



Canadian Lutheran
World Relief

ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024





Daw Shwe Yadanar Lay, a youth facilitator at a women and girls' centre in Basare camp for the internally displaced in Myanmar, conducting a training session on gender-based violence and health issues. (Photo: CLWR/Ahkhee Chel)



**Canadian Lutheran
World Relief**

OUR VISION

A healthy and sustainable world where people live in peace with hope, justice, dignity and equality.

OUR MISSION

Inspired by God's love for the world, CLWR challenges and responds to the injustice which causes human suffering and poverty.

On the cover: In Burundi, where former refugees are starting new businesses with your support, Niyoyankunze Evelyne helps women get started as entrepreneurs through her work as secretary of her village's savings and lending association. (Photo: CLWR/ Arnaud Mugisha)



GREETINGS

Dear friends,

This past year has been one of great upheaval, marked by unprecedented global conflict and natural disaster.

As our fiscal year started, communities were reeling from the massive earthquakes that hit Türkiye and Syria in February 2023. In the summer, a growing hunger crisis left millions displaced and in urgent need in East Africa. And in October 2023, the world witnessed a dramatic escalation of conflict in the Middle East. As February 2024 came around, we grimly marked two years of the ongoing war in Ukraine.

Against these compounding crises, I am buoyed by the steadfast partnership that Lutherans across Canada have offered people around the world who are suffering. This is why I am honoured to present you this report on Canadian Lutheran World Relief's activities over the 2023-2024 fiscal year, as it is a testament to the hope you have brought to

countless lives. You have responded quickly and generously to every appeal, allowing our partners to save lives and deliver essential care to those who were suffering.

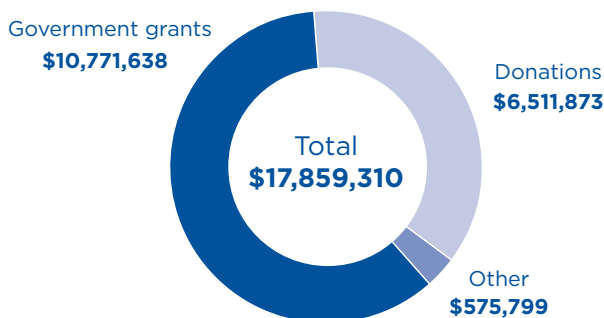
Your partnership has also allowed us to continue our efforts to tackle the root causes of poverty and injustice, securing learning opportunities and means of income so that everyone can build a better future. People like Evelyne (cover), who is going to farm school so she can build her own farm in Burundi.

On behalf of our team, our Board, our partners and the many thousands of people like Evelyne whose lives you've touched, thank you!

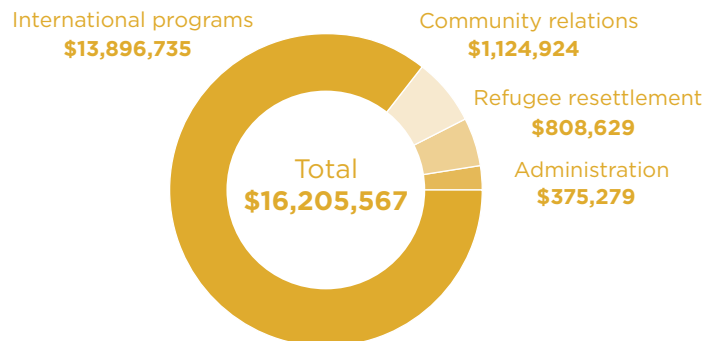
Deepest blessings,

Karin Achtelstetter, Chief Executive Officer

REVENUE

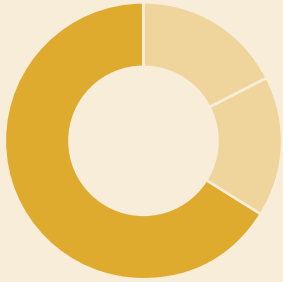


EXPENSES



Complete 2023 audited financial statements are available on CLWR's website at clwr.org.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE



Budget

\$9,219,368

Last year: \$8,074,781



Beneficiaries

328,020

Last year: 210,344



Locations

Armenia, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Ethiopia, Gaza, Haiti, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, Türkiye, Ukraine

Over the last year, millions of people were newly displaced as conflict raged, and the climate has continued changing. The exodus caused by conflict in Sudan put incredible strain on neighbouring countries such as South Sudan, Chad, and Central African Republic. Severe weather continues to plague Ethiopia and Somalia, putting countless lives at risk. Meanwhile, earthquakes in Syria and Türkiye and intense fighting in Gaza brought renewed hardship to vulnerable communities in the Middle East.

Your support has allowed our partners around the world to respond immediately to these growing crises. Through Lutheran World Federation and the ACT Alliance, CLWR has local partners in each of the affected communities who can ensure we're first on the scene, then guide our response to make sure we're responding with exactly what people need. With your partnership, families facing conflict and disaster are receiving shelter, food, clean water and supplies as well as medical care and support for coping with trauma.

Nourasham Haroun recounts the harrowing journey from Sudan to Chad in search of refuge, surrounded by others who made a similar voyage. (Photo: Roger Mornombaye/LWF Chad)



YOUR GIFTS AT WORK

100

latrines were built benefitting 3,000 displaced people in Somalia

4,715

people in Central African Republic received emergency food

2,050

earthquake and flood affected families in Haiti received cash assistance

Fatme's Story

FATME AND HER FAMILY of seven were asleep when the 2023 Türkiye-Syria earthquakes hit their city of Adiyaman in southeastern Türkiye. Her son Gazi, who has autism, woke up minutes before the disaster and was able to drag the family outside. "We watched the second floor of the house crash into the first. It is a miracle that we are all alive," Fatme said.

Those like Fatme's family who were unable to relocate to other parts of the country moved into makeshift shelters, turning Adiyaman into a city of tents.

Fatme's husband Hüseyin had lost all hope for the future, saying, "Adiyaman is over, life is over here, this is the end. We all used to live here, side by side. But many of our relatives died. There's

no point in going on like this." But his wife could not give up for the sake of their children. "We'll stay in the tents for 10 more years if we have to," Fatme said. "It's particularly hard for Gazi, he has difficulty adjusting to new environments."

In the immediate aftermath of the disaster, CLWR partners in the region helped displaced families like Fatme's find shelter and provided them emergency supplies such as food, medicine, winter clothes, heaters, blankets, and hygiene kits. They also delivered medical support and toys, books and other educational supplies for children.

Once the immediate needs were met, our partners began assessing buildings to determine which were safe and which need to be evacuated or repaired. They also began assessing the needs of those such as Hüseyin and Gazi who were in need of longer-term rehabilitation support to deal with trauma.



Fatme and her son Gazi rolling up a section of the canvas tent that housed their family of seven. (Photo: Tamas Keleman/Hungarian Interchurch Aid)

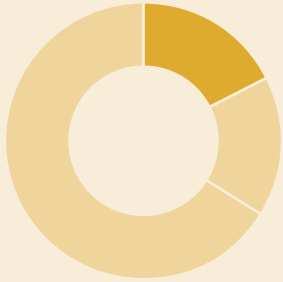
CHANGED LIVES

31,000 Sudanese refugees in Chad have access to improved shelters, hygiene facilities and safe drinking water

1,500 households in South Sudan successfully reduced malnutrition and increased consumption of nutritious food, particularly for women and girls

2,700 earthquake survivors in Syria increased resilience to and ability to cope with stress and trauma, resulting in better overall mental health

FOOD SECURITY & LIVELIHOODS



Budget

\$2,412,868

Last year: \$1,359,860



Beneficiaries

18,540

Last year: 8,380



Locations

Burundi,
Cameroon, Chad,
El Salvador,
Ethiopia, Ukraine

After many years of progress in the fight against hunger, the last few years have seen the development of a global food crisis of unprecedented proportions. Some of those hardest hit are small-scale farmers who feed so much of the world.

With your support and in collaboration with Canadian Foodgrains Bank, we are working to provide families the food they need today plus the skills and supplies to grow their own food—and food for their communities—tomorrow. We're working with small-scale farmers, particularly women, to improve their food production and increase their incomes through the provision of agricultural and marketing training, supplies and financial tools.

Our partners are collaborating with local communities to promote sustainable agricultural and water management practices in order to protect, restore and sustainably manage ecosystems.

We also work to rebuild local economies and help families find new livelihoods after conflict and disaster.

Mariano Humberto Hernandez's corn field is located in the rural area of the Zacatecoluca, El Salvador, which is known to be part of the Dry Corridor in Central America. (Photo: CLWR/Juan Carlos)



YOUR GIFTS AT WORK

1,200

people, mostly women, participated in 40 farmer field schools in Burundi

540

people in Ethiopia trained in rearing poultry as a sustainable livelihood

300

Ukrainian refugees living in neighbouring countries received language training

Birhan's Story

SIXTY-ONE-YEAR-OLD Birhan Desta is a single mother to five children living in Tigray, Ethiopia. The family survived on the income her husband earned through farming, until he was killed during a war and they lost their livelihood. Birhan initially depended on relatives to help provide food for her children. She eventually began making and selling a local beverage in an attempt to become self-reliant. Then conflict broke out in her region yet again. "Everything is upside down with war," Birhan says, "I am just thankful we survived. My children and I had to hide in the mountains for weeks while our homes were targeted by armed groups." When they came back home, they found that everything, including all their food and the raw materials she needed to make the beverage she used to sell, had been looted.



Birhan, decked in her beekeeping suit, sits next to her beehives. (Photo: Daniel Zemcheal/LWF Ethiopia)

Ongoing conflict had affected the availability of basic services in Tigray and even the distribution of emergency food was frequently interrupted. And Birhan wanted to start her life afresh, "I am here to work for myself, not passively wait for someone to provide me food."

So, when CLWR partner Lutheran World Federation Ethiopia began providing support for beekeeping, Birhan jumped at the opportunity. "It was my lifelong interest to work in beekeeping, but I didn't have the facilities or skills before," says Birhan. The prospects for beekeeping as a livelihood were strong in Birhan's area, as nectar and pollen were readily available and the market demand for local white honey was on the rise. Along with other conflict-affected households in her area, Birhan was given training in beekeeping management and colony transfer demonstrations. She also received two packages of beehives to get her started. "Beekeeping doesn't demand much space," Birhan says, "What it needs is continuous supervision, which I received training for. Now I am confident that I have the skills to shape my future."

CHANGED LIVES

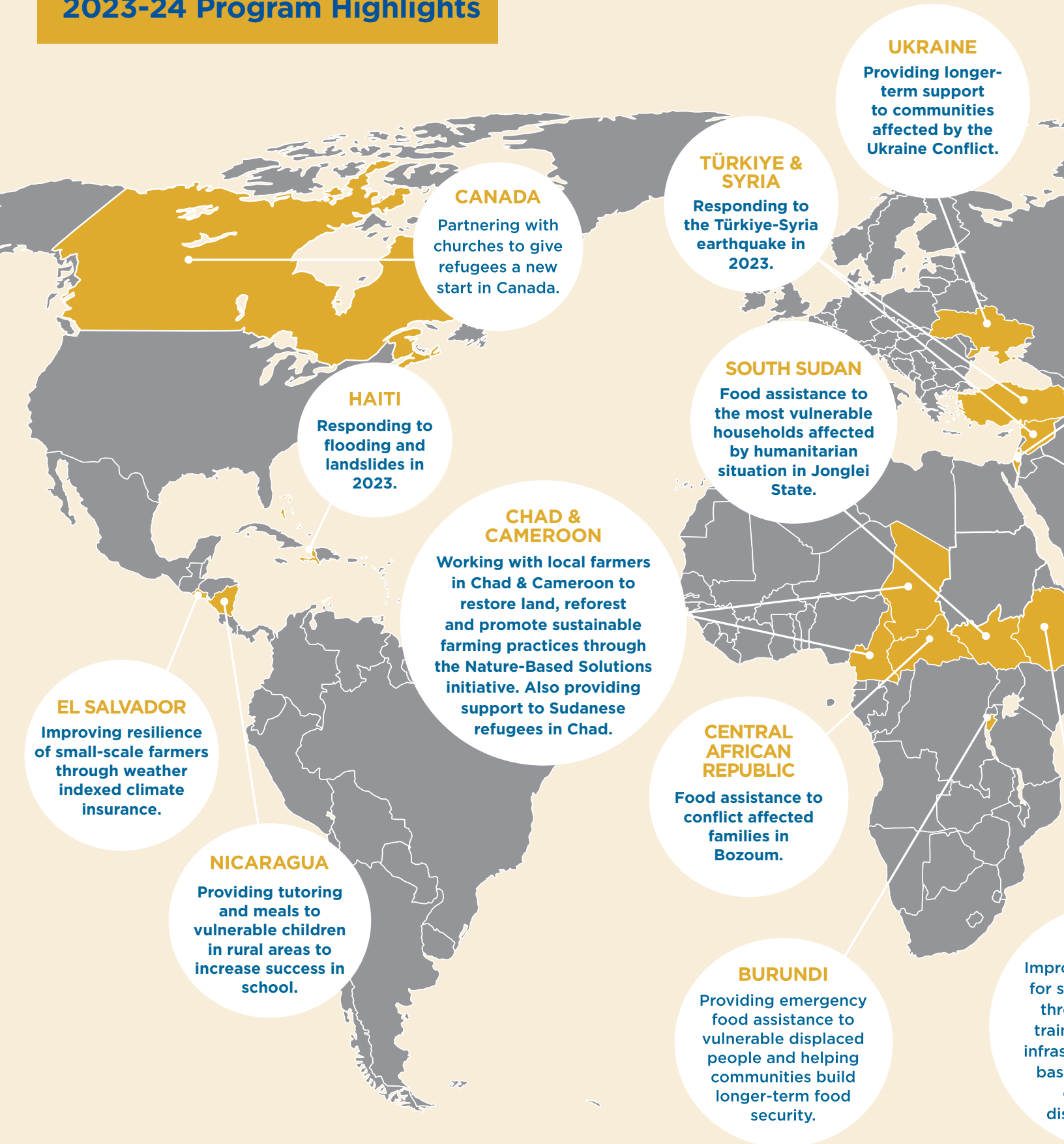
2,844 people in Ethiopia have built sustainable, climate-resilient livelihoods such as beekeeping

1,200 households in Burundi have transitioned from food assistance to producing or purchasing their own food

300 vulnerable small-scale farmers in El Salvador are more resilient to the effects of climate change, such as droughts or floods

CANADIAN LUTHERAN WORLD

2023-24 Program Highlights



RELIEF

ARMENIA

Providing emergency food, hygiene and cash support to Armenians displaced by conflict.

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 ethnic violence in Manipur.

NEPAL

Helping churches prepare for and effectively respond to emergencies.

SOMALIA

Responding to those displaced by floods.

MYANMAR

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

ETHIOPIA

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

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

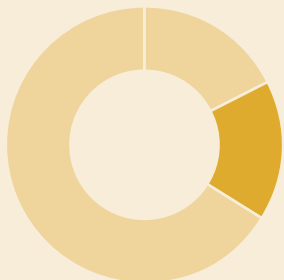
Your partnership with communities around the world is doing so much good.

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
-

We take good care of your generosity.
Thank you for your trust!

EDUCATION



Budget

\$2,264,499

Last year: \$2,548,065



Beneficiaries

20,250

Last year: 20,250



Locations

Nicaragua,
West Bank

Poverty, conflict and disasters often disrupt the education and career goals of vulnerable learners worldwide.

In the West Bank, women have far fewer opportunities than men to find employment, and the opportunities that do exist are difficult to access. For women with disabilities, the situation is even more difficult. With your support and funding from Global Affairs Canada, our GRIT program is giving Palestinian women access to technical and vocational training so they can secure their own futures and their financial independence. Now, as

violence has disrupted life across the West Bank, dedicated staff and faculty have worked to transition to remote classrooms and provide extra care for students.



In Nicaragua, education remains inadequate, particularly in rural areas, limiting children's development. Our partners are providing educational supplies, after-school tutoring and school meals to children in marginalized Nicaraguan communities in order to ensure they thrive at school.

Children enjoying a nutritious school meal at the Iglesia Luterana Cristo, Verdad Y Vida in Somotillo, Nicaragua. (Photo: David Friesen)

YOUR GIFTS AT WORK

125

children receiving daily school meals in Nicaragua

9

partner training institutes in East Jerusalem and the West Bank supported

736

women trainees in the West Bank provided with scholarships

Dua's Story

DUA AL-QATOU, a mother of two, had been struggling to overcome the obstacles that many women in the West Bank face—financial hardships due to the ongoing political situation and difficulty finding employment. In order to support her family, Dua was trying to set up a handicrafts business, taking online courses to improve her skills.

She came across an advertisement for CLWR's GRIT program, which offers scholarships to women for vocational training in various specializations, including graphic design. Dua realized this was a great opportunity, as design skills were crucial for her work. She enrolled in the graphic design and printing course.

She was one of the first women to participate in this new course developed by the GRIT program. Through GRIT, she received a scholarship and transportation support to help cover the costs of her training. Leaving home for the first time to attend training was challenging—Dua had to balance childcare with her studies. But she persevered, completing the year-long diploma course with distinction. Her coursework included three months of on-the-job training, which helped significantly in growing her skills.

After Dua graduated, she launched her own business. Now she sells beautiful wood carvings and other handcrafted products. Her dream is to be able to employ other women, so she can provide them with an opportunity to blaze a new trail for themselves and their families, just as she did. So, she spends her free time acting as an ambassador for GRIT—sharing her experiences with other women to encourage them to pursue technical and vocational training.

“I always tell people that they should work on themselves,” Dua says. “They need to believe in their abilities. Everything is possible with hard work and dedication.”



Dua shows off one of the many wood carving products made by her business. (Photo: CLWR/Heather Platt)

CHANGED LIVES

250 students in Nicaragua experienced better learning outcomes due to after-school tutoring and improved school supplies

Over 90% of employers of GRIT graduates feel the training adequately prepares participants for challenges faced in the market

Nearly 90% of employed GRIT graduates earn at least minimum wage, compared to 55% national average for employed Palestinian women.

REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

Last year, 244 people went from refugee to Permanent Residents in Canada thanks to Lutheran churches and community groups across the country!

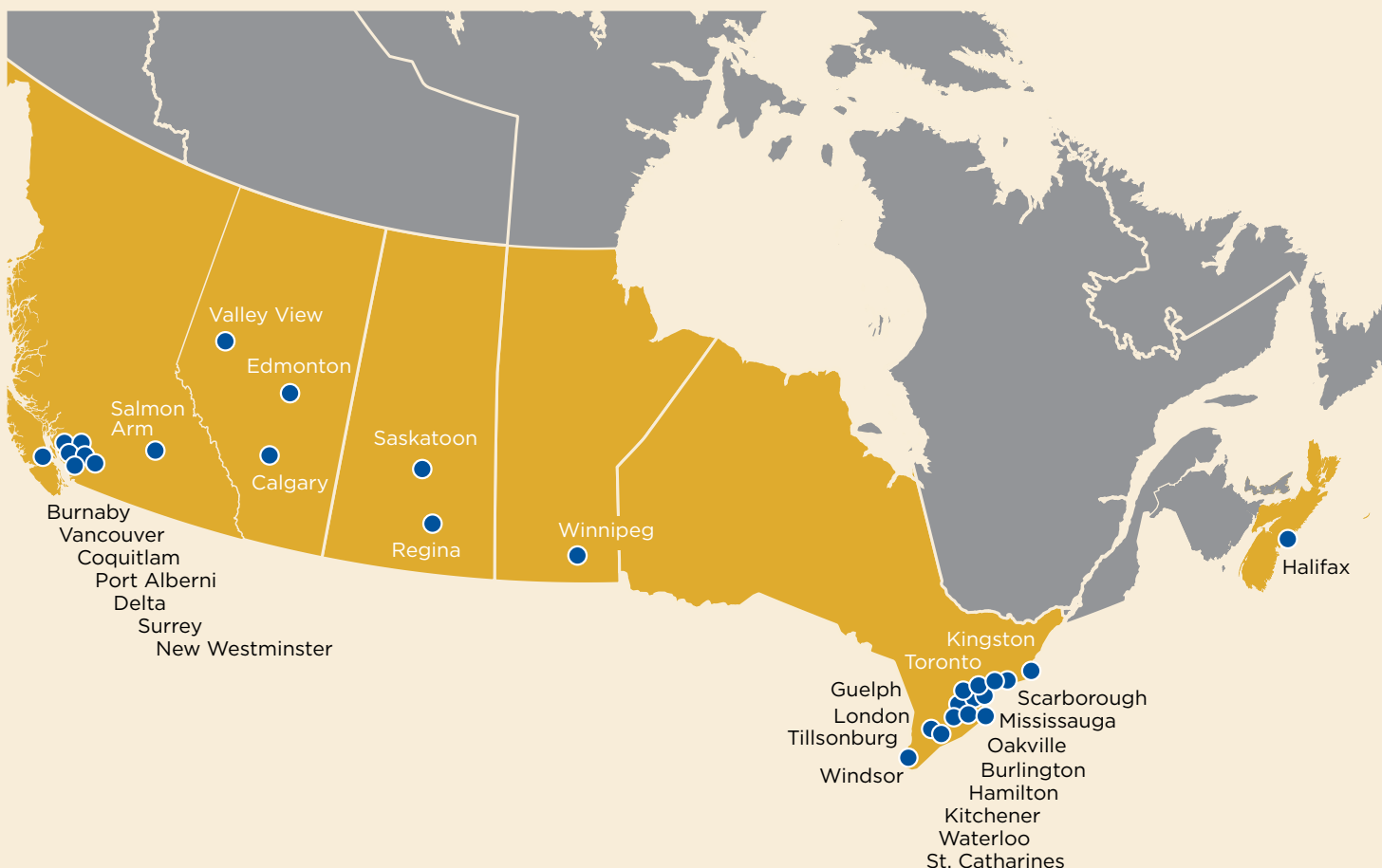
In 1946, CLWR was created to help people displaced by the Second World War. Our commitment to refugees continues to this day through refugee resettlement.

CLWR is a Sponsorship Agreement Holder with the Government of Canada. Through CLWR, congregations and groups are able to sponsor refugees from abroad and help them build new lives in Canada.

Thank you to the many churches, communities and supporters across Canada who are part of this lifesaving work!

If you want more information about how your congregation can play a part in helping refugees find a new home in Canada, visit clwr.org/rr or email us at rrinfo@clwr.org.

DESTINATION CITIES LAST YEAR



About's Story

WHEN HE WAS ONLY 16, Aboud was imprisoned and tortured for taking part in Syria's Arab Spring protests. His home in East Aleppo was destroyed, forcing the family to flee to the countryside in order to survive. Aboud ended up fleeing to Lebanon, where he lived as a refugee for nearly a decade.

In December 2020, while working for pennies a day at a chicken farm in rural Lebanon, Aboud was able to connect with Gerry Steinke and his wife Bonnie in Alberta, Canada.

Gerry and Bonnie eagerly share how they were led by the Holy Spirit toward a journey with Aboud and his family.

"Our lives changed after meeting Aboud. The miracle of instant messaging and translation apps brought two families together," says Gerry.

Energized by his contact with the Steinkes, Aboud started preparing his family for the journey of a lifetime. Then began the lengthy process of bringing them all to Canada, first Aboud and then eventually the others. The Steinke's congregation at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Valleyview, AB, became the sponsoring organization, with the support of CLWR's Refugee Resettlement team. Members of the church and others in the broader community built strong online relationships with the Syrian family, which resulted in generous contributions towards the trust fund and provision of daily needs. Gerry, Bonnie, and church chairman Henry Krueger even journeyed to Beirut in 2022 to bring the family supplies and give them hope. Aboud eventually arrived in Canada in late 2023.

Aboud enjoys a close bond with his church family. And his family in Syria joins in worship on Sundays by video. Yet, as Lebanon's situation worsens, he longs for the arrival of his relatives. "I love Canada. This is my home now," says Aboud. "I have a new loving family and church. I know I am free. God has rescued me." Yet, as the situation in Lebanon worsens, he longs for the arrival of his relatives.



Gerry and Bonnie Steinke with Aboud. Aboud constructed the stone wall at the altar of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Valleyview, AB. (Photo: Gerry Steinke)

CHANGED LIVES

Arrivals last year:

244

Countries of origin: **Afghanistan, Myanmar, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iraq, Nigeria, Syria, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tunisia.**

Grace Lutheran's Story

IN 2017, GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH in Burnaby, BC, embarked on a ministry of refugee work when CLWR's Refugee Resettlement team approached the church council with a request to sponsor a refugee and provide full financial support for their resettlement in Canada. After several meetings with church representatives and council, they decided to take the request to the congregation for a vote. The congregation approved the partnership with CLWR, agreeing to sponsor a young Eritrean refugee. Upon his arrival in 2018, the young man quickly found full-time employment and did not need the funds allocated for his resettlement. The church then decided to redirect the raised funds to CLWR and in 2018, it was used to sponsor another refugee.

In September 2019, the church partnered with CLWR to sponsor a young Eritrean woman by the name of Soleyana who fled her home country and sought asylum in Ethiopia at the age of eighteen, where she endured the immense hardship refugees face in exile. Soleyana arrived safely in Vancouver in March 2023, at the end of a long processing period. Members of Grace Lutheran, along with her family, joyously celebrated her arrival at the airport.

In 2024, Grace Lutheran partnered with CLWR again to sponsor another refugee from Eritrea; the processing for that case is currently underway.

Since 2017, Grace Lutheran has remained a staunch supporter of refugee resettlement

through CLWR, dedicated to providing displaced families with a second chance at life. The sponsorship process requires a significant commitment from a congregation, but the CLWR Refugee Resettlement team is available and happy to support in navigating the process. Congregations who have taken on this ministry have discovered it not only provides hope to those forced to flee their homes but also offers host communities the opportunity to learn about and embrace diverse cultures. Grace Lutheran Church has set a shining example in this ministry and CLWR is grateful for this partnership!



Soleyana being greeted at the airport by her family and members of Grace Lutheran. (Photo: Roger Steers)

THANK YOU

Our work is only possible because of the support of Lutherans and friends across Canada — thank you for the vital part you play in our work. We're always ready to share more about how your support is making a difference! Contact us today for more info, or if you'd like to talk about opportunities for your congregation to be part of our work, please visit clwr.org/resources or contact heidi@clwr.org.

Proud to partner with



actalliance

HUMANITARIAN
COALITION





Canadian Lutheran World Relief

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Ejigae Kassie at her home in Ethiopia's Amhara region. Ejigae is one of countless women whose lives and livelihoods were destroyed when conflict broke out in their region. Our partners were able to provide emergency food assistance to her and her family. (Photo: CLWR/Genaye Eshetu)