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SPRING 2018

12

A life-renewing
promise for
Grace, 5

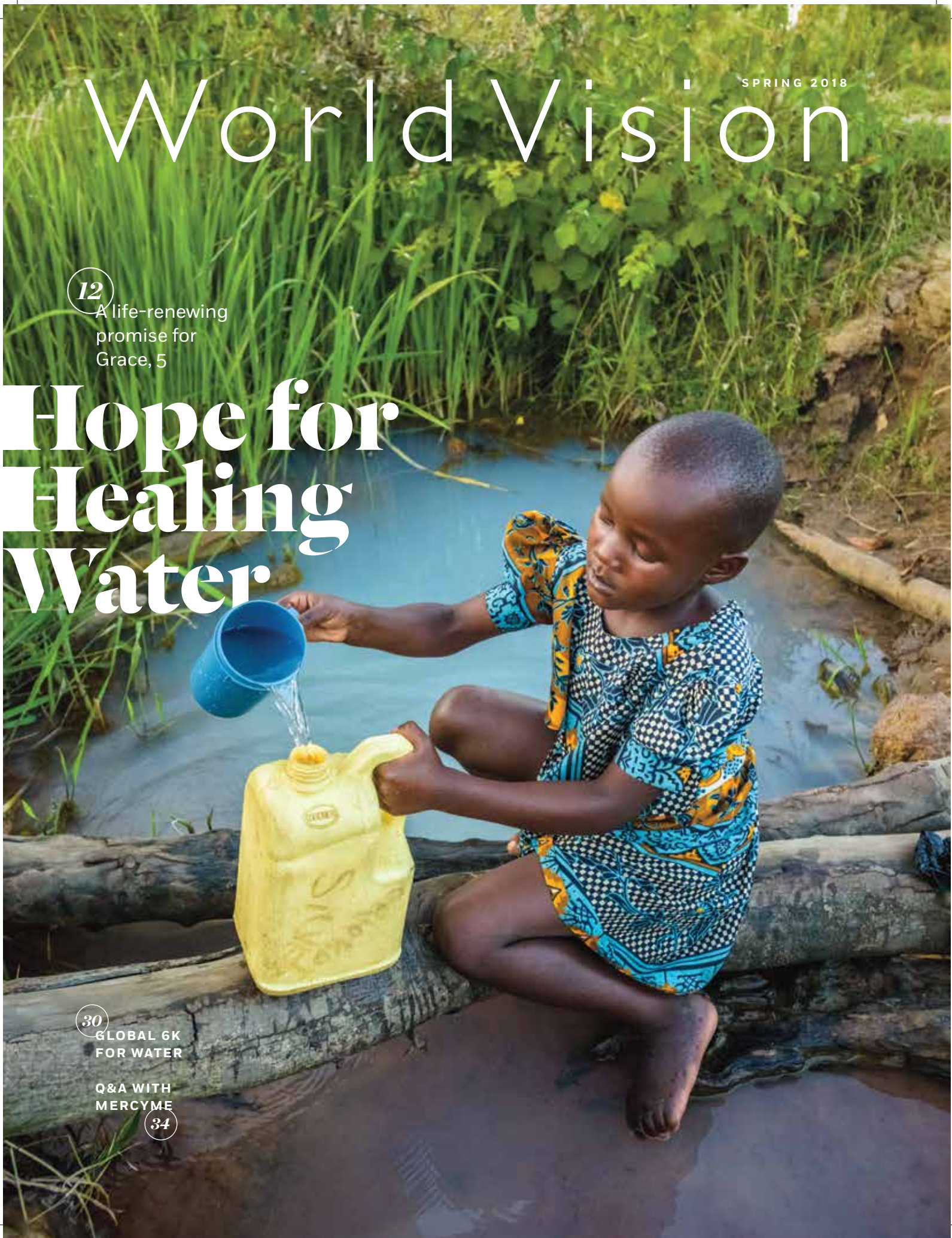
Hope for Healing Water

30

GLOBAL 6K
FOR WATER

Q&A WITH
MERCYME

34



World Vision 



Grace, age 5, Uganda

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World Vision

ON THE COVER

Walk with Grace, 5, in Uganda, where water is a daily struggle.

JON WARREN/WORLD VISION

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Without water, you don't have life.”

—PATIENCE senior secretary with the Morungatuny, Uganda, government, which is working with World Vision to provide clean water to their community

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● **President's Letter**



JANE SUTTON-REDNER/WORLD VISION



JON WARREN/WORLD VISION

Nicholus, on the right in the smaller photo, appeared on Rich's Global 6K bib in 2017, as seen in the photo on the far left. Rich decided to sponsor the child on his bib and later traveled to Kalawa, Kenya, to meet Nicholus.

The dream of clean water

By Rich Stearns

LAST YEAR, on a brisk May morning in Seattle, I participated in World Vision's Global 6K for Water. The sky threatened showers, and mud from a recent rain squished under my tennis shoes. At the race midpoint and finish line, volunteers handed out bottled water.

Water was everywhere! This made it difficult to imagine what it's like to live where clean water is nowhere.

In America, we're blessed. We seldom have to think about clean water because it's readily available.

But I've been to many places where people can only dream of such a thing. I've met men and women in their 70s who have never taken a bath or shower with clean water. Can you imagine living your whole life without a decent bath?

I've also seen the remarkable ways clean water changes a community. It's a turning point—leading to consistent education for kids, higher incomes for parents, and better nutrition and sanitation for everybody.

A month after the Global 6K, I saw that process underway in Kalawa, Kenya—home to my newest sponsored child, 9-year-old Nicholus. At the Global 6K, I made the same decision as thousands of other participants to sponsor the child on our race bibs. Nicholus was on mine.

World Vision has been working in Kalawa for five years, and when we started, only 4 percent of the population had access to clean water and sanitation. Now it's 44 percent and climbing, as the community expands the yield from aquifers with pipeline extensions and solar power. All this clean water has cut the prevalence of water-related diseases by half.

The effect on healthy Nicholus was clear as he and I played an energetic game of Frisbee. He's in school, and he also attends Bible club, devouring Bible verses and singing songs about Jesus. His mother, Jennifer, told me, "He doesn't let us eat before we pray."

Which brings me to another benefit of clean water I encountered in Kalawa: a rise in baptisms. You see, local churches previously held baptisms in the crocodile-infested river. Not surprisingly, pastors and new believers alike were reluctant to risk too much time there. But clean water piped into churches has removed that obstacle.

And people are making the connection. "The water is here by the mercy of God—the glory goes to God," says Pastor Elizabeth Kyeva. "This has transformed the community."

The dream of clean water is coming true for residents of Kalawa. And this year, I have my own dream.

World Vision has a bold plan to provide clean water to everyone, everywhere we work by 2030. We're close to realizing that goal in Rwanda. My dream is to finish the job and provide clean water to all people in our project areas in Rwanda in five years.

I'm inspired by the change clean water has brought to Kalawa. It promises a life for Nicholus much like the one my own children enjoyed, marked by the absence of thirst and a relationship with Jesus, the Source of living water. I pray for this for all children—in Kenya, Rwanda, and across the globe. +

Rich Stearns is president of World Vision U.S. and the author of *The Hole in Our Gospel* and *Unfinished*. Follow him at twitter.com/richstearns.

FIND MORE

See photos from the countries where World Vision works at wvmag.org/photos.

Embark

COME IN AND SEE THE WORLD

ONLINE

Read more about World Vision's response to the Syrian refugee crisis at wvmag.org/syria.

Lebanon

A Syrian refugee boy peeks out from the doorway of his home in an informal tent settlement in the Bekaa Valley. March 15 marks the beginning of the eighth year of Syria's civil war. Since 2011, millions of refugees have flooded into Lebanon and neighboring countries while millions more remain displaced inside Syria. World Vision has helped more than 2.37 million children and families in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, and Iraq.

HEATHER KLINGER/WORLD VISION





- Embark

Bolivia

Rocio Lopez Orosco, 11, walks over a polluted stream in Colomi. Her family does not have clean water at their home, so she must walk to get it from a nearby ground well. "This is how we live," Rocio says. World Vision will help improve access to clean water in her community, help feed malnourished children, provide vocational training, and support schools with educational material.

EUGENE LEE/WORLD VISION



• Embark





Mali

Djenidie village residents dance to celebrate a World Vision well-drilling crew striking water June 5, 2017. This well marks World Vision's 1,500th borehole drilled in Mali since 2003. Still, only 16 percent of Malians in rural areas have access to hand-washing facilities with soap, and only about 64 percent of people in rural areas like Djenidie, southern Mali, have access to an improved water source. World Vision is focused on bringing access to clean water to more than 800,000 Malians between 2010 and 2020.

CHRIS HUBER/WORLD VISION

• Embark



Cambodia

A family affected by flooding exudes relief after a World Vision water filter distribution. During the rainy season, flooded wells caused families like this one to temporarily lose access to clean water.

OSCAR DURAND/WORLD VISION



Nepal

Sri Ram Baral stands next to a white tank, known as a *ghaintas*, in Hansapur. World Vision taught Baral how to build rooftop rainwater collection systems and how to create a greenhouse that allows his family to easily grow vegetables. Now his vegetables and gardens can flourish.

SUNJULI KUNWAR/WORLD VISION

COVER STORY | 12

Walk with 5-year-old Grace along her long path to clean water.

Discover

EXPLORE THE ISSUES FACING PEOPLE IN POVERTY

“I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink.”
—MATTHEW 25:35



Kenya

Children on their way home from school stop for a drink of clean water from a solar-powered, automated water kiosk in Kalawa. It works like a gas pump: People bring their jerry cans and ATM-like cards, press a button, and water flows. People here used to walk long distances for dirty water—it could take five hours to get to the river and back. World Vision installed three kiosks and 14 boreholes that have changed the travel time to five minutes for clean, clear water.

JON WARREN/WORLD VISION

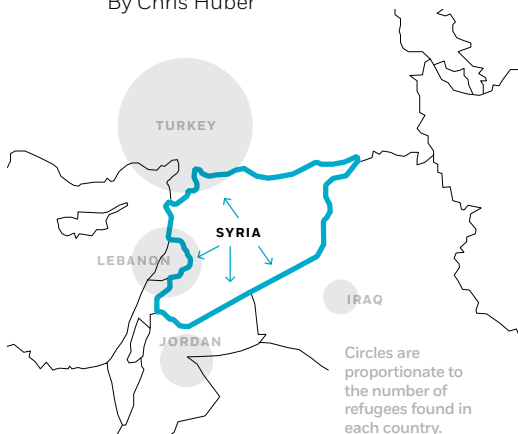


LAURA REINHARDT/WORLD VISION



Syrian refugee crisis

By Chris Huber



The ongoing Syria civil war will enter its eighth year March 15. Conflict has set back the national standard of living in Syria by decades—now that healthcare facilities, schools, homes, businesses, and water and sanitation systems have been damaged or destroyed. Hundreds of thousands of people have died, nearly 5.5 million Syrians have fled the country as refugees, and 6.1 million Syrians are displaced within the country. Half of the people affected are children. About 13.1 million people inside Syria—almost three-quarters of the population—need humanitarian assistance. **Since the civil war began in 2011, World Vision has helped more than 2.37 million refugees and displaced people in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, and Iraq.** Read more at wvmag.org/syria.

SINCE 2011

5.5 MILLION

Syrians have fled the country as refugees

13.1 MILLION

Syrians inside the country need humanitarian assistance



SHABIR HUSSAIN/WORLD VISION

MYANMAR REFUGEES IN BANGLADESH

More than **650,000 people** have fled their homes in western Myanmar's Rakhine state to Bangladesh since late August because of **renewed fighting** between inter-communal groups, minority groups, and government military forces. Hundreds cross the border from Myanmar into Bangladesh daily. **Decades of tension and unrest** in remote areas of Myanmar have displaced another 240,000 people within the country. World Vision staff in Bangladesh have **reached more than 220,000 people** with emergency food relief; Child-Friendly Spaces; access to clean water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities; and emergency supplies including tarps, clothes, and blankets. Read more at wvmag.org/myanmar. 📍

—Chris Huber



CHRIS HUBER/WORLD VISION

Puerto Rico

Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Maria

THE 2017 HURRICANE season in the Caribbean and Atlantic regions was one of historic proportions, bringing some of the strongest and wettest storms on record in hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria. World Vision responded to all three disasters, sending dozens of semitruckloads of relief and rebuilding supplies to communities in the **Houston** area; Immokalee, **Florida**; and various sites in **Puerto Rico** to help some of the worst-affected storm survivors. As of Feb. 1, World Vision and local partners have helped more than 80,742 people with food, water, hygiene kits, flood clean-up kits, tents, tarps, cash assistance, and other household necessities. Thanks to a generous church partner, World Vision opened a warehouse in Houston to provide supplies to sustain recovery efforts for the foreseeable future. Read more at wvmag.org/irma, wvmag.org/harvey, and wvmag.org/maria. 📍 —Chris Huber

Democratic Republic of the Congo

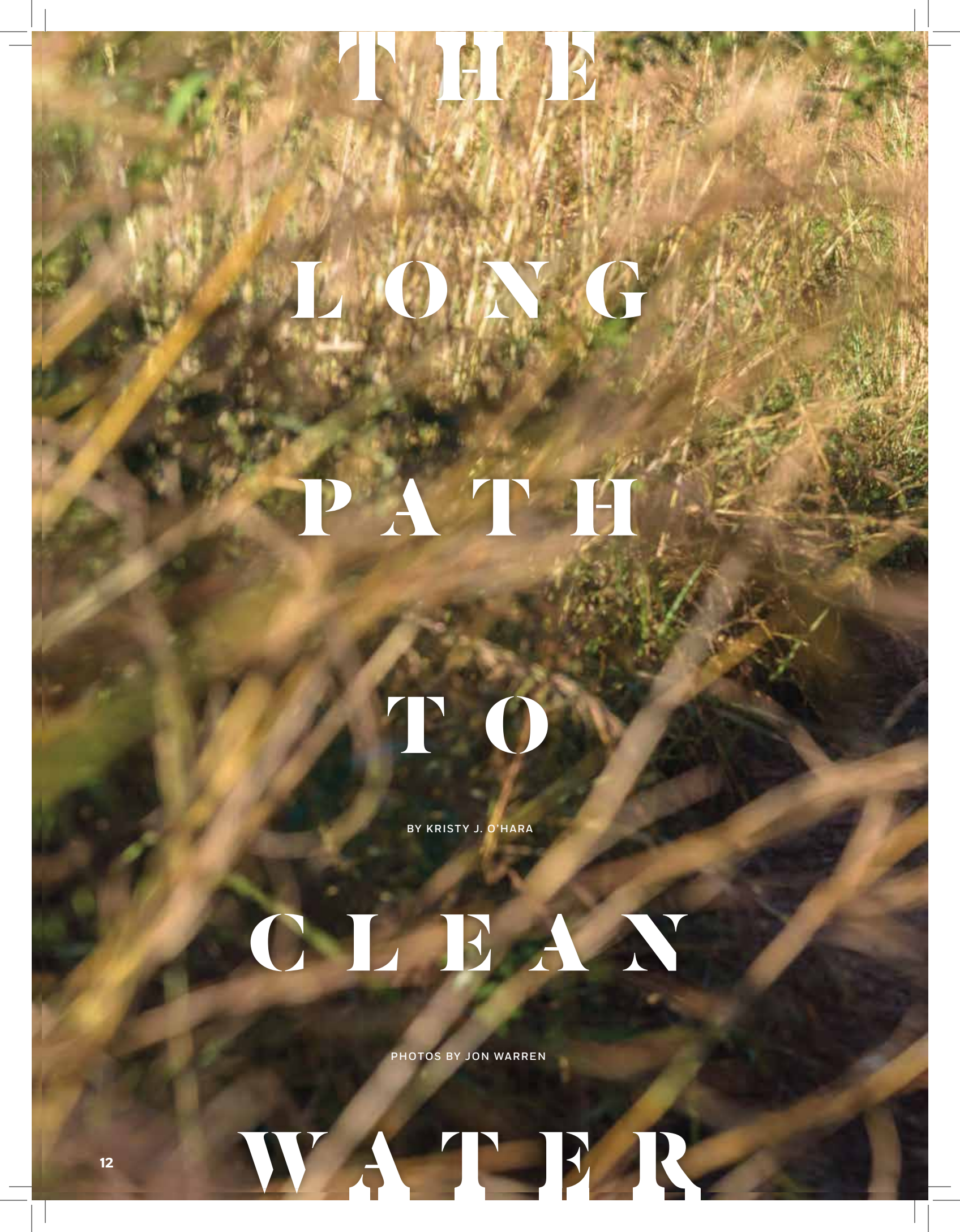
The people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo have endured more than two decades of civil war and conflict, which have claimed as many as 6 million lives. Violence has continued to spread, **displacing more than 4.3 million people**. More than 13 million people of the DRC's nearly 80-million population need humanitarian assistance and protection, with more than **7 million people facing food insecurity**. World Vision scaled up our response in 2017 to address increasing needs, reaching 146,000 people. Read more at wvmag.org/drc. 📍 —Chris Huber

146,000

PEOPLE REACHED



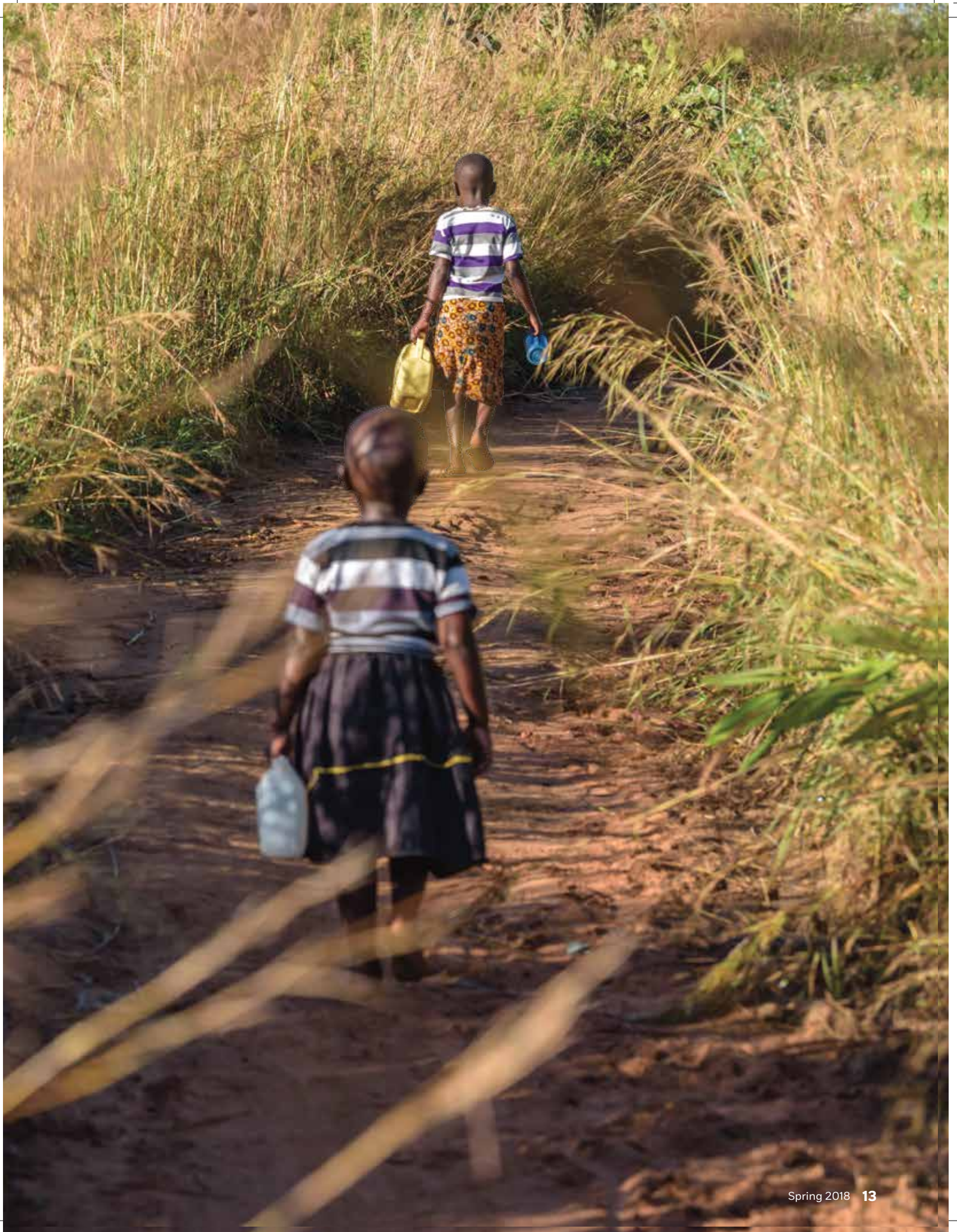
KATE SHAW/WORLD VISION



THE
LONG
PATH
TO
CLEAN
WATER

BY KRISTY J. O'HARA

PHOTOS BY JON WARREN





A

t daybreak, Asamo Grace's tiny 5-year-old feet swiftly carry her along the narrow dirt path. She softly hums her ABC's as butterflies flutter before her and crickets chirp in the dry grasses she brushes past. As the Ugandan sun begins its day's journey across the bright blue sky, Grace begins her journey for water.

Grace's little sister, Asimo Judith, who's a month shy of her third birthday, scampers behind, struggling to keep up as they make their way through the high grasses that stand far taller than both girls. But unlike so many people who begin their day with morning exercise, this 1.75-mile walk in Morungatuny, Uganda, isn't for fun or to take in the beauty of a peaceful morning. It's out of necessity—Grace and Judith are making the day's first trek to get water for their family.

Above: Grace, 5, maintains her balance as she fills her water container at the closest swamp, which is her family's main water source. Opposite page, top: Joseph, 35, still carries emotional and physical pain from being tortured by the LRA. Bottom: Grace, left, and her sister Judith stand in the doorway of their home, which they help their grandmother maintain.


The girls live with their father, stepmother, grandmother, and four siblings, who range in age from 10 to 17. Their father, Alia Joseph, works as a farmer and tax collector. Their grandmother, Ariso Selina, helps care for the children, but she has ulcers and cysts that make it painful for her to walk for water.

With the nearest borehole about 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) away, the journey for clean water is more than 7 miles round trip. So the family instead settles for contaminated swamp water that's half that distance—about 2.8 kilometers (1.75 miles)—away.

Grace and Judith must make their daily trek so the family can survive, and struggling for survival is what this community is accustomed to.

A WOUNDED COMMUNITY

LIFE WAS ALREADY challenging for the people of Morungatuny, but in June 2002, their world



**“
I was arrested
and badly
beaten, almost
to the point of
death.
”**

ALIA JOSEPH



became downright terrifying when Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a rebel group operating in Uganda and neighboring countries, moved into the area. The LRA launched its insurgency in 1987, aiming to create a new government based on a twisted interpretation of the Ten Commandments. Over the years, the LRA abducted tens of thousands of children, forcing them to fight or marry its soldiers, who murdered, raped, and destroyed.

Auma Mary Margaret, 55, is a local official in Morungatuny. She remembers the horror.

“We rely on cows, which were being eaten by the rebels,” Mary Margaret says. “Food eaten. Houses burned. Most of the schools were destroyed. You couldn't remain at your home alone.”

To protect people during the insurgency, the Ugandan government created camps for families while it fought the LRA. Borehole wells were installed at the camps, but there was little access to food. Children cried in anguish as they starved. As the calendar changed to 2003, the death toll rose, and desperation drove parents to take bold, dangerous risks.

Grace's parents made the perilous trek home to their farm to gather food, but as they harvested cassava, LRA soldiers found them. “I was arrested and badly beaten, almost to the point of death,” says Joseph, 35.

Soldiers tortured him for six hours. He's never fully recovered from his injuries due to the lack of medical care in the community. His wife, pregnant at the time, also suffered. “When we were arrested, they separated us, so she was taken in a different direction. I was tortured, and she was tortured.”

The extent of her injuries suggests the worst. “She poured blood,” Joseph says. They lost their baby.

As the government cleared the area, families

returned home. Joseph and his wife had more children, including Grace and Judith, but because of their emotional and physical pains, problems arose in their marriage. Joseph's wife left home two years ago and has failed to return.

Their story isn't unique. Many people in the community recount terrible events.

"People are still traumatized," says Abugo Patience, senior secretary in Morungatuny's government.

While it's been more than a decade since the area was under immediate threat from the LRA, the fear hasn't faded. If Joseph hears a gunshot, it takes him back. He says, "You begin standing [close] with your children, and you get suspicious. You're peeping around, but you don't want to get out of the home. At night, you can't sleep because you think it's another attack."

When he can sleep, his slumber is often ruined by torturous nightmares.

"There are moments in dreams that the soldiers and rebels have again come, and when I dream, I get up and find my body very painful. I feel as if it's a fresh wound," Joseph says. The dreams emotionally rip open the wounds so desperate to heal.

Wanting to move forward, Joseph eventually remarried and clings to his faith to help him lead his family. He says, "I have a family that has survived, by the grace of God, and we have our hope in God."

WATER STRUGGLES

AFTER A SHAKY peace deal was established in 2006, people began returning home. But they faced a water problem. The boreholes drilled during the war were by the camps, which weren't close to people's normal homes. Aluka Elizabeth, the area program manager for World Vision in Morungatuny, says there are 37 borehole wells across the larger district—but only 20 are functional.

"The others got spoiled," she says. "All of these were put in by the government and local partners during the insurgency to manage the larger populations in the camp. At that time, World Vision was not there."

Patience, 25, says clean water in the district is accessible—within 1 kilometer—for about an abysmal 20 percent of people.

People in the developing world walk an average of 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) a day for water. In Morungatuny, if people want to access clean water, the only reliable borehole is about 6 kilometers one way. Joseph says it can take between 90 minutes and two hours to walk that distance.



“
**I fear kidnapers—they use sacks
and put the sack on your head.**

”

ASAMO GRACE



Every borehole serves more than 850 people, which makes them incredibly crowded. Joseph says, “Then when you get to the water source, you can take two or three hours” because the line is so long, as it serves six communities.

Even if families wanted to endure the walk and wait, the fields often flood and cut off access during the rainy season.

So many families, like Grace’s, opt for the shorter

Above: Grace often gets tired and sore from carrying water about 6 kilometers every day. She also suffers from kidney problems because her family can’t afford the treatment.

walk to the dirty swamp. But that creates a host of other challenges.

SAFETY STRUGGLES

TALL GRASSES MORE than twice as high as Grace’s tiny frame overhang the path she takes to get water. There are noises and rustlings aplenty—goats, cows, and pigs roaming; men zooming by on bicycles; and other women and children also walking for water.



Together, the sounds create a kind of symphony.

But not all the sounds are innocent. One of the biggest concerns for children like Grace is safety. Her long walk is fraught with opportunities to get hurt or for others to hurt her.

In 2016, a child in a neighboring community was kidnapped while walking for water.

“It frightens me moving alone along that long, bushy road,” Grace says, her voice barely audible. “I fear kidnappers—they use sacks and put the sack on your head.”

Sexual assault and broken bones from falling are also a risk. But safety isn’t only an issue for children. In a community with such deep emotional wounds, tempers can be short. Often husbands will accuse their wives of infidelity because they’re suspicious of how long the women are gone for water.

“The issue of water is causing domestic violence,” Patience says.

EDUCATION STRUGGLES

WHEN GRACE ARRIVES late at her school, St. Mika,

Above: Grace, on the far left in her school uniform, loves to draw and count and dreams of becoming a nurse, but she is about two years behind in her studies because she misses so much school due to how long it takes to get water each day.

she stands nervously outside, reluctant to burst under the thatched-roof structure to join her classmates. Sometimes administrators and teachers scold or even beat her for being late. But today, her teacher, Acham Lucy, greets her with a smile and invites her to take her seat on the wooden bench.

Lucy guides the students in learning their ABC’s, numbers, and types of transportation, and she ends their morning lessons with having them draw their teacher reading a book, which Grace pours herself into. She loves drawing pictures—on paper with pencil or in the dirt with chalk—as well as jumping rope, matching, and counting.

Grace enjoys school, but to make it to class, which starts at 8 a.m., she must hurry to get water in the morning. She’s often as much as an hour late—and sometimes she may simply not go at all. During the rainy season, she misses about 10 days a month. But during the dry season, when she must walk much farther for water, her grandmother Selina estimates that Grace misses 80 percent of her classes. And sometimes, she may miss class simply because her

family can't afford her exam fees or supplies.

Because she's missed so many classes, Grace is two years behind in her studies.

"Her performance is poor because she comes late," Lucy says. "She has to catch up. Sometimes she can't finish the week with coming to school. She can perform better when she attends every day and is on time too."

Classmates often ridicule Grace for being late and behind in her studies. She says, "They laugh at me all day."

But tardiness and absences are problems throughout Morungatuny. Many schools had to be rebuilt following the insurgency. Eloagu Julius, the school founder and a teacher, says the school started four years ago with 168 children. Today, the school has only 109 students, and of those, only 30 had arrived on time that day—a tally that isn't unusual.

"Children [can] come to school more easily when there is a water source nearby," Julius says. "It encourages children to run and have happiness."

Grace longs to become a nurse. She says, "I want to inject the children and be a vaccinator so they can get healed and not have diarrhea and polio." But she'll need a solid education to make that happen. She also needs the proper supplies to study. Selina laments that often the children cry because they don't have notebooks and schoolbooks to do their assignments.

Joseph prays. "My dream, and I'm praying by the grace of God, that he gives them life, and I want my children to study," he says. "I want one to become a doctor, one an engineer, one a police person, one a carpenter, and one to become a teacher."

HEALTH STRUGGLES

AT HOME, GRACE seems tired and may be developing a fever. Judith runs around, her tiny body carrying a far heavier-than-normal belly.

"Judith has a problem—she continuously falls sick," Selina says. She's had tests done. "They keep telling me she has a high fever and stomach pain, and they tell me it's malaria."

She'll receive a health evaluation soon, but the diagnosis could also be worms, which Grace has been treated for in the past. Grace and Selina have also had typhoid, and the whole family—particularly the children—consistently gets diarrhea.

"It can be frequent," Selina says, "especially during the wet season and when they go [for water] after the animals have drunk."

She says the children are all constantly sick. "Every time they use the water from the swamp, there are complaints of stomach problems and headaches," Joseph adds. Grace has been diagnosed

“**There's no running water. We get water from the rain, so we can't wash our hands.**”

OJULONG
AARON

Below: Grace helps her grandmother, Selina, sweep and maintain their home. Even though she is only 5, Grace is already aware of all the chores that must be done each day.

with kidney problems, but proper medical treatment is not available in their community.

The water also creates itchy and painful sores that leave scars. Grace has some on her legs that she says hurt when she walks for water. It's only one of the pains for her young body. She says she also gets tired and her head and neck hurt from carrying the water "because it's long, and I don't rest on the way."

The distance to the health centers also compounds the water issues. The dirt roads to get there are bumpy, filled with holes, and in some places, only wide enough for a bike—which all make it challenging for families to transport their children.

Okello Emmanuel, 40, is part of the village health team, which serves as the first line of treatment for people in the community. He says, "There are long distances to access the health service facilities. Some parents can't get to these, so they reach them when they're already at an emergency level."

Even if they do make it to the local clinic, there are other difficulties. Ojulong Aaron, the clinic officer for Morungatuny Health Center III, has a sink at the clinic that doesn't produce anything.

"There's no running water," he says. "We [only] get water from the rain, so we can't wash our hands."

Aaron has a staff of only seven who see more than 1,200 people a month. He says malaria is the number one disease for the children. The clinic staff also handle many cases of diarrhea, typhoid, and dermatitis from the dirty water, as well as people needing psychosocial support after the LRA insurgency. He says that nationally, about 20 percent of people get



diarrhea. The local rate is barely above that at 22 percent, and he hopes to decrease that number.

He says the other major challenge is a shortage of medicine and tests. "Without the test, you can't get the treatment," Aaron says. "Sometimes we're blindly treating."

But families often can't afford treatment elsewhere. "You have poverty rates so high, and you tell someone to buy something to clear up a rash; where would they get the money for that?" Patience says. "If they go to the health unit and find there is no medicine, the only solution is to buy from the private drugstores, which are very expensive." So it becomes a choice between medicine and food.

That's why Joseph continues to have problems from injuries he sustained during the terrible beating,

and it's why his children have persistent health problems.

"When any of the children fall sick, I'm not able to raise enough funds to get a full treatment," he says. "Our little Grace has a problem with the stomach and has pain in her kidneys and pelvic area."

Aaron says additional funding would help provide tests and medicine for proper treatment. But prevention is better than treatment, so having access to safe water close to home would change everything.

Joseph sees how clean water would give his family better health, and he says World Vision can help.

"Sponsorship can help Grace get that treatment."

Below: Judith, nearly 3, naps at her grandmother's feet, exhausted after walking for water in the afternoon heat.

FINANCIAL STRUGGLES

WITH SO LITTLE money to support his family, Joseph struggles to pay all the costs involved with his children's





“
**The priority is
 mostly water
 because without
 water, you don’t
 have life.**
 ”

ABUGO PATIENCE



educations, which in total cost about 990,000 schillings a year (about US\$278). But what pains him more is that he can’t afford the medicine his children desperately need when they’re sickened by dirty water.

He feels these strains, but the lingering effects of his injuries prevent him from farming more crops to sell at the market. “I can’t do a big plot that would bring a lot of food for my home,” he says. “My waist gets tired. I desire to do work like any other, but my energy [isn’t enough].”

Stomach pains, cysts, and ulcers slow Selina down when farming, so she struggles to keep up, saying, “The children are my hands of work.”

And without water close by, Joseph can’t water his crops, so they don’t flourish. Instead, he’s forced to depend on the rain—which is no longer reliable. “The rains are very unpredictable nowadays,” Patience says. “We used to have two rainy seasons and one dry season, and now we can’t predict how many seasons we’ll have in one year. ... You can’t really say, ‘Let me plant this at this time.’”

By early November, Joseph’s chili pepper crops had already shriveled. He dreams of someday having resources to help him farm more productively.

“If we had a near water source, we could maybe do irrigation or draw water for our crops,” he says. “We would be able to do short-term rotating with crops like cabbages, green peppers, onions, and tomatoes. All those crops have market during the dry season because they’re not available.”

SOLUTIONS

WITH WATER THE source of so many problems

Top: One of Grace’s main chores is washing the dishes after meals and placing them on the raised rack to dry.
Bottom: Many of the women and children in the community have a form of dermatitis that causes itchy, circular sores all over their bodies, like Abido Merab, 5, has on the side of her face. Grace has smaller sores on her legs.

in Morungatuny, both the government and World Vision are working toward solutions.

“The priority is mostly water because without water, you don’t have life,” Patience says of the government’s efforts. “But the resources we have are very meager.”

She says the government is able to rehabilitate one borehole a year. It would take 17 years to fix what already exists, let alone build new wells or fix more. Over the last four years, World Vision has installed four borehole wells in the district and trained community leaders on how to maintain the wells.

“World Vision plays a big role because it does almost everything a government is supposed to do,” Patience says. “It’s helped us with livelihood, agriculture, sponsorship, education. The pit latrines they’ve given us are improving the sanitation in the schools. It has also drilled boreholes. It encourages us and trains us on other issues that are related. The community is empowered.”



She says the evidence of that empowerment is visible throughout other communities in the district where World Vision hasn't yet worked, but where the principles it teaches are already being applied. Patience says it "shows that people have really learned something" when you see practices and programs being shared by word of mouth.

Mary Margaret sees change in the community as well as a correlation between clean water and recovery.

"We're grateful to World Vision for the healing we have seen," she says. "We have some boreholes.

Above: A two-hour walk from Grace's home is a government borehole serving 850 people with wait times up to three hours. Instead of spending all day fetching clean water, Grace's family reluctantly opts for the contaminated swamp water closer to home.

It's not enough, but we have some—we are lucky. The relationship is so good. They are helping."

World Vision is working with the community to install three boreholes in the area in the year ahead. Paul Oiesigye, a water engineer for World Vision in Uganda's eastern region, says drilling for shallow wells in the area has been challenging.

"You have to drill and go deep to get water," he says. "In some areas, you're really limited by the underground water situation."

Elizabeth noted that some of the borehole



“
**God will
remove this
wound of
pain.**
”

ALIA JOSEPH



wells run dry faster than expected. World Vision wants to install a mechanized system. Paul says, “A solar-powered, motorized water system is cost-effective. They use a generator or a grid. The only challenge is in the initial investment of buying the solar panels. After the initial investment, the people are able to manage that system.”

A project like this can help about 20,000 people, in comparison to 900 served by a regular borehole.

The first priority is the health centers, says Paul: “We need to ensure the health centers are equipped with continuous water year-round. We can’t mainly rely on rainwater.”

Elizabeth says that if World Vision can drill 13 boreholes, they can reduce the local walk for water to around 3 kilometers. With 20 boreholes, the distance will drop to 1.5 kilometers—significant progress toward reaching the ideal 1-kilometer threshold. She says, “We will be very intentional,” when World Vision plans the well locations with the community.

Even though Joseph still struggles with pain and Grace and Judith are still walking a long path for water, the family is hopeful. As they attend church every week, Joseph encourages his children to seek God in the midst of their burdens.

“I use the Bible and tell them the living testimonies of our home based on the trials the family is going through,” he says. “Every challenge we go through, I share with them and encourage them every Sunday to go for prayers, and when they go, they shouldn’t just be going to church; they should pray, repent of anything the family has done to God, pray for God to forgive them, and pray for God to open a way for them. God will remove this wound of pain.” 🙏

GIVE Help bring water to communities like Grace’s. A gift of \$50 provides clean water to one person, bringing lasting change. To give, complete and mail the form between pages 20 and 21 or call 1.866.332.4453.

ACT On May 19, join others around the world to walk or run—and change a life!—through World Vision’s Global 6K for Water. Learn more and register at worldvision6K.org.

ORCHESTRATED
BY
G O D

BY KARI COSTANZA
PHOTOS BY JON WARREN

The struggle for clean water isn't specific to Africa. Water woes consume much of the developing world. In Honduras, as in every other region, children suffer the most. But in this community, people decided to do something about it.

Normally gregarious, Pedro Antonio Goday Sosa was miserable. Every day, he watched families slog down a muddy trail to the Hato River in eastern Honduras, their horses and wheelbarrows laden with empty plastic containers. Winding through the coffee and tobacco fields of the Jamastran Valley, the Hato River is shared by men, women, children, cows, horses, and pigs. It is filthy. The 70-year-old grandfather, known affectionately as Don Pedro, saw how drinking from the river was making people sick, and he was determined to stop it.

At a community meeting in 2016, Don Pedro's frustration spilled over. He appealed to World Vision Project Manager Ruth Cardenas and World Vision Facilitator Noe Rodriguez, an expert in water and sanitation, on behalf of the children. He begged Noe and Ruth to find a solution to the problem. The Hato River was a plague on the 3,000 people who lived in two communities, Sartenejas and Zamorano.

Noe and Ruth consulted with World Vision's water, sanitation, and hygiene staff at the national office in Tegucigalpa. They got good news. "Suddenly, the project was planned in the budget for







2018,” says Noe, “but only for drilling a well.” Don Pedro wasn’t satisfied. It wasn’t enough. Children were suffering.

Don Pedro knew the water crisis in Jamastran had to be fixed right away. But a permanent solution would only be possible if World Vision, two communities, and big-hearted donors united in a project orchestrated by God.

A community in crisis

Drinking dirty water affected all of life in Jamastran, creating perpetual health problems for children. “We found it was contaminated with Hepatitis A and poisons,” says Dr. Zulema Lopez, who blames the animals who drink and waste there and the pesticides that trickle into the river from the coffee and tobacco fields that provide residents with a meager income. “It’s normal to see children throwing up and expelling worms,” says Ana Lainez, the clinic’s nurse.

The clinic routinely treats children who are malnourished, suffering from diarrhea, and infected with cholera. Some damage can never be undone. “It affects their cognitive development,” says Dr. Zulema. If that’s not enough, the clinic gets its water from the very source of so much illness—the Hato River. Lips pursed, Nurse Ana opens the tap in the delivery room. Brown water runs out like tea steeped too long in a pot. “We can’t even wash our hands in it,” she says.

This is the last day we will argue over water problems. Your problem is solved.

NOE RODRIGUEZ

At the primary school, dirty river water is stored in a *pila*, a cement tank. The tank is so deep that the littlest students risk falling in when they scoop water. The school’s gentle janitor, Lionel Arriola, 44, worries for them. “Sometimes their thirst is so big they go to the *pila* and drink water,” he says. “One hour later, they are vomiting.”

Families suffered the most. Every day,



Opposite: Filling old soda bottles with contaminated river water nearly cost David his life. Above: Don Pedro, in the checkered shirt, helped mobilize the community with his passion.

Johanna Hernandez, 23, would walk 6 kilometers (3.7 miles)—the average distance people in the developing world walk to get water for drinking, cooking, and cleaning—for dirty water. Three times a day, she would fill an old wheelbarrow with empty soda bottles and take her sons, David, 5, and Noe, 3, to the river. Shivering, she’d wade knee-deep into the cold, chocolate-colored water while the boys played in the sand on the bank.

Filling soda bottles, their once-cheerful labels peeling with wear, is both tedious and dangerous. Only a few months before, David was caught in the current, drifting out of his mother’s reach until a big rock stopped his path. “I was washing my clothes here,” she says. “He almost drowned.” David survived, a deep cut on his lip as a reminder of his brush with death.

Good news at last

World Vision staff in Jamastran worked tirelessly with the national office to move the project forward, spurred on by phone calls from Don Pedro. “He called me every day: breakfast, lunch, and dinner, morning, noon, and night,” says Noe. Noe lived in a constant state of agitation. The conflict with Don Pedro hurt his tender heart. Then came a break.

“Our colleagues [from the U.S.] came to visit,” says Noe. “We went to the river for them to see the community’s situation, and we saw that they were really moved by the suffering. They took pictures to share with their friends in the U.S. Three months later, [they] returned with good news. Donors in the U.S. saw the photos and heard the Lord call them to help.”

Refined Technologies, a chemical decontamination company, had watched a video of the community at the filthy river. Moved to action, the company pledged the funds needed for the project. Noe jumped on his motorbike, racing to tell Don Pedro the news. “When I saw him, I told him, ‘Don Pedro, this is the last day we will argue over water problems. Your problem is solved. The water project for Sartenejas and Zamorano is a reality.’” Don Pedro grabbed Noe and hugged him hard. In August 2017, the work to bring water to 3,000 people began.

First, a miracle

The project kicked off with a miracle when drillers discovered clean water on the first try: “The perfect well,” exclaims Don Pedro. Builders from the community created a sturdy hut to protect the source as 600 people began backbreaking work every day for four months, rising with the sun to move heavy rocks and dig miles of trenches.

In her front yard, Juana Martinez stored 1,000 pipes and 1,000 bags of



cement used to construct the massive 60,000-gallon water tank. Juana serves on the water committee made up of men and women, responsible for overseeing that a near-marathon—40 kilometers—of trenches are properly excavated. Her red hair tucked beneath a jaunty cowboy hat, Juana, 57, motors her all-terrain vehicle along the trenches, recording names of all present, as men and women dig with tools they've brought from home.

This is Juana's first time as a project manager, and she says she loves it. It's a hallmark of World Vision's work to involve everyone in decision-making—men, women, and children. "This is an example for other women in the community," says Juana. "They tell us we are blessed and that we are doing a great job."

A mission accomplished

Juana and others on the water committee are documenting every moment of this journey. "We're creating a big photo album," she says. "It will serve for future generations to understand why you have to take care of the water."

The album will have a spectacular ending: the celebration when the project is christened with good food to eat, folk dancing, and a marimba band made up of sponsored children. There will be speeches of love and thanksgiving. Hundreds of people will attend, including the health clinic staff, teachers and students from nearby schools, and families like Johanna's who will no longer have to drag a wheelbarrow full of soda bottles to the river to collect water that poisons them.

Above: For months, 600 community members worked with tools brought from home to see the project through.

The gift of water in Jamastran is seen as a gift from heaven. "The power of God has shown here," says water committee member Julian Ordonez, a father of four. They are thankful to World Vision staff like Noe. They're thankful to the donors who stepped for-

**"I fought for children.
Now they will have
clean water."**

DON PEDRO

ward to fund a dream. How World Vision, two communities, and caring donors came together as a team was something that could only have been orchestrated by the Almighty. "God put his eyes on us," says Julian simply. As for Don Pedro, he's going to retire. "My dream will be achieved," he says. "I fought for children. Now they will have clean water." 🍌

GIVE Help bring water to communities like Don Pedro's. A gift of \$50 provides clean water to one person, bringing lasting change. To give, complete and mail the form between pages 20 and 21 or call 1.866.332.4453.

**GLOBAL 6K FOR
WATER | 30**

Join others who are
lacing up for a life-changing
walk for water at
worldvision6k.org.

Inspire

MOTIVATING YOU TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

**Q&A WITH
MERCYME | 34**

Lead singer Bart
Millard shares about
loss, redemption, and
God's mercy.

In the 1980s, Lani Dolifka (right with a woman named Naomi in Kenya) learned the water flowing through the faucet in her Colorado home had been declared unsafe. It inspired Lani and her husband, Don, to develop an automated small-scale purification plant that converted their tap water into pure drinking water. Today, their company, Watermill Express, is the largest drive-up pure drinking water company in the U.S. Read her story at wvmag.org/lani.



CHRIS HUBER/WORLD VISION



GAMEFACE MEDIA

How far would you go?

Six kilometers, a little more than 3.7 miles, is the average distance people in the developing world walk for water—water that is often contaminated with life-threatening diseases. Every day, 835 children under age 5 die from diarrhea caused by contaminated water, poor sanitation, and improper hygiene.

But the global water and sanitation crisis can be solved within our lifetimes. Join thousands who are participating in World Vision's Global 6K for Water to help bring clean water to one new person every 10 seconds.

Motivate your church

By Phil Manzano

A couple of years ago, 20 members of Cascade Covenant Church in North Bend, Washington, joined Team World Vision and began running together to raise money to bring clean water to children around the world.

Then last year, about 70 people from the church joined the Global 6K for Water: young and old, walking or running to serve in a simple, but powerful way.

"It is such an easy way to have people put their faith in action," Senior Pastor Dan Boehlje says. "We're just one tiny little church here in Washington, but you multiply that across the United States, across the globe and that makes a big difference."

Angela McCann, children's pastor for Cascade Covenant, saw the 6K as a wonderful teachable moment for children.


"It was always important to me to teach my kids to be grateful for what they had," Angela says. "And so as a mother, I just think this is such a great way to teach our kids to be thankful for something as simple as a clean glass of water that's right out of the tap."

Nestled in the shadow of the Cascades east of Seattle, the 6K has given Cascade Covenant a way to take a broader and deeper view of changing the world through sponsoring a child, says Associate Pastor Lyndsey Watson.

"It's not just that child, it's that family; it's that community we're able to impact," Lyndsey says.

Church members Duane and Julie Duim have been longtime supporters of World Vision, traveling to Zambia to meet their sponsored child, which Duane says was a life-changing moment.

"You commonly get asked, why you would do something like this," Duane says. "But why not? Why would you not want to come in and be able to love others the way Christ loves us?"

"We know that we're all sponsored into God's kingdom, and he calls us to do the same with his children. And we're fortunate to be blessed in order that we can turn around and be a blessing to others." Read more online at wvmag.org/cc. 



ANDREA PEER/WORLD VISION



RYAN HAWK/GENESIS PHOTO AGENCY

Offer an incentive

By Chris Huber

Teacher Tammy Belau donned long pigtails and sat in a chair in the middle of the gym floor with 250 students watching. Two eager middle-school boys flanked her wielding dull scissors and wide grins. The boys' plan: Cut off 10 inches of her hair.

This was the boys' reward for finishing first in the Global 6K for Water last May. Tammy, a middle school math and high school finance teacher at Hosanna Christian School in Klamath Falls, Oregon, hosted the event to fundraise for World Vision. To add an extra layer of motivation, she pledged to donate an inch of hair for every 10 people registered if their school reached 100 participants.

"God gave me so much in Jesus, and I love to give. It is so rewarding to surprise people and give joy," Tammy says. "I loved that I was able to sacrifice something as simple as my hair to motivate 100 people to make a difference."

Tammy heard about World Vision's Global 6K for Water at a teachers' conference. She was immediately

drawn to the cause—partly because it sounded easy to do and partly because she knew the people of Klamath Falls would participate. She registered the school as a host site and started recruiting.

Getting buy-in was easy. She announced it in daily school emails and at weekly chapel gatherings with students and posted a bright orange and white sign in the hallway. In the lead-up to the 6K, she found encouragement and camaraderie in the community cultivated on the Global 6K leaders' Facebook page, set up to share photos and ideas among World Vision staff and host site coordinators around the world.

Tammy and her team raised \$4,000, which will bring clean water to 80 people. Tammy and her husband also sponsored the three children on their family's race bibs.

Says Tammy, "God comes to us with a gift. We come with open hands, and then we need to turn and give. We can't keep him to ourselves." Read more online at wvmag.org/tammy.

Engage your children

By Chris Huber

The last thing 7-year-old Kamryn Thackrey sees before she goes to bed each night is a photo of Cheru, a 5-year-old girl from northern Kenya (see page 38), holding a tea kettle full of dirty water on her head. Cheru looks tired from walking 6 kilometers with her siblings to collect water for their family.

The photo inspires Kamryn and reminds her to pray for Cheru: that she would get access to clean water and not have to walk so far for it.

Kamryn and her family participated in the Global 6K for Water last year in Flora, Illinois. The second-grader and her little sister, Abigail, led the effort to raise \$1,200. That's enough to help provide clean water to 24 people like Cheru.

"I was excited that I got to help kids not have to walk so far and that they could have clean water," Kamryn says.

Kamryn's journey with Cheru began last spring. One day, her mom, Kari, was sorting through the mail and about to toss out the *World Vision* magazine, when the cover photo caught Kamryn's eye. "Who is this?!" Kamryn asked.

When Kari took her over to the couch to read it together, Cheru's story brought Kamryn to tears. Cheru was 5 in the photo, the same age as Abigail.

"Kamryn started crying and I said, 'What's wrong?'" Kari recounts. "She said, 'I can't imagine Abigail having to walk that far for water. That would be scary.'"

So Kamryn and her family signed up for the 2017 Global 6K for Water. As they began fundraising and planning the race course, Kamryn shared Cheru's story with everyone. They made fliers and posted a video on Facebook.

"We enjoyed being able to do it just on our own, rather than drive to a big event, but knowing we were part of something bigger," Kari says.

"I want to try and do a big one at my church," Kamryn says.

Kamryn has been praying for Cheru since last spring. She recently learned that Cheru's community will be getting access to clean water this year (see page 38).

"Awesome," Kamryn says matter-of-factly. "We will walk for other kids now." Read more online at wvmag.org/kamryn.



SEAN LOFTIN/GENESIS PHOTO AGENCY

On May 19, join the world's largest 6K walk for water. Find a host site near you or host your own 6K. Learn more and register at worldvision6K.org.

Praying for clean water preparations

By Kristy J. O'Hara

During the season of Lent, Christians around the world prepare their hearts for Easter and the good news of new life through Jesus' death on the Cross. Just as many prep their spiritual lives for the Source of living water, thousands of families worldwide in areas where World Vision works are preparing their homes for the new life that physical clean water will bring. When World Vision drills wells in communities, we don't just arrive, install a water source, and leave. Instead, we work with community members to educate them on proper water, sanitation, and hygiene practices that will contribute to a fuller life.

Communities work to to prepare their homes for clean water by changing their daily habits. So once clean water comes, they'll see healthier and happier lives. But change is always hard, and doing things differently takes time to adapt.

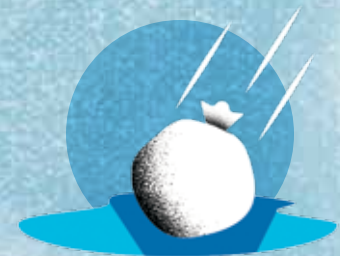
As you and your family seek the Source of living water this Easter, please pray for families World Vision works with as they implement six key sanitation and hygiene practices in their homes and prepare to receive clean water.



Pit latrines

World Vision educates people about how pit latrines keep water sources from getting contaminated by human waste. Instead of World Vision digging latrines, families are encouraged to dig them to build a sense of ownership. Without pit latrines, urine or feces can run into food and water sources and cause sickness.

Father, help people change their minds to embrace the idea of doing things a new way. Give them the strength and materials to build their own latrine.



Rubbish pits

Just as we have trash cans and garbage pickup at our houses, families in developing countries need a central place to put their trash. Having one dedicated pit for rubbish dug near a family's home helps eliminate contamination and diseases and keeps animals away.

Lord, none of us likes taking out the trash—it's a chore. Help us communicate to people how important it is and help them find a good spot for their compost.



Hand-washing stations

World Vision educates children about how washing their hands with soap is like a do-it-yourself vaccination. Families install hand-washing stations like tippy-taps near their latrines at home and learn how regular handwashing with soap—or ashes if they have no soap—eliminates harmful germs that can make them sick.

God, we dream of a future in which no family lacks proper sanitation. Work in people's hearts to remind them to clean their hands after using the bathroom and before preparing food.



Raised dish racks

With animals roaming freely, dishes on the ground can become contaminated. Instead, families learn to build raised racks to dry and store their plates, cups, pots, and utensils. This keeps dishes clean, so families can eat their food without the risk of consuming dangerous germs.

Jesus, help people build sturdy racks in safe locations to keep their dishes protected.



Safe water storage

As families gain access to clean water and are able to store it at home, they need to store it in properly covered containers so the water stays clean. Safe water can be easily contaminated by dirty hands, flies, or even animals, which is why it's important to transport and store clean water in a covered container.

Living Water, help families learn how to safely store the clean water they'll have access to. Keep it safe, and may it bless them.



Bathing showers

In communities with limited water sources, bathing showers provide people with clean water and privacy. They replace washing in community water sources and help prevent the spread of disease.

God, help World Vision increase the number of bathing showers for families. Provide people with cleansing waters and the privacy they need to reduce the threat of spreading illness and germs. +



COURTESY OF BRICKHOUSE ENTERTAINMENT

Q&A

MercyMe

By Kristy J. O'Hara

Bart Millard, the lead singer for Christian rock band MercyMe, stood on a movie set in Oklahoma, and emotions overwhelmed him. "I'm in tears, and I'm trying to not ruin the scene by making weird noises on the side," Bart says. "For the movie, they tapped the right emotion because it rattled me pretty good." The movie, *I Can Only Imagine*, debuts March 16, 2018, and is the story behind the hit song of the same name, which earned MercyMe two Dove awards and has been certified triple platinum for sales of more than 3 million digital downloads. MercyMe is partnering with World Vision for its 2018 tour, so we spoke with Bart about the movie, the tour, and leaning into God during tough times.

There's a lot of pain behind *I Can Only Imagine*. With the movie coming out, can you tell us about it?

I wrote *I Can Only Imagine* after my father passed away with cancer. I was 19 when he passed away and wrote it a few years after that when thinking about my dad being in a better place. My dad was really abusive most of my childhood. When I was in high school, he was diagnosed with cancer, and his life turned completely around—he fell completely in love with Jesus to the point that when he passed, he was one of my best

Bart Millard, on the right with his family, is the lead singer of MercyMe. The band has partnered with World Vision for its 2018 tour.

friends and one of the godliest people I know. People always say, "This is for Bart's dad," but it doesn't address my dad at all. It's about when I see Christ, and that's because I'd rather be obsessed with that than an empty bedroom or him not being around. It was my way of coping.

Somewhere along the line, a lady wanted to make a movie about it, and it's been about a six- or seven-year process. It was really therapeutic to go through that, watching people relive and re-enact these hard moments that I spent a lot of time trying to get away from, but a redemption story is a story worth telling. Now I can watch it as a fan of a pretty good movie.

What's your hope for the movie and how it will impact people?

I hope the redemption story is loud and clear. At the pre-screenings, people have come up, especially men, who've had unhealthy relationships with their fathers, maybe that went unresolved because their father passed away. But the biggest thing is for people to not assume they know how the story is going to pan out—it's not over yet. If there was one person for me to pick to never come to know Christ, it would have been my dad. But as long as there's air in your lungs, don't give up on the story, whether it's you or someone else. There's hope. That's the biggest message. One of the last lines of the movie shows a live scene of me in the credits, and it says the gospel took my dad from being a monster to being one of the godliest men I ever knew, and that's what set me on a warpath for the gospel. If the gospel can change that dude, the gospel can change anybody.

Did you have any idea that the song would be what it became?

Oh yes, we had a 20-year plan, and we're right on schedule! Of course not! It was special to me when we wrote it. If it

moves you, that's what's most gratifying. You're still never sure if it connects with people. The night that I wrote it, I was freaking out—it was like you decoded something you've been trying to figure out. You get so excited and want people to read it. That's gratifying. I knew it was incredibly special to me, even more than *Even If*—of all the songs we've done, those are the only two that made me feel the way I did when they were written. I knew it was special to me, but I don't even try to go, "Oh I wonder if 100 people will like this." If they didn't, I wouldn't lose any sleep because I know how it made me feel.

What's the story behind *Even If*?

I wrote *Even If* while having a bad day. My oldest son is a Type 1 diabetic who was diagnosed when he was 2. I wrote *Bring the Rain* when he was diagnosed years ago. He's now 16, and you have your good days and your bad days. We were going to his six-month checkup; it's always like going to the principal's office—it never feels good. We went, and I don't remember if it was a good or bad checkup. It doesn't matter, but it was a reminder that life revolves around this dumb illness. I was about to head out and be on stage, and it was the last thing I wanted to do. Sometimes you don't want to stand on a stage and tell everyone it's going to be okay and God is in control because you're not sure yourself. I even said, "Man, I don't know what the thorn in Paul's flesh was, but sometimes I feel like mine is knowing that God can heal my son but he hasn't." That's what the enemy tries to convince me of on my bad days. It gets to me sometimes.

I was with a dear friend of mine, a songwriter, and I said, "Man, I just want to be like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from time to time when they're standing in front of the fiery furnace and they say, 'I know that God will deliver us, but even if he does not, I'm still not going to bow, I'm still not going to surrender because he's worth it.'" Sometimes I just want to be like those guys and get it. I have moments like that, but most of the time I don't get it. But that's okay because

my relationship with Christ is not based on how I feel. So when I doubt, worry, get angry, or question him, it's okay. He can handle it. He has pretty broad shoulders. It's not me having it all together. It's a reminder that God, even if you don't do what I think should be done, you're still my greatest hope.

My middle son, Charlie, is just like me—very ADHD. We had a conversation one day, and he said, "Dad, I think I know why you do this for a living." I thought, "Okay, this ought to be good." But he said, "If you didn't sing about it every night, you'd forget." I was like, "Okay, touché." There's a little bit of truth to that. Singing these songs, it's like muscle memory for me. It brings life to hiding the Word in your heart and setting your mind on what's above, and I've been blessed to sing through these truths even when I don't feel like it.

As you go out singing those songs this year on tour, you're partnering with World Vision, so why is that important to you?

Partnering with any kind of ministry has always been a big part of MercyMe for the 23 years we've been a band. It's one of those things that sets us apart from only being a band that entertains and makes music to be part of something that when people leave the show, they're tangibly making a difference for the kingdom and investing in lives of people they may never see face to face. It's as natural as breathing for us to partner with a ministry. Who better to partner with than World Vision? Their reputation precedes them, so it's an easy one for us.

What is it about helping other people that you're passionate about?

It's a core part of what being a believer is—the body of Christ relies on the body of Christ. For years, people have told us, "I wish I could do more; I wish I can go to the mission field; I wish I can make a bigger impact but I can't—I have kids; I have a daily job; or I could never leave the country like that." The opportunity to do something to make such an impact without ever getting up

As long as there's air in your lungs, don't give up on the story, whether it's you or someone else. There's hope.

out of your chair and leaving your house is a big deal. We've seen thousands of people over the years respond to that in a big way. We've seen it firsthand in our own lives with kids we've sponsored. These kids become a part of your family. It's incredibly important to us to be part of something like this. This is one of the few things that, when it's all said and done and you look back, you're like, "Man, if you were ever part of creating any kind of legacy, World Vision is part of that." The impact that you quite possibly could have with your life, it's gratifying to say the least.

How has child sponsorship personally impacted your family?

I've got five kids myself, and we sponsor five kids. From the time my first child was born, we've sponsored a child for each of our kids. There have been times I see my kids writing letters, especially at Christmastime. Or even this past Christmas, we have had a conversation with my two youngest and said, "What can we do for them?" For us, it's been a part of our family so long that it's a natural reaction to include them in some of the things we're doing. It's like an extended family in some ways. I'm fortunate to have kids who think about these kids and care about them. That happens pretty easily when you start to invest and start writing and receiving letters and stay updated with these kids' lives. It melts your heart as a parent. You spend most of your time hoping you're a good-enough parent and that you're doing something right, so you treasure any moment like that. 📖

READ and learn more at wwmag.org/mercyme.



JON WARREN/WORLD VISION

‘We were wrong’

By Keith Stewart

WARD BREHM ONCE wrote, “They say that if God wants to get your attention, he will toss a little pebble into your life. If that doesn’t work, he will throw a rock. As a last resort, he will heave a brick!”

Africa was definitely my brick. It rocked my world in ways I never anticipated. Seeing with my own eyes the devastation caused by extreme poverty, lack of access to clean water, the HIV and AIDS pandemic, and preventable diseases like malaria truly made me wonder how anyone could be as willfully blind as I was. I used to say, I went to Africa to help save Africa. Now I know God had the opposite in mind. He brought Africa into my life to save me.

Not long after that fateful trip, while running at White Rock Lake in Dallas, I sensed God say to me, “I want you to apologize to the community for the kind of church you have been.” I instantly knew exactly what he meant. I don’t know how I knew it. I just did.

The church took out a full-page ad in the Dallas Morning News. In large, bold letters in the center of the page it read, “WE WERE WRONG.”

At the bottom of the page was our apology:

**We followed trends when we should have followed Jesus.
We told others how to live but did not listen ourselves.
We live in a land of plenty, denying ourselves nothing,
While ignoring our neighbors who actually have nothing.
We sat on the sidelines while AIDS ravaged Africa.
We were wrong; we’re sorry.
Please forgive us.**

The only other thing printed on the page was our church name, phone number, and website. We offered no explanation beyond the words of our apology, because explanations at the point of apology always sound like excuses. We only wanted to speak the truth about our behavior and offer a sincere apology to those whom we had hurt.

Sadly, the church today is better known for its political stance than helping the poor, feeding the hungry, or helping to heal the hurting. Do we dare believe the church could be known for its love and compassion more than its rhetoric and judgments? That’s one risk I am willing to take.

In the years since our apology, Springcreek Church has become an entirely different church. Hundreds and hundreds of children now have sponsors. The Nyakach Valley of Kenya has networks of wells, pipes, and water kiosks to serve thousands who used to fetch water from polluted lakes and streams. Children no longer regularly fall ill to easily preventable diseases like they once did. Everything for them has changed, as has everything for us.

I sincerely believe God’s work done in God’s way will always be mutually transformational. We are as changed by the work we are doing as the people we intend to serve. Our investment in our friends overseas has profoundly enriched our church family. They have taught us so much about true wealth—to be rich in faith, hope, and love.

In addition, we are assured in Scripture that God *always* hears the widow and the orphan’s prayer. I sometimes wonder about my own prayers, but I am supremely confident about theirs. So, every day, on the other side of the world, there are widows and orphans who fall on their knees in the dirt and bless our name to God. This is the highest blessing anyone can receive in life—to be blessed by the least of these.

I never could have imagined how much three little words would totally transform my world—*we were wrong*. +



COURTESY OF KEITH STEWART

Keith Stewart is the senior pastor at Springcreek Church in Garland, Texas. He is the author of *We Were Wrong*, the story of his radical transformation through following Jesus in the margins.

**HOW'D THEY
DO THAT? | 38**

Find out how your generosity is bringing water to Cheru's community in Kenya.

Delight

FINDING MEANING IN EVERYDAY MOMENTS

"But whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. ..."

—JOHN 4:14

IN THE KITCHEN

ZA'ATAR MAN'OUSHE

By Heather Klinger

You're sure to find man'oushe (pronounced ma.nu/) at a traditional Lebanese breakfast. It's a flatbread often topped with za'atar (thyme, sumac, sesame seeds, and salt), cheese, or kishk (fermented dried yogurt and ground bulgur wheat). Serve with olives, fresh cheese, croissants and jams, tabbouleh or fattoush salad, and keep the courses coming for a taste of Lebanon this spring!

Ingredients

1 1/4 cups lukewarm water
1 teaspoon active dry yeast
3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon sugar
2 teaspoons salt
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1/2 cup za'atar
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil

Instructions

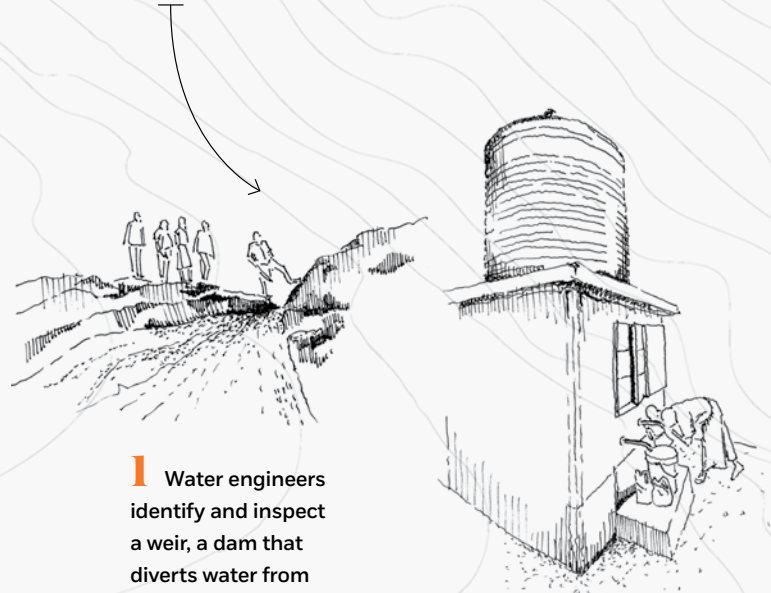
- 1 -** In a small bowl, mix 1/4 cup water and yeast. Set aside 5 to 10 minutes until yeast foams.
- 2 -** In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, and salt.
- 3 -** Add yeast mixture, remaining water, and vegetable oil to flour mixture. Mix until combined, and knead 10 minutes until dough is soft and elastic.
- 4 -** Place dough in a lightly oiled bowl. Cover and let rise in a warm spot until doubled in size, 1.5 to 2 hours.
- 5 -** Punch down dough and divide into four to six balls; use extra flour, if needed. Cover and let rise for 20 minutes.
- 6 -** Meanwhile, preheat oven to 400 degrees, and place a baking stone or steel on the bottom rack. (An upside-down cookie sheet will do.)
- 7 -** Combine za'atar and the olive oil. Set aside.
- 8 -** On a floured surface, press each ball with your palm. Turn and flatten from the center to edge, adding extra flour as needed until each is 1/4 inch thick and about 8 inches across.
- 9 -** Spread za'atar on the dough, leaving a 1/2-inch edge.
- 10 -** Slide pieces onto the heated stone, and bake for 7 to 10 minutes until golden and bubbly. Serve warm, and enjoy! 🍷

HEATHER KLINGER / WORLD VISION



JON WARREN/WORLD VISION

Here's how water engineers and villagers are bringing life-changing clean water from a pure mountain river down to Kesot, Kenya, where Cheru lives.



1 Water engineers identify and inspect a weir, a dam that diverts water from the Kwok River, in the wooded hills about 15 miles away from Kesot.



2 World Vision upgrades water services, building a new water kiosk with four taps, a cattle trough, and a water tank at the primary school. This work is being done in Cheboret, about 9 miles from where the water is piped from the river.

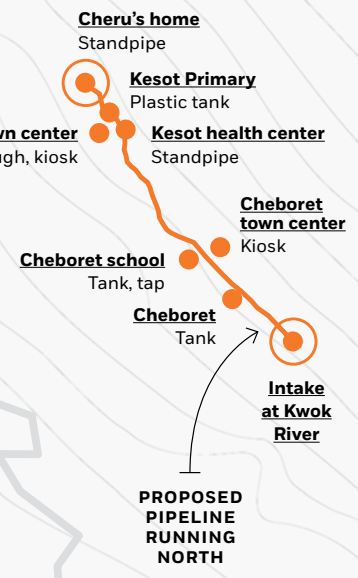
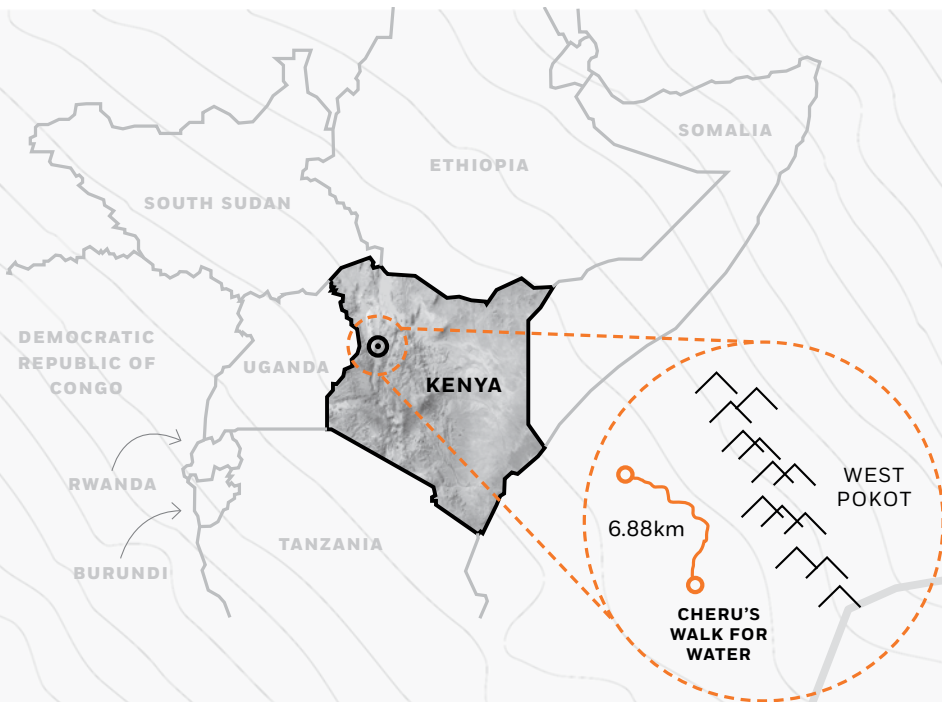


ILLUSTRATIONS BY ASHLEY WALTON/JOJOURNEY GROUP

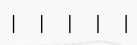
Bringing water to Cheru

By Kathryn Reid

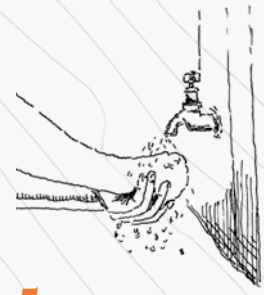
Last spring, people around the world were inspired to walk or run the Global 6K for Water by 5-year-old Cheru Lotuliapus, whose daily life in Kenya was consumed with finding water. The effects of this life were keeping Cheru—like so many other girls and women in sub-Saharan Africa—from living up to her potential. Today, thanks to our caring donors, World Vision is working in West Pokot County to bring clean water access to Cheru's community.



3 Villagers from Kesot help build a pipeline extension from Cheboret to Kesot, 8 miles, to bring water to their school, health center, and market. Workers clear brush, dig trenches, and haul rocks and sand to the location.



4 Workers erect and build kiosks, water troughs, and tanks to serve the school, health center, and market at Kesot.



5 Kesot community members train others in areas of water, sanitation, and hygiene. A local technician learns how to perform repairs and maintenance.



6 A standpipe will bring fresh water to Cheru's family, just steps from where her mother cooks, washes clothes, and prepares tea. +



A golden moment

Written and
photographed by
Chris Huber

Canon EOS 6D
144mm, 1/160, f/5,
ISO 1600

SHE STOOD WITH purpose and promise. I noticed her rise among the women and children sitting inside the community center in Maraka, Mali. Light from the blazing midday sun shot through the dark room and illuminated her and the hope she carries.

As a World Vision photographer, I have the privilege to capture some of life's most precious moments. On this day, I not only took this photo but was able to bear witness to our life-changing work in Mali.

I know access to clean water changes many people's lives, especially women and girls, since they disproportionately bear the burden of collecting water for the household. But water is especially precious here in semi-arid western Mali; I almost passed out twice working long days in the intense heat.

In places with long-held, sometimes harmful habits in certain aspects of life, people's health suffers because they drink unsafe water and lack toilets and handwashing. As much as 84 percent of the rural population in Mali does not have access to hand-washing facilities with soap. So our work is vital to women like this soon-to-be mother—a mom whose child will grow up in a community with access to clean water.

Clean water nearby means less sickness like diarrhea for her family. It means her children can go to school. And it means her family can invest more time together because they spend less time collecting water.

But the benefits of bringing access to clean water can't be fully realized until each community member changes his or her mind about improving personal hygiene and sanitation. This includes incorporating latrines, hand-washing stations, and dish-drying racks at each house (see page 32). In Maraka, we are working together to make this a reality—to improve life for not only this mother, but the entire community.

It was truly a golden moment. +







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STEP
YOU
TAKE

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IS ONE
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