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ANNUAL REPORT Bellwether International



BELLWETHER
INTERNATIONAL



Children in IDP Camps, Nigeria

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Year in Review

The mission of Bellwether International is to ensure freedom of religion or belief by securing to individuals the free exercise of conscience, the right and control of property, and the protection of life.

The year 2020 provided unprecedented challenges and incredible opportunities to address growing disparities. As an organization we focused on maximizing partnerships, researching at the intersections of multiple human rights, and networking to expand our advocacy efforts. We added three new board members and five officers to our team to enlarge our impact.

Board of Directors

Rachel Miner; Executive Director
Katie Baird; Publicity and Outreach
Ross Montierth; Networking and Impact
Jim Matheson; Legal Specialist
Robert Lohead; Attorney
Jacob Bell; Accountant
Krystal Bodily; RN, SANE, Certified in Tropical Medicine

Officers

Andy Rosas; Strategic Partnerships, London
Brenna Christen-Server; Content
Mckena Ullman; Content
Elizabeth Hart; Marketing
Katy Armknecht; Social Media

This report highlights projects in each of our four priorities.

1. Education
2. Gender Equality
3. Aid to Displaced Persons
4. Advocacy

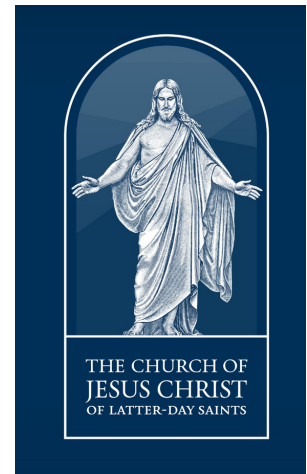
We also highlight new and current projects with projected outcomes for 2021. We are grateful to our partners and donors who make our work possible.

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2020 in Review

Education Western Europe

In early 2020, Bellwether provided the European Area Presidency for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints instruction and resources for the unfolding landscape of international freedom of religion or belief. The report was received and distributed by President Sabin of the Area Presidency.



Gender Equality Democratic Republic of Congo



On January 4th Bellwether met with Panzi Hospital foundation to discuss the roll out of the Badalika program child psychologist that Bellwether helped to fund. Hiring has been halted with the challenges of COVID-19 but the project will move forward in early spring. Once hired, the child psychologist will work directly with families affected by sexual abuse and will coordinate holistic healing efforts through the Panzi Hospital that Dr. Mukwege runs in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Aid to Displaced Persons Nigeria

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Bellwether initiated an education support program for vulnerable children displaced by local terrorist attacks and extremism that has targeted Christians in rural Nigeria. In July 2020, the APPG on International Freedom of Religion or Belief published the report "Nigeria: Unfolding Genocide?" highlighting the need for intervention. Bellwether teamed up with Stefanos Foundation in Jos, Nigeria and Books2Africa in Canterbury, UK to facilitate the distribution of 40,120 books in addition to 10 pallets of clothing to respond to the growing needs of displaced people and especially children.

On March 2, Stefanos Foundation met with the 8 heads of schools to discuss how the community can partner with IDP camps in distributing the books and implementing support for IDP children in a literacy program. In addition to delivering books to schools where IDP children attend, books will be delivered directly to the camps in Benue State and Kaduna State.

The timeline for the project was set to finish December 2020, but was delayed by a police violence protest SARS in Northern Nigeria, increased terrorist attacks between December-January, and the ongoing challenges of COVID-19. The new estimated completion date for the project is the end of April 2021. Pictured below is an IDP camp in Kaduna State, a picture from the the meeting with the heads of school on March 2, and a first group of students receiving books and supplies in addition to scholarship to attend secondary school.



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Advocacy

APPG on International Freedom of Religion or Belief

Bellwether attended the APPG Stakeholder meeting on February 22. Prior to the meeting we conducted a survey amongst the stakeholders on behalf of the APPG to gather data on priorities for the upcoming year. Bellwether has also met with the chair of the APPG Jim Shannon, the new special envoy for international religious freedom, Fiona Bruce and several stakeholders including Aid to the Church in Need, the Bahai Association, Church Solidarity Worldwide and Humanists UK.

Bellwether submitted the following questions for Parliamentary Debate:

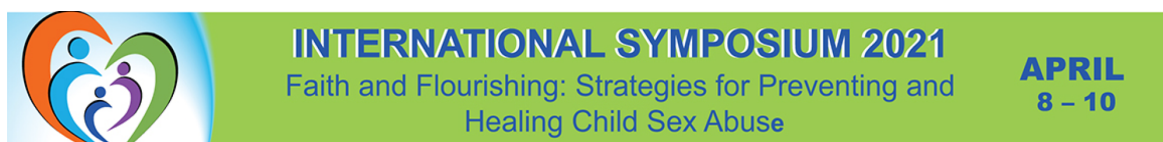
1. We are concerned about the increased violence and persecution of minority believers in the al-Hol Syrian refugee camp. From AP News, "The slayings in al-Hol camp — nearly triple the deaths in previous months — are largely believed to have been carried out by IS militants punishing perceived enemies and intimidating anyone who wavers from their extremist line." Furthermore, there are over 27,000 children in the al-Hol Syrian refugee camp that are at risk of being radicalized by ISIS militants in the camp. What investigation can be conducted? What intervention is possible?
2. The disturbing report of torture and rape against Uighur women released by the BBC must be addressed with urgency. As we have seen unfold with the Yazidis, sexual assault is an indicator of genocide and the vilest of human rights violations. What actions will the UK take with the UN Security Council to intervene and prevent genocide?
3. What unilateral action is taking to support Myanmar? What is the status of Rohingya refugees being relocated from Bangladesh to Myanmar? What are the implications for the Rohingya as a result of the military take over?



Upcoming Projects 2021

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Bellwether is honored to be a sponsor for the World Day for Prevention and Healing from Child Sexual Abuse. In conjunction with recognition from the United Nations for a world day, Bellwether's Executive Director Rachel Miner will be presenting research on how the intersection of religious law and international law can protect children from sexual abuse perpetrated in religious settings. Her research will be presented on April 8 as part of the International Symposium "Faith and Flourishing: Strategies for Preventing and Healing Child Sex Abuse" hosted by Harvard's Human Flourishing Program and The Catholic University.



The Human Flourishing Program
at Harvard's Institute for Quantitative Social Science



Bellwether is excited to continue to create access points for the public to learn more about freedom of religion or belief. On March 19, Bellwether will launch the first-ever and leading podcast on freedom of religion or belief. The FORBcast will bring the leading stakeholders, academics, and many personal experiences from people of all background into a broader conversation about what freedom of religion or belief looks like around the globe. Additionally, Bellwether is working with the BYU International Center for Law and Religious Studies to create a public education campaign that can be accessed by the public for more in depth resources on freedom of religion or belief.

Bellwether has submitted a copyright for our children's book "We Live." which explores pluralism and international religious and beliefs groups. We expect to publish the book for an international audience, intended to be used by families as an educational resource.

Furthermore, Bellwether intends to continue to work with displaced persons by taking a trip to the Greek Islands later this year to explore potential partnerships with organizations on the ground and conduct a formal needs-assessment framework to construct cost effective intervention in the future. The timeline for the trip is contingent on travel restrictions due to COVID-19.

Thank you.

To stay updated on our current work please
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