili water system serves Karawa Hospital. After a number of setbacks, reliable water access remains difficult. Join us in praying for sustainable and reliable access to water, specifically through Ndoabili Spring.

Training will be provided for WASH committees on effective management of water supply systems and to equip 10 technicians to repair water supply systems.



"I run for my brothers and sisters in Africa. I run so they can not just survive, but thrive."

WILL R, LIFE CHURCH LIVONIA, LIVONIA, MI

In Gemena (Ledia Area Program), we plan to drill eight new boreholes for five elementary schools and connect them to nearby water supply networks. Twenty-five local artisans will also be trained and contracted to build sustainable latrines.

In both areas, the partnership will continue to support the government's healthy school and village initiative, and local faith leaders will be trained to share WASH messaging and promote WASH behavior change.



GERTRUDE'S STORY

Gertrude lives in Gemena, Democratic Republic of Congo, with her three children. She has seen the transformative ability of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) efforts by the Covenant Kids Congo partnership between the Covenant Church and World Vision. WASH programming strives to contribute to child nourishment, protection from disease, education, and the overall well-being of children.

World Vision's WASH system ensures that the maintenance and operation of water points are in the hands of the Congolese people. Gertrude serves on the water committee for the Bokonzo water system. She aids in the continuation of the water system by collecting fees from the community.

The water system in Bokonzo also provides opportunities to further invest in Gemena's people. With funds they collect, Gertrude and her team were able to contribute to buying a mill. This mill is primarily used to grind maize into cassava flour, a main staple in the local diet. Previously, the work to create cassava flour demanded heavy labor, especially women and girls who had to pound the cassava to create the flour. Now, families can buy the cassava flour already milled. This frees up time for girls to focus on being students and going to school.

Now, not only does Gertrude serve on the committee for the water system, she is also the manager of the mill. This work allowed her to pay for her children's studies as well as buy a goat for breeding purposes. Gertrude says, "My family and I are not only able to survive, but now have greater security about our future."

The water system in Bokonzo also provides opportunities to further invest in Gemena's people.

Healing from a Painful History

by Jensen Smith

The Covenant Kids Congo partnership between the Covenant Church and World Vision is celebrating its ten-year anniversary in 2022. Although the last decade of this partnership has seen great change for the people of Gemena and Karawa, DR Congo's colonial past leaves more room for significant growth.

From its initial settlement along the vast Congo River, the Kingdom of Kongo had resources in abundance. The Scramble for Africa—the European takeover and splitting of the African continent—at the end of the nineteenth century resulted in Belgian rule and exploitation of Congolese resources and people. The Belgian Congo existed alongside centuries of horrific slave trade and extraction of the area's riches. The greatest loss, however, was millions of lives and the generational trauma that continues to impact DR Congo. It's estimated 10 million Congolese people were exploited and murdered in the Belgian pursuit of the country's natural resources like the rubber plant.

In 1960, the DRC finally gained its independence from Belgium. But internal struggles for leadership and external forces destabilized the country, fostering conflict and civil strife that continues today.



CONSTANTINE AND OTHER PARTICIPANTS OF A COMMUNITY GROUP SUPPORTING WOMEN LIVING WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIES.

Yet hope persists. Constantine lives in Gemena, and her life has been transformed by her own tenacity and opportunities provided through Covenant Kids Congo. She is now able to provide for her family through World Vision's Savings for Transformation initiative that allows Congolese people to save together in a safe, convenient, and flexible way. They use a simple method to convert small amounts of cash into savings that can then be lent to members as credit.



CONSTANTINE WITH MAMA PAULA PRESENTING AT A SAVINGS FOR TRANSFORMATION GROUP GATHERING IN 2019

To read more about Constantine's story and the work being done to create a sustainable future, scan below or visit covchurch.org/10-years-10000-children.



COMMUNITY*

50,094 people now have access to handwashing facilities with soap and water to practice good hygiene and reduce the spread of disease.

4,160 people gained access to clean drinking water in FY21.

12,004 smallholder farmers participated in savings groups, saving a total of \$149,649 and helping to ensure financial security for their families.

FAMILIES

15,903 mothers/caregivers with children ages newborn to 23 months received nutrition counseling, learning proper food preparation and how to offer balanced meals to their families to prevent/treat malnutrition.

15,359 families were educated on child protection and ways to report abuse, resulting in more cases of child abuse reported to police and more perpetrators convicted.**

EDUCATION

86,701 students: Local stakeholders also led education awareness campaigns throughout their communities. As a result, school attendance rose to **86,701** students (**44,121 girls**) in the 2020-2021 school year (up from 72,452 in the 2019-2020 school year). As children gain access to quality education, achieve literacy, and complete school, they have better opportunities to thrive.

* All statistics from FY2021.

** In FY21, we partnered with the Social Affairs Division in Gemena and 13 communities to form and train conflict management committees. These committees worked to raise awareness on child protection and ways to report abuse. As a result, 32 cases of abuse (rape of minors) were reported to the police and 13 perpetrators were arrested and convicted.

TEN YEARS AND COUNTING

2012

*Partnership
begins with
World Vision*

OCTOBER
2013

230 churches
have participated
in Hope Sundays



2013

Access to
Savings
Groups begins

MARCH
2014

7,000 children
sponsored so far

JUNE
2014

First Covenant church participates in
Team World Vision endurance race

MAY
2015

*First
Global 6K*

SPRING
2020

Karawa Hospital
water project
complete

JUNE
2021

*10,000 total
sponsorships*



2021

Chosen, a new
model where
kids chose
their sponsors,
launches with
Redeemer
Covenant (MN)
as the first ECC
participant.

JUNE
2021

First Chosen Cluster
with multiple
Covenant churches
participating

JULY
2021

Karawa Area
Program opens



OCTOBER 2022

*10-year anniversary of
1st sponsorship in DR Congo*





WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE (WASH)

Working in collaboration with Covenant Kids Congo, communities in Karawa and Ledia Area Programs are striving to obtain certification as healthy schools and villages. By God's grace, they are making progress. In FY21, families living in Karawa formed a WASH committee, developed community action plans, and began to implement planned activities—such as cleaning trails and pathways, maintaining community water points, and creating a schedule to share responsibilities.

This year, 60 faith leaders (eight women) in Karawa also volunteered to participate in training on WASH interventions. These leaders then shared key WASH messaging with 8,654 congregants, such as the importance of regular handwashing at critical times and maintaining clean latrines and home environments. Today, neighbors are keeping their outdoor spaces clean and have created a monthly schedule to make sure all community members without distinction of gender or age have an opportunity to participate.

SPONSORSHIP THROUGH CKC

When you become a sponsor, children, their families, and the greater community will benefit from interventions in areas like clean water, education, healthcare, food resources, and economic development. Monthly donations will be made in the name of the child and will contribute toward critical community needs for transformational development. You can write to your sponsored child, and you will receive annual updates. You'll also be able to send gifts to your sponsored child, both material and monetary, as specified on the World Vision website. As a sponsor, you can set up a My World Vision account, which allows you easy online access to information about your sponsored child.

Many sponsorship programs focus only on helping select children rather than working toward long-term community development. What makes the World Vision sponsorship program unique is that your monthly donations bless the lives of all children in the community where your sponsored



Through Covenant Kids Congo powered by World Vision, you can sponsor a child who lives in either Gemena or Karawa in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

child lives, through long-lasting sustainable development. Your financial support builds infrastructure for water, health, education, agriculture, economic development, and advocacy. Your sponsored child benefits greatly, and so does their family and their community.



To learn more, scan here or email us at covenantkidscongo@covchurch.org.

Celebrate with us!



This year, we are inviting Covenant churches across the denomination to celebrate all God continues to do through the Covenant Kids Congo partnership by hosting a Celebration Sunday this fall or next spring.

Your Celebration Sunday can be designed to best fit your church, whether you are a seasoned or first-time partner. It could include launching your Team World Vision or Global 6K team, offering sponsorship, collecting an offering, or simply highlighting CKC and showing a video.

Whether it's a full Sunday or a Mission Moment, we want to connect with your church. Sign up today!



CHOOSE A DATE AND ORDER YOUR CELEBRATION SUNDAY
KIT AT [COVCHURCH.ORG/COVENANTKIDSCONGO](https://CovChurch.org/CovenantKidsCongo)!

Learn more at CovChurch.org/CovenantKidsCongo

Contact Us: **773-442-6578**
Follow Us: **@covkidscongo**
CovenantKidsCongo@CovChurch.org