



Canadian Lutheran  
World Relief

# Partnership

Your generosity in action  
Winter 2026



*Hare, left, and Palmata are members of a farmers group supported by CLWR's project around Lake Chad. LWF photo/Marie Renaux*

**Thank you – your support is turning survival into stability!**





**Dear friends,**

It's my privilege to write to you and share updates and stories from our work around the world, because these are stories you have helped

write. We're so grateful for your generosity and the chance to tell you more about how your kindness is changing lives.

Through the escalating conflicts and continued challenges around the world, your partnership has meant real faith and real hope. You've helped change lives forever, like Akoi Riak Akech's, a South Sudanese father of six who is featured later in this newsletter.

As 2026 begins, I'm thrilled to see that our churches and donors across Canada are partnering with us to restore more than

2,500 acres of land around Lake Chad. That's 2,500 acres of soil being revived, trees being planted, water flowing again and communities rediscovering food security, stability and hope.

We respond to some of the most difficult situations in the world, and it would not be possible without you. Thank you for helping us write these stories.

Blessings,

**Rev. Dr. Michael Pryse,**  
Interim Executive Director, CLWR

**P.S.** We're always ready to tell you more about how your gift is making a difference! Call us any time at 1-800-661-2597.

## A quarter century of changing lives: Gayle's story

"When I was six, we had a visiting missionary from Cameroon. I went to the presentation, came home, and announced I was going to be a missionary in Africa," says Gayle Moore-Morrans (Johannesson).

Nearly 50 years later, Gayle found herself travelling internationally – not in Africa, but in India. In 2000, she joined 17 women on a tour sponsored by CLWR and Evangelical Lutheran Women, which offered a first-hand look at a project which supported marginalized communities through literacy classes, safe water access and livelihood training.

"Just life-changing," is how Gayle describes it. Despite nursing a broken leg, she was determined to go. One moment that stayed with her was seeing a young boy without legs going past on a wheeled platform, waving. Temporarily in a wheelchair herself, Gayle was struck by both the contrast to her situation, and the permanence of his. This moment inspired her to lean into her generosity even further.

For over 25 years, Gayle has continued to turn faith into action, supporting CLWR's work and

remaining dedicated at 82 years old. "I'd love to go on more trips, but now I give. That's the best I can do: keep informed, stay interested and give."

You can read Gayle's full story on our website. Scan this QR code with your mobile phone's camera to read more.



Gayle Moore-Morrans (Johannesson), a steadfast donor.  
CLWR photo/Shaua Turnley

## South Sudan | You're helping a father feed his family



Akoï with his daughter next to their house. LWF photo

Feeding six children is a daily challenge for 60-year-old Akoï Riak Akech in Kongor Payam, South Sudan. He lost his wife two years ago and now cares for his five sons and one daughter.

For years, Akoï relied on farming, but the frequent flooding since 2020 submerged his land, making cultivation impossible. He lost his cows to raiders and now owns only five goats. To survive, he sells firewood and construction poles, often earning just enough for his family to eat once a day.

But support from Lutherans and friends like you across Canada brought relief.

In 2025, monthly cash transfers helped over 11,400 people in Duk and Twic East counties buy food. The project was funded by donors and through CLWR's account at Canadian Foodgrains Bank, and implemented by a team effort alongside Lutheran World Federation.

Over four months, Akoï received approximately C\$300 in emergency assistance. He used it to buy 50kg of sorghum, five litres of oil, beans, fresh fish every other day, and meat once a week. His eldest son now cooks for the family.

"I have no words. We survived because of this support," Akoï said. "I managed to feed my children properly. My food gap is closed for this time."

Thank you for turning survival into stability for Akoï's family and so many others. Read more here.



## You're helping families flee violence and find safety

"We had to flee or end up in a concentration camp," says John Weingartner.

Born in 1936 in Croatia (then a part of the former Yugoslavia), John was just a child when war forced his family to leave everything behind. Alongside his parents and three siblings, he fled to Austria, where they lived in uncertainty for nine long years, waiting and hoping for a chance at safety.

That chance came in 1953, when they were resettled to Canada through a CLWR-supported program. They arrived on the *Beaverbrae*, the ship that carried more than 33,000 displaced people to new lives in Canada between 1948 and 1954.

John's family found a new home, and he went on to become a teacher, raise a family, and celebrate 65 years of marriage. Today, at 89 years old, he and his wife Barbara (who was born in Berlin but also fled with her family to Canada) still live in the same home, surrounded by a lifetime of memories made possible by that one journey.

Thanks to you and your kindness, our refugee resettlement program continues to change lives, just like John's. Last year, 199 refugees from across the world began building new lives here in Canada.

Through your generosity, more people can flee violence and persecution, and find safety, belonging and hope. Thank you.



Members of the Weingartner family that fled in 1953. Photo courtesy of John Weingartner

## Restoring hope, one acre at a time



Elijah, of Peace Lutheran Church. Photo courtesy of his mom, Rachel

Elijah, an 11-year-old member of Peace Lutheran Church in Chatham, Ont. is proving that anyone, no matter their age, can make a difference.

Lake Chad was once one of the largest lakes in the world, but it has shrunk by 90% over the past 60 years. This crisis has affected millions of people who rely on it for water, food and livelihoods. Through CLWR's Friends of Creation Challenge, Elijah is supporting a project that uses nature-based solutions –

giving nature a chance by tipping the balance of the ecosystem back toward sustainability – to heal the land and strengthen communities. These efforts include replanting trees, restoring water sources, supporting women and girls and teaching sustainable farming. Rooted in kindness, it's a project about climate change, food security, water, education, gender roles, migration and life itself.

Elijah took this problem to heart. His goal? To raise \$1,000 to help restore land and life around Lake Chad. And thanks to his dedication, he surpassed it, helping to restore 20 acres of land.

Around the lake's basin, thousands of farmers are now fighting back to stop an entire ecosystem from unraveling – thanks to the help of kind-hearted donors and supporters like Elijah.

**Thank you for caring for one of God's most precious creations.**

Learn more and become a Friend of Creation by scanning this code with your mobile phone's camera.



### **P.S. HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT HOW YOU WILL BE REMEMBERED?**

By leaving a gift to Canadian Lutheran World Relief in your will, you are joining other kind-hearted people who have committed to creating a more just, compassionate and hopeful world. Start the conversation and learn how much of a difference you can make.

Call John Constable, Director of Donor Relations & Philanthropy, at **204-631-0111** or email us at **legacy@clwr.org**.



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