

# GIFTS

**"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." – 1 PETER 4:10**



~1990. MISCHIEVOUS BOYS FROM ONE OF THE CHILDREN'S HOMES IN KENYA. PICTURE SCANNED FROM AN OLD SLIDE PRESENTATION FOR LOCAL SCHOOLS.

**The Lord willing,** and with great thankfulness, we look forward to celebrating 60 years of CRWRF in 2025. We hope to take this special anniversary as an opportunity to reflect on God's goodness and faithfulness over the past six decades. The theme that we've chosen for the year is *God's Good Gifts*. We hope to celebrate these gifts in various ways, including conferences in a few provinces and a special publication. In 1965, our church community's thankfulness for the free gift of salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord served as a foundational principle for establishing CRWRF. It continues to be a main motivator for our work today. Indeed, the Lord has given so many gifts! In addition to the amazing gift of salvation, God gifts his people in many other ways, e.g., good health, wisdom, knowledge, family, friendships, community, work, and the ability to teach, preach, and serve. The Lord has given gifts to you, our supporting community, resulting in many opportunities for you to be generous towards the work of CRWRF. We praise and thank the Lord for that! We can also

humbly say that the Lord has given various gifts to the many committed Board members and members of subcommittees who have served over the last sixty years. The Lord has also given gifts to our partners and their communities, who bless us in sometimes unexpected ways. This is evident in the updates from the various projects that you can read about in this newsletter. We will expand on this more in the Spring 2025 newsletter as well. May the Lord continue to receive honour and glory through our work!



OLD PICTURE FROM THE ACHEGO PRIMARY SCHOOL IN KENYA, AND A VISIT MADE BY A BOARD REPRESENTATIVE.

ACHEGO PRIMARY SCHOOL  
WITH US ASPIRE TO EXCELLENCE  
MISSION: THE MISSION IS TO ENCOURAGE PUPILS TO EXCEL IN THEIR PERFORMANCE AND FOSTER POSITIVE FRIENDLY ATMSHERE TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS  
TO ENCOURAGE... AND RESPONSIBLE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY  
TO PROVIDE PUPILS WITH A WIDE SPECTRUM OF SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE FOR SELF RELIANCE.  
TO ENABLE PUPILS TO BE DISCIPLINED, HARDWORKING, AND TO "OWN" THE FUTURE "BERTAKIN





GROUP PHOTO AFTER THE COMPLETION OF ONE OF THE TRAINING EVENTS.



ONE OF THE PARTICIPANTS AFTER OBTAINING HER CERTIFICATE.

# Project Updates

Mali

## The Good Gift of a Healthy Family Life

Do you have good and healthy relationships in your family? Thank God for the gift of a healthy family life. The project we support in Mali is all about building healthy Christian families. The goal is to improve the health and wellbeing of community members, particularly survivors of abuse and those with a high vulnerability to abuse. It is hard work on an often taboo subject, but the years of perseverance are paying off. In the past year, our local partner's church-based program has mobilized facilitators to conduct 131 days of training in 77 local communities for 13,163 participants. This included sessions with couples, women, men, pastors, young people, children, orphans, and survivors of domestic abuse. Training events have titles like: 'Types of Abuse in Christian Families and How to Combat Them.' The work is done in collaboration with church leaders, nurses, doctors, psychiatrists, and police officers. One encouraging development is that men now make up 38% of participants. What a good gift! The demand for training and help is overwhelming; so much so that in the last year the number of participants exceeded the projected target by 204%. Mali is a predominantly Muslim country and the church there is small. Praise God for our faithful Christian brothers and sisters there who welcome our partnership with them in this important work. And praise God for the good gift of healthy Christian families!

Niger

## The Good Gift of Resilience

Do you have the ability to endure and cope with difficulty? Thank God for the gift of resilience. The project we support in Niger is all about building resilience in the face of poverty. As a land-locked nation where subsistence agriculture is the reality, Niger has more than its share of difficulty. In the past year it has experienced insufficient rain, a weak harvest, and to top it all off, a military coup. The Resilient Communities project in Niger helps people in rural areas cope with the difficulties of life by providing training in areas such as agricultural production, maternal health, and small business development. What a good gift this kind of education is!

Take the example of Heure. Heure's life was very difficult after the death of her husband Mani, leaving her to raise 6 children alone.

She remarried, and had 3 children with her second husband, but she still had difficulties providing for her children. When our project started a small business group in her village, Heure joined it. She received training and started saving little by little. After a while, she was able to take out a loan. "I took out a loan and began selling peanut oil, which enabled me to provide for my family while increasing my savings and paying back the loan. I saved enough to expand my business by selling cloth, peanut oil, and peanuts. Thanks to this initiative, I'm now able to provide for my family, so they can eat well, have clean clothes and, above all, I'm able to pay for their school supplies." Praise God for the good gift of resilience!







Senegal



LEFT: A MOTHER AND HER CHILD SUPPORTED BY ONE OF THE SHINING MAMAS. RIGHT: MARIAME HANNE.



Middle East

CHURCH SERVICE FOR REFUGEES.

## The Good Gift of Role Models

Do you have someone in your life that you really look up to? Someone you might name your baby after? Praise God for the good gift of role models. In Northern Senegal there is a woman named Mariame Hanne. She is the program director for the Lutheran Development Service and is an excellent Christian role model with an unwavering commitment to helping all those in need. Mariame oversees the programs we support which focus on nutrition and health for individuals, families, and communities. One key program is called Shining Mamas, which aims to train and hire local women to provide vital educational health sessions and regular check-ups on pregnant women and new mothers. The goal was for each locally trained woman to track approximately 10 women at a time, but the program is now so popular that some of them are supporting 50-60 women. It has been so successful that it is being replicated in other parts of the country by other people.

Mariame's exemplary leadership and commitment is visible in how she interacts personally to help those in need. When an 11-year-old girl was sexually assaulted by two boys, Mariame helped her talk about what had happened, bought her medicine, and visited her every day in the hospital. When the father of the rapists tried to bribe the family of the victim not to press charges, Mariame's involvement stopped the injustice. The 11-year-old sums it up like this: "Now the two boys are in prison and people are saying that if you touch a girl, there's a woman who'll take you to court; they are all afraid." Mariame's work does not go unnoticed by the community. There are 37 babies who have been named after her! Praise God for the gift of good role models.



LEFT: A VILLAGE SAVINGS LOAN GROUP IN ACTION. RIGHT: HOURE.



## The Good Gift of Generosity

While partnering with churches throughout the Middle East, including those in Lebanon and Pakistan, one recent project worked alongside a local church body to provide weekly hot meals for those attending services.

Though this meal is meant as an open invitation to share the gift of salvation to all those in the camp, there remains a lot of tension between the Christian believers and Muslims who oppose the church. Specifically, the pastor's children became increasingly harassed by other children to the point where they were unable to walk in the camp alone. Though the circumstances became very difficult, they continued to pray for the children who teased them and looked for an opportunity to share the gift of Christ's love to them as well.

Following the church's Christmas service, the church celebrated the birth of our Saviour together with a meal for everyone in the church. During the meal, the pastor's daughter asked if she could go outside for a moment. Bringing her plate of food with her, she took it and gave it to one of the children that had teased her daily. Seeing this, the other church members followed her example, taking their Christmas meal and feeding the people who scolded and laughed at them outside church every Sunday. Since then, the teasing has stopped and a few of these people have even been attending church services.

Thanks to the perseverance of pastors and believers in these difficult circumstances, the gift of the gospel continues to encourage and spread.



MEAL AND FELLOWSHIP TIME AFTER THE SERVICE.





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# Looking to SPONSOR a Family or Student?

## Busia Family Sponsorship

\$45/month

### LOCATION: Busia, Kenya

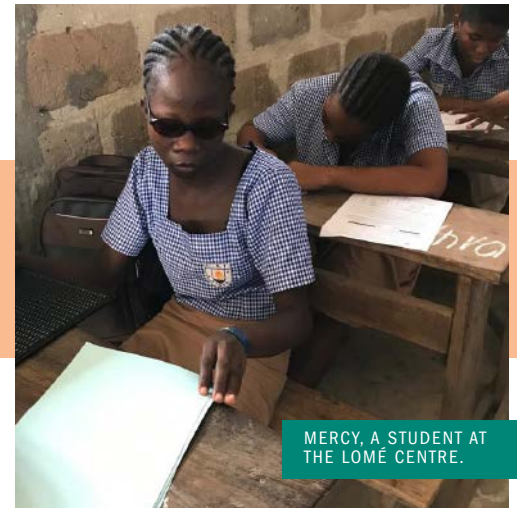
By sponsoring a Busia family, you will be helping parents learn how to run their businesses and farms effectively, and how to raise their children well. Your sponsorship will also help children go to school and learn important lessons in faith, health, and community involvement. This holistic approach to sponsorship promotes family stability and community growth. As a Busia sponsor you will receive an update on your family's progress every fall and can send letters to them.

## Lomé Student Sponsorship

\$50/month

### LOCATION: Lomé, Togo

When you sponsor a student from Lomé Centre for the Blind, you will be helping a visually impaired student gain access to braille resources and vocational training, and have their basic needs met, so that they can thrive in school and grow up to be involved in their community. As a Lomé sponsor you will receive a profile of your student and can send letters to them.



MERCY, A STUDENT AT THE LOMÉ CENTRE.

To learn more about our sponsorship opportunities please

## contact us at:

FAMILYSponsorSHIP@CRWRF.CA

# Update on our EBF Drive:

With much praise and thankfulness to our heavenly Father, we want to share the news that the **Education Bursary Fund** has surpassed its goal of **\$500,000!** With your generous contributions, the EBF can continue supporting the future of many students. Thank you!

