



Canadian Lutheran  
World Relief



# partnership

Your generosity  
in action

Winter 2023



PHOTO: ACT ALLIANCE

*Thank you for your  
partnership in 2022!*



Dear friends,

We are grateful to have the opportunity to share with you some of the ways in which your support has made a difference over the past year.

We all heard such tragic stories last year, from families displaced by the war in Ukraine to millions forced to the brink of starvation due to a historic hunger crisis.

But despite the challenges and crises facing communities around the globe, your kindness and generosity are helping people write new stories—of hope, adaptation, healing, and peace.

In Ukraine, your support has provided everything from clean water and shelter to kids' drop-in centres and trauma therapy.

As the hunger crisis affected so many, your donations provided vital aid to those struggling to meet their basic needs.

And in countries around the world where families faced drought, disaster and

chronic poverty, your support allowed our life-saving work to continue.

We don't write to you today as donors, but as partners in a mission of hope. You have partnered not just with us, but with countless individuals who are defying tragedy to write new stories. A few of those stories are enclosed in this newsletter, but we're always happy to share more, so please get in touch.

**Thank you for your ongoing partnership and thank you for the opportunity to share these stories with you. We pray that God will bless you in the coming year and look forward to continuing our mission together.**

**Karin Achtelstetter**, Executive Director

We're always ready to tell you more about how your gift is making a difference!

Contact our office any time at **1-800-661-2597** or email [clwr@clwr.org](mailto:clwr@clwr.org)

## COVER STORY | Myanmar | Opportunities for all

We've written a few times over the last couple of years about Myanmar, where your support is accomplishing big things.

Communities have safe new housing, new water sources, employment training and job opportunities. Beautiful gardens are growing in IDP camps, and many displaced individuals have found new income sources. But have you considered the extra barrier in the way of half the population?

We think it's important that everyone have the same opportunity to attend work and school. That's why your support is also helping address what's been called "period poverty."

In places where women and girls face chronic poverty, or have been displaced like many in Myanmar, they often lack access to menstrual

health supplies. And without those supplies, they face significant extra barriers to work and school, which has long-term consequences for their income and well-being.

Thanks to your support, women and girls are receiving critical supplies for menstrual health management, reducing an inequitable barrier and giving them the chance to pursue their education and careers.

Thanks for partnering with these young leaders!

Cover image: Twenty-one-year-old Daw Shwe Yadanar Lay is a Facilitator at the Women and Girls' Centre in Basare Camp, where members receive monthly supplies of menstrual kits. One of her responsibilities is to provide the members of the centre with information on health issues. (Photo: CLWR/Ahkhee Chel)





Our ACT Alliance partner in Pakistan, Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) distributed hygiene kits, jerry cans, mosquito nets, and shelter kits to those affected by the floods. (Photo: RDF)

## Pakistan | Emergency response to historic floods

The news cycle in 2022 went at breakneck speed and felt like one thing after another. For many, it may have been easy to miss the severity of some of the crises occurring in the world.

We're immensely grateful though that CLWR's community of supporters responded so quickly and generously to our emergency appeal for those affected by flooding in Pakistan.

The flooding was a historic disaster and changed the lives of millions of people in Pakistan forever. But with your support and thanks to our partners in the region, so many families have received emergency items to help them withstand the crisis and begin to rebuild.

Your support is helping reach 22,875 people with support including:

- Hygiene supplies including menstrual health supplies
- Debris clean-up
- Mosquito nets
- Latrines
- Safe water from tanks, and rehabilitation of water sources
- Shelter materials

Thank you for your compassion and your generosity in response to this tragedy!

## Ukraine | Evolving response for refugees

As the one-year anniversary of war in Ukraine approaches, your support means our partners are continuing to respond, and adapting as the needs of affected families evolve.

In Poland, our partner Lutheran World Federation initially focused on getting cash to Ukrainian families who had arrived there, supporting their needs for food and shelter. Now, LWF's response is expanding into helping families integrate in their host communities and deal with the trauma they've experienced.

Forty-eight staff members from Lutheran World Federation—many of them refugees from Ukraine themselves—recently gathered for a special workshop on psychosocial support, making sure the staff are equipped to work with people who have faced extraordinary trauma due to the war.

Your support in Ukraine is helping to meet urgent needs and giving families the compassion and kindness they need to recover and rebuild from this crisis. Thank you!

Lutheran World Federation staff from assistance centres across Poland, established to support incoming refugees to Poland from Ukraine, gather in Bytom, Poland for a full-week training in community-based psychosocial support. (Photo: LWF/Albin Hillert)



# Canadian Lutheran World Relief

## 2022 Program Highlights



### CANADA

Partnering with churches to give refugees a new start in Canada.

### UKRAINE

Emergency response for communities affected by the Ukraine Conflict.

### HAITI

Responding to the devastating earthquake of August 2021.

### SOUTH SUDAN

Food assistance to the most vulnerable households affected by humanitarian situation in Jonglei State.

### VENEZUELA

Providing emergency food support. Supporting vulnerable women and children to access critical medical support by increasing capacity of a clinic.

### CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Food assistance to conflict affected families in Bozoum.

### EL SALVADOR

Improving resilience of small-scale farmers through climate insurance indexed to satellite weather data.

### NICARAGUA

Providing tutoring and meals to vulnerable children in rural areas to increase success in school.

### UGANDA

Supporting refugees and members of the communities hosting them. Responding to emergency needs by providing basic necessities, clean water and improved hygiene services. Vocational training for young people.

### BURUNDI

Providing emergency food assistance to vulnerable displaced people and helping communities build longer-term food security.



### WEST BANK & EAST JERUSALEM

Providing technical and vocational education and training to women and girls, including women with disabilities. Providing urgently needed medical care through Augusta Victoria Hospital.

### PAKISTAN

Providing emergency supplies including clean water, food, shelter and healthcare to those affected by the floods in 2022.

### INDIA

Responding to the devastating effects of the second wave of COVID-19.

### NEPAL

Helping churches prepare for and effectively respond to emergencies.

### ETHIOPIA

Improving food security for small-scale farmers through agricultural training, support, and infrastructure. Providing basic necessities and clean water to displaced families.

### MYANMAR

Supporting displaced people by responding to basic needs and improving living conditions. Providing literacy, skills and leadership training to women and girls.

**You** are making a difference in the lives of thousands of people around the world! **Thank you!**

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**Your support in 2022 was critically valuable.**

**Your gifts are:**

- Providing emergency food and shelter for people displaced by conflict or disaster
  - Connecting communities with sustainable sources of clean water
  - Improving food security and building resilience to climate change
  - Helping refugees resettle and find new homes in Canada
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We take good care of your generosity.  
**Thank you for your trust!**





If Palestinian families in Jerusalem lose their homes, they lose their permanent residency cards, their health insurance and their right to live in Jerusalem, where they've lived their whole lives. (Photo: LWF Jerusalem)

## East Jerusalem | Access to affordable housing for families

Thanks to our community's support for our recent Advent appeal, families in Jerusalem have access to affordable housing they wouldn't have otherwise.

For families like Omar's in the Beit Hanina neighbourhood, the skyrocketing costs of living have increased worries about food, school fees and rent.

A lack of affordable housing is driving people from the city and from their homes. Families have been pushed dangerously close to becoming evicted and homeless. Affordable housing units of various sizes is crucial for these families in need.

Our partners at Lutheran World Federation put together a creative plan to build affordable housing in the neighbourhood and will soon be able to move towards the next stages of this crucial project, thanks to the compassion of Lutherans and friends across Canada.

Thank you for your support of this project—it will make a difference, providing affordable housing for families in need in East Jerusalem!

## Venezuela | Emergency food support for communities

We loved hearing the story of Yelitze Betancourt, a 67-year-old who teaches children with learning disabilities in the community of San Francisco in the city of Cumaná, Sucre State, Venezuela.

Times have been hard in the community and in much of Venezuela, and Yelitze was a recipient of food assistance herself through our recent food distribution with Lutheran World Federation Venezuela.

After getting to know the organization, Yelitze volunteered to start spending her time when she isn't teaching to work with LWF on the project. She's in charge of delivering materials that go along with food deliveries and answering questions families might have.

Yelitze tells us she has really enjoyed being part of the food distributions and getting to know her community in a new way, and the chance to guide families who need support.

Thank you for your generosity toward Yelitze and her community!

Through a new partnership with LWF Venezuela, we are providing emergency food support for people like Yelitze, who also delivers information to her community on nutrition and healthy eating habits. (Photo: CLWR/Rosali Hernandez)







Aline also joined a Savings and Loan Association with other members of her community, started saving money, and purchased more animals through access to credit. (Photo: CLWR/Arnaud Mugisha)

## Burundi | Supporting families to grow their own food

In Burundi, your support is helping families go from needing emergency help to building their own futures.

As a young single mom, Bucumi Aline struggled to provide for her family in a region recovering from conflict. When LWF Burundi's new project started in the region in 2021, she was one of the first to sign up, and began receiving emergency food rations to feed her family. That support helped her family hold off hunger, and since then she's done so much more. Aline received support to begin growing her own food, develop income and eventually purchase livestock, which she's using to further develop her farm. She joined a class to improve her farming and learn modern agricultural techniques!

Aline says her life has improved greatly and keeps getting better with the new skills she's acquired. Her family is happy and healthy, and she gets excited to talk about her future plans for developing the farm.

We're inspired by Aline's determination and drive, but none of this would have happened without the support she received through your partnership. Thank you!

## Refugee Resettlement | Ensuring a brighter future

The conflict in South Sudan forced Yubis and Ruda to flee with daughters Viola and Yola, leaving behind everything for an uncertain future. The family recently arrived in Canada and were greeted at the airport by their sponsors.

Their family is part of the over 180 refugees that we were able to welcome to Canada in 2022, thanks to the support of Lutheran churches and community groups across the country.

Last year's arrivals included those forced to flee from Afghanistan, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Iraq, Myanmar, Somalia, South Sudan and Syria.

CLWR has sponsored 75 Afghan refugees under the Canadian government's special immigration measures and humanitarian program (Operation Afghan Safety) to protect some of the most vulnerable groups outside of Afghanistan.

In August 2022, we also welcomed the first family from Latin America through a special new partnership with the UNHCR.

For Yubis, Ruda, Viola and Yola, joy is finally reaching the safety of their new home where they can begin to rebuild their lives and look forward to a brighter future. (Photo: Nest Saskatoon)



## Refugee Sponsorship | John Makey's story

After he retired in 2014, John Makey told God he was open to whatever God wanted him to do. So, as he tells it, God unexpectedly brought some refugees into his life. Makey, 73, had been serving as pastor at St. Peter's Lutheran Church congregation in Port Colborne, Ont. After he retired from the church, he made himself available for pulpit supply, and for three years, served as vacancy pastor at Christ Lutheran Church in St. Catharines. In between preaching and filling in at Christ Lutheran, Makey decided he wanted to get to know people in other countries—to learn more about their lives and how they viewed the world.

And so it was, one day in 2020, he came in to contact with Kareem. As it turned out, Kareem was a refugee from Iraq, stuck in Greece with his wife and two young sons. "We communicated for a few months," Makey said. "I learned he could be sent back to Iraq, where his life would be in danger." Concerned for his new friend, Makey approached the Council at Christ Lutheran. "I asked if they would be open to sponsoring Kareem and his family," he said. "They said yes."

The next step was to approach CLWR, to get their assistance in sponsoring the family to come to Canada, and to set up a Refugee Committee at the church comprised of people to organize the sponsorship and help the refugees settle into the community. Unfortunately, the pandemic slowed everything down; Kareem and his family are still in Greece—something Makey finds to be "frustrating." While waiting, Makey decided to keep busy helping other refugees. During a visit to Greece to see Kareem last fall, he met another refugee family—this time, from Tunisia. Moved by their story, he decided to also help them come to Canada.

Since Christ Lutheran was already sponsoring Kareem and his family, Makey approached two other churches: Clarington Lutheran in Bowmanville and Peace Lutheran in Tillsonburg, both places where he had contacts. They agreed to work together to help. "Peace is doing the application and settling the family when they arrive, and Clarington is helping with the funding," he said, adding, "This is a great model for other churches that don't think they can sponsor refugees on their own." Along with the Tunisian family, Makey has another refugee family on his radar. "I'm looking for a church to sponsor them," he said.

Looking back, Makey is a bit surprised by how his life has been changed. "I wasn't planning on sponsoring refugees, but I feel the Lord put all these people in my life for a purpose," he said. "The more I learn about them, the more it pulls at my heart to want to reach out and help refugees." At the same time, helping other has given him a meaningful retirement project. "I may be retired, but God has given me a new chapter in my life. It wasn't something I was anticipating, but I'm glad I made myself open to whatever it was God wanted me to do." His message to others who may be wondering what they can do with their lives—retired or not—is to pray. That, and contact CLWR to see if there are any refugees they can help. "So many people need sponsors," he said. "It's an exciting and interesting process, a 'wow' experience, something beyond description when you can help someone like this."

"I feel like I'm going to cry," Makey said. "But they are good tears, not bad tears. God wants us to help others. There are so many people who need us to reach out. If we do that, we not only enrich their lives, they enrich our lives, too."



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