



COVID-19 RESPONSE UPDATE

Prepared for Week of Compassion on October 1, 2020

We are grateful for Week of Compassion's generous support of the CWS response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Egypt, Haiti, Cambodia and Kenya. The following is a brief summary of planned or current program activities in each country.

EGYPT

Week of Compassion is supporting the CWS Coronavirus Response Fund in Egypt through our partner St. Andrew's Refugee Services (StARS). During the pandemic, refugees and migrants in Cairo have faced extreme challenges, from increased xenophobia to homelessness, hunger and widespread unemployment. With the help of funding from Week of Compassion and other partners, CWS is able to support StARS to provide multipurpose cash grants to refugees and displaced people in Cairo which help them meet urgent needs, such as food, rent, cleaning supplies, personal protective equipment or even medical care in case of infection.

Besides the regular StARS beneficiaries, StARS currently receives 20-30 urgent requests from refugee families in dire need each day. One of these letters, from a refugee named Marwan, reads, *"I have been suffering from loss of job opportunities...and despite the intensity of my effort searching for a job, I have not been able to find a permanent one. I have accumulated debts and there is a possibility that my children suffer from malnutrition due to lack of basic food and nutrition. I have not been able to obtain a residency permit to enroll my son in school, and the United Lawyers' Office is yet to issue a birth certificate for my daughter... I am afraid that something bad will happen to me and my family in our house while we cannot get food, and my children have started to develop symptoms of malnutrition and weight loss, and my wife had a gallbladder removal surgery through a donor but due to the lack of follow-up treatment, the surgery wound was infected and signs of malnutrition and anemia began to appear on her."*

Week of Compassion provided \$25,000 for this program, which has gone a long way in providing relief to refugee families. Should we be able to meet the program's \$91,000 goal in partnership with Week of Compassion and other donors, StARS will be able to provide services to 18,000 refugees, including families like Marwan's, in the next nine months. They will also be able to give assistance to 200 families with an average grant of \$100 per family.

HAITI

With the support of Week of Compassion that other partners, the CWS program in Haiti aims to reduce the spread of coronavirus in the communes of Jean Rabel, Môle Saint Nicolas and Baie-de-Henne. At the same time, it will decrease the deterioration of human assets and rights, social cohesion and livelihoods in these same communities. We have carried out a needs assessment in target communities and identified top priorities. These included buckets, seeds and food rations for 100 families. The plan also included building handwashing stations at five public schools and providing soap, sanitizer and face masks for 750 teachers and students. Partner monitoring and coordination are also key to ensure stewardship and accountability of this intervention.

The recent changes in the Haitian Gourde exchange rate against the U.S. Dollar has significantly affected the budget and required us to adjust the number of public schools we would reach from five down to three. We are ensuring best practices in procurement and partnerships; sanitizer has been purchased through a local partner, and we are working with ACT Alliance partner Norwegian Church Aid to install the school handwashing stations. We aim to have the handwashing stations in place when the new school year starts in late November. With the onset of planting season, we are prepared to begin purchasing and distributing seeds for short cycle crops to 100 families. CWS and the community partners appreciate this much needed and timely intervention.

CAMBODIA

The situation continues to be dire for families in the rural communities of Battambang and Preah Vihear provinces, where CWS and our partners have programs. Migrant workers who returned from Thailand, Vietnam and other parts of Cambodia are facing challenges in generating income. Families are facing food shortages. Many are turning to high-interest loans from private moneylenders, so their debts are mounting, and families are resorting to unsafe food options such as bush rats. CWS aims to respond to the dire needs of 850 families with cash assistance and food packages that include rice and condiments for subsistence eating. With the help of Week of Compassion and other partners, CWS has been able to support about 559 vulnerable families in August and September. With the increased COVID-19 government regulations and complexity for our staff to travel to the field; Multi-purpose cash assistance remains an appropriate support for families so that they can meet immediate needs without starting a devastating cycle of debt and starvation. With support from Week of Compassion, our team is planning another round of assistance in early October.



A family in Cambodia who relied on income from family members who were migrant workers in Thailand. Now they are facing a lack of income and a food shortage. To cope with the crisis, they have had to borrow from private moneylenders to afford food.

KENYA

Families in Nyando sub-county of Kisumu County, Kenya, are facing compounding disasters. When COVID-19 reached Kenya in March, families were already struggling in the face of flooding and a locust invasion. Nyando was particularly hard hit by flooding that caused Nyando River overflow its banks and destroy farmland, as well as backflow from Lake Victoria that left thousands of families permanently displaced. Families moved into temporary shelters, including schools, that made social distancing and proper hygiene especially difficult. With help from Week of Compassion and other partners, CWS is reaching 450 families in Nyando. Due to government restriction for direct food distribution, the families receive cash grants for food and hygiene products. The priority for the women is to secure food for their households as they seek for alternative livelihood. The mobile money transfers will be complete within the next month. We have also developed a SMS platform where people can receive relevant information on Ministry of Health guidelines and other information on preventing the spread of COVID-19. The communities see this support as God sent.



The affected population in Nyando in Kisumu, stare at the situation with hopelessness and has contributed to rising cases of mental health and depression owing to the fact that the situation is estimated to last for more than two years.

Week of Compassion Funding US\$ 115,116.00:

International	Program	Proposals	WOC funded
Cambodia	Life-saving assistance	\$ 137,000	\$ 57,666
Haiti	Recapitalizing Families/Protecting Schools	\$ 34,985	\$ 22,000
Egypt	Saint Andrew's Refugee Services	\$ 90,950	25,000
Kenya	Kisumu County COVID Response	\$ 25,000	10, 500