

# What's Brewing | World Hunger Team

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

World Hunger Fund, World Hunger Team, microlending, empowering women, education, mission, abject poverty, clean water

## SPEAKERS

Richard James, Carla Long

### **Carla Long** 00:27

Hello, and welcome to the Project Zion Podcast. I'm your host, Carla Long. And today I'm here with a dear friend, Richard James. Hi, Richard.

### **Richard James** 00:36

Hi, Carla. Hi, everyone.

### **Carla Long** 00:38

Uh, it's so good to be here with you, Richard. Especially since, well, Richard and I worked together when I was working in Europe for about five years. So, we got to know each other really well. So, we're good friends, but he is also in charge of one of the teams, um, for world church and Richard, why don't you go ahead and tell us what team that is?

### **Richard James** 00:56

Okay, so, the Council of Twelve are responsibility for using some of the World Hunger funds. And I work with an incredible team of members of the Council of Twelve, Presiding Bishopric, which is you, Carla. (Right.) You are amazing person to work with on the team. And, uh, with, uh, Scott Murphy from the First Presidency.

### **Carla Long** 01:17

Right, so the world hunger team. So, I don't even know if a lot of our listeners even know that we have something called the World Hunger Team. And I'm really excited to talk with you about this, Richard, to learn more about it because, as you said, I am on the team and I don't even think I know a lot about it. So, this is gonna' be a podcast where I will be learning as well. But before we jump into learning about the World Hunger Team, Richard, why don't you tell us a little bit about yourself?

### **Richard James** 01:41

Yeah, sure. So, I'm Richard. I live in South Wales in the United Kingdom. Uh, my wife and four children, very close and dear to us. When I was, uh, young, my father was a coal miner. Very difficult, physical work. Uh, many of his, uh, peers died either from black lung, pneumoconiosis, or drinking. My dad lived to just under 100 years old. So, that's quite a good testament of his, his life and his genes. I'm just raising that up because, really, when I was growing up, I don't think we had a lot of things around us

apart from lots of love. As a child, you're not really, really aware of some of the lack of resources around you. And I'm sure there are times when my mum and dad sacrificed for us to have food on our table. We always had clean water. And we always had enough. I think the hardest time was when there was a coal miners' strike. And, so, there this was no income coming in. But every week, there was a parcel on our doorstep, uh, with some groceries in. And I'm sure that was the church people helpin'. But when we talk about world hunger, I think it's at a different level. I think this is abject poverty and a lack of opportunity. And, so, I'm really pleased to be a part of the, the Council of Twelve here that are helpin' us with our mission initiative to abolish poverty and end suffering.

**Carla Long** 03:33

Richard, thank you so much for making that distinction. I mean, I think, and you can correct me if you, if I'm wrong, but I think one of the major distinctions is, um, not only that food and the difference in that, but the clean water. When you don't have clean drinking water, um, you, you get sick so easily, like, um, and it, it changes everything about how you feel. And, so, I, for me, that's a, that's a huge issue and one of the major differences, I think, between how you grew up and how others in the world grow up.

**Richard James** 04:07

Yes, yes it is and it's something we just take for granted, you know, sort of security, our food, our water in many of our Western nations we're very privileged and we can take that for granted. But, uh, there are millions of people in our world that don't have access to clean water. So, when we talk about some of the projects that through the generosity of some wonderful church members, we are able to look at some projects that really do deliver clean water for people.

**Carla Long** 04:38

Absolutely. So, let's kind of just jump into it. Um, so, I, I mean, the whole podcast is really gonna' be about how Community of Christ is trying to abolish poverty through the use of World Hunger contributions. Do you just want to jump in there or do you want to jump into what is, tell me more about the team first?

**Richard James** 04:57

Yeah, well, let me, as you say, start at the beginning. So, in 1978, World Conference approved the World Conference resolution 1148 to establish a world hunger fund. At that time, the vision was to provide resources to alleviate hunger, to educate people about the issues of hunger, and to advocate on behalf of the hungry. I think that was terrific 45 years ago, very prophetic as a, as a people. We find ourselves in a world now with so many challenges that we face and if ever there's a need for a world hunger fund, uh, it will be now. When that fund was initially established, there was, um, funds available to help with World Hunger projects and also something called Tangible Love. Tangible Love was, uh, a grant matching, uh, fund where congregations or mission centers could apply for some funds for community projects. And those were very, very successful. As we all know, the financial situation of the church has impacted all levels of our ministry and mission. And so in 19, in 2019, um, there was a substantial reduction in the funding available for world hunger. So, as part of that, uh, change, the, the Council of Twelve, and that's when I came onto this, uh, team, were charged with looking at using some money to alleviate poverty, but really to experiment. So, our focus now is on sustainable projects, projects that generate income, uh, that are basic life necessities like water. And very important to

empower women, and educate children, and particularly educate girls and provide some funding for agriculture. What I hear is that people want the opportunity. They have lots of ideas, it's just they haven't got the opportunities. And so I'm really, really grateful for generosity of the church, that they're able to, uh, give so generously, that enable us to try these projects, and they are making such a difference for people. It, it really is amazing. So, if I say where we're at now, within the worldwide mission tithes budget, there's \$200,000, that's US dollars, given to the Council of Twelve to look at reducing world hunger. So, this is where the team comes in. There's three or four members of the Council of Twelve which is, uh, Apostles Angela Ramirez, uh, Art Smith, Bunda Chibwe, myself, the fabulous Carla Long, and, uh, Scott Murphy. So, that's the team for this year. So, you indicated you're learning about it because this is this year's, uh, team, um, and we will be looking at projects, uh, soon. We have this \$200,000, but there have been two long term projects that we have been supporting, match funding, with Outreach International. So, one is a school project in Haiti. There's been about 95-100,000 dollars a year been supporting this project which Community of Christ provides. And it's been a, a wonderful project. We also support a school in India, uh, that's been in just under \$40,000. It was this year that that school project has now been taken on board by the local Indian government. And it's released on the \$40,000. What we have done is to continue to support the Haiti project. Inflation is rampant in the country, so, more dollars are needed to support that Haiti. And we also support Bread for the World, uh, with amount of \$12,000. This is a base that, uh, advocates for, um, world hunger issues in, in the US. So, that tends to leave about 55,000 US dollars for us to support projects that help to abolish poverty and end suffering. So, when I look at this, what we are saying is that we have a wonderful gift of \$55,000. What can we do with this? How can we be creative? How can we make a difference to people? And, so, we've invited our colleagues in the Council of Twelve to work with local field ministers and leaders to identify projects that they feel will make a difference. And, wow, what, what great projects we can. I am amazed that projects that are a relatively small value in amount, but can make a huge difference in communities. So, I, my one regret is that we don't have enough dollars to support all the projects, uh, that come. It tends to be about five or six oversubscribed number of projects what we can fund. If we look back over the last few years, um, we've allocated 216,866 US dollars to support 35 projects and also \$22,000 for some microfinance. And I'll talk about some of those in a few minutes. I, I find it absolutely amazing that a relatively small amount of money can change not you, one life, but a community and to hear the stories of, uh, appreciation and gratitude that, uh, they have the opportunity to change their, their lives.

**Carla Long 11:27**

I love hearing those stories. I, uh, they're incredible, um, and I am, it's very cool that the in, the government in India picked up the school that we had been supporting. That's, that's exactly what we want to happen, right? We want it to be, we don't want to have to, uh, support it for forever. And it's much better when the government will do something about it. So, that's really great. And the, the school in Haiti, I know that what is happening in Haiti right now is, is a, it's a very difficult time in Haiti right now. So, I'm really glad we can support that as well. Now, you were talking about, um, some, well, I don't know if you use the word microlending yet, but I know that we have been doing some microlending projects. And even I have heard like, second, third, fourth-hand, that those microlending projects, even though I think they probably take a lot more work than supporting the school in India and in Haiti, they truly change lives at the ground level, like, lives are completely different after just getting a little bit of funds. And I, I don't know if this is true or not, but I've also heard that a lot of times it's women

who are doing the, the, that we microlend to and who's really working hard. I know it's not just women. I'm sure men are involved as well. But, um, I've just heard such amazing stories about that. Can you talk a little bit about that microlending and what's, what's been happening with that?

**Richard James** 12:55

Yeah, a, a, absolutely. So, Carla, as you know, I used to be a bank manager, uh, before I started working for the church. And, so, this is a project I'm really passionate about. I think that we have models of microlending and microfinance that, uh, empowering women. Absolutely. And they are amazing what they are able to do. So, when we were looking at setting up these microfinances, uh, projects, I looked at different models that were, were working and, and some of the, the downside of that. Some were concerned that a church getting involved in this can impact membership and if they default will that effect their participation in church life? And as we've explored that, uh, resounding was., Yes, please. We, we need the opportunity to, to express and fulfill our hopes. I also was very keen on developing a model that didn't charge interest, the idea of don't charge your sister, your brother usury. I've also realized that the best models are not free money. It's always best that there is some level of charge so that people are able, then, to feel that they are contributing. So, the models that we tend to use is that there is a very nominal management charge. It's something like 10, \$10, \$5, um, on each one and that's re, recycled into the project to reinvest. So, in the context of where these microfinances are being lived out, that is ridiculously low amount of money. You know, you're talking of interest not a 50%, not a 100% times 1,000%, 5,000%. So, a very nominal charge is almost free money for them. But it's an, in the attempt of saying, I am contributing beyond what I just had. So, we have, um, we experimented with a number of projects in different areas. We have a very, very successful project in Cote d'Ivoire, in Ivory Coast. Here, some of our leaders have experience in the past of managing some projects. And it's been very successful and we're also one in Monrovia, in Liberia. You, you're right, we're talking microloans here of like \$70 for some ( . . . ) or \$50, or something like \$110 to set up a small business. So, whether that business is just buying some used clothes and then retailing them and selling them on, whether it is setting up a little coffee shop, or buying some vegetables so that you can now, uh, prepare some vegetables or a meal in a little cafe. So, if you happen to look at the, um, September-October 2023 Saints Herald, there are some pictures there as well as a small report. And there's one there about a, a food project cafeteria. That's one of these little projects that were set up with a very small microloan. I have to say, at the moment we are not having many problems with default. I don't like that. I wish that there was default, because you learn from default. But it also means that people are trying. Uh, you might find that strange coming from a bank manager, but you anticipate that some people, their projects don't work out and that, and that's it. But at the moment, we are doing very, very well with that. A lot of the, the loans have been paid early, because they've been very successful. And then that recycles the money. Um, ( . . . ) listen to the messages and feedback that we're hearing from some of those people. I just want to share some of those. Um, and here's some of these is that people are saying, Thank you that I can now have food that I can buy in my local town. I haven't got to walk five hours or four hours to buy my vegetables. I can get them nearby. Um, Thank you that I can feed my family. So, there's evidence also of financial autonomy. So, here women are able to contribute to their home environment. They are no longer reliant on the men paying what needs to be done. And so they are able to support their family. I, I think also we have to understand in context. Sometimes when there is abject poverty, men have the biggest say where the money goes and a lot of it also goes into alcohol consumption. And the children and the women are left behind. So, here we

have women saying, There's money here. This money is going on food. It's not going on alcohol. It's not going on to other projects. So, there's a lot more autonomy that we're able to provide for women. As a kind of byproduct, the image of the church in the community is increasing. So, all of a sudden, where the church is, is better prosperity. There are things happening. And the, the community is looking out to the church and saying, Wow, what are you doing? This is really good. So, we are changing the community. Um, and I think that there's also an increased capacity from people to give to the church to that they can support other mission projects in their local area and also contribute to the bigger worldwide picture. That's a byproduct for me, but it shows their generosity. They've been helped and they want to help other people. So, the micro projects are, are small, but they're very exciting. I think one has got about \$10,000 now and is continuing to turn over. Um, another just got \$3,000. One is set alongside another project so that people can, um. Let, let, let me digress. So, one of these projects we funded was a sewing school. Basically, the project is that we train people how to make garments. We provide the, uh, the workspace and the sewing machine and materials. They are trained and then they can go and, um, start their own business doing that. So, alongside that is a very small microfinance project that if they want to access some credit to buy materials or resources for themselves, then there's another way. So, I like that idea because that's, it's a funding model and also additional capital or resources that people can access if they need to. Again, this is mostly women. Isn't, isn't only women. There are some men learning those skills, too. But it really is empowering women in a, in a culture that, uh, women really need, need to, we need to free women. So,

**Carla Long** 20:29

Those sound pretty wonderful, really awesome. So, I, I am curious, though, about how does it, how does it get started? You know, does, do people ask for that help through their Apostles? Or do they, they come to their mission center financial officers? What's the process of making sure that happens?

**Richard James** 20:46

Right, okay. I think this is the big change between the previous, uh, World Hunger Funds and Tangible Love. So, now the, um, the proposals come through the, the Apostle. They work with maybe Mission Center Presidents or local areas, uh, at projects that they feel would make a difference in their community. So, I'm aware that, like, when Apostle Catherine Mambwe or Apostle Bunda Chibwe have some leaders meeting, they have some time exploring some of these projects and what that would look like. Um, so, if people are, want to apply is through the Field Apostle. We've also, um, encouraging, uh, positive, uh, encouragement for places outside the Western nations to be applying for these funds, uh, because there's abject poverty. So, um, that's how we are having proposals that we, that we consider with the idea, as I lifted before, but income generation, sustainable projects, uh, clean water supplies, education, and, again, empowering women.

**Carla Long** 22:00

That's, that's really good to know. I, I also, so, like, if people are listening to this podcast, and they think, Oh, my gosh, that's incredible. I really want to be a part of that. How can people listening to this podcast be a part of it, like, um, either with their money or with their time and effort? Is there any way that they can help out, too?

**Richard James** 22:21

Yeah, there is. And, so, if people are feeling excited now, let me tell you a bit more of some other projects and I think, uh, our excitement can rise even more.

**Carla Long 22:30**

Yes, I was hoping you'd say that. Yes, please.

**Richard James 22:32**

Yeah. So, I, I think the avenue right now is that we can contribute to our worldwide mission tithes and that will provide, uh, funding available within the World Church mission budget. It is possible to designate funds under the abolish poverty, end suffering, but as you know, Carla, uh, we, we have a worldwide mission budget that we want to support and this is one of the ways we can do that. I think as we go through a decentralized model of the church, I think there might be opportunities for areas to match funding or partnerships that might develop. So, for me, I think what we're trying to do is experiment and pilot and show some models are sustainable, and then saying, Would you like to support this? This is only \$50. This is only \$1,000. Isn't this possible? Now, we're not quite there yet. but we will get there I'm sure.

**Carla Long 23:31**

Oh, we'll definitely get there. We'll definitely get there. So, uh, did you say you had more stories to tell us? ( . . . ) all the stories.

**Richard James 23:37**

Yeah, yeah. I have lots of stories. At the very beginning, we talked about clean water. So, I think we have to be realistic that there are many places in the world that do not have access to clean water. And some of, some of our, our mission centers have focused as this has been a priority. So, the areas where we have, uh, provided some funding to drill boreholes, I don't know what the American words are on this. Is that right language? You drill down and the water comes out. There's a couple of villages that we have done this. I, I think this is transformative. Uh, we've even got one clip of the local television broadcasting our, our sort of, uh, dedication of this simple water pump. Um, again, in context, they haven't got clean water. Normally the women got to walk three, four miles to the river, back, maybe to do that two or three times a day and the children are helping. Here it is straight in front of them in, in their community and, and it's clean. In some of the places, we charge a nominal charge like 50 cents, hardly anything. That is really to help the servicing of the pumps. Sometimes these might just need a new repair, simple repair on it. And, so, try to be self, uh, funding on that. So, we have funded a number of, uh, waterhole projects in Africa. And the impact is, is amazing for those, those areas. There's, um, another little project that I, that I like. It is a block making project. So, we have an area of land by our church where we were presented with a proposal of making blocks to build houses. This started off by a request for some funding to buy the natural resources, meaning the sand, the, the cement, or whatever, whatever they have, plus a block making press, which is a manual device. A relatively small amount of money and with the idea that they would make these blocks and then sell them on for construction of homes. Initially, that project was very successful. And then, because things were getting successful, they came back and said, We need some more money for more resources. And as we looked at the project, which was successful in itself, and saw the pictures, we realize that the people in this instance were mixing the sand and the cement by hand. They didn't have a mixer. So, it was very hard labor. So,

we looked at it and said, What if we supplied now an electric mixer for you to do this? What would your capacity be? And, so, ( . . . ) employing two people, I think to six people, they're able to generate a lot more income that supports families. Uh, and, again, it's a sustainable project. It's generating employment. It's generating sort of food on people's tables. And it's also, in this case, providing a, a place where the communities see the church doing something for our community. And, so, again, for me, that's a good s, symbol, what I like. We pilot something. We see it's successful. We need to adapt it and then how about if we help you a bit more with this. And, so, that's a little project that I really like, this block making project. There are some farming projects that we have supported. There's some sugar cane, some beans, some pigs. I think it's fair to say some have been very successful and some haven't been so successful. But in an experiment on which ones work best in different contexts, I'm, I'm up for that. We know that, uh, some things can make a big difference and some things don't quite work out as you thought they would. The project I really like in Malawi is a solar powered water irrigation system. So, in my simple language, what this means is that we have provided some finance to build a solar powered irrigation system. So, what happens is that you have farmers have good crops ( . . . ) any other river. The poor farmers who have poor yields, they're far from the river and cannot get water to irrigate it. So, by providing a solar powered water pump, we, we pump the water to the fields and then their crops grow. Now, to see the images of these pictures is amazing. It is terrific. The crops are, wow, amazing and, and the, the happiness and gratitude on people's lives. The whole family are engaged in this. And it's people who would normally be left behind. They won't be the ones that would have the good crops. They would be the ones that were marginally living. Now, they can provide for themselves. They can sell their, their produce and then generate an income for them and providing food for the community. So, I, I, it's, it's, I would say it's a kind of produces, Oh, why aren't there more of those? There's lots of sun. You know, there is limited water, but if we can get it to the places as needed. So, it's been a real successful project. Um, it was really sad to hear last year that the two models like this, we had water pumps, the pumps got stolen. And, so, we're really appreciative of the Presiding Bishopric who were, who were prepared to replace those pumps and not take it from this fund, but from other funds that they had. So, those are now being replaced and it's continuing to yield incredible crops for our, for our, our sisters and our brothers around the world. I think some of the school projects are really interesting. So, we have provided a number of different school projects. In some areas, the local government will say, If you provide the school, the fabric of the structure and the staff, then they will take over the cost of running that. So, sometimes we have a basic building and it's just dirt floor and there are just stones with a plank of wood on. Now, that isn't acceptable for the local government to take on board. So, some of the proposals that we've received has been to, uh, cement or concrete the base of that and provide some desks. And when that happens, then the local governments say, Thanks very much. Now we'll take this over and we will run. So, it's relatively simple project, it doesn't cost a lot of money. But the impact on education is huge. Other projects that we find is that the poor people can't afford to send their children to school, either because of fees or they have not got a uniform. So, in many cultures, you have to have a uniform to go to the school. And, also, people are given a choice. They send their boys to the school and not the girls to the school. So, so what we've been able to do, a, allied with the project about, uh, sewing machine training and, and tailoring, we have enabled people to sew or make, uh, uniforms for the girls and the boys, so that they can go to school. You know, I think he's trying to break this cycle of why the boys are preferred to the girls. And, so, by making uniforms available for everyone is one of the ways of breaking that. And, so, that's proven very good. So, something that's relatively inexpensive, makes a huge, huge difference to one girl, another girl, to

another girl. A, another project that we find is ( . . . ) a little bit. In Honduras, what we are finding is that teenage girls do not finish the last few years of their education, that predominantly due to the family needed money, they can't afford the last grants to finish off their education, and they need money in the, the family. And, again, it's the girls that are stay, have to stay behind. The guys continue with their education. So, we provide a very small grant system there that allow the girls to finish the last two years of their education. And then they get bet, they graduate from the school, they get better paid jobs so they're contribute better to the household. So, that was a very simple project, but it's really aimed at allowing these young girls just to finish education, to graduate.

**Carla Long 33:14**

You know, Richard, these are such great stories. And I, I feel like we would be remiss if we didn't mention, you know, how important it is that the church isn't coming in and quote unquote, saving these people from where they're at. The, the people in, that you're describing, have come up with the idea, have decided this is what they want to do, have asked, have taken the initiative to ask for funds. The funds have been granted, but then they run the project. It's not, uh, it's not the field Apostle or the Mission Center President or someone coming in and doing the work and making sure this happens. It is the people themselves. And you and I both know, that makes a huge, huge difference in the success of these projects. Uh, when people feel empowered, they, they work harder and things hap, more things happen that, and they, and people who live there know their culture way better than you and I would know their culture and what would work better than what you and I would think would work. So, I mean, I just, I just feel like it's so, so important that we just really put a pin in that and recognize that.

**Richard James 34:18**

Um, hmm. And they, and you're right. There's some people who say, Well, why is the church doing this when we're, there are so many other charities doing far better work and even sort of Outreach International who are phenomenal in the projects that they do. And, so, the way that I see that, this, we cannot just absolve our responsibility as a church. It's part of our Mission Initiatives. And these are relatively small projects. You're right that we empower local people to come up with the idea and then they work through the project and they benefit completely from it. And some of the stories that we're hearing are lives being transformed and changed and the Spirit of gratitude. Again in ( . . . ), Thank you for giving us the opportunity. And that's the key word. People have, have lots of ideas, they lack of opportunity to access credit, lack of opportunity of some capital to start the new business, or even the opportunity to go to school, um, as a simple project. Um,

**Carla Long 35:21**

It's almost like the starfish story, isn't it? You know, like, It made a difference to that one. It made a difference to that one. So, I do feel like whatever, I, I, there are incredible charities out there doing such great work. But we're doing great work, too. And, as you said, you know, like, the, uh, the sewing, the sewing, um, group that you said. Now the sewing group is making uniforms so kids can go to school. Like, that, that's, I mean, the way those two came together, it just makes my heart so happy. (Yeah.) I'm really glad you mentioned that.

**Richard James 35:49**



And, and that is a good example. And one of the big differences here is that these ideas come from our church members, our sisters and our brothers around the world. And it, it's impacting where Community of Christ is. And so we are not doing it for the purpose of the lifting up Community of Christ. We're doing it to, to make where they live a better place to live. But people are noticing. And, in fact, people have come into the church because we are making a difference. They want to be a part of this Community of Christ that is helping my village, my, my community. So, we're not doing it for that purpose at all. We're doing it with this Mission Initiative to abolish poverty and end suffering. There is a project that we have provided funding for in Bolivia that hasn't started yet. And the reason it hasn't started is really because of COVID. But if I talk through what the project is, I think it's very, very neat project. So, in Bolivia, there are these farmers that have very, poor crop yield. And that's because they cannot afford to buy the fertilizer to increase their yield. The project proposal came in two pieces. One was that, could we provide access to fertilizer. In other words, buying it as a cooperative and then allowing the farmers to buy fertilizer at a reduced price. In itself, I think that is a commendable project. But what we were hearing as we listened to the proposal, is that poor farmers get a low crop yield, have to sell it, and they also get a low price. If we provide fertilizer, they get increased crop yield and can sell more, but still at a low price. So, what would it look like if we built a silo, so allows the increased crop yield to be stored and then the farmers could sell it at a higher price a little bit later. And, so, that, that's the nature of the project. So, it's increasing crop yield, allowing some storage, and then they can get a higher price maybe, maybe, it might be months later, might be two months later. So, that project is in stage of going to happen. And I think, again, that is a really good example of listening to a project on the ground, empowering local people to make a decision of how this will work for them. I, when I look at that sort of project and I think you provide one solution, but it has a huge impact. And so farmers not only provide for their family, they're providing for the community, the increased yield. And, um, so, I, I think it's, it's wonderful. I'm always appreciative of the generosity of the church. So, I want to say again, thank you, uh, merci, uh, gracias for your generosity because every little dollar does make a difference for people's lives here.

**Carla Long** 39:01

Uh, you absolutely said it. That's exactly right. Every dollar makes a difference. And it sounds like the stories that you're telling prove that to be true. Every dollar truly makes a difference. Gosh, Richard, these have been such great stories. And that's exactly what I wanted to hear today on this podcast, the reason why we do this. I know it's a lot of work. I'm sure it's a lot of work to, you know, keep on top of all these different projects, but I'm, I'm really glad that this is one thing that we're doing. Is there anything else were, we, is there anything else that you wanted to talk about that I didn't ask about the World Hunger Team or World Hunger Fund?

**Richard James** 39:40

Yeah, I, I think when I look at it in normal times, and I think normal times is pre-COVID, the World Hunger Team used to meet three times a year. We probably meet once a year now. But it also provide education opportunities to the church of how we can abolish poverty, end suffering. And one of those from the Council of Twelve point of view, we had some practitioners from the field, we had people in the Philippines, Dominican Republic, um, joining the Council of Twelve by Zoom, telling us what is their context, what is happening, and then what help they will need. And I think that's really important for us to be learning from our sisters and our brothers around the world. So, it's not, we've got all the answers,

we've got all the money. It's, it's the other way around. We are the, we are the poor people really. We, we are the ones that need to learn. And I think that's a nice message that we need to flip sometime for us is that it's not just one way. There's poverty of time, there's poverty of our spirituality, there's poverty of our, of our communities wherever we are. And we can learn from each other in partnership with our, our dear sisters and brothers around the world.

**Carla Long** 40:54

Thank you, Richard, for saying that. That's beautiful. And thank you so much for being here with us today. And thank you for all the good work that you and the World Hunger Team is doing. And I'm looking forward to being a part of that team as well.

**Richard James** 41:04

Yeah, yeah. We, we, we want you because you're amazing. We were ( . . . ) She is amazing. You know, um, I said the main part of this, and this is my perspective, if we want to abolish poverty in our world, we have to deal with the man issue. We have to empower women, dismantle patriarchy, because we've messed it up guys. And we, we really need to empower women and education of women and make sustainable projects. So, this is what we try to do here in a very simple, small way. But one by one like the starfish, we are making a difference.

**Carla Long** 41:43

Amen. Thank you so much, Richard.

**Richard James** 41:45

Thanks, Carla. Really good to chat with you.