

SOLUTIONS

Independence for the Poor & Oppressed

Volume 4, Issue 2



New Pain Washes Over Families

As floodwaters recede, reality is beginning to set in for struggling families in Sri Lanka. Their homes and livelihoods were swallowed beneath the mire. Torrential rain throughout January and into February caused the worst flooding in 100 years. The destruction is severe, with some villages under six feet of water.

You can help ease this suffering. For \$50, you can extend hope to these families with food and other vital emergency supplies (see back cover).

The Sri Lankans who are hardest hit have already been through a lot of pain. Many

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New Pain Washes Over Families

families were just beginning to rebuild their homes and lives after spending months in war displacement camps.

Now, they find themselves uprooted again, back in camps in order to survive. Farms that were sprouting produce and rice fields were washed away. Valuable dairy cows and other animals drowned. Wells that were repaired and newly built latrines are damaged again.

Many families have nothing left – and are in dire need of help.

“The magnitude of the destruction is such that the families have to start all over again,” said World Concern’s Selena Prem-Kumar, who witnessed these same families lose everything in the war. Many survived the deadly 2004 tsunami as well.

The UN estimates 30,000 homes were damaged or destroyed and 500,000 people need food assistance.

Now, there is fear of disease spreading. Water-borne illness, dengue fever and H1N1 are on the rise and pose serious threats.

After the 26-year-long civil war, World Concern was a lifeline to families who longed to return home – but there were no homes to return to. With you, we helped these families resettle, build new homes and restore livelihoods. Many were just beginning to have hope for the future. Then the rain started.

“It is heartbreaking to talk to the families and to see all we have strived for together over the last few years had been destroyed,” Selina said. “But we are not going to give up and God wouldn’t expect us to do so.” ●

You can help! For \$50, you’ll help one family with food, shelter and more (see back cover).



For war survivors, having someone hear their stories and share their pain helps them heal.

World Concern SOLUTIONS

Renewing Hope After Disaster

During my last trip to Sri Lanka, I met many people whose lives had been torn apart by war. Some were living in camps, or had recently returned to homes that had been destroyed. They had really seen hell on earth, and it was clear that these survivors needed one-on-one attention.

This is where World Concern shines, especially in Sri Lanka. As we go about providing critical aid — like food, water and shelter — we learn the stories of people we're helping.

People in Sri Lanka have faced much personal loss. Missing children. Missing spouses. But because of our relationships with senior officials, we're able to investigate. On many occasions, we've reunited family members who were separated in the war.

I'm proud of the progress we've made since the war, like new wells, renewed livelihoods and reunited families. But now, many of these same families have seen their post-war rebuilding washed away in the floodwaters.

With your help, we can ease this loss. We can renew hope.



You may think \$50 won't do a whole lot, but it will. We can provide a family with food, shelter and more. It also enables us to reach out to them with emotional support — one human being to another — and help them heal.

One of the things I heard over and over again from the people we serve is, "World Concern cares about me." It is a time consuming and emotionally draining approach, but it is a way we pour the love of Christ into people's lives.

Because of Him,

David Eller
President, World Concern

P.S. Please help us change lives and ease this suffering today. **For \$50 you can help a desperate family with food, shelter and more.**

Healing

One Heart at a Time

Many families were separated during the violent end to Sri Lanka's civil war. The Tamil Tigers terrorist group forced young men and women to join their cause. It did not end well for these young soldiers. Many were imprisoned. Many died.

Rasa Luxshmi knows this pain well. She's a mother of eight children, but her eyes are heavy with grief as she labors to tell the story of her two youngest sons being taken by the Tigers. Both were just 17.

Rasa often went to military training camps to search for her sons, but was always told they weren't there. Then, she heard one of them had been spotted on the news being shot while blindfolded and bound.

After the war, families found themselves scattered among displacement camps. World Concern has helped Rasa's family, and thousands of others, resettle in their home village, providing them with shelter and assistance to restart their businesses. But the pain of losing loved ones is still raw.

On this day World Concern Sri Lanka Country Director Selina Prem Kumar visits Rasa's family, gathering details about the missing sons. She looks at photographs of the

boys, and promises Rasa she will do what she can to help find her sons.

"It's very painful," says Selina. "Many people have lost young children. Some know their family members are dead. That's hard, but they know that in time, they can accept the loss. They live each day



Rasa lost both her sons in the war when they were just 17. World Concern is working to reunite many families like hers.

hoping their child will contact them. We facilitate the process and try to find where these children are."

Back at her office, Selina makes calls to government officials, providing as many details as she can about the missing people.

"We show them we are there to share the grief," said Selina. "They have no one to listen to them. We listen." ●

Shining Light into the Darkness

Kamaladedi stood shivering and terrified, waist-deep in a lagoon in the middle of the night. She and her three young children had fled their home, leaving everything behind. The shelling in her village killed her husband just days earlier. Now she had to escape – running all night – to save herself and her children, ages six, five and three.

Months later, it was safe to return home, but when they came back, they discovered everything had been destroyed.

As Kamaladedi struggled to rebuild her life, a new fear began to grip her – the fear of darkness. As night fell, she had no protection from others entering her property intending to harm her. She had heard of other widows who had been attacked in their homes by men who preyed on the vulnerable women at night.

Hope and help began when World Concern offered to fix Kamaladedi's damaged well, which posed a risk to her children as they could fall in.

"The World Concern field workers talked to me," she said. "For the first time, I had caring people and

listening ears to hear my story."

Hearing her fears and knowing that the danger of darkness was real, we installed solar panels on her home. The panels powered lights inside and around the property outside. "All my security depends on the lighting," she said. "Even if I received nothing else, the light itself is sufficient."

Kamaladedi received barbed wire fencing around her property for protection, and seeds to grow vegetables for her family. She also received a sewing machine, which will enable her to earn an income and support her children by sewing. She can even sew at night, thanks to her solar lights.

Now, she says, she sleeps better at night, knowing her family is safe. ●



Kamaladedi feels safe in her home now that World Concern installed solar powered lights on her property.

A Heart Broken for God

“Father, break my heart for what breaks Yours.

Give me open hands and open doors ...”

— Matthew West, “My Own Little World”

Kurt Campbell remembers the moment God melted his heart for the people of Sri Lanka. It was on Easter Sunday, 2009. Sitting in his comfortable, warm church, singing worship songs, he started to cry.

Weeks earlier, he and his wife Cari had prayed and felt led to donate their entire savings to aid in the crisis in Sri Lanka. Knowing World Concern was responding and rescuing war victims, they wanted to help.

“I’ve often said, your pocket book follows your heart, but sometimes it works the other way,” Kurt said. “It was after that financial investment that we felt more connected to Sri Lanka.”

That Easter Sunday, he realized they probably weren’t singing worship songs in Northern Sri Lanka. “I thought, here’s a group of people who don’t know the Lord as their savior, and surely aren’t experiencing the love and compassion I’m used to on a daily basis,” Kurt said. “My heart just broke.”

Kurt’s burden for the people of Sri Lanka grew, especially as he’s

traveled there several times. He’s seen the tremendous losses people have endured — loss of life, loss of limbs, and loss of loved ones.

During one visit, he struggled to hold his composure as he passed the cot of a 4-year-old girl who had been maimed.



World Concern donor Kurt Campbell visits kids who were living in camps after Sri Lanka’s civil war.

She had lost three fingers on one hand,” Kurt said. “I was looking right at her, but she had a completely blank look on her face.”

She was probably an orphan, and had seen the horror of war. The experience changed Kurt. He felt more compassion and more of a desire to help than ever before.

One of the most significant aspects of the work that Kurt observed was how World Concern staff pays attention to individual people, walking with them through their struggles.

“We’re affecting people’s lives and it’s wonderful,” Kurt said.

To learn more about how you can help a family in Sri Lanka heal, visit worldconcern.org/SriLanka-Rescue or see the back cover. ●

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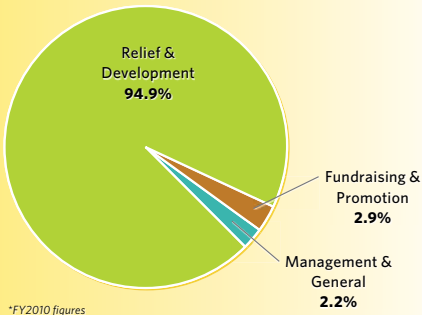
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World Concern is a nonprofit Christian humanitarian organization providing disaster response and community development programs to the world's poor.

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

World Concern considers every gift a sacred trust. The items and needs in this newsletter reflect the average costs for World Concern projects at the time of writing, but as you know, projects can change over time.

In the event a ministry need has been fulfilled, World Concern promises you that we will honor your generosity by directing your gift to a project that is similar in nature.



*FY2010 figures

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Give online at: worldconcern.org/SriLanka-Rescue

Yes I will rescue families in Sri Lanka! I will provide food, shelter and more to help them rebuild their lives. I'm enclosing:

- \$20/month to help five families *
- \$50 to help one family
- \$_____ to rescue as many families as possible

I'd like to become a World Concern prayer partner. My email address is: _____

Thank you for your support.

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