



CWRD UPDATE

THE COVENANT WORLD RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2023

Ministering to the Abused and Exploited in Mexico

When Felipe Rodriquez was invited to join a pilot group in Baja California, Mexico, that sought to offer a space of healing from past trauma and abuse, he joined hesitantly. But when he experienced a safe community to share painful parts of his story he had not shared before, Felipe, who is a pastor, became convinced God was calling him to offer the same experience to other pastors and leaders, and he eventually became his group's coordinator.

The group Felipe joined was part of MAEM (Ministering to the Abused and Exploited in Mexico), one of CWRD's unique peace and reconciliation partners. This work began in 2013 when people connected to the Covenant Church in Mexico City came together around their own needs for healing from abuse trauma and the desire further violence against others. Their experience of healing in a communal setting led them to continue to seek additional resources. Eventually they were moved to create additional safe, communal spaces of healing and prevention training.

Convicted by the need for personal restoration in order to minister well to others, MAEM facilitators first commit to their own process of reflection and restoration. This is part of extensive, personal training in and integrated understanding of the dynamics of violence and abuse as well as how to accompany others who are suffering. In total, a facilitator participates in more than 100 hours of training and pastoral care!

Today MAEM has grown from one small group in Mexico City to seven regional teams located throughout the country. Each region is led by a coordinator, with a total of 50 trained, committed volunteer facilitators who serve as advocates for justice and peace and agents of transformation in their families and communities. They are breaking the cycle of violence that has oppressed them from generation to generation.

Recently, the MAEM coordinators gathered for a retreat for pastoral care, continued education, and time to



MAEM COORDINATOR'S RETREAT

celebrate God's work through the ministry. As the regional coordinator for MAEM Baja California, Felipe has walked with dozens of pastors and leaders in their healing journey. He has helped train the 15 facilitators who serve the region today. He has also prepared this group to continue with a new coordinator, as he and his wife are relocating to a new city where they plan to launch a new region of MAEM.

Join us in celebrating the ways God is working through Felipe and the whole MAEM team to bring about transformational healing and reconciliation.

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"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.
Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality."
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ROMANS 12:12-13

Malkia Program Transforms Lives

Globally, an estimated 4.7 million persons are caught in sex trafficking today. Through the FREE initiative, a collaboration with Serve Globally and Love Mercy Do Justice, Covenant World Relief and Development responds to the call of the global church to pray, learn, give, and act to oppose the evil of sex trafficking both domestically and globally.

Sarafina searches her Kenyan neighborhood for women in need of help and support. Driven by her own experience, she is part of the Malkia program of Freely in Hope, a FREE partner. This program works with women in prostitution living in the infamous Sinai Slum. Thanks to your support, Malkia is an empowerment program providing women a path to freedom.

Nancy grew up in Nairobi, Kenya, where she was introduced to prostitution in order to provide for her children. Suffering from abuse, she spiraled, with no hope or support, and she contemplated suicide. She was close to giving up when she met Sarafina, who provided a way out.

After receiving education, counseling, and vocational training, Nancy can now envision a future free from abuse and prostitution. She is one of ten graduates who came together for the first Malkia conference. 130



MALKIA GRADUATION

people, including graduates, partnering organizations, and some currently still in prostitution, listened to powerful stories from Nancy and her classmates. “Malkia taught me to dream again,” she says. Nancy now believes she can achieve the life and safety she desires.

Stories like Nancy’s and the work of Freely in Hope are a reminder of God’s transforming power to overcome sex trafficking.

Through the FREE initiative, our global and domestic partners are engaged in the holistic and transformative work of anti-sex trafficking through prevention, intervention, and rehabilitation that seeks to support survivors and break the supply and demand cycle. Alongside our partners, we hope to mobilize individuals and local churches to strengthen the movement through the power of networking, education, awareness, support, and activism.

For more information about FREE, visit covchurch.org/free.

Anti-Sex Trafficking Efforts

THROUGH THE FREE INITIATIVE

6 partners domestically & 4 partners internationally

\$150,000 annual fundraising goal

7 projects funded in 2022



Partnerships Workshop at Midwinter

The 2023 Midwinter Conference provided an opportunity to highlight the blessings and impact of global partnerships. Rev. Jyoti Deep, program officer for Covenant Social Service of the Hindustani Covenant Church in India, attended the conference as our special guest. Grace Shim interviewed him on the main stage just prior to a message from Bryan Stevenson. Pastor Jyoti was also one of the presenters at the Serve Globally workshop on Global Partnerships, along with Adam Edgerly and Renee Hale. The workshop provided principles for successful partnerships, so it was especially helpful for Covenant pastors to hear directly from Pastor Jyoti.



Covenant World Relief and Development

PARTNERS IN TRANSFORMATION



The Evangelical Covenant Church

Learn more and give at covchurch.org/cwrld.