

world relief 

CHANGEMAKERS

VOL. 18





OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Yousif and his family in Southern California. For security, their faces are not shown.

Yousif's journey to escape Afghanistan was nothing short of miraculous. He and his family were forced to flee following the Taliban's return to power in 2021. As a Christian and a former employee of the Afghan government, it wasn't safe for them to remain in Afghanistan any longer.

Yousif, his wife and their infant son hid in their home for two days before they decided to run. The Taliban already controlled the roads to the airport, so the family traveled by bus to Pakistan, where they caught a flight to Brazil. Soon, they began to feel unsafe as immigrants in Brazil and decided to move again.

They traveled by foot, boat and bus through South America, navigating the dangerous jungles of Panama before finally making it to the U.S. southern border to seek asylum. Today, World Relief's Immigration Legal Services team in Southern California is helping Yousif and his family as they navigate the complex asylum process.

THE BIG PICTURE

Today, hundreds of millions of people like Yousif have been driven from their homes as a result of three interconnected realities:

1. Violent conflict
2. Climate change
3. Extreme poverty

These three forces are fueling an unprecedented migration crisis the likes of which our world has never seen. More people than ever in recorded history have been forced to flee for their lives and seek refuge in a community not their own. Tragically, more than 40% of these people are children.

For us, this crisis is more than just facts on paper. It's personal because it's people. It's people like Yousif, his wife and his son. It's people like

Dasha and her family who were displaced in Ukraine. It's Mwambi and Bashale who left their home in DR Congo and were resettled in the U.S. It's the millions of people in Sudan, including more than 80% of our staff, who were displaced last year by the most recent conflict.

Your partnership with World Relief has connected you with each of these people and with tens of thousands of others who are experiencing displacement right now in places like Chad, Sudan, Haiti and Ukraine.

GROUNDING IN HISTORY

If you're like us, you find this harsh reality unsettling. It's a far cry from the redeemed world we know God made us for.

As we celebrate our 80th anniversary this year, we are acutely aware of the immense suffering we see worldwide, and we believe God is calling World Relief to lean forward and face this crisis head-on. That's why we're stepping into the future with a renewed sense of calling and commitment.

At World Relief, our mission is to boldly engage the world's greatest crises in partnership with the church.

Time and time again, we've witnessed the transformative impact the church can have when it moves together, speaking out against injustices and mobilizing its people and communities to create lasting change.

Eighty years ago, in 1944, World Relief was founded by one church's response to the major displacement crisis in Europe following World War II. **We've been engaging in crises since our very beginnings, and today, we believe we are uniquely positioned for such a time as this** — to lead in engaging with and equipping local churches to respond to global crises with holistic, transformative solutions.

We envision a world of thriving, welcoming communities where families like Yousif's flourish and people experience restorative relationships with God, their neighbors, themselves and all of creation. We see a world where partners like you join hands with churches across the globe to step into this calling with World Relief, as a powerful and united body of believers committed to restoring stability, creating pathways to flourishing and inspiring action on behalf of those suffering.

THE OPPORTUNITY WE SEE

Our faith drives us with a fierce determination towards this vision. And with this in mind, we're refocusing our programs worldwide to center on:

- Building communities of resilience
- Supporting communities on the move
- Creating communities of welcome

This refocusing is not a departure from the work on which you've partnered with us in the past. Rather, it's a strengthening of that work by more clearly naming what God has called us to do.

Together, we'll build communities of resilience by engaging in immediate humanitarian response to some of the most pressing drivers of mass displacement, including conflict, climate change and extreme poverty, while working to restore stability and create resiliency.

We'll also provide ongoing support along the journey for those impacted by displacement, helping to restore livelihoods and forge pathways to flourishing.

And finally, we'll continue creating welcoming communities and advocating for public policies that lead to a sense of belonging and restoration for all those forced to flee their homes.

THE CALLING WE PURSUE

In Isaiah 65, God tells us that the sound of weeping and crying will be no more, lives will not be cut short, people will build houses and dwell in them, plant fields and enjoy the harvest.

In the face of the growing displacement crisis, never has the need for effective, sustainable solutions been more apparent, nor has our distinct approach to creating lasting change through **church and community partnerships, holistic approaches** and **interconnected solutions** been more relevant.

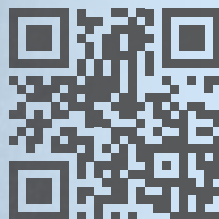
For 80 years, we have witnessed the undeniable, God-ordained power of the church to restore lives. Moving forward, we continue to lift up the church in its response to crises, calling on her to lean into her God-given design as an instrument of peace and lasting change.

So today, we commit to praying and planning for a better future for all who will come after us. One marked not by the constant increase of suffering, but by love, justice and peace. One in which those experiencing suffering are restored through the transforming power of Christ — in thriving families, strengthened churches and flourishing communities.

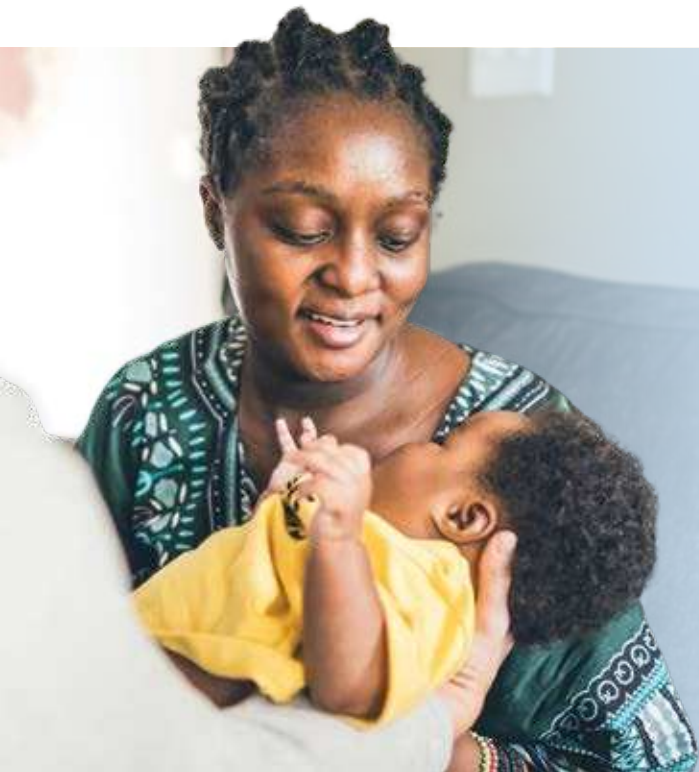
Thank you for partnering with us yesterday, today and for years to come. ♦

YOUR LEGACY OF LASTING CHANGE

Do you want your charitable giving to become a legacy that benefits future generations? Through careful planning, you can leverage your non-cash assets and make your gift's impact go further. We are committed to equipping you with the resources and tools you need to make a lasting influence.



Scan the QR code or visit worldrelief.org/planned-giving to learn more.



EMPOWERING CHANGE:

HOW BIBLICAL ADVOCACY SHAPES OUR RESPONSE TO GLOBAL CRISES

BY MATTHEW SOERENS, VP OF ADVOCACY

For eighty years, World Relief staff and our vast, global network of church-based volunteers have come alongside those facing crises of disease, hunger, poverty and displacement, directly meeting physical and spiritual needs.

But sometimes our on-the-ground response exposes underlying structural problems. When we encounter these systemic barriers that harm those we are called to serve, we engage the world's greatest crises through advocacy, leveraging our voice and our influence to encourage and persuade those in positions of governmental authority to pursue just and compassionate policies.

A BIBLICAL CONVICTION

Jesus taught his disciples that part of the greatest commandment is to love our neighbors as ourselves. He provided the example of a "Good Samaritan" who sacrificially met the physical needs of a vulnerable traveler who had been the victim of injustice (Luke 10:21-37).

Loving our neighbor means stepping out of our comfort zone and asking hard questions about

why unjust conditions persist and stewarding the influence that God has entrusted to each of us to change them.

We have compelling biblical models for such advocacy before governmental authorities. Moses reluctantly followed God's call back to Egypt. Esther fasted, then courageously went before King Xerxes to plead for her people. And John the Baptist challenged King Herod — and paid for his advocacy with his life.

God does not promise that every advocacy effort will be successful or without cost — but he does promise to be with us and advocate for us too (Matthew 10:18-19, John 14:26, 1 John 2:1).

OUR HISTORY

Advocacy has been one way that World Relief has partnered with the church to engage the world's greatest crises throughout our 80-year history. In the 1960s, our leaders urged the Soviet government to grant safe passage to Soviet Christians seeking refuge in the U.S. In the early 1970s, we advocated for humanitarian aid into West Africa to prevent a genocide. In 1979, Grady

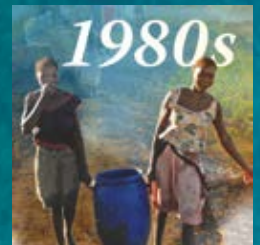
80 YEARS OF WORLD RELIEF



World Relief was founded as the War Relief Commission during **WWII**.



Partnering with Pres. Kennedy's **Food for Peace**, we fed some of the world's poorest communities.



After the **Vietnam War**, we formed a resettlement program and welcomed refugees to the U.S.



We established 140 feeding centers and distributed 31,000 meals a day after the **Korean War**.



Mangham, who with his wife Evelyn, founded World Relief's U.S. ministries, joined Mother Teresa and other religious leaders to urge President Carter and the U.S. Congress to expand refugee resettlement — which they did, in dramatic fashion, with the signing of the Refugee Act.

Throughout the 1980s, World Relief advocated for Central Americans fleeing civil war to be allowed to seek safety in the U.S. And the executive director at the time, Jerry Ballard, traveled to Cuba to lobby Fidel Castro to release political prisoners.

In the 1990s, World Relief president Arthur Gay joined other evangelical leaders in signing “An Evangelical Declaration on the Care of Creation” recognizing the impact of environmental degradation. A few years later, new World Relief president Clive Calver began raising the alarm of the HIV/AIDS crisis in sub-Saharan Africa. Within a few years, President George W. Bush would sign the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief after advocacy from World Relief and other Christian organizations.

Our efforts have continued in the past few decades as World Relief has advocated for immigration reforms, noted by President Barack Obama in his 2010 National Prayer

Breakfast address. In 2012, we helped convene the Evangelical Immigration Table, coalescing broad evangelical support around the need for immigration reforms.

We also advocate through prayer. Scripture tells us to pray “for kings and all those in authority” (1 Tim. 2:2), and we take that charge seriously.

World Relief's efforts have never been partisan: we never endorse or support particular candidates, but we do want to be stewards of our influence to implore Republicans and Democrats alike to pursue public policies that serve the common good, that protect the lives and dignity of those fleeing persecution and that

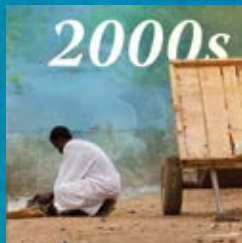
ensure the ability of churches and Christian ministries to live out their faith.

ADVOCACY THROUGH PRAYER

While we believe that speaking before governments is an essential way that we love our neighbors and engage the world's greatest crises, we also advocate through prayer. Scripture tells us to pray “for kings and all those in authority” (1 Timothy 2:2), and we take that charge seriously.

As we enter into a contentious campaign season in the United States, we invite you to **join us both in advocating with governmental leaders and in praying for God to grant wisdom to all those in government leadership.** ♦

We provided essential relief to 10,000 people affected by war in **Mozambique**.



We provided support to 35,000 people uprooted by war in **Darfur, Sudan**.



During the **COVID-19** pandemic, we equipped communities with health and vaccine information.



We responded to the AIDS crisis in **Rwanda** and after the genocide against the Tutsis.



We welcomed **Syrian and Iraqi refugees** to the U.S. and provided trauma-healing support.

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world relief

TRANSFORMING FAMILIES THROUGH COMMUNITY DIALOGUES

Do you believe God can truly transform a person's heart? Odette certainly does! She's seen it happen in her own family.

A 36-year-old mother of four in Burundi, Odette suffered at the hands of her husband, Ernest, for years. "My husband beat me almost every day," she shared. He forbade her from socializing with neighbors and wreaked havoc on their home, knocking over food she had prepared, killing pigs they were raising as a source of income, damaging their house and selling rice they had harvested to buy drugs and beer.

Despite interventions by family and local community members, Ernest refused to change his behavior and be reconciled with his wife. Many times, Odette and her children were forced to seek refuge at her parents' home or even spend nights outside. Their situation seemed hopeless — like relief for their suffering might never come.

But God was already at work in their community.

In partnership with World Relief, churches in their local area had begun hosting Transforming Masculinity (TM) community dialogues. Led by trained "Gender Champion" volunteers, TM dialogues generate thoughtful conversations that promote positive relationships between husbands and wives, shared household decision making, and the inherent value and dignity of women and men.

TM dialogues are intentionally designed to have a multiplying impact. World Relief staff start by orienting church leaders and their wives to TM, creating essential buy-in. Church leaders then identify two volunteers, a man and a woman, from within each congregation who can be trained as Gender Champions.

These Gender Champions then lead dialogues with eight to 10 community members. Dialogue cohorts last for six weeks, after which the Gender Champions invite a new cohort of participants.

"By the grace of God," Odette said, "[Ernest] agreed to participate." His ears and heart were opened through the lessons and testimonials shared in the dialogues. He came to recognize the

harm he was causing in his family and asked for forgiveness.

Today, the proof of Ernest's changed heart is on display in his and Odette's home. "When we are at home, it's joy," said Odette. Ernest now cares for his children and his wife, peacefully sharing meals and life together.

"I praise the Eternal God who brought the [dialogue] program to our locality," Odette said. "My most ardent desire is to see the program expand on all the hills of Burundi. There are many women who live the same life that I have lived for so many years."

At World Relief, we share Odette's dream to see broken relationships between wives, husbands and children restored so more families can thrive!

Since 2022, 152 church leaders and their wives have been oriented to TM, 76 Gender Champions have been trained and approximately 2,615 community members, including Ernest and Odette, have been reached through community dialogues in Burundi.

Your generosity makes this kind of transformative impact possible through local churches in communities around the world. Thank you! ♦



CHANGEMAKERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

JULY 2023 - JUNE 2024*

1,192 ACTIVE CHANGEMAKERS

3,602 GIFTS

OVER \$1.8 MILLION TO TRANSFORM LIVES

\$128,193

TO WORK IN THE UNITED STATES WITH REFUGEES, ASYLUM SEEKERS AND OTHER IMMIGRANTS, AND WITH THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN DISPLACED FROM THEIR HOMES OR FORCED INTO REFUGEE LIFE.

These gifts reach women, men and children in displaced persons and refugee camps around the world and when they arrive in the United States. They provide comfort and essential needs, restore faith, reunite families, build welcoming communities and provide vital services for brighter futures.

\$203,561

TO SPECIAL EFFORTS AND SPECIFIC COUNTRIES.

These gifts reach people and programs in other countries in efforts to end human trafficking, promote economic security, improve child nutrition, and support victims of the Haiti crisis and Morocco earthquake, and the response in Israel, Gaza, Sudan and Ukraine.

\$1,524,608

TO OUR STAND WITH THE VULNERABLE FUND (WHERE NEEDED MOST).

These gifts reach people in their most vulnerable moments where and when they need it most. In times of unforeseen emergency or crisis, these gifts allow World Relief to respond without a moment's hesitation.

QUESTIONS?

We want you to know exactly what your gifts are doing. If you have any questions or wish to make a new gift, please connect with Jill Eggemeyer, Changemakers Team Lead.

C: 618.401.8121 | jeggemeyer@wr.org

**Values reflected are indicative of gifts documented by June 26, 2024. Additional gifts are in process and final audited financials may vary.*

CELEBRATE 80 YEARS

For 80 years, World Relief has existed as a movement of the church. Born out of a heartfelt response to the displacement crisis in war-torn Europe after World War II, we've spent the last eight decades convening the global church, in all its expressions, to respond to the world's greatest humanitarian crises and to create change, on earth as it is in heaven. And we don't plan on stopping any time soon.

Celebrate this momentous birthday with us by visiting our 80th microsite. We couldn't have done this without you!



DEAR CHANGEMAKERS AND CO-WORKERS,

One of the many blessings God has given me is being a mother to our three children. I am so thankful for loving and providing opportunities for them every day, even during trying times. As a parent, I'm pained to see the rising number of families forced to flee their homes as a result of violence, persecution, climate change and extreme poverty. My heart has been transformed by the perseverance and bravery of these parents and children, all while navigating new languages, different cultures and unknown communities.

Together with Changemakers like you, I envision a different future for these families. **I want these parents and children to experience joy and communities that are safe and welcoming for all.** In this newsletter, you will read more about the current crisis and the vision that motivates us to continue this important work.

At World Relief, we believe God has a plan to restore our broken world, and crucial to that plan is his church — you and others in this Changemaker community — leading the way.

I am so grateful to be doing this transformational work with you. Thank you for making a difference with change that lasts!

Together,



JILL EGGEMEYER
CHANGEMAKERS TEAM LEAD

PRAYER REQUESTS

- **Pray for our teams in Sudan, DR Congo, Haiti and Ukraine** as they work in conflict zones. And pray for all the men, women and children affected.
- **Pray for those affected by flooding** in East Africa.
- **Pray for our Church and Community Engagement Teams and our Advocacy Team** as they engage with church and political leaders during an election season.
- **Pray for all those arriving at the U.S. southern border** and pray that our leaders would work together to create more just and effective policies.