



**Board of Directors**

- KARL J. VELDAMP CHAIR
- MIKE DEBOERSAP TREASURER
- MARISE VELDMAN SECRETARY
- RUTH GELMS
- SONYA KAMPEN
- BECCA MPINDI
- HANNAH OLIJ
- JOHN RAVENSBERGEN
- DUANE SWAVING

**Western Representatives (Mufu Home)**

- LAURA DEHAAS
- LUCILLE VAN ORIZANDE

**Faithworks Committee**

- MARLA BOEKEE
- KEVIN BUIKEMA
- ALLARD DEVRIES
- MELISSA LIGTENBERG
- JOYCE OLIJ
- KATHRYN PLANTINGA
- TIM PLANTINGA
- BEN VANDENBERG

**Board of Mission Aid – Smithville**

- TAMMY BLOKHUIS
- WINNIE BOS
- WALTER FEENSTRA
- STEPHEN HORSMAN
- CRAIG OUWERSLOOT
- FELICIA VANDERVELDE

**Staff**

- EMILY-KATE BOSVELD
- SUE JAGT

**Contact Us**

ADMIN@CRWRF.CA  
 P.O. Box 62054  
 Burlington, ON L7R 4K2

We have a **NEW** P.O. Box!



# The Plight of Internally Displaced Persons

“The LORD is near to the broken-hearted and saves the crushed in spirit.” – PSALM 34:18

While we may enjoy the beauty of the Lord’s world as we observe the changing seasons, we are quickly reminded when we keep an eye on the news that this world is marred by sin and filled with brokenness and sadness. We read of the war in Ukraine, the persecution of believers in the Sahel region, various other conflicts, and the impact of severe weather events, and our hearts cry out, ‘How long, O Lord?’ We pray that the Lord may encourage his saints worldwide and be near to them in their troubles.

One area in which we’ve witnessed a huge growth in need is with respect to the plight of internally displaced persons (IDPs). IDPs are people who have been forced to flee from their homes due to conflict, persecution, or disasters.<sup>1</sup> Unlike refugees who leave their country and cross a border to safety, IDPs stay in their own country for various reasons (e.g., no access to borders, physical weakness, or a hope that the situation will get better). Whereas refugees who seek safety in another country are protected by international law, IDPs must rely on their own government for protection. Since in many cases governments aren’t willing or able to give such protection, IDPs are among the most vulnerable displaced people in the world.<sup>2</sup> Many IDPs experience loss of property, income, and livelihoods. Communities are torn apart, causing a significant negative impact on the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of families, children, and youth.

According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, the number of people living in internal displacement has reached an all-time high. At the end of 2021, there were 59.1 million people living in internal displacement.<sup>3</sup> Most of these people (53.2 million) were displaced due to conflict and violence, whereas the rest were displaced due to disasters. In 2021, 80% of all internal displacements due to conflict and violence took place in Sub-Saharan Africa; the high numbers were driven mostly by conflict in Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burkina Faso, Somalia, and Central African Republic.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Human Rights Commission unhr.org/teaching-about-refugees (Accessed November 1, 2022)  
<sup>2</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>3</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre https://www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2022/#part1 (Accessed November 1, 2022)  
<sup>4</sup> Ibid.



**CRWRF has been able to help IDPs in various areas of the world. We'll highlight two stories here, from Mali and Ukraine.**

## Ukraine Project Update

We are thankful that we could partner with RPCCEE (Reformed Presbyterian Church of Central and Eastern Europe) who have been able to support both refugees leaving Ukraine and those who are internally displaced.

Families stay in Ukraine for many different reasons. One obvious reason is the current forced conscription of men between the ages of 18 and 60. They are not permitted to pass through the borders and leave Ukraine. There is an exception to this rule if they have three or more children. To those left in Ukraine (i.e., IDPs), we provided food packages and helped them with firewood or compressed wood briquette. Natural gas and electricity might not be available in the coming months, so most of the people are trying to increase their firewood provisions.

Those leaving Ukraine (i.e., refugees) can go to neighbouring countries and receive shelter, food, and support. Our brothers and sisters in Hungary have been providing refugee support throughout the war, and continue to do so, for which we are thankful. Here is an excerpt from an update we received in October:

*I've just returned recently from a two day long trip to Ukraine. This was my first visit since the beginning of this war. Let me share some of my experiences with you. In the last two and a half decades I visited Ukraine over a hundred times. But this was completely different. I've been able to 'feel the spirit of the war' so to speak. As I crossed the border, we drove*

*through 'ghost towns' and villages. One could hardly see people walking on the streets, except military police units.*

*I visited ten families out of four dozen we are helping with a recent subsidy project, including two pastors. I've tried to encourage them, but it turned out that they encouraged me by sharing fascinating grace stories. This diaconical work provides tremendous opportunities to share the gospel and point to God's unspeakable gift (2 Corinthians 9:15). Still the ongoing pressure of the war has a toll on the people. If this goes on for a long time, the churches might be forced into a kind of 'underground' mode, since public gathering will be more difficult and risky.*

Please uphold our brothers and sisters in and around Ukraine in prayer. May the Lord continue to provide endurance, strength, and encouragement to those who have fled, and to those who are helping the displaced.



Keep your eye out for **PART 2** of the **Prayer Calendar**, May to October 2023

## Mali Project Update

Our partners in Mali (World Renew-Mali and AMAFEP) shared a report with us in early 2022 in which they described that there has been an influx of IDPs from other regions in Mali. The security crisis in Mali has doubled the number of IDPs. A group of Fulani people have settled in the Bamako region, where AMAFEP serves, and our partners identified that they were one of the marginalized groups in the community. The Fulani are from non-noble lineage, and for generations their main trade has been weaving traditional clothing. When they fled from their villages, all their weaving materials were also burned. CRWRF was able to support the displaced Fulani groups by providing them with four new looms. AMAFEP reported, "We could see the joy on their faces the day the looms were given. They continue to weave at the camp. This allowed them to earn money to pay for their daily needs. The displaced men finally have an activity to do. Newcomers to the camp are also introduced to the trade as a way to care for their family." We are thankful that we could support these people and help them to earn an income so that they no longer have to depend on aid.



## WELCOME! EMILY-KATE

The CRWRF Board would like to introduce you to Emily-Kate Bosveld, our new Administrator. She started working for us this past summer, and is excited to be part of the team. Emily-Kate and her husband moved to Hamilton, Ontario from Australia, and have recently welcomed their first child. Emily-Kate can be reached at

[admin@crwrf.ca](mailto:admin@crwrf.ca).

Welcome aboard, Emily-Kate!