

# Thank you!

**CHRISTMAS ACTION**  
 Australian Lutheran World Service



## REPORT BACK

See the results of your ministry gifts through ALWS - January 2009

Photo by Anna Muinonen / FCA - ACT International

# "I couldn't turn them away ..."

When Maria Buira's pastor asked whether she could open her tiny home to refugees fleeing the violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Maria didn't hesitate. Despite her own poverty, she took in 18 people.

*"I couldn't turn them away. As they became too many, I started to look for other places for some of them to stay. My house is small you see."*

Maria found an unfinished brick building nearby, and persuaded the owner to allow more displaced families to settle there. She then set about helping the refugees by sharing food and firewood.

In the same way, Australian and NZ Lutherans last year opened their hearts to the world's poor through ALWS. Despite Australia's prolonged drought and the world's financial crisis, you have also said "I couldn't turn them away".

*Last year, Australian and New Zealand Lutherans helped more than 200,000 people through ALWS!*

Through **Christmas Action**, pledged monthly gifts, *Gifts of Grace* and Family Farm Packs, you helped more than 200,000 people last year. If those people stood side by side, there would be a line of people 200 kilometres long!

Who needs help	The Lutheran aid you support with ACT partners	Cost
1,200 severely malnourished children	Children receive therapeutic milk until strong enough to move on to solid food with supplementary feeding. Milk supplied by UNICEF. Doctor provides medical care.	<b>\$115</b> per child
3,600 moderately malnourished children	6 Lutheran feeding centres. Families provided with 3 months of food. Taught about good nutrition. Dispel local belief that malnutrition is caused by witchcraft.	<b>\$25</b> per child
4,800 farming households	2 hoes + 12kgs crop seeds + 40 gms vegetable seeds	<b>\$43</b> per family
1,679 families who lost everything	Sheeting, 3 casserole dishes, 3 sarongs, 2 blankets, 1 mosquito net, 1 jerry can, 5 pieces of used clothing for children, 6 plastic plates, 6 drinking cups, 6 big spoons, 1 knife	<b>\$115</b> per family

### Lutheran response to Congo crisis

The 18 people Maria Buira took into her home were part of the 250,000 people displaced by the conflict in the DRC. With no food or medical care, they faced hunger, cholera epidemics and malaria.

The world's churches, of many different denominations, swung into action through ACT International (Action by Churches Together). The first phase of the emergency response targeted 58,750 people.

Our Australian and NZ Lutheran Church was one of the first in the world to respond.

On your behalf ALWS committed an immediate \$100,000 to the aid effort. This shows the vital importance of 'general gifts' that allow us to respond straightaway at times of crisis.

We followed up with a further \$150,000 on 22 December, trusting in your **Christmas Action** gifts.

Your **Christmas Action** gifts also support pre-school children at Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya, refugee families returning to southern Sudan, and poor families in countries like Nepal and Cambodia.

Thank you for the wonderful responses already received. If your church still has **Christmas Action** donations to forward, please do so now as the needs are urgent.

## Blessing Card

Hundreds of **Christmas Action** Blessing Cards are all set for the children of Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya. If you still have a card, please get it in soon!

## YOUR GIFTS OF GRACE - simply AMAZING

Socks and jocks. Scented bath products. Candles. These top the list of \$978 million worth of unwanted Christmas gifts eBay estimates Australians received this year ...

... but being 'unwanted' is not a problem with the 6,697 gifts you gave through our *Gifts of Grace* catalogue!

Every one of these gifts contributes to the life-changing ALWS ministry in countries like Sudan, Nepal and Cambodia.

Your enthusiasm for *Gifts of Grace* meant our volunteers were still packing last minute orders on Christmas Eve!

No one minded though because **your generosity has provided \$352,066 to help change people's lives!**

You gave everything from chickens (1,763) to Long Drop Loos (696). We even have 8 villages in Cambodia partnered with Lutheran groups here – including Chanping linked with St John's church in Perth, and Rong Masin partnered with Immanuel Primary at Novar Gardens (SA).

Meanwhile the staff at Lutheran Aged Care in Albury gave up their Christmas presents to partner O-Phdao village.

Many schools took up *Gifts of Grace* with a passion – (like Immanuel in Gawler SA), where even the Grade 1s were able to provide mosquito nets and chickens, and every student received a *Gifts of Grace* card at end of year chapel!

Meanwhile St Paul's Lutheran Primary School in Henty (NSW) will help restore a school in Nepal (one of 8 schools to be restored through *Gifts of Grace*).

### TOP 5 Gifts of Grace

- Chicken** - 1,763
- Clean Water** – 812
- School Start Kit** – 715
- Long Drop Loo** – 696
- Home Gardening** – 587



Photo by Rachel Cook / LWV Cambodia

## How your Gifts of Grace GROW

You might be surprised when you see the impact of your *Gifts of Grace*. Mrs Chham Im from Aoral in Cambodia shows how gifts like Business Loans (\$37) and Village Banks (\$815) can completely transform a family's life:

### Wood-cutter

Before she received Lutheran help, Mrs Chham Im cut wood and grew rice to support her family. They're so poor their only shelter leaks in the rain, so children cannot sleep.

### Cake Maker

Im receives a \$21 loan, and buys a steam-pot and a grinder for making flour. Each day she bakes 176 *num akor* cakes from sticky rice flour, sugar and coconut. Sales produce \$6 profit each day and Im soon repays her loan.

### Grocery Shop

Using the profits she's saved of \$50, and borrowing another \$90 from the Village Bank, Im sets up a grocery shop. Profits repay her loan, build a proper house, and buy a motor-bike, cow and seeds to start a farm garden.

### Vegetable Farmer

Im grows corn, cassava, pumpkins, cucumbers and string beans. She raises a pig, 20 chickens and 4 cows. Now she plans to buy a plough, and then open a Snack Shop! She says: "I thank everyone for always supporting me, and encouraging me to reduce poverty."

**Mrs Chham Im was one of 25 people to receive help from this Village Bank. A total of 16 people chose to give Village Banks through *Gifts of Grace*.**

## Gifts of Grace for birthdays too!

Then there's the young man who after attending Ypout (a Lutheran Youth of SA camp) decided to request *Gifts of Grace* for his 21st birthday. He doesn't want his name mentioned, but said:

*"Ypout focused on justice and how God wants us to care about what he cares about, like the poor ... I saw the potential my 21st could have in helping the poor, and I thought it would be a worthwhile thing to do, giving gifts away instead of getting it all for me ... I hope it might encourage others to do the same."*

That spirit of compassion and passion for justice, following the example of Jesus, is at the heart of the ALWS ministry of our church.

Our prayer is that as your *Gifts of Grace* help some of the world's poorest people, they also show local communities here how our Lutheran Church is alive and active in people's lives. Thank you for the grace of your gifts!

**NEW! Order your Mother's Day Gifts of Grace catalogue now! Use the Action Slip or call 1300 763 407.**

## Did you know?

Australians spent **\$37 billion** on Christmas, plus another **\$7 billion** at the January sales: **\$44 billion**  
The UN estimates the cost to end world hunger, providing food security to 824 million people, is: **\$42 billion**

Sources: Australian National Retailers Association; United Nations Food & Agriculture Organisation



Loredana Saracini, the SRC and Principal Andrew Messenger led the 290 students of St Mark's Lutheran Primary School in Mt Barker in raising more than \$7,700 to restore the Tang Bampong Primary School in Cambodia. How? An Obstacle-a-thon!

## No obstacle to changing children's world

**St Mark's Lutheran Primary School at Mt Barker raised \$7,700 to restore Tang Bampong Primary School in Cambodia. Principal Andrew Messenger explains how...**

"An Obstacle-a-thon was the main fundraiser for the year. A local dad serves in the Australian Army so he set up a Boot Camp style obstacle course for Years 3-7.

The Reception to Year 2s did the same thing at an easier level, organised by the SRC.

We raised \$5,500 from the Obstacle-a-thon. I was pretty happy with this but Loredana wanted to keep going to make the \$7,500 Tang Bampong needed. We had the choir sing at the local shopping centre and ended up raising more than was required!

We got the students excited about the project by talking to them about others less fortunate than them. It's a great way to put our school's values of compassion and service into action. It helps teach students what true giving is all about."

Loredana Saracini, Special Projects Co-ordinator at St Mark's, adds:

"It's been such a beneficial exercise for our school community. It builds community spirit and brings the gospel values to life. You can see the walls coming down and people branching out and thinking outside their own little worlds ... We need to break out of the 'me'-culture. We need to sow the seeds of social justice so that as the kids grow up they start to think of more than just themselves."

*Loredana is happy to talk to other teachers/schools who may be interested in taking on a similar fundraising initiative, and is also happy to share the resources she's developed. Simply contact Jenny Pfitzner on 1300 763 407 or [alws@alws.org.au](mailto:alws@alws.org.au)*

## HOSTS – opening doors to the world!

**When it comes to following the example of Jesus in serving the poor, there are some truly inspirational things happening in our churches.**

At 'Our Saviour' in Rochedale, Queensland, a Home Group began last year called HOSTS – Hands of Our Saviour Together in Service. Working alongside Redeemer Lutheran College, HOSTS has raised money to build a new dorm for the Chea Sim Secondary School in Cambodia through ALWS, and are now beginning to support other projects.

Already HOSTS have:

1. Run a Labour Auction (raised \$1180)
2. Put inserts in their church bulletin to raise awareness of poverty
3. Given a dinner presentation to a neighbouring congregation
4. Taken both a morning and evening church service
5. Supported a 'Far Out' young people's concert (raised \$4000)
6. Had a dinner for 290 people (raised \$11,500)
7. Used the 50th birthday of a HOSTS leader as a fundraiser (raised \$2210)
8. Promoted *Gifts of Grace* in the congregation
9. Planned a Bush Dance for February 2009

David Spann, one of the leaders of HOSTS, says it's not just about the money raised:

"Often the church finds it difficult to engage in dialogue outside of its closely allied circles. A church community passionate about the world's concerns largely has an open door to the community ...

...in an age of increasing consumerism, it is a place where the church can show a path back along a different way. At a time of great disillusionment with the promises of technology, consumerism and capitalism, it is a chance for the church to be heard.

Many in our church will find the expression of their church life intersecting with the groanings of the world. Many will find action like HOSTS a way that they can witness to the truth of Jesus in their lives in a way that is authentic for them."

***If you'd like to share what's happening in your local Lutheran community, simply drop us a line at [alws@alws.org.au](mailto:alws@alws.org.au)***

## Like a Speaker?

Jen and Jonathan are happy to visit your school, church or group to share what you are doing through ALWS.

To make best use of our time and travel, you should work us hard – a church service (or two), fellowship group and, if you have a local Lutheran school, book us in on the Monday!

Simply contact Jen on **1300 763 407** or **[alws@alws.org.au](mailto:alws@alws.org.au)** and we will do our best to schedule a time!

# Being effective with your gifts

Lutherans are amazingly generous people. You can see this in the growth of the money that went to overseas projects through ALWS last year:

**2008 - \$3,911,928**

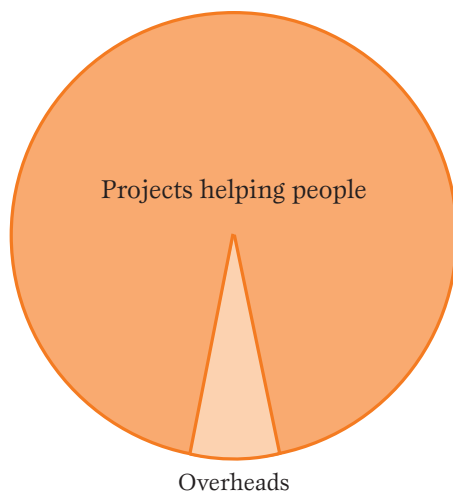
**2007 - \$2,888,625**

That's a 35% increase! At a time of continued drought and the 'global financial crisis'! This proves it's what in our hearts and not our wallets that counts.

We're also grateful for the \$800,000 support of the Australian Government through AusAID last year. The more money we raise ourselves the greater the amount the Government gives through their Matching Grant program.

## How much of your money 'gets there'?

Our goal at ALWS is to keep overheads to 10%. You can see our performance for 2008 in the chart below. (Our 2008 Annual Report will be available in April with full audited details.)



'Overheads' are administration and fundraising costs as defined by the ACFID (Australian Council for International Development) Code of Conduct. Percentages calculated as percentage of total 2008 disbursements.

Year	Overheads
2004	9.5%
2005	8.3%
2006	9.2%
2007	7.4%
2008	8.2%

As you can see, the percentages vary from year to year. Sometimes overheads may increase as we invest in activities planned to increase results in the future – for example, installing a new database or computer system.

**During 2009, we aim to raise \$12 for each \$1 we invest in fundraising.**

That's a huge challenge. We use volunteers wherever we can, and work very hard to cut costs – but at the same time we are committed to giving you quality communication and professional service. This ministry is too important to make do with any less.

## Looking forward

Over the next 12 months, we will invite you to be part of the ALWS ministry through:

### March

- Awareness Week in Lutheran Schools
- Mother's Day *Gifts of Grace* catalogue (we won't be blanket mailing catalogues so please use the Action Slip to order your copies now!)
- a wonderful LLL offer to TRIPLE your ALWS Permanent Fund donation

### May

- 'Water for Life' (our goal is to provide safe water to 10,000 people!)

### July

- mid-year Report Back & Donations Statement (confirming your total gifts for the financial year to assist you to claim your tax benefits)

### October

- *Gifts of Grace* (so you can put special meaning into your Christmas gift-giving)

### December

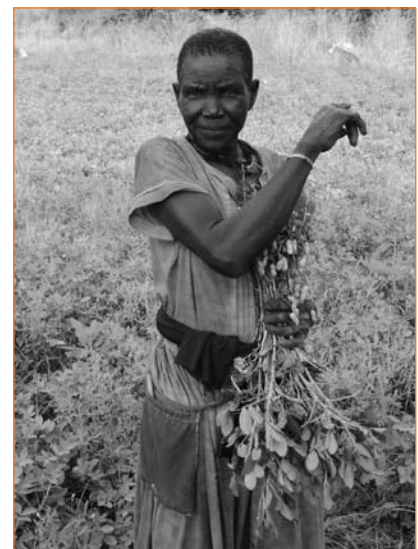
- **Christmas Action** (a great opportunity to show visitors and 'once-a-year' people our Lutheran Church in hands-on action)

We understand you're asked to support many worthy causes, and may not be able to give each time we present people's needs to you. We simply give thanks for whatever God moves you to do. If you prefer not to stay in touch with our church's ministry through ALWS, have any questions, or need to update your contact details, simply contact Jen on **1300 763 407** or at [alws@alws.org.au](mailto:alws@alws.org.au)

Thank you again for your generosity, your encouragement, and especially your prayers for safety for our team. We look forward to serving alongside you in this life-changing ministry in the year ahead.

### Jonathan Krause

ALWS Communications Manager



Martina holds her first harvest of groundnuts (small peanuts) – LWS / Sudan

## Seeds & Tools Ready for Harvest

Martina Ikanga from Momoria in southern Sudan received a Family Farm Pack of seeds and tools in June last year. Australian and NZ Lutherans generously provided Family Farm Packs to 4,000 families – 3,136 headed by women. (This is a legacy of the war that killed so many.)

Martina spent 19 years in Adjumani Refugee Camp in Uganda, then when her daughter died took on care of 5 grandchildren. Returning to southern Sudan has been hard. Martina was desperate and depressed until she received her seeds and tools, and says our help revived her hope and made her optimistic again.

The seeds were planted in late July, and Martina says the fast-growing cowpeas rescued her family from famine.

The good news is 39,000 people benefited from the seeds and tools Aussies and Kiwis provided – part of the total 91,422 people in southern Sudan helped through ALWS last year. On behalf of Martina, her 5 grandchildren, and every other person you helped –

## Thank you

**Your privacy is important to us:** ALWS collects personal information about you in order to process your gift. Your personal and financial details are not disclosed to any third party without your specific consent. A copy of the ALWS Privacy Policy is available on request.



[www.alws.org.au](http://www.alws.org.au)

**1300 763 407**

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**Australian Lutheran World Service**

*Faith that doesn't lead us to do good deeds is all alone and dead!* James 2:17

Australian Lutheran World Service (ALWS) is The Overseas Aid & Resettlement Agency of the Lutheran Church of Australia – ABN 36 660 551 871