

## Classis Niagara Report – autumn, 2022

*Submitted by Peter Bulthuis, Canadian CORE Team Leader*

### A. General Updates:

**Thank you for your support of the work of World Renew. For 60 years!** God has blessed this work, and through that blessing and your support, literally millions of people around the world have realized their strength, regained hope, risen out of poverty and praise God for his mercy. 60 years ago, CRWRC (renamed World Renew in 2012) was established, and three years later, the first global worker, Peter Feddema from Bowmanville, ON was sent to Korea as an agronomist. Over time, that “direct implementation” changed to working with partners. The current *Strategic Plan* is looking to shift power even more, such that participant communities legitimately chart, manage and lead their own futures.

These 60 years are being celebrated in some 13 locations across Canada, from mid-September through the end of October. Stay tuned to your church bulletins, our Facebook pages and our website ([here](#)) for information on where the celebrations will occur.

Last fiscal year (July 1/21 – June 30/22), World Renew in Canada received over \$30 million in donations from various sources; of that, \$179,958.00 came from Classis Niagara. Thank you!

### B. Upcoming Synodically-Designated Church Offerings:

Some of the ways that churches can partner with and support the work of World Renew, are through the offerings that Synod suggests CRCs use as opportunities for engagement:

**Thanksgiving, Oct. 10:** The focus for this offering is the *Free a Family* program. The way it works is that the funds support a community, and its transformation is illustrated by highlighting a representative family.

**Sunday, Nov. 6: World Hunger Sunday:** This day marks the end of the *World Hunger Awareness* campaign, which runs from Oct. 23. The campaign comes with a devotional booklet, a video, online devotions with World Renew staff and more.

**Christmas, Dec. 25:** This offering is for World Renew’s work in transformational community development.

In the new year, Synod recommends these dates to the churches to designate offerings for World Renew:

**Mar. 5:** CFGB Sunday, to support the work of this amazing organization, of which World Renew is a leading partner,

**April 2:** Refugee Sunday, to support World Renew as a “Sponsorship Agreement Holder” (SAH)

### C. Community Development:

God has blessed World Renew with partners through whom his mercy flows; our agency has the opportunity to support their work. Like in Zambia, where our local partner, the diaconate of the Reformed Church of Zambia, implemented a program in which *farming as a business* is taught, but also, *gender justice* is learned.

Fransisco Phiri, pictured here with his wife and their cash-box, had by his own admission, lived a selfish life, “drinking a lot and beating my wife. My wife never had a voice in anything. Lessons on gender through the church’s Diaconia opened my mind.” His wife says that “now we budget together, and I have a role to play in decision making”. She bought a cash box; they need to tell the other when they open the box. Fransisco has learned to see his wife as an image-bearer of God, deserving of respect. He has become a gender rights ambassador.



The website ([here](#)) has many such stories of the difference the Holy Spirit is making in the lives of 10s of 1000s of folks around the world; differences through people’s awakening of their resilience. Canadian donors are supporting these 1000s. Thank you.

### D. International Disaster Response (IDR)

The assistance of and partnership with our donors, our networks (like CFGB) and the Canadian Government has allowed World Renew to support over 463,000 participants through 87 projects in 26 countries last fiscal year (July 1 – June 30). (These numbers of course, fluctuate as emergencies rise and sometimes recede.)

IDR provides these kinds of supports, depending on the situation: nutrition, economic recovery, sanitation, agriculture, artner support, water, shelter, disaster risk reduction, emergency assistance and health supports.

One of the areas of great concern currently (late August, 2022) is the **world hunger crisis**, exacerbated by conflict (especially in Ukraine), covid and changing climate patterns.

The other area of great concern continues to be the impact of the conflict in **Ukraine**. World Renew is working there with its various networks to support one partner's response of providing food to vulnerable households through church networks and partners in Ukraine. This partner also provides refugee support to persons entering bordering countries. Medical kits and medicines are being delivered to hospitals and medical clinics in Ukraine; emergency cash-based transfers are being provided to assist displaced persons in Ukraine; cash-based transfers for shelter repair are being provided, as well as support for winterization efforts for vulnerable households; and World Renew is supporting another partner, ADRA, in Ukraine with food security response. Thank you for your gifts in Canada of over \$2.2 million by mid-August.

## E. Disaster Response Services (DRS)

DRS held two wonderful Canadian celebrations of their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary over the past several months: July 21 (Edmonton), and Aug. 16 (Hamilton). These were times of reminiscing, sharing, seeing good work-friends and eating some good food. The attendees were reminded of the role that they played in helping to restore lives, and rejuvenate hope. These two documents are descriptions of how each church and each reader can volunteer to continue that long legacy of making a difference: [Supporting Communities when Disaster Strikes](#), and [Volunteer! Repair Disaster-Damaged Homes](#).

As of August, DRS has this information about where volunteers can be helpful: [August Opportunity Link](#).

## F. Refugee Settlement Activities:

On July 11, 2022 World Renew received our annual sponsorship allocation of 175 persons plus 20 persons for Operation Afghan Safety (OAS). OAS sponsorship allocations are in addition to our regular allocations. Sponsorship allocation refers to the number of refugees for whom World Renew will be allowed to submit a sponsorship application in a calendar year. Receiving our allocation in July is significantly later than expected. It had been expected that allocations would have been received by the end of February as per our SAH Agreement.

Currently 34 sponsoring groups are working on applications for 139 refugees. There are 87 sponsoring groups waiting for 358 refugees to arrive.

Orientation Sessions - All sponsors are required to complete an Orientation with the RSRP team prior to World Renew submitting their sponsorship application to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). Since January 10, 2022, we have provided 16 Sponsorship Orientations for 44 different sponsorship groups, with between 2 and 5 representatives attending from each group.

## G. What else can the people and the churches of Classis Niagara do?

- Pray for the participants of the work of World Renew; for their resilience and strength.
- Donate for the ongoing disaster response work in around the world, especially in response to the *World Hunger Crisis*, on our website [here](#); use the **DONATE** button.
- (If your church isn't already) Connect with Rebecca Walker to sponsor a refugee (family): [rwalker@worldrenew.ca](mailto:rwalker@worldrenew.ca)
- Be open to the Spirit's leading, and connect with us to learn about a possible partnership with a program of project in an area outside of North America.
- Consider being an International Relief Manager (IRM); contact Donna Veenstra ([dveenstra@worldrenew.ca](mailto:dveenstra@worldrenew.ca))
- Be involved with the *World Hunger Campaign* when it arrives in your church mailboxes, and on our website.
- Get involved with the *Climate Witness Project*; connect with Cindy Stover ([cstover@crcna.org](mailto:cstover@crcna.org)) to learn more.

**Please continue to pray for the world. May the God of peace grant wisdom and healing to the nations.**

Blessings,



Peter Bulthuis, Canadian CORE Team Leader  
[pbulthuis@worldrenew.ca](mailto:pbulthuis@worldrenew.ca); c. 289-983-9293