Malnutrition is a major issue throughout DR Congo. When the Karawa Area Program began in 2021, malnutrition was identified as one of the top challenges facing the community. For as long as anyone can remember, children in Karawa have been dying of malnutrition. We have seen much progress in the area of malnutrition in Gemena and are prayerful as we begin to hear stories of transformation in Karawa.

La Grace was only three months old when her mother died. It became difficult for her father, Ndepana, to support her older brother and a new baby, while also working. La Grace soon became malnourished, and her father was worried. He recalls, “She was losing weight from day to day and all her hair had fallen out.”

Last year, a World Vision community volunteer looked in on the vulnerable family, and it became clear that La Grace, now a toddler, was struggling. The volunteer connected them with the Karawa Area Program office. World Vision gave Ndepana four packs of soap, sugar, and salt—enough to provide for his family and a little extra, which he sold to start a small peanut-growing business. La Grace was also enrolled in Positive Deviance Hearth (PD Hearth), a feeding and education program that teaches parents how to fight malnutrition using nutritious local foods.

Today, La Grace is a healthy two-year-old. “I thank World Vision for providing items to start income-generating activities and coaching to parents on improving the health of the malnourished children in our community,” says her happy father.

In addition to implementing programs like PD Hearth, providing families with direct nutritional needs is often the jumpstart they need to provide for their family long into the future. In our program in Gemena, we have seen significant progress.
in improving the nutritional status of children.

*Stunting is identified when a child’s height-for-age is more than two standard deviations below the WHO Child Growth Standards median.*

Last year, evaluations indicated a 33% decrease in stunting in children under five since 2018. One significant factor was the involvement of households in savings groups and income-generating activities. This increased families’ earnings and enabled them to invest in their family’s nutritional health. Praise God!

World Vision's economic empowerment efforts are making big changes for families in Gemena and Karawa; however, nine in 10 parents report they still struggle to provide for their children. Many of these families have requested access to additional credit. **Join us in praying for the capacity to fulfill their desire to create and grow income-generating enterprises.**

Families in Gemena celebrate their children's graduation from the Positive Deviance Hearth nutrition program. Many of these children faced life-threatening malnutrition but now are in good health thanks to their parents' newfound nutritional know-how and income-generating opportunities facilitated by the initiatives.

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**Covenant Kids Congo by the Numbers**

- **46%** to **13%** rate of stunting in children in the program under five since 2018
- **11.5%** to **29.8%** proportion of third graders meeting reading standards in Gemena from 2021 to 2022
- **11%** to **36%** of households using basic sanitation facilities from 2017 to today
- **16%** to **59%** of households using basic drinking water facilities from 2017 to today
- **26%** decrease in the number of community members suffering diarrheal illnesses

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*All statistics taken from the Fiscal Year 2022 (October 2021 through September 2022) Annual Report prepared in April 2023.*