

2009 GRACE Hunger Fund Recipient Agencies

International Agencies

Four international agencies receive up to \$50,000 of the amount distributed from the GRACE Hunger Fund. This money is provided to programs working for long term development around the world with a particular focus on Central America and Africa. Each agency has a direct link to the faith community in Grand Rapids.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) - Guatemala

In the remote department of Totonicapán in Guatemala's western highlands where the malnutrition rate for children is higher than in some parts of sub-Saharan Africa and more than two-thirds of the population is poor growing enough food to feed a family is a yearly struggle. Decades of political policies have excluded the mostly Mayan indigenous people of Totonicapán from accessing even the most basic services, including health care and education. One of every 16 children will die before reaching the age of 5.

The near-subsistence farmers of Totonicapán continue a generational disadvantage, toiling away on shrinking plots etched into steep hillsides, barely able to grow enough corn and beans to last the year. The worldwide spike in food prices in the last year has increased the amount families spend on basic food staples by about 12 quetzals (\$1.54) per day. That's half a day's pay as a hired farm worker, and the pressure is pushing families further into desperation.

To break the vicious cycle of malnutrition, CRS is working with pregnant women, nursing mothers and children under the age of 5 to improve hygiene, to enhance healthy diets and to increase the use of medical services.

For more information about Catholic Relief Services, go to www.catholicrelief.org

Church World Service (CWS)

For more than 60 years, Church World Service has been providing God's mercy and compassion to those who experience hunger and poverty in the face of natural disasters and human conflict. Following the second World War, in response to the overwhelming human need in Europe and Asia, a small group of Midwest farmers responded to God's call to assist their brothers and sisters facing starvation. Taking a portion of their crops, they put them on rail and boat to address the tremendous need overseas. Sensing they could do more together than individually, the partnership of Church World Service/CROP (Church Rural Overseas Project) was born. Today, thirty five members denominations are in partnership, working in 80 countries throughout the world to declare in word and deed that we are "Christians working together with partners to eradicate hunger and poverty and promote peace and justice" in our local communities and the global community.

Church World Service responds to people suffering hunger and poverty through three different avenues. Those experiencing crisis (earthquake, drought, tsunami, etc) receive immediate aid (food, water, shelter, etc). Those challenges with chronic need receive sustainable assistance (training, tools, micro-credit loans, etc). And third, these acts of compassion are done in partnership with local indigenous groups who are attempting to address these needs. Built upon these three legs of meeting immediate human need in the midst of crisis, developing sustainable solutions to chronic need, and cooperating in partnership with local peoples, CWS has been blessed in ministry together!

Current examples of our service include:

**Sudan: The CWS supported coalition continues to provide urgently needed assistance in the Darfur region of Sudan. It has assisted some 250,000 people over the past five years.

**Nicaragua: Families in seven communities in the La Dalia Municipality are learning about crop diversification, environmental protection, soil conservation, and marketing of produce with the help of CWS.

**Democratic Republic of Congo: CWS and coalition partners are providing water, sanitation and hygiene facilities for 55,000 people, seeds and tools, nutritional supplements for malnourished children.

Church World Service is very grateful for our partnership with the GRACE Hunger Walk, as together we respond with God's compassion to our neighbors locally and globally who are placed in our path!

For more information about Church World Service, go to www.churchworldservice.org

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) – Food Security in Uganda

This year's hunger walk funds will provide financial support to food security projects in Uganda, where CRWRC is working with the Pentecostal Assemblies of God to provide hope and food security.

Through livestock training and providing initial seeds and goats, families will increase their food security and income. Families will repay their loans by giving back the firstborn goat and seeds in kind at harvest.

CRWRC has been working in Uganda since 1982, when we responded to the country's recovery needs after the 1979 ouster of Idi Amin, and in the midst of continuing insecurity throughout parts of the country.

Life expectancy at birth in is approximately 50 years. Generally health care provision is poor. There is a wide range of endemic disease including malaria, tuberculosis, measles, meningitis, and respiratory illnesses. In addition, Uganda was among the first countries hard hit by HIV and AIDS.

Up until recently there has been a great amount of insecurity in the north, where citizens suffered through twenty years of brutal attacks by the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). At one time or another nearly two million people were displaced by these acts of terrorism with around 25,000 children abducted. Since 2006 displaced people have been returning to their homes throughout the north, while keeping an anxious eye on the LRA, still operating just across the border in Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo.

For more information about Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, go to www.crwrc.org

Lutheran World Relief (LWR) – Niger

Niger is considered to be one of the world's least developed countries, falling to 177th of the 177 countries in the United Nations Development Program's human development index in 2005, the year of a well-publicized food crisis in West Africa. Though much of Niger's labor force is engaged in agriculture, crop yields tend to be poor even in the better years. Niger's climate is arid and harsh. Desertification and unsustainable farming practices contribute to Niger's food insecurity. Per capita food production has been on a steady decline for several decades, and forty percent of Nigerian children are malnourished.

Because it is difficult for farming families to produce sufficient food to maintain an agriculturally-based livelihood, many men adopt a nomadic lifestyle in search of work. Their transience has contributed to an increased incidence of HIV/AIDS as they bring the disease from the cities back to the villages and those who remained at home.

Literacy rates for both men and women are below twenty percent, hindering chances for long-term poverty reduction in Niger. Women have a growing role in local markets in Niger, but they remain Niger's most poorly educated, vulnerable and marginalized citizens, with limited access to land, credit, and opportunities to generate income.

LWR began working in Niger in 1974 in response to drought-related famine. Since then, LWR has worked to address the root causes of food insecurity and to explore ways of improving water supply and increasing overall food production, while also addressing issues of gender equity and women's empowerment.

For more information about Lutheran World Relief, go to www.lwr.org

Local Agencies

\$67,500 from the Hunger Fund has been allocated for local distribution in **June of 2009**, contingent upon revenue. It will be distributed to the following agencies:

ACCESS of West Michigan

Funds will be used to provide assistance for pantry food supplies and the ACCESS *öLiving on the Edgeö* Poverty Simulation workshops.

Arbor Circle Corporation – The Bridge

Hunger walk funds will be used to assure that youth in temporary emergency shelter receive nutritious meals, as well as to provide education and support to youth regarding issues of hunger and nutrition.

Asian Center

The Asian Center's Community Food Program is a needs-based, temporary assistance program aimed to provide food to the Asian and Pacific Islander Community. The program seeks to be culturally and ethnically sensitive to the needs of our diverse community.

Catholic Charities of West Michigan – Casa de la Paz

The funding secured from the Grace Hunger Walk provides critical support for the provision of food for our program. 98% of the food that is offered in our program is purchased at our local Second Harvest Gleaners Food Bank. The food is made available to all Casa de la Paz families when they enter the program. All the women and children housed in our shelter are able to use the food on a first come-first served basis until they can generate income or obtain food stamps.

Greater Grand Rapids Food Systems Council/WMEAC

The funds will be used to fund the Cultivating Urban Seeds of Prosperity project. The CUSP project sells herbs and produce from community gardeners and urban growers to restaurants and markets, with an emphasis on low-income growers, and gives gardening assistance to maximize sales potential.

Hard Times Café

The Hard Times Café focuses on empowerment for those living in and around or connected to the Heartside area. Our meetings allow us to empower ourselves by planning activities in order to build a stronger community.

Kids Food Basket

Hunger Walk funds will be used to purchase fresh fruits and fresh vegetables for sack suppers given to 1,750 children daily, Monday - Friday.

North End Community Ministry (NECM)

Funds will be used to assist clients by providing resources that are food related, that they would not otherwise be able to access. We provide direct services of food and educational opportunities to equip clients with necessary skills to more effectively utilize resources.

North Kent Service Center – Life Skills Training

The funds from the GRACE Hunger Walk will assist NKSC with our quarterly staff in-service development days ó these funds are used to provide training classes, travel, instructors and materials.

Safe Haven Ministries – Ramoth House Shelter

The monies will be utilized to purchase perishable grocery items for the women and children served by Safe Haven Ministries, Ramoth House who are fleeing domestic violence situations.

Senior Meals Program, Inc. – Home Delivered Meals

Senior Meals Program delivers freshly prepared, healthy, diabetic friendly meals to low-income homebound citizens under the age of 60.

South End Community Outreach Ministries (SECOM) – Food Pantry

100% of funds received by SECOM from the 2009 Hunger Walk will be used to relieve food insecurity in Kent County through the Emergency Food Pantry Program.

Sunday Breakfast Café – St. Mark’s Episcopal Church

The funds will be used to further the effort of the Breakfast Café in providing a safe haven, fellowship and hot breakfast for more than 130 persons weekly, throughout the year.

The Salvation Army Booth Family Services – Economic Stability Project

The project will increase the stability and economic self-sufficiency of families and individuals which use community food resources. The funding will leverage BFS caseworker time, through the utilization of a part time employee, in order to increase client financial stability.

United Church Outreach Ministry (UCOM) – Food Pantry

50,000 people turned to UCOM for emergency food in 2008. Because of the caring generosity of the community, UCOM was there for them. UCOM exists to make lives better.

United Methodist Community House – Senior Center

Funds are used for the purchase of canned and packaged food supplies for homebound seniors in emergency situations. Additionally funds are used to transport low-income seniors for food purchases, congregate meals and home assistance with nutrition related needs.

Well House Homeless Shelter

Funds will be used to provide Well House with a Gleaners Shopping trip, as well as seasonal fruits and vegetables purchased locally and will also be used to buy non-toxic household cleaners such as vinegar, baking soda, borax and peroxide. We may also purchase non-toxic products to make our own personal care products, such as coconut oil, sesame oil, etc. We model green living for our residents and encourage them to create their own healthy homes by using time-honored, eco-friendly products.