



Presbyterian World Service
& Development



Faithful to
our calling,
we respond
together.

2023 Impact Report

Message from the Director



In 2023, the world seemed to experience unprecedented levels of conflict and natural disaster, which were often caused by the climate crisis. Conflicts such as the wars in Ukraine and Gaza, created enormous need in countless places.

But 2023 was also a year where many families received comfort and support through PWS&D projects. Together, we responded to systemic poverty and injustice, as well as conflict and disaster.

PWS&D contributed \$10.8 million to programs where most needed around the world – \$3 million in development and \$7.8 million in emergency relief programming. We are grateful for the support of the Government of Canada and membership in Canadian Foodgrains Bank, which allows PWS&D to multiply and expand our resources through matching funds, and our reach through collaboration with our ecumenical partners. PWS&D's refugee sponsorship work has allowed PWS&D to provide accompaniment to congregations and presbyteries that welcomed 99 refugees to Canada in 2023.

Your generosity made this possible.

While it can be easy to feel overwhelmed by the need in the world, we place our faith in God's comfort and provision, and find hope in stories like those shared in this report.

Despite the challenges, PWS&D experienced unprecedented generosity from Presbyterians from across the country—enabling us to increase our impact in the world. Support from other churches at Canadian Foodgrains Bank, the Humanitarian Coalition, and the Canadian government through Global Affairs Canada only maximized this impact.

As we reflect on 2023, we look ahead to 2024 with hope and conviction, working together to build a more sustainable, compassionate and just world. We invite you to accompany us on this journey.

With deep gratitude for your support,

Guy Smaghe
Director

Visit [WeRespond.ca](https://www.werespond.ca) to learn more about the life-transforming work you helped make possible in 2023.

In 2023, PWS&D and our partners undertook **58** projects in **27** countries.

30

sustainable development projects

116,274

adults and children participated in health, food security, livelihoods and human rights projects

28

emergency relief projects

129,580

people received food, water and sanitation, and other emergency assistance

PWS&D's sustainable development programs:

28%

focused on health

18%

provided livelihood support

33%

improved food security

21%

focused on human rights

44% of program participants were under the age of 18

60% of all participants were women, and **40%** of these were under the age of 18

PWS&D programs span the globe

39%

in Africa

8%

in the Americas

44%

in Asia

3%

in Europe

6%

in the Middle East



In 2023, PWS&D and our partners undertook **58** projects in **27** countries.

35 projects in **9** countries were implemented with partners who receive direct funding from PWS&D



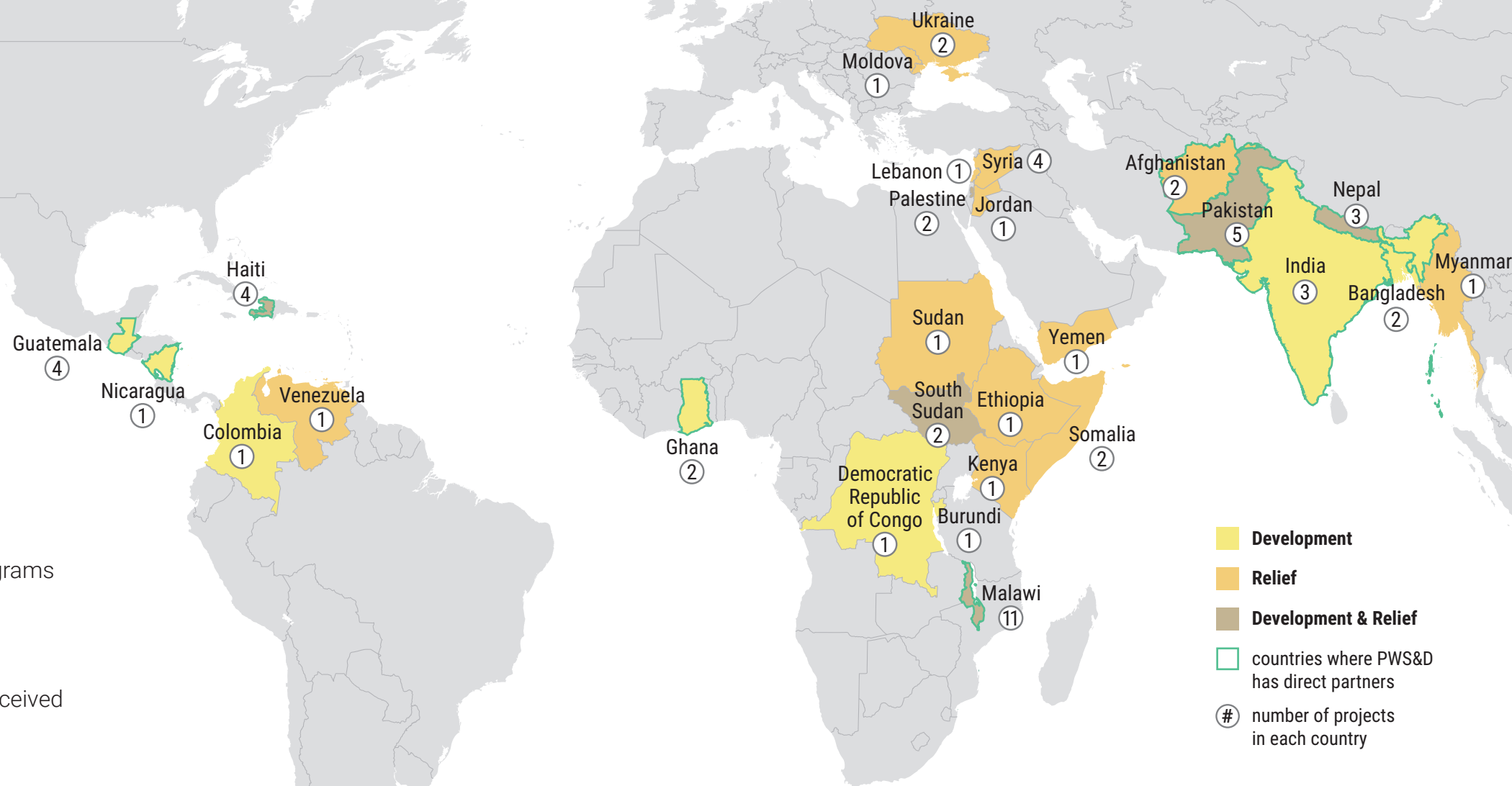
35,221 people in **Afghanistan** received food assistance

1,070 Indigenous Maya-Mam women and girls in **Guatemala** learned about their rights

2,175 people affected by the war in **Gaza** received food and emergency support

29,183 people, over 86% women and girls, participated in sexual and reproductive health programs in **Malawi**

8,728 earthquake-affected people in **Syria** received essential humanitarian aid



■ Development
■ Relief
■ Development & Relief
 countries where PWS&D has direct partners
number of projects in each country



Development



Food Security

Communities are learning innovative and sustainable agriculture practices to increase crop yields, improve nutrition and build resilience to the climate crisis.

In 2023, 41,710 people participated in food security projects in Bangladesh, Burundi, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Nepal and Malawi.

In Haiti, PWS&D is supporting farmers and their families. As a farmer, Wilner Nezil has seen how his land has changed over the years due to an increasingly unpredictable climate. The married father of four decided to join this agricultural project in his

community after he heard neighbours voicing the same concerns about the challenges they face in producing enough food.

Prior to joining, Wilner would work hard, but harvest little, particularly when the wind and water washed the soil away. Through trainings, Wilner learned sustainable agriculture techniques that both conserve the soil in his fields and increase crop yields. Wilner's beautiful garden now boasts diverse crops, such as corn, pigeon peas, yam, squash and spinach, as well as fruit trees. It's used as a model to teach others about both conservation agriculture and diverse nutrition.

"I thank God for providing training that has helped me chase away hunger."

Wilner Nezil



Up to 783 million people go to bed each night not knowing where their next meal might come from. The deteriorating and increasingly unpredictable climate, limited access to farming inputs, and poor infrastructure in many communities mean the situation continues to get worse.



Human Rights

Injustices are addressed through a shared commitment to human rights, with a special focus on promoting and protecting rights for women, children, subsistence farmers, persons with disabilities, and refugees.

Human rights projects in Ghana, Guatemala, India, Nicaragua and Malawi reached 26,047 people in 2023. PWS&D is also proud to support KAIROS' Women of Courage—Women, Peace and Security project in Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Israel/Palestine and South Sudan.

Rooted in the understanding that in conflict and post-conflict situations women are victimized many times over, the KAIROS project works to end gender-based violence and increase the participation of women in peacebuilding processes. Support from the Government of Canada means PWS&D funds contributed to this project were matched 3:1.

"I carry the voices of women and messages of peace in the community, church and in government, urging everyone to work together to bring peace to South Sudan."

Christina Anita Phillip, a Women of Courage program participant



Health

By ensuring mothers and children receive the medical care they need, caring for people affected by HIV and AIDS, and providing access to water and sanitation programs, families and communities are growing healthier and stronger.

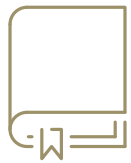
In 2023, health programs in Ghana, Haiti, Malawi and Nepal supported 34,363 people.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic continues to pose serious social, health and economic problems in Malawi. PWS&D's partner, the Ekwendeni Hospital AIDS Program (EHAP), supports people living with and affected by HIV and AIDS. EHAP is working on HIV prevention awareness, stigma reduction, and care and treatment for HIV infected individuals.

Lita Mvula tested positive for HIV and began antiretroviral therapy in 2019. At the time, Lita was worried about being discriminated against, should her HIV status be revealed. Due to these concerns, Lita sometimes missed opportunities to collect her medication, lest people discover her status. In 2020, she joined a support group of people living with HIV and AIDS, where she received counselling and support from staff and volunteers. The experience was so encouraging that Lita now does the same work with others in her community to prevent HIV transmission and reduce stigma. "I am now healthy and able to do my work at home, which I wasn't able to do before," she shares.

Health progress in 2023...

- 2,258 young people in Malawi learned about sexual and reproductive health and rights, including the importance of staying in school and avoiding early marriage
- In Nepal, 16,631 people benefited from leprosy and tuberculosis treatment and prevention programs
- 8,350 children were treated with therapeutic food to combat malnutrition in Haiti



Sustainable Livelihoods

Families are empowered to meet their basic needs through education, skills training and small business development. When one person becomes self-reliant, they improve their quality of life and future, and lift up others in their community.

In 2023, sustainable livelihoods programs reached 22,503 people in Bangladesh, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Nepal, Nicaragua, Malawi and Pakistan. These initiatives help break cycles of poverty and create long-term positive impacts.



“This assistance made us even stronger.”

Gauri, a single mother in Pakistan

Meet Gauri

Gauri, a mother of two in Sindh province, Pakistan, became the sole provider for her family after her husband died in 2008. A skilled tailor, having learned as a child, Gauri put her work into overdrive. “We desert people are very resilient and can bear every adversity that nature throws at us. But hunger is unbearable, and we suffered,” shared Gauri. She and her family were selected as participants in the Humanitarian, Early Recovery and Development project in Pakistan.

As part of the project, the family received several distributions of food aid. During that period, Gauri was also able to invest in her tailoring business – expanding it from simple sewing into a fabric store! The extra income Gauri earned from her business means that she can continue to send her son to school. She also invests more money to grow her business, having learned business and marketing skills through the project as well. “This assistance made us even stronger,” she concludes. Now Gauri can provide for her family and is less dependent on outside assistance.



Relief

Emergency relief programs are an integral part of PWS&D’s ministry. From the war in Ukraine to the devastating earthquake in Syria and Türkiye, continuing global food insecurity to the climate crisis, the need for humanitarian assistance was greater than ever.

Cyclone Response in Malawi

Cyclone Freddy was one of the most powerful storms recorded in the southern hemisphere and the longest-lived tropical cyclone ever recorded. This cyclone struck many of the same communities that had been devastated by Tropical Storm Ana in 2022.

PWS&D’s partner implemented an immediate food response. Cash transfers were distributed to 2,500 families to enable them to cover monthly food needs. Farming families also received vegetable seeds, sweet potato cuttings and fertilizer for the planting season to strengthen their recovery. This was made possible with funding support from Canadian Foodgrains Bank and matching funds from the Government of Canada.

Ukraine Conflict

The military conflict in Ukraine stretched into its second year, resulting in ongoing suffering for the civilian population. In 2023, PWS&D continued to provide food aid through partners at Canadian Foodgrains Bank to 4,706 people in Ukraine and surrounding countries. Additionally, through the Ars Longa Foundation, support was provided to farmers in eastern Ukraine. Fifty women-headed farms were provided with fertilizer to assist them in growing food in the spring and to be able to plant in the fall.





Syria-Türkiye Earthquake

In February 2023, a powerful earthquake struck the border region between northern Syria and southeast Türkiye. Beyond the massive infrastructure damage and loss of life, widespread displacement also occurred. Syria's ongoing civil war and economic collapse only exacerbated the situation.

Responding with partners at Canadian Foodgrains Bank, PWS&D provided monthly food parcels to 8,460 people. With members of the ACT Alliance, PWS&D helped supply essential items, including food and winterization materials for those facing the harsh winter weather. Psychosocial support was also provided, with a special focus on the developmental needs of children.

“When I got money from you, it meant the world to me.”

Mr. Maamar, who received a cash transfer that enabled him to rent a house and avoid homelessness after the earthquake

Food Crisis

Climate change, conflict and other factors have led to emergency levels of hunger in many countries across the globe. In Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia, some 23 million people were without reliable access to food and water due to severe ongoing drought.

In Somalia, famine-like conditions left many children malnourished. After fleeing their home due to drought, Gabey and her 11-month-old son, Abdi, were sheltering in a camp. Abdi was diagnosed as malnourished and was one of 2,482 children who received therapeutic food to recover his health. “I feel so much better and calmer now that he is better than before,” his mother shared.

Many people are also living in camps for refugees and internally displaced persons because conflict forced thousands of families from their homes. Recognizing the need to support the world's hungriest, PWS&D responded in several countries, including Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan.

PWS&D's membership in Canadian Foodgrains Bank and ACT Alliance allowed us to provide necessary interventions in Afghanistan, Haiti, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Malawi, Moldova, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria and Ukraine.

War in Gaza

Since war began in Gaza in October 2023, tens of thousands of people have been killed or injured and countless more are facing catastrophic hunger. Generous Presbyterian support has enabled PWS&D to respond, despite the challenges of getting aid into Gaza. Through partners at the ACT Alliance, cash transfers have been provided to enable families to buy water, food and other essentials. The provision of primary health and dental care has been supported, as well as psychosocial care to children and mothers to help with coping mechanisms and relieve emotional distress.



Afghanistan

After almost two years of advocacy, the Canadian government passed legislation in June 2023, which enabled Canadian humanitarian agencies to once again provide assistance in Afghanistan, with the legislated exception to the sanctions in place.

The long-awaited change in legislation meant that PWS&D was able to respond to the earthquake that struck Herat province on October 7. Families were helped with access to temporary shelter, safe drinking water, food and supplies to survive the winter season. This was coordinated by the ACT Alliance.

Additionally, food insecurity in the whole country is only worsening. At the end of 2023, more than 29 million people in Afghanistan needed humanitarian assistance. PWS&D's long-time partner initiated a response in Bamyan province. With financial support from Canadian Foodgrains Bank members and the Government of Canada, the \$1 million project provides 4,824 families with monthly cash transfers to buy food.

“In a timely intervention, [the partner] came to our aid, providing my family with a new tent, which we promptly set up.”

Guljan, a mother of four in Afghanistan who received a winterized tent

PWS&D-supported relief projects provided life-saving emergency assistance to 121,230 people in 2023.



Refugee Sponsorship

PWS&D is very grateful to the congregations, presbyteries and other groups who contributed to the church's refugee sponsorship efforts in 2023. Over the course of the year, they developed applications, prepared to receive those they had sponsored, awaited arrival, and assisted with the first year of settlement in Canada, helping newcomers from unsafe places build new lives.

The welcoming heart of Canadians Presbyterians inspires us. Refugee sponsorship requests received from Presbyterian congregations still exceed the annual sponsorship quota allocated to The Presbyterian Church in Canada by the Government of Canada.

In 2023, PWS&D refugee staff helped facilitate the sponsorships of two families under the Blended Visa Office Referred (BVOR) sponsorship program. Through this program, the financial costs to sponsoring groups is reduced because the government pays 50% of the costs. These high priority refugee cases are pre-screened by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and will generally arrive in Canada quite quickly. This provides a more affordable way for sponsoring groups to engage and to help those most in need of sponsorship.

The Government of Canada announced that they had fulfilled their pledge, made in August 2021, to resettle 40,000 refugees in response to the situation in Afghanistan. The refugee program worked with two congregations to complete applications for two Afghan families who qualified under the criteria of the program.

In total, 28 applications were submitted for 82 individuals, to be sponsored by 19 congregations or presbyteries.

During the year, 99 sponsored refugees arrived in Canada originating from nine countries. This number is more than double the numbers of arrivals in 2022, when 47 people arrived. Among the highest groups of arrivals were refugees originally from Syria (31 people), Afghanistan (27 people) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (24 people). Other arrivals included individuals from Burundi, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan.



“Sponsoring a young family, originally from Sudan, has been satisfying, intense, humbling, busy, enriching, wonderful, full of learning, fun and more.”

Ruth Barwell, member of St. Andrew's PC refugee committee in Owen Sound, Ont.

Champion for Change

Champion: a person who fights for, or speaks in support of, a group of people or a belief

PWS&D Champions are volunteers committed to keeping their congregations aware of what PWS&D is doing to address global needs, and how they can help.

In 2023, 105 Champions representing over 90 churches worked together to:

PRAY

Champions prayed for a more sustainable, compassionate and just world both in their congregations and at monthly Champions Pray events.

LEARN

Champions gathered in person and online to hear stories of PWS&D's work, and develop their capacity to advocate for those in need.

RESPOND

Champions arranged for PWS&D speakers at their churches to help their congregations understand the vital need to respond. They also dedicated countless hours to raise funds through local fundraisers and the national Journey for Hope event.

Make a difference today by becoming a PWS&D Champion.

Visit [WeRespond.ca/be-a-champion](https://www.werespond.ca/be-a-champion) to learn more and sign up.



“It's surprising to me the work that God can do, even when it feels like I'm not doing much... It's sometimes just the small things you do that make the biggest impact on people.”

Sharyl Eaglesham, Champion at First Presbyterian in Winnipeg, Man.

Journey for Hope

In September 2023, supporters from across Canada got active to make a difference in Journey for Hope.

Building on last year's success, 11 teams from three provinces biked, walked or completed other activities in support of PWS&D's food security work around the world. The teams raised over \$30,000!

Victoria Banfield, a team captain in Markham, Ontario, shared, "Team Lightning Bolt was thrilled to be able to participate in Journey for Hope again this year. We really appreciate having the chance to help others in a tangible way. We love supporting PWS&D, knowing how hard they are working to bring about a just and equitable world."

Hearts for the Hungry at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Campbell River, British Columbia hosted a luncheon as an opportunity for fellowship and to raise awareness about food insecurity. Team captain Anne Kerr shared, "Members of the congregation volunteered to make soup and a local grocery store donated buns." She added, "Our original goal was \$1,500. Trinity has always been a mission-minded congregation, but it excelled itself this time around. Over \$4,100 was raised."

See you at the next Journey for Hope on September 28, 2024!



Where Our Resources Came From

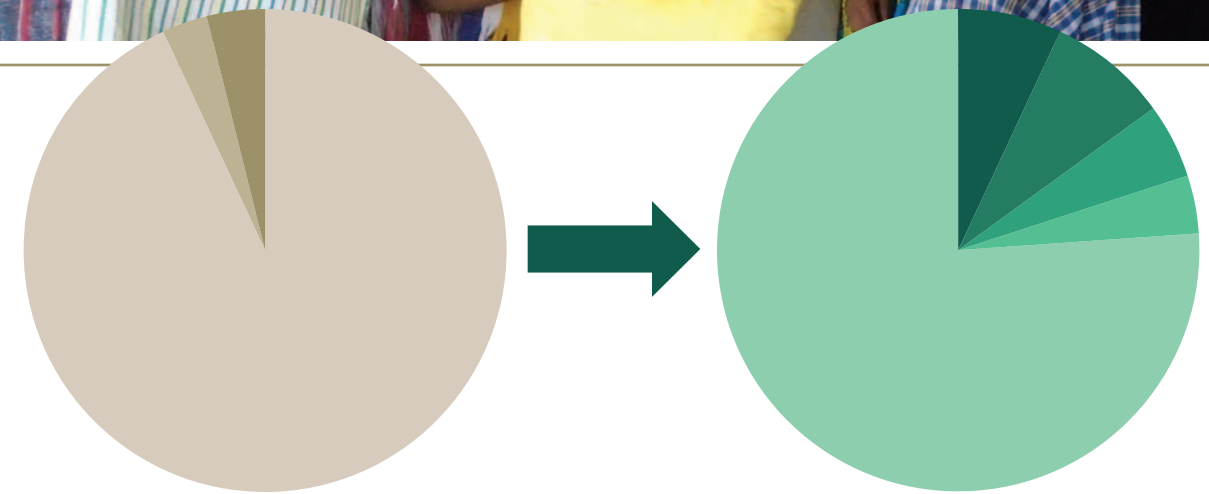
In 2023, PWS&D led projects at Canadian Foodgrains Bank valued at \$5,400,862. This included \$550,133 of PWS&D funds, matching funds from the Government of Canada and contributions from other Foodgrains Bank members. PWS&D also contributed over \$862,000 to projects led by other Foodgrains Bank members, with a program value of \$3,619,000 after all matching funds were applied. These funds are not reflected in PWS&D's statement of revenues and expenditures.

	2023	2022
Undesignated donations	1,362,167	1,229,858
Transferred from Loaves & Fishes Fund	1,284,362	1,313,612
Designated contributions (excluding relief)	251,331	212,641
Designated relief	663,965	1,306,196
Canadian Foodgrains Bank – Member support	108,693	—
Government funds from:		
Government of the Province of Manitoba	—	8,885
Other income - interest	27,835	2,121
	3,698,353	4,073,313

Where Our Resources Went

	2023	2022
Disaster, relief and rehabilitation	1,423,770	1,438,095
Development projects	1,173,155	938,087
Relief and development program support	529,988	493,075
Memberships, partnerships and coalitions	22,078	49,617
Resources and communications	356,213	358,704
Administration	372,242	365,471
	3,877,446	3,643,049

Figures above are preliminary. For audited financial statements, visit [WeRespond.ca/financials](https://www.werespond.ca/financials).



For every dollar PWS&D spent in 2023*

- 93% Development and relief programs (see following chart)
- 3% Education and fundraising
- 4% Administration

*This chart represents the full value of PWS&D programming in 2023—including Government of Canada matching funds through Canadian Foodgrains Bank and KAIROS—which are not reflected in the financial statements.

Program funds were spent on:

- Food security 7%
- Health 8%
- Human rights 5%
- Livelihoods 4%
- Relief 76%

In Jesus' hands, five loaves and two fish became enough to feed a multitude, with plenty remaining. Inspired by the miracle of multiplication, generous donations to PWS&D's legacy fund—the Loaves & Fishes Fund—multiply over a seven-year period. With 1/7 of the gift used in the year it is given, the remainder is invested. Over the next six years, a portion, including interest generated and market valuation, is provided to PWS&D, ensuring consistent predictable support for our programs and operations.

In 2023, PWS&D received \$2,578,725 in legacy gifts. We are so grateful for those who choose to include PWS&D in their legacy planning. **To learn more, visit [WeRespond.ca/legacy-gifts](https://www.werespond.ca/legacy-gifts).**

We are so grateful for over 75 years of faithful support. Thank you for helping make this life-changing work possible!

There are many ways to provide sustaining support.

- Pray for those who lack the basic necessities, that they may experience abundant life
- Be a Champion for PWS&D in your church, school or local community
- Consider making a legacy gift to PWS&D's Loaves & Fishes Fund
- Request a speaker for a Sunday service, group meeting or youth gathering
- Designate your support for PWS&D through offerings at your local congregation
- Become a monthly donor and ensure PWS&D can rely on your regular and consistent support



50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, ON M3C 1J7
1-800-619-7301 ext. 291
pwsd@presbyterian.ca

WeRespond.ca



Photo credits: PWS&D, ACT Alliance, CARD, CFGB, CWSA, INF, Paul Jeffrey and Tearfund Ethiopia