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Covenant
World Relief
and Development

CWRD UPDATE

THE COVENANT WORLD RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

FALL 2024



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LATEST VIDEO BY
SCANNING HERE!



Reach Out to the Least of These

In Mathew 25, Jesus makes a clear and unmistakable call to pay attention to the overlooked and ignored of society, specifically to care for the hungry, thirsty, unhoused, unclothed, sick, and imprisoned. It is a call to reach out to the least of these.

At CWRD, we are grateful for more than 30 incredible global partners who live out Christlike compassion. In the past year, with your help, these partners carried out 26 disasters responses in 13 different countries around the world, providing food, water, shelter, and clothing to those who are experiencing the worst crises imaginable, from brutal war to devastating natural disasters.

Going beyond disaster response, we are also partnering in 41 transformational development projects in more than 20 countries, designed to bring lasting change to entire communities. Led by local practitioners—experts in their own contexts—these projects engage in collective community action to facilitate the flourishing of communities through access to clean water, food and nutrition security, income-generating activities, and many more beautiful expressions of being faithful to Jesus's call.

“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one
of the least of these brothers and sisters
of mine, you did for me.”

MATTHEW 25:40

We are excited
to announce the
promotion of Nils
Clauson to director
of Covenant World Relief
and Development (CWRD).



Since joining CWRD in 2020, Nils has built strong relationships with our partners, advancing CWRD's mission to reduce human suffering and support healthy communities. His 17 years of experience with Serve Globally, including his work in Mexico and Latin America, have equipped him with valuable skills in leadership, communication, and collaboration. We are confident that Nils's leadership will continue to strengthen CWRD's impact worldwide!

TO READ MORE,
SCAN HERE:





TOP: Jitokeze group members selling vegetables to one another after a weekly meeting.

BOTTOM: Self-help groups empower communities by fostering resilience, financial independence, and skill-building for women facing poverty and climate challenges.



Fuentes Libres

Fuentes Libres in Oaxaca, Mexico, is driving change through the power of collective action. **As a faith-based organization started in collaboration with the Covenant Church of Mexico, Fuentes Libres is empowering women and children in marginalized communities to build sustainable futures.** Esperanza, a 53-year-old retired lieutenant from the city of Salina Cruz, is a shining example. Through a Fuentes Libres Community Bank called “Prosperidad,” she joined a group of women working together for financial independence. With a loan, Esperanza started a juice shop and became the bank’s treasurer, gaining both respect and valuable leadership skills within her community.

Beyond financial empowerment, Fuentes Libres fosters collective action through its children’s clubs. These clubs provide spaces for children like Larisa, an 11-year-old girl who has flourished through group activities.

EMPOWERING THE MARGINALIZED THROUGH COMMUNITY ACTION

Women in West Pokot

In West Pokot, Kenya, where women face struggles of poverty, discrimination, and violence, CWRD is partnering with Jitokeze Wamama Wafrika to bring about holistic transformation.

The women in the program receive training in essential skills like tailoring, organic farming, literacy, and computer skills. This initiative isn’t just about individual transformation; it’s about creating a network of empowered women who support one another and their broader community. Through collaboration, local resources such as farmland and organic manure are mobilized, and women are trained to manage these assets, fostering a sense of collective ownership and responsibility.

One example is a woman named Gladys whose life was transformed through this community effort. Forced into early marriage due to economic hardship, Gladys learned tailoring and farming through the program. With the support of fellow participants, she was able to start her own business, buy land, and build a small hotel, becoming a beacon of hope in her community. Her transformation is a powerful testament to how collective action can elevate even the most marginalized, creating sustainable change that touches entire families and communities.





TOP: Women from a community bank working on the group accounting.

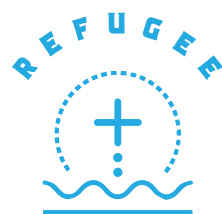
RIGHT: Fuentes Libres kids' club.

BOTTOM: Woman making traditional Oaxacan food, a common business venture for Fuentes Libres participants.



Once shy, Larisa now leads her peers, encouraging them with her faith and participation in community-driven projects.

Fuentes Libres teaches that solidarity and shared effort are key to lasting change at the individual and community levels. Women in the program learn to manage community banks, making decisions together and supporting each other's growth. This collective approach addresses not only financial challenges but also social and emotional well-being, creating a stronger, united community.



JOURNEY

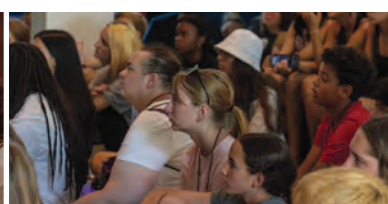
Refugee Journey at Unite 2024

At Unite 2024, Covenant youth participated in the Refugee Journey, an immersive experience hosted by Covenant World Relief and Development. This powerful event allowed students to step into the lives of refugees, facing challenges such as dangerous travel and emotional hardship. Through interactive stations and reflection, participants deepened their understanding of the global refugee crisis and explored ways their faith calls them to respond.

The Refugee Journey was designed to spark empathy, deepen understanding, and inspire action. Students and leaders were challenged to host Refugee Journey at their church in the coming year. **If you would like to join these efforts, learn more here: covchurch.org/refugeejourney.**

We are grateful to the many volunteers who made this impactful experience possible and for the students who donated. Collectively, students raised \$3,800. We are hoping to double their impact through donations from our supporters.

SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW TO JOIN THE COLLECTIVE EFFORT OF STUDENTS AT UNITE AND DONATE TO REFUGEE WORK AROUND THE WORLD.



Students participating in Refugee Journey at Unite.



Christine and her daughter, Promise

Women at Home of Hope in India making communion wafers.



A MOTHER'S RESILIENCE

Christine's Journey to Provide for Her Family

Christine lives on the income from two peanut harvests a year, and it's often difficult to provide for her family. When her husband left while she was pregnant with her second child, she faced even greater difficulties. Unable to work in the fields due to her pregnancy, Christine and her two-year-old daughter, Promise, became malnourished. Yet Christine's determination to care for her family never wavered.

Christine joined income-generation training sessions in her neighborhood aimed at helping families with malnourished children. At the end of the program she chose to receive essential items such as sugar, salt,

oil, spices, and soap, which she could sell to earn a living. The proceeds from this small business allowed Christine to feed Promise and herself nutritious meals, ultimately improving the toddler's health and her own.

These training programs provide individuals with the skills to generate their own income, fostering independence and financial stability. By starting small businesses, participants become self-sufficient, promoting long-term community development and reducing reliance on external aid. Over time, this helps improve the overall living conditions within the community.

Covenant Kids Congo is under the umbrella of Covenant World Relief and Development, focusing specifically on our denomination's partnership with World Vision in the Democratic Republic of Congo.



STRATEGIC GUIDANCE

CWRD Advisory Team

The purpose of the Covenant World Relief and Development (CWRD) advisory team is to provide strategic guidance and expertise to ensure that our work is effective, sustainable, and aligned with the mission of transforming communities through relief and development. The team plays a crucial role in evaluating current projects and advising on new initiatives. Team members come from diverse backgrounds—ranging from humanitarian aid to development and ministry—and are united by a shared passion for justice and compassion. Our staff is thankful to be supported by such a dedicated group of servant leaders!

PARTNERING FOR FREEDOM Breaking the Cycle of Trafficking

Our partner in India, the Hindustani Covenant Church (HCC) through Covenant Social Service, fights sex trafficking by focusing on intervention, prevention, and rehabilitation. They walk alongside women impacted by trafficking, offering care, empowerment, and hope for restoration. Their mission also focuses on the children of these women, addressing their unique trauma.

Driven by the mothers' desire to protect their children, our partner provides holistic support, including education, healthcare, psychosocial services, and safe spaces. These essential resources help break the cycle of trafficking, empowering both mothers and children to flourish.

Currently, 16 children receive direct care through HCC, equipping them to break free from the system of sex trafficking that threatens their futures. With support through FREE, a collaborative initiative between Love Mercy Do Justice and CWRD, we can help these children continue their journey toward freedom and hope.

In the coming year, in partnership with Love Mercy Do Justice, we seek to raise \$150,000 to help fund the work of our FREE partners in the US and around the world. Would you consider making a gift today?





Community Covenant, Minneapolis
Photo by: Sarah Swanson

CHURCH ENGAGEMENT

What Is Your Role in Global Impact?

On Covenant World Relief and Development (CWRD) Sunday Covenant churches unite to support CWRD's global mission of disaster relief, community development, and justice. On this day, churches engage with CWRD's transformative work around the world through learning and giving. Last year we were encouraged by how Covenant churches and families celebrated and supported CWRD in unique ways.

For example, **Cape Cod Covenant Church in Brewster, Massachusetts, dedicates each month to highlighting and supporting a local, national, or global ministry.** In November, their "Mission of the Month" is Covenant World Relief and Development. Their involvement includes "Can for Change," as well as sharing CWRD videos and inserts. On Thanksgiving Sunday, members place their Cans for Change on the altar, symbolizing their partnership with CWRD in God's transforming mission to vulnerable communities worldwide.

Community Covenant Church in Lenexa, Kansas, is returning to a CWRD Sunday focus after the challenges of the pandemic. The flexibility to choose their own CWRD Sunday has allowed them to shape their church calendar around the various ministries they support. They've chosen September to highlight CWRD's mission. Pastor David McCowan notes, "CWRD provides us with an opportunity to bring global concerns to our church family in the context of our worship...to live Jesus's words in Matthew 25 to reach out to the least of these."

Baxter and Margie Swenson, retired Covenant global personnel who served in Colombia and Ecuador, have found meaningful ways to involve their grandchildren in supporting CWRD. During the pandemic, they creatively used the CovCares catalog, purchasing a gift like a goat for a family in need in place of traditional Christmas presents. The following year, they introduced what they call the "Gift of the Magi," encouraging their grandchildren to save money throughout the year to support projects in the CovCares catalog.

Similarly, Eagle Rock Covenant Church in Los Angeles, California, has a strong history of partnering with global initiatives of the Covenant. Pastor Fred Carter emphasized, "Partnering with CWRD provides us with a meaningful way to serve beyond our local community. Their focus on sustainable development and relief perfectly aligns with our mission of justice and compassion."

These are just a few examples of how Covenant churches and families have embraced CWRD's mission. We invite you to continue sharing your stories of how your church is partnering with CWRD to bring hope and transformation to communities in need around the world.

WAYS TO ENGAGE WITH CWRD



THE CAN
FOR CHANGE



PERSONAL
GIFT



SPECIAL
OFFERING



PLANNED
GIFT

PLEASE CONTACT THE COVENANT WORLD RELIEF
AND DEVELOPMENT TEAM WITH ANY
QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS.
(773) 596-2499 | EMAIL: cwrld@covchurch.org



Covenant World Relief
and Development

PARTNERS IN TRANSFORMATION



The Evangelical Covenant Church



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2024 CWRD YEAR IN REVIEW

Thank you for your generous support and partnership with Covenant World Relief and Development. Here is a glimpse of your support of CWRD this year!

\$2 MILLION GRANTED



41
PROJECTS

21
COUNTRIES

28
PARTNERS

FOOD SECURITY
22
PROJECTS

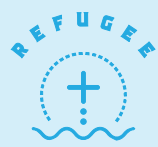
PEACEMAKING
11
PROJECTS

CHILDREN
25
PROJECTS

WOMEN'S
EMPOWERMENT
23
PROJECTS

Projects that listed sector as primary or secondary focus.

CWRD Currently
Supports Refugees in
7 Different Countries



2,500
students
and leaders
participated in
Refugee Journey
at Unite 2024.

GOAL IN RESPONSE:

Hosting
Refugee Journey
Experience at
4 Churches

26
RESPONSES



13
COUNTRIES

\$671,500

INCLUDING:

UKRAINE — \$367,500 | GAZA/WEST BANK — \$52,300
TÜRKIYE/SYRIA EARTHQUAKE — \$72,000

2026
80TH
ANNIVERSARY
OF CWRD

FREE Initiative ANTI-SEX TRAFFICKING

\$120K granted
6 domestic
partners
4 international
partners



COVENANT KIDS CONGO

The Global 6K was May 20, 2024. **71 teams** made up of **2,159 participants**, representing approximately **80+ Covenant churches**, raised **\$219,829** for clean water in DRC. This represents **4,396 people** gaining access to **clean water** because of Covenant-hosted Global 6K efforts in 2024.



Covenant World Relief and Development

PARTNERS IN TRANSFORMATION

Covenant World Relief and Development is funded solely through gifts specifically designated to CWRD. **We fully depend on churches and individuals like you to continue this ministry.** To learn more about giving to CWRD, please contact us at cwrdd@covchurch.org.