

Classis Quinte Report – winter, 2020

Submitted by Peter Bulthuis, Canadian Director of Church and Community Engagement

Thank you, brothers and sisters in Classis Quinte for your churches' support of the work of World Renew. Without your prayers, and your donations of time, talents and treasure, there would be many communities around the world that would have less, and feel less than now. You have walked alongside folks to listen, encourage and embolden.

Let me illustrate something of the impact you have made:

World Renew ministered to a total of 918,663 participants worldwide who experienced powerful change in their lives in 2019.

- 241,154 participants changed their story through World Renew's community development programs.
- World Renew helped 677,509 participants recover from an international disaster.
- With your support, World Renew helped 206 refugees resettle in Canada.
- 258 churches in the U.S. and Canada were involved in justice activities with World Renew.
- 511 global volunteers served others in North America and around the world.
- 1,330 communities worldwide joined World Renew through a local church or outreach ministry
- World Renew placed 12 international relief managers in Bangladesh, Honduras, Malawi, Madagascar, or Niger.
- 256 North American congregations were engaged in partnerships with churches internationally.
- 1,900 Free A Family® donors gave US \$719,683, helping to free 2,221 families from poverty.
- Last year, DRS placed 2,784 volunteers from 36 denominations on disaster sites, and repaired or rebuilt 290 damaged homes, giving 243,196 hours of their time to serve others.

A. General Updates:

There are quite a few general updates that are important here:

In order for World Renew to continue to its work well, efficiently and effectively in a continually changing environment (both in North America and around the world), there have been ongoing transition in the Burlington and the Grand Rapids offices.

- The website is undergoing changes, one of which is that there is a Canadian and an American iteration.
- We are re-imagining our interactions with the churches to ensure the best possible connections, the best possible responses and the best engagement, supporting both churches, participants and World Renew.
- The same with interactions with donors; striving for responsive engagement.
- in order to support these changes in the way we do things, several staff positions have been added to both the US and Canadian World Renew offices.
- Diaconal Ministries Canada, and World Renew Canada are continuing to work together better, sharing resources, plans and passion so that the churches are better served.

B. Upcoming Offering Dates

The CRC in North America continues to have the tradition of designating certain Sundays throughout the year for specific offerings, for specific agencies of the CRCNA (among other organizations). World Renew receives no member shares; all the funds used to support participants across the world, are received from donors, like your churches. That being the case, let me recommend these specific offering dates to you congregations:

1. **March 8: Canadian Foodgrains Bank:** Funds are used to give food security to 10s of 1000s of people annually.
2. **March 29: Refugee Resettlement:** The World Renew program housed in the CDN office, supports churches and community groups sponsoring refugees fleeing from ravaged regions of the world.
3. **May 10: Maternal, Newborn and Child Health:** World Renew works with families to support pregnant mothers, and the first 1000 days of a child's life.

C. Community Development: Stories of Transformation

Dennis DeGroot, a World Renew board member from British Columbia, writes an amazing story about his experience of being part of a regular partnership review in Uganda. Here are a few excerpts:

Agnes Atim and her husband Moses Ogwang know what Micah 4:4 is all about in a very practical way. For, “Everyone will sit under their own vine and under their own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid...” In fact if they had 700 children rather than the ten they do have, each would be able to sit under his or her own orange tree and enjoy the fruit of their labors. This family has worked hard to achieve the kind of shalom that Micah was talking about. They have turned their 12 acre farm into a little piece of paradise and they no longer live in the fear that comes with poverty. Everywhere you look, something is blooming, growing, ripening, drying, and giving this family the security they longed for. With the help of World Renew training in Conservation Agriculture and a Village Savings and Loan program, life looks very different today. But the training not only impacted their food security it impacted their relationship.

This was a truly beautiful experience; to hear these men and women speak with confidence about how saving money was not part of their previous experience and they always felt vulnerable to the challenges of everyday life, money for school fees, medications or seeds for next year’s crops was always a challenge. The savings and loan program changed all of that. They were themselves amazed at how the funds grew to levels previously unimagined; a loaves and fishes miracle of sorts.

Wives and husbands spoke shyly, but honestly about how prior to training there was often discord in the family whereas now decisions about money were made together. We were proudly shown a photo of a previous WR intervention of goats. A number of families received goats which also, ‘miraculously’ multiplied into herds of goats, providing protein and milk. There was so much pride and a feeling of empowerment for their own lives that emanated from the happy group, a sense of hope for the future.



We then drove to various family compounds to get closer to what we had heard about. Agnes and Moses’ family compound exudes peace. Though homes are simple, the entire acreage was a bounty of fruits and vegetables: bananas, guavas, and 700 orange trees. Cassava, amaranth, Irish potatoes, and ground nuts. The family now exports their orange crop into Kenya; not just a farm but a business. Moses said that he could never have imagined a million

shillings. That is now a reality for the family who work the land together when the children are home from school.

The day was coming to an end but we could well imagine what it might be like at this family farm to sit in the shade of an orange tree as the sun set, to sit in peace and unafraid, husband and wife together, talking about the day’s work, what needed doing tomorrow, about their children’s schooling and the good prices for oranges.



D. Disaster Response

Update International:

We want you to see the global impact of the work God accomplishes through World Renew:

Since July, 2019, we have been led to work in 19 countries impacting 290,000 people. God has resourced World Renew to give \$1.13M USD to projects funded through the US, and \$2.45M CDN to projects funded through Canada, partnering with over 29 implementing partners. And that’s just from July, 2019 through the end of the calendar year. The disasters are: storms, drought, earthquakes, floods, and conflicts.

Update Domestic: Canada and US:

A simple, quick statistic: World Renew’s Disaster Response Service (DRS) is responding by house-building, needs assessment and personal support in areas where **eight different disasters** impacted communities across North America.

E. Refugee Settlement Activities:

These statistics are for Jan. 1, 2019 – Dec. 5, 2019, and *they're awesome!* World Renew is a SAH (*Sponsorship Agreement Holder*) and was given a total of 209 "Private sponsorship of Refugees" spaces this year, the most ever. This is a listing of the applications submitted:

PSR (Private Sponsorship of Refugees) Cases

- CRCs** = 31 CRCs have submitted 55 applications representing 133 refugees
- Beyond CRCs** = 15 BCRC's submitted 24 applications representing 60 refugees
- Community Sponsors (CS)** = 4 CS's submitted 15 applications representing 16 refugees

BVOR (Blended Visa Office Referred) Cases

- CRCs** = 4 CRCs submitted 8 applications representing 16 persons refugees

In-Canada JAS (Joint Assistance Sponsorship) Case

- CRCs** = 3 CRCs partnered together to submit 1 application for 1 refugee

Arrivals Statistics

- 34 CRCs have welcomed 147 refugees.
- Beyond CRCs & Community Sponsors have welcomed 77 refugees.

Total = 224 refugees welcomed, from 13 countries.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow! And thank you to the churches across Canada for *welcoming the stranger*.

F. What else can the people and the churches of Classis Quinte do?

May I suggest one, most powerful bridge: prayer. Pray for:

- trauma healing in Nigeria,
- families in Uganda,
- appropriate disaster responses in North America,
- wisdom and thoughtfulness in gender relations.

Do poke around the website; and then share the website with one person who doesn't know about World Renew. She/he will be grateful you did!

Blessings,



Peter Bulthuis, Director, Church and Community Engagement Canada