



LWF World Service With Refugees

Facts for World Refugee Day 2021

LWF World Service is the humanitarian and development arm of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), a global communion of churches, created in 1947 and based in Geneva, Switzerland.

We value dignity and justice for all, compassion for and commitment to others, respect for diversity and inclusivity. Our participatory approaches guarantee both transparency and accountability to the communities with whom we work.

In 2020 alone, we served more than one million refugees and one million people in host communities, as well as close to 400,000 internally displaced people, through activities in 27 countries worldwide.

The focus of our strategy remains clear: it is always on the people we serve. At the center of everything we do are the people involved in and affected by our work: refugees, internally displaced people, returnees, host communities, and communities at risk.



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World Service at work, for hope and a future

ROHINGYA CRISIS, BANGLADESH — Over three years since violence in Myanmar forced more than 700,000 Rohingya into Bangladesh, refugees continue to wait for safe, dignified, and voluntary return to their homeland. LWF World Service has been responding to the needs of refugees and host communities in Kutupalong in Cox's Bazaar through its former country program, RDRS Bangladesh. In 2020, LWF extended its support to host communities with an outreach of close to 17,000 people.

VENEZUELAN CRISIS — Approximately five million refugees and migrants have left Venezuela as a result of the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Venezuela. Colombia is hosting the highest number of refugees and migrants. The COVID-19 pandemic worsened the situation. With an outreach of more than 12,000 people in 2020, LWF World Service is responding to this crisis from Colombia and with local partners in Venezuela. LWF also supports Venezuelan migrants along the Colombian border.

MULTIPLE PROTRACTED CRISES IN CAMEROON — Cameroon has been welcoming refugees from the Central African Republic in the East, Nigeria and the Boko Haram insurgency in the North. In 2020, the crisis between the government and separatists from the English-speaking minority escalated into armed conflict, displacing hundreds of thousands in the northwest and southwest regions of Cameroon. With an outreach of 180,000 people in 2020, LWF World Service has been supporting refugees in the East Adamaoua and Northern regions of Cameroon, and took first steps to support displaced people affected by the separatist crisis.

These are but a few examples of LWF World Service's work around the globe in 2020, improving the lives of millions of refugees, internally displaced people, and host communities – for hope and a future.

*I am peace, hope
for the hopeless.
God can raise
you anywhere.
Being a refugee
does not mean you are dead.
If you have peace, you can
have anything.*



Poem by Nzeyimana Gaudiose – Refugee rights advocate, member of the KADANA refugee platform created with LWF support.

Areas of intervention

Our programmatic framework focuses on protecting and fulfilling the rights of refugees, internally displaced people (IDPs) and returnees, as well as hosts and at-risk communities, to livelihoods, quality services and protection and social cohesion. The three areas cut across the humanitarian, early recovery and development phases of our work and embed advocacy and a rights-based approach into each one.

Serving people in need, holistically

LWF World Service works to address the causes of forced migration and to alleviate the emergencies that cause people to leave their homes behind – whether to seek refuge as internally displaced people in their own country, or as refugees in another country.

The Tigray conflict in Ethiopia broke out in the middle of harvest time. Amanuel Yemane, a 66-year-old farmer in Tirkani is one of those impacted. He lost a good harvest, several oxen, 25 goats and his home. The war separated his family. Three of his older children were living in Mai Kadra, where militia committed a massacre on 12 November. They managed to flee to Sudan before it happened. Yemane himself and his four younger children walked 560 kilometers over 18 days to provincial capital Mekelle.

After long delays due to the lack of humanitarian access, LWF World Service and LWF member church the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus' diaconal agency started their response in Southern Tigray and Mekelle in early February. Activities include providing water and sanitation and other relief items, livelihood support, protection, and peacebuilding services.

This extract draws on a longer story published on the LWF website in February 2021. Names have been changed to protect the people concerned.



Amanuel Yemane with his grandson, daughter and son in Hawultie School, Mekelle, an IDP site for people from Western Tigray. Photo: LWF/ S. Gebreyes, February 2021

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