

# COVENANT KIDS

## Congo

powered by

World Vision®



## Dear Friends,

**Yesu azali awa! Jesus is here!** The past six months for Covenant Kids Congo have been full of excitement and activity—and we are continually reminded of this phrase in Lingala. We continue to see Jesus at work in and through the ministry of the Covenant Church of Congo (CEUM) and our partnership with World Vision. I am delighted to share the latest updates from Covenant Kids Congo and our partnership efforts in Gemena and Karawa in DR Congo.

This newsletter highlights significant strides in the last year in various sectors. You will read inspiring stories like Christine's, who transformed her life through vocational training, and see the remarkable progress in child health, nutrition, water, and sanitation. This year, we saw more than 9,000 people gain access to clean water, dramatically improving health and daily life. There was also a jump in houses with access to water within a 30-minute walk—from 59% to 81% in Gemena.

This spring, I also had the privilege of traveling to DR Congo with a group of Covenant leaders and pastors. This was the first time since the pandemic that we've visited the work. Witnessing the positive changes in the communities and meeting the resilient people benefiting from these programs was deeply moving. I continue to be incredibly impressed with the World Vision staff and community volunteers. Sponsorship, fundraising, and direct support have been instrumental in making transformation possible!

Throughout this newsletter, you will see multiple QR codes. To access these extra resources, simply open the camera on your phone, point at the code, and click the link that appears.

Thank you for your continued commitment and generosity. Together, we are creating lasting change and brighter futures for the children and families of Gemena and Karawa, DR Congo.

P.S. We are excited to release a number of video updates that were captured during the trip in April from Covenant Kids Congo in the coming months. We hope they fill you with renewed energy for our partnership and the role you play within it—whether through prayer, sponsorship, direct giving, or participating in a Team World Vision race or a Global 6K. **Jesus is here! Will you be a part of what is happening in DRC?**



*Together,*



**Pastor Lyndsey Watson**

COVENANT KIDS CONGO  
PROGRAM MANAGER





## Stitching Together a Stronger Future

When Christine's father passed away, she and her siblings were forced to drop out of school while her mother worked to support her five children. When asked how she felt during that season, Christine shared, "I wondered if I could ever finish my studies."

Christine's life was transformed through the Covenant Kids Congo program and the community engagement of World Vision. Her mother participated in training sessions on income generation and upon completion, received a sewing machine for Christine, who already had some sewing experience.

"I didn't hesitate to start sewing," Christine said. As neighbors brought her clothes to repair and requested new items, her business took off, enabling her to earn enough money to return to school, where she now studies industrial sewing as one of her subjects. "Thanks to the training, I can support myself and continue my education," Christine shared. While she plans to keep improving her tailoring skills, Christine is focused on finishing her studies, gaining employment, and helping her siblings attend school as well. Her mom has also begun selling vegeta-

bles to better support her family.

Christine's story is a testament to the transformative power of vocational training and economic empowerment initiatives in both Gemena and Karawa. Growing up with limited educational opportunities and financial constraints, Christine faced significant challenges. However, with support and training, she has a plan for a promising future.

Christine's success is not an isolated case! Her story highlights the impact of vocational training and economic empowerment initiatives in Gemena. By equipping individuals with essential skills, these programs foster financial independence and educational advancement. Christine's journey demonstrates how targeted support can create sustainable, positive change, benefiting not just individuals but entire communities. These initiatives not only provide immediate financial benefits but also lay the foundation for long-term prosperity and self-sufficiency in the community.

As we continue to support and expand these programs, we remain committed to empowering more individuals like Christine!

## VISIT FROM PRESIDENT DUALE

In May, we welcomed Rev. President Theophile Duale Langba and Mama Josephine Akpakpa Duale to the United States, including stops in Colorado, California, Illinois, and Washington DC. Our CKC team hosted them in Washington state.

CKC friends and others were invited to learn more about the Communauté Évangélique de l'Ubangi-Mongala (CEUM—Covenant Church of Congo) and hear an encouraging message and update on the mission and ministry of the CEUM. A big thank you to the Gillespie family (longtime CKC supporter) for hosting our guests in their home, and Dick & Judy Anderson for interpreting throughout the week. Covenant Living at the Shores, as well as multiple churches including Cascade, Kent, Creekside, Monroe, Shoreline, and Newport Covenant, hosted various events. It was a blessing to be together!

Watch the services by scanning below:



Sunday  
Morning  
Worship



Wednesday  
Evening  
Worship







# Clean Water Access Improves Lives

Each year Covenanters across the country participate in half marathons, full marathons, ultra marathons, invitationals, and the annual Global 6K in May to fundraise for clean water initiatives in DR Congo, raising approximately \$600,000 annually.

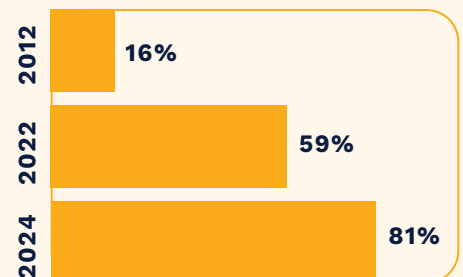
We believe access to clean water is a basic human right and a critical component of community health and development. In Gemena and Karawa, significant efforts continue to be made to improve water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) conditions. Last year 9,101 people gained access to clean water sources, both in their communities and schools.

Since the beginning of the partnership in 2012, we have seen significant jumps in access to clean water in Gemena—with an increase of 22% in just the last year! This achievement marks a considerable advancement in the quality of life for residents, as clean water is essential for drinking, cooking, cleaning, and maintaining hygiene. It also reduces the prevalence of waterborne diseases, which continues to be a major concern in the region. In FY22, we reported a 25% decrease in the number of community members suffering from diarrheal illnesses. **Clean water is the reason!**

*Will you join us in praying for WASH efforts in Gemena and Karawa in the coming year?*



Percentage increase of households with access to a clean water source within 30 minutes (round trip) of home in Gemena







## WASH Stands for Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene



In addition to providing clean water, the partnership has focused on educating communities about proper sanitation and hygiene practices.

Training sessions have been conducted to teach residents about the importance of handwashing, safe water storage, and waste management. These

practices are vital for preventing the spread of disease and ensuring the benefits of clean water are fully realized. These projects are carried out in collaboration with local communities, ensuring that the systems are maintained and managed effectively. Community involvement is crucial for the sustainability of these projects, as it fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among residents.

One notable success of the WASH programs is improved school attendance and performance. With access to clean water and proper sanitation facilities, children, especially girls, are more likely to attend

school regularly and participate actively in their education.

A Covenant team traveled to DR Congo this spring and was able to see the importance of WASH initiatives at schools and health clinics. **Scan the QR code above to watch a video about these initiatives from the trip!**

The impact of clean water access extends beyond health and education. It also influences economic stability and social well-being. With clean water readily available, families spend less time and effort collecting water from distant sources. This time can instead be used for productive activities, such as farming, education, or small businesses. Additionally, the reduced incidence of illness means fewer healthcare costs and less time off work or school, contributing to overall economic and social stability.

By continuing to participate in events like Team World Vision races and the Global 6K, you and your church are joining our friends in DRC to bring forward a healthier, more prosperous future for their communities. Thank you!

## 2024 GLOBAL 6K IMPACT

**\$219,829**  
RAISED BY  
COVENANT  
TEAMS

**2,159**  
COVENANT  
PARTICIPANTS

**71**  
COVENANT  
TEAMS

**80+**  
COVENANT  
CHURCHES

**4,396**

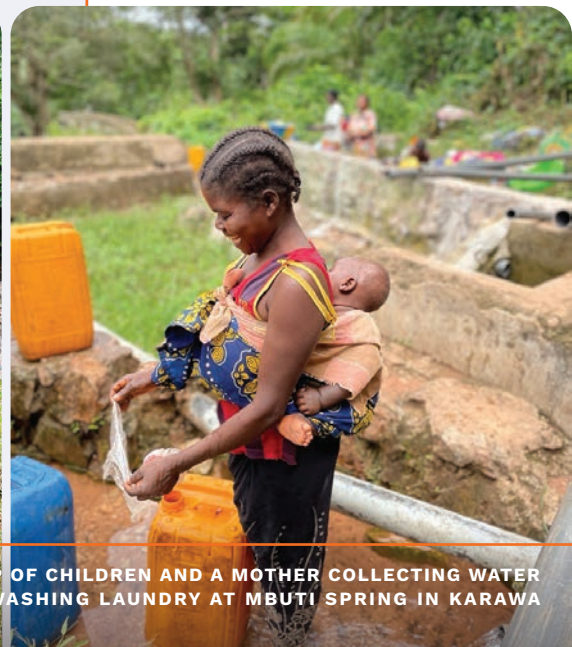
**PEOPLE WILL GAIN ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER BECAUSE OF COVENANT-HOSTED GLOBAL 6K EFFORTS IN 2024.**

It's not too early to sign up for next year's Global 6K! Visit [covchurch.org/6K](http://covchurch.org/6K) and use the code **ECCLEADER** for a free host site registration. We have a goal of 100 Covenant teams—will you join us?

The spring Covenant World Relief and Development newsletter featured Thornapple Covenant Church's Global 6K efforts. **Read it here!** →



Scan the code below to watch a video recorded in DRC as a thank you to those who participated in this year's Global 6K.



A GROUP OF CHILDREN AND A MOTHER COLLECTING WATER AND WASHING LAUNDRY AT MBUTI SPRING IN KARAWA



THE TEAM THAT TRAVELED TO DRC IN APRIL ATTENDED A CHOOSING PARTY WHERE CHILDREN CHOSE COVENANT SPONSORS.

## Embracing Chosen

In the past year, several pastors have hosted the Chosen initiative, a unique sponsorship invitation where children in DRC choose their sponsors. This innovative approach has left a profound impact on congregations and sponsors alike. Here's what some of our pastors had to say about their experiences:

*“There’s a connection with brothers and sisters across the world that, short of bringing the whole congregation to the DRC, cannot be matched.”*

Eric Hedberg, pastor of Emmanuel Covenant Church in Surrey, British Columbia, shared that the timing was perfect for his congregation. With new members eager to engage, the church experienced a shared mission-focused experience through Chosen. “We saw two of our newest families become part of sponsoring kids, which was very exciting!” Eric emphasized, “The impact is undeniable, both for the kids who are choosing their sponsors, and for the individuals, families, and groups who are sponsoring.”

*“Holistic, Christ-centered approach to helping those in need.”*

Brad Jackson, pastor of Crossview Covenant Church in North Mankato, Minnesota, highlighted his long-standing appreciation for Covenant Kids Congo, powered by World Vision. “It is an easy yes for us,” he said. He was particularly moved by the initiative’s videos, which rekindled memories of his visit to DR Congo more than seven years ago. He noted the program’s immediate fruitfulness, with

new members, including university students, enthusiastically sponsoring.

*“We are a church plant, and I believe starting these things early means it is in our DNA. It teaches people another way to be radically generous.”*

Sandi Asker, co-pastor of Community Covenant Church in Mankato, Minnesota (formerly Crossview Covenant–Rosa Parks), saw Chosen as a natural fit for her church’s values of global diversity and radical generosity. She was touched by the unexpected participants, like a family friend who decided to sponsor a child. Pastor Sandi traveled to the DR Congo with the team in April and since has been integrating Congolese songs into worship. The church also saw an increase in participation and fundraising for their Global 6K this year, connecting the dots and continuing to highlight the partnership.

*“Each step of the planning we felt this was a good use of God’s blessings.”*

Matt Kennedy, pastor of Roseville Covenant Church in Roseville, Minnesota, appreciated how Chosen encouraged conversations about generosity and compassion within families. He praised this “reverse” format of sponsorship for helping his congregation think biblically about being a global church and emphasizing spiritual assets over physical ones.

*“We love the ministry, love the potential impact in Congo, and love the impact on the people from Hope.”*

Paul Knight, pastor of Hope Church in Grand Forks, North Dakota, hosted an Encore Chosen event, doubling the number of sponsors from their first invitation two years earlier. He witnessed the powerful emotional responses of those chosen and noted the sustained generosity fostered within his church, with families and college students proudly displaying photos of the children they sponsor.

Chosen has not only enriched the lives of children in the Democratic Republic of Congo but has also deepened the faith and engagement of sponsors within our Covenant churches in the US and Canada. We invite you to learn more about this transformative initiative and consider becoming a part of it! For more information, contact Lyndsey at [lyndsey.watson@covchurch.org](mailto:lyndsey.watson@covchurch.org). **Let’s continue to make a lasting impact together!**





# HAVE A HEART FOR CONGO?

HERE ARE THREE ADDITIONAL WAYS YOU CAN ENGAGE IN THE MINISTRY OF THE COVENANT IN CONGO THIS YEAR.



**Watch this Partner Perspectives webinar** hosted by Covenant World Relief and Development (CWRD) and learn more about the conflict happening in eastern DRC. Pray for Modestine, director of AGIR-DRC, and her team serving in Goma. AGIR-DRC and

ACT for Congo are CWRD partners serving refugees and internally displaced peoples in eastern Congo.



**Bike for Congo this October!** Join the 2024 Biking for Congo Challenge. Did you know that some people in DRC travel over 50 kilometers (31 miles) on a bicycle to a hospital, while sick or injured? If you can ride a bike, you're invited to partner with Paul Carlson Partnership to raise support for healthcare in DR Congo.



**Pray for and support** the mission and ministry of the Covenant Church of Congo (CEUM). Join us in praying specifically for President Duale and his family as well as the many pastors and leaders of the CEUM.



## DID YOU KNOW?

**Covenant Kids Congo** is under the umbrella of **Covenant World Relief and Development (CWRD)**. CWRD partners in a variety of community development projects around the world. For information about partnering with CWRD through partners and programs like Covenant Kids Congo, visit [covchurch.org/cwrdd](https://covchurch.org/cwrdd).



**Emmanuel Covenant Church in Surrey, British Columbia, became the first Covenant church of Canada to host Chosen!**

We continue to celebrate the relaunch

of the Covenant Kids Congo partnership in Canada, and we are looking for ways to further engage Canadian churches. Emmanuel was also the first ever Choosing Party in Karawa, DR Congo, the newest Area Program for Covenant Kids Congo, and the epicenter of Covenant mission in Congo for many years. If you're part of a Canadian Covenant church, we invite you to join! Opportunities include Chosen, Global 6K, and direct gifts to the community. Contact our team to learn more.

## Who Cares About Gen Z?

**WE DO!** Join us on September 17 for an interactive webinar, co-hosted by Covenant Kids Congo and World Vision, exploring Barna's groundbreaking research on the Open Generation (aka Gen Z).

Discover what defines today's youth; their unique perspectives on faith, diversity, and global issues; and how they're shaping the future. Don't miss this

opportunity to gain valuable insights into understanding and engaging with the next generation!



[← Register Here](#)

Learn more at [CovChurch.org/CovenantKidsCongo](https://CovChurch.org/CovenantKidsCongo)

Contact Us: **773-442-6578**  
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