

## Internship Portfolio: Naomi Falk

*Completed at Convoy of Hope*

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## World Water Day 2025

Link to article: <https://convoyofhope.org/world-water-day-2025/>

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### **“Just Add Water -- A Convoy of Hope Digital Special Report”**

Water is essential to life, yet 1.4 billion people — including 450 million children — live in areas where there is not enough clean water to meet their needs. Without access to clean and safe water, communities face increased disease, higher death rates, and struggling economies. Convoy of Hope is committed to changing that reality.

#### **When the Water Is Gone**

Only half a percent of the world’s water is usable and available freshwater. That half a percent must be shared among all 8 billion people alive today, as well as every living thing that uses freshwater to survive.

Add to that the complications of making that freshwater accessible and drinkable, and the true picture humanity faces starts to come into view.

Unclean Water – Clean water is essential for sustainable development. When people drink unsanitary water, they are exposed to a litany of diseases, bacteria, parasites, heavy metals, and harmful chemicals. A person could eat three healthy meals a day, but the unclean water they drink can rob them of all that nutrition.

Convoy of Hope was introduced to a village in Indonesia where residents had the knowledge and skills to grow plants and vegetables, but the only water they had access to came from a polluted river. When they drank from the river, they reported itchy skin. Their children became sick. Their crops would not grow.

Disaster – Natural disasters like hurricanes, droughts, wildfires, and floods can severely impact access to clean water. They damage water infrastructure, contaminate freshwater sources, and overwhelm treatment facilities. Clean water is vital for drinking, cooking, bathing, and cleaning. Without it, recovery is even more difficult.

After Hurricane Helene devastated much of the southeast United States, clean water was next to impossible to find. With a hurricane’s large-scale destruction, its impact on a local water supply is sometimes underreported. If water supplies are contaminated, or pipelines are destroyed, hurricane-impacted communities need rapid and targeted help.

Drought – Severe droughts are experienced all over the world. From the most urban parts of America to the most remote corners of Africa, communities struggle with the fallout that occurs when rain simply won't fall from the sky. In countries where there are resources to address these shortages, drought shifts from dire to concerning. But in regions that are destabilized by poverty, conflict, and climate shock, drought can quickly become deadly.

### **What Do the Numbers Tell Us?**

- More than 2 billion people (1 in 4) still live without safely managed drinking water, including 115 million people who drink surface water. (WHO/UNICEF, 2023)
- Two billion people still lack basic hygiene services, including 653 million with no facility at all. (WHO/UNICEF, 2023)
- Around 1,000 daily deaths of children under five are due to unsafe water, sanitation, and hygiene. (WHO, 2023)
- More than 2 billion people live in countries under water stress, and 3.6 billion face inadequate access to water at least one month per year. (WMO, 2021)
- Water-related disasters account for 70% of all disaster-related deaths. (World Bank Group, 2022)
- Since 2000, flood-related disasters have increased by 134%. (WMO, 2021)
- Only 0.5% of water on Earth is usable and available freshwater. (WMO, 2021)
- Global water demand is projected to increase by 20 to 30% by 2050. (UN, 2018)

### **Water in West Africa**

How far do you have to go to get a drink of water? For most people in higher-income countries, the answer is probably just a few steps — maybe from their bedroom to their kitchen.

For a child living in West Africa, however, the answer could be “miles.” And then they have to collect as much as they can and haul it back.

Outside a school in a village in West Africa, the ground is littered with plastic soda bottles. No, this is not the result of students who don't throw away their trash — these plastic bottles are the only way for the children in this village to collect water. For these children and everyone else in the community, water comes from the yawning, large-diameter well outside of the school. This well is hand-dug and open to the elements. There's nothing to block contaminants from falling inside. There's also nothing to prevent a child from falling inside.

To retrieve water, the children tie a cord to empty soda bottles and drop them down the well. The risk of falling in is high. And even if they manage to collect the water safely, there is no guarantee that the water itself is safe or that there is enough.

This West African community is just one of many places around the world facing water scarcity, and this issue isn't one that affects everybody equally.

“In many communities, the chore of retrieving water falls on the women of the household, leaving girls and women vulnerable to assault and the elements,” explains Convoy of Hope Global Program Operations Manager Ali Manuella. “Accessible clean water transforms the overall health of a community, but it also provides an avenue for girls to stay in school and for women to connect and explore more opportunities for themselves and their families. In these communities, water is life and oftentimes a catalyst for empowerment and opportunity.”

Because of gender roles surrounding water and the traditional division of household labor, it's often the women and young girls who are sent to travel long distances to collect water that might not even be safe for them to drink.

The journey is long, the water is heavy, and the cycle is endless. Young girls can't focus on their education if they have to collect water multiple times a day, and they can't go to school if the water they drink makes them sick.

*This isn't safe.*

*This isn't sanitary.*

*And for Convoy of Hope, it is not acceptable.*

### **An Integrated Approach**

Clean water is fundamental to breaking the cycle of poverty. That's why water is a key component of Convoy of Hope's integrated programming strategy. Convoy provides potable water for cooking and drinking in our Children's Feeding program, irrigation for farms in our Agriculture program, and clean water and sanitation solutions through our Community Health program.

Children's Feeding initiative: Clean water ensures the safety of meals prepared for the children, reducing the risk of waterborne illnesses and improving their overall health.

Agriculture initiative: Irrigation systems help school, community, and other farms grow nutritious crops, ensuring food security and economic stability.

Community Health program: Through WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) training and clean water access, Convoy improves sanitation in clinics and public spaces, preventing disease and promoting healthier communities.

### **A Global Water Strategy**

Convoy's mission is to ensure that every community and program center we serve has access to clean and safe water through tailored solutions that meet a community's specific needs. We provide both short- and long-term solutions, ensuring communities can maintain access for generations.

### **Short-Term Solutions**

- Water filters to provide immediate access to clean drinking water
- Repairs to existing water systems to restore functionality

### **Long-Term Solutions**

- Wells and water-storage systems that ensure a steady supply of clean water
- Latrines and kitchen irrigation systems that improve sanitation and food production
- WASH training to educate communities on hygiene, water conservation, and maintenance of water systems

Sustainability is at the heart of Convoy's water initiatives. Community members receive training on how to save for and maintain these solutions, empowering them to take ownership of their water resources.

So in instances like the one in Indonesia, Convoy of Hope partnered with the community to build a well. Now, they can grow their own plants and vegetables. The community is transformed. They have flourishing crops and can feed their families, which only builds upon their food security.

And after disasters, water is a part of every distribution Convoy of Hope does. When someone comes through one of our drive-thru distributions, volunteers load their car with relief supplies such as food, groceries, hygiene kits, and a case of water.

In places where drought is prevalent, Convoy employs both short- and long-term solutions for water. Convoy funds well drilling in communities where it's feasible, since wells can provide an area with years of access to clean water. If drilling wells or installing catchment systems isn't possible, Convoy can provide vulnerable communities with truckloads of potable water and water filters.

In 2024 alone, Convoy of Hope implemented 43 clean water projects across seven countries and three regions, reaching more than 90,000 people.

These efforts ensure that families, schools, and entire communities have a sustainable source of clean water, improving their health, education, and economic prospects.

### **West Africa, Revisited**

In March of 2021, Convoy of Hope made plans to drill and install a water pump for this village. These plans created a sense of relief in the community.

“At last, we can have clean water,” said one woman living there.

Access to clean water may not be thought about often in societies where everyone has two or three designated water cups within arm’s reach at all times. However, water is an essential resource, and for communities where this resource is scarce or dangerous, clean water is more than just an afterthought. Clean water is hope.

And at Convoy, hope is what we’re all about.

Despite setbacks due to COVID-19, Convoy drilled for water in five communities in West Africa. Easy access to clean water changed everything for the people in these communities.

“I remember watching the children in [West Africa] standing around one of the wells we dug,” said Convoy’s Heath Adamson, Senior Vice President of Global Program. “They were surprised to discover that drinkable water is supposed to be clear rather than brown.”

Now, the school not only has a water tank but also both a manual and solar water pump. There is enough water in the well for the children at the school and everyone else in the community.

Having a functional well and water pump provides more than just safe drinking water. Along with the well, Convoy of Hope helped implement a school garden, and it’s still growing today. Through this garden, the children are learning how to grow vegetables, a skill that will set them up for future success. Convoy has also helped start a rice farm in the community that has produced over 10 tons of rice.

### **Transforming Lives Through Clean Water**

Access to clean water is not just about survival — it’s about opportunity. When communities have safe water, children can stay in school, families can grow food, and entire regions can thrive. Convoy of Hope’s commitment to providing clean water is changing lives worldwide, one project at a time. By addressing both immediate and long-term water needs, we are creating lasting solutions that empower people and transform communities for the better.

Access to clean water creates more than a cup of water to drink. It creates hope.

Hope for mothers, as they care for their children at home without having to leave for hours at a time to collect water.

Hope for children, as they begin to thrive in school.

And hope for the entire community, as they begin to see a future ahead of them, one that is exciting and full of possibilities.

## Global Program Articles

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### **‘Despite the difficulties, there is always a way forward’**

*Link to Article:*

<https://convoyofhope.org/agriculture/despite-the-difficulties-there-is-always-a-way-forward/>

Jose, a farmer in Honduras, recently found himself unemployed when the maquila where he worked as a textile machine operator closed down. He began to work every day on his farm, while always worrying that there might not be enough to support his family.

“I feel a bit desperate at times,” Jose said. “There are days when I wonder how I will be able to bring food home without a steady job.”

Despite these difficulties, he never lost hope. Encouragement from his friends and family helped him to stay positive and continue working.

“I have been unemployed for four months now, but thank God, we have always had enough to eat.”

Jose encountered Convoy of Hope while working at the maquila and became involved in the Agriculture program.

“When I started attending Convoy of Hope meetings and getting involved in the pig farm project, I felt a new motivation and hope.”

Jose received training from Convoy that enabled him to explore new areas of farming, such as establishing a pig farm and growing cucumbers.

Now, Jose is able to dedicate more time to his farm. He has learned how to take care of the pigs by managing their feeding, weighing them without a scale, and choosing the right medications for them when they are sick.

“Since I have started applying the skills I learned with Convoy of Hope, my life has changed for the better.”

Jose is now a mentor to other farmers in his community. Whenever anyone comes to him for advice, he uses his knowledge and passes along the training he has received in order to help the whole community.

“I am happy to give them the guidance they need. It feels good to know that I am helping those in need.”

As Jose’s farm continues to grow, so does his hope for the future. He plans to work with other crops and continue helping people with the knowledge that he has acquired.

“I hope that the future I have always dreamed of will become a reality. I want my children, when I am no longer able to work, to see the effort I have put in and learn to fend for themselves.”

Jose hopes that one day he will be able to support himself completely from the farm. Now that he dedicates more time to this dream, Jose looks forward to seeing the results of his efforts and the satisfaction of having something of his own.

“The experience has been positive and has shown me that, despite the difficulties, there is always a way forward.”

## **Energized for Excellence: Stephanie's Story**

*Link to Article:*

<https://convoyofhope.org/childrens-feeding/energized-for-excellence-stephanies-story/>

Fourteen-year-old Stephanie enjoys many things about her life in Haiti. She loves her mom, who works hard to provide for her family. She loves her two younger brothers and her friends at school. She loves her teachers and learning new things — especially math, her favorite subject.

Between school, activities with friends, and responsibilities at home, Stephanie has a lot going on, which means it's also important that she has lots of energy.

Unfortunately, due to financial difficulties, Stephanie does not always get food at home. This makes it hard to focus on all the things she loves.

“I often went through the day hungry,” Stephanie said. “I didn't always have the energy to concentrate in school or complete my homework. My family struggled to provide enough food, and it was difficult to stay motivated when I felt so weak.”

Stephanie has faced many challenges in her young life. Her father passed away, and her family has since lost their home to gangs. Now, they are living with someone else because they cannot afford a place of their own.

Throughout these difficulties, Stephanie has relied on those close to her for support and encouragement.

“In hard times, my mother's support has helped me the most. She encourages me to stay strong, even when times are tough, and her love reminds me that we're not alone.”

When Convoy began sending food to Stephanie's school, she experienced a new sense of hope. Receiving a nutritious meal made it much easier to focus on her studies.

“My life has improved because I can count on having a meal each day at school. I feel stronger, healthier, and more focused in class,” Stephanie said. “This stability has helped me do better in my studies, and I have more energy to help my family and participate in activities with my friends.”

Stephanie is committed to her education, and her hope for the future is that she can continue in school. Now that she knows she will have a meal at school every day, that future is starting to look more possible.

“I just want to say how grateful I am for the help I receive from Convoy of Hope,” Stephanie said. “Their support has made a big difference in my life and gives me hope for a better future. Knowing that people care about me and my education inspires me to keep working hard.”

## Looking Ahead: Woenishet's Future-Focused View

*Link to Article:*

<https://convoyofhope.org/womens-empowerment/looking-ahead-woenishets-future-focused-view/>

Woenishet, a single mother living in Ethiopia, works every day to provide for her three boys. She runs a shop in her community, where she shines shoes and sells shoe accessories. Although her business helps support her family, Woenishet has not always felt secure in her future.

“Before joining Convoy of Hope, my life was in a vicious circle,” Woenishet said. “I lived day by day; my only concern was to obtain what was sufficient for a specific day.”

Woenishet also faced criticism from her community, as her field of work is largely male-dominated. Still, Woenishet persevered. To secure her spot in the market, she masked herself so that no one could tell she was a woman.

“Despite the discouragement and negative word, I pushed forward.”

Woenishet's difficulties increased when she became sick and couldn't work for almost three months. She relied on those around her for support. When Woenishet returned to work, she still faced many struggles. She was still living day-to-day, without a plan for the future of her business.

Then Woenishet joined Convoy of Hope's Women's Empowerment program, and her life began to change. She received startup capital as well as training that helped her transform many areas of her business.

“After receiving training from Convoy and obtaining startup capital, my life has changed dramatically. I now have a renewed commitment to my business and have learned to respect my working hours.”

With new skills under her belt, Woenishet can focus on more aspects of her business, such as saving, planning, and bookkeeping.

“Before the training, I had no idea who my clients were. I never kept a logbook and had no records of my business routine. Now, I am putting into practice what I have learned from the training, and I am seeing visible results.”

Today, Woenishet looks to the future. She aspires to have her own shoe manufacturing business and hopes that her children will continue in their education and live good lives.

“Ladies should avoid fear of trying [a] new business venture,” Woenishet said. “Some people expect instant change. I strongly believe that gradually building one’s business is more important, backed up with long-term vision and [a] dream.”

## Walking in Confidence: Sita's Story

*Link to Article:*

<https://convoyofhope.org/childrens-feeding/walking-in-confidence-sitas-story/>

Sita, a girl living in Nepal, is enjoying her ninth grade year in school. Her favorite activities are singing and being with her friends. She likes learning from her teachers, who encourage her singing.

But the journey to school is not always easy. To get there each morning, Sita must walk for one hour. Her exhausting trek and demanding day are even more difficult when they're done without food.

"Due to our low financial condition, my parents were not able to provide me with lunch for school," Sita said. "I had to attend school the whole day with an empty stomach."

But when Convoy of Hope began providing food at Sita's school, things that had once felt so out of reach suddenly became a reality. She was full during the day, and she had the energy to focus on her classes and help her family at home.

"The food Convoy provides is very helpful for students like me. It has helped me to focus on my studies and my dreams. It has also made me healthier than previous years."

Sita is also benefiting from Convoy's Girls' Empowerment program. Before connecting with Convoy, Sita often could not attend school when she had her period. Because of her family's financial situation, they could not afford sanitary pads for her.

"I used to use torn cloths, which were very uncomfortable," Sita said.

When Sita joined the Girls' Empowerment program, she received training on many different subjects, such as awareness training and training on how to make reusable sanitary pads.

"After joining the Convoy program, all my problems are solved. I don't have to have an empty stomach in school, nor do I have to miss school because of my monthly period."

Sita is excited about her future, especially now that she has the tools she needs to succeed.

"I just want to say a big thank you to everyone behind this support. We children from this remote area of Nepal are very grateful towards Convoy for providing us with warm and nutritious meals daily in our school."

## **A Flourishing Field: Abdul's Story**

*Link to Article:*

<https://convoyofhope.org/agriculture/a-flourishing-field-abduls-story/>

Abdul, a man living in Tanzania, enjoys his life as a farmer. His field produces a variety of crops that help him provide for his family.

One of Abdul's favorite crops is his sunflowers. Recently, he pressed stored sunflowers from his field to make 10 liters of cooking oil and still had some sunflower left over! He used the cooking oil to make food, and the sunflower was beneficial for his daughter's health as she was breastfeeding.

Abdul's field is a reliable source of food for his family. But this has not always been the case.

"The yields were poor from my field," Abdul said.

This lack of crops created uncertainty in Abdul's life, since the economy in Tanzania depends on agriculture. With severe weather and natural disasters affecting the vulnerability of crops and livestock, access to food can be a concern.

However, uncertainty turned into security when Abdul connected with Convoy of Hope's Agriculture program.

Through the agricultural training, Abdul learned about many important aspects of farming, such as budgeting and growing a diverse range of crops.

"The training was very good," Abdul said. "It changed my life from poor agricultural practices to good agronomic practices."

Now Abdul grows many different crops in his field, such as maize, sunflowers, and lablab — a versatile, high-protein legume. He uses his training from Convoy to continue to develop his field and provide for his family.

"I no longer worry about food security at my household because I expect to harvest enough for food and surplus," Abdul said.

As Abdul looks to the future, he hopes his family will continue to have good health and enough food. Now that he has his training and his thriving field, this future is no longer out of reach.

“I love farming,” Abdul said, “and I can say that the presence of Convoy of Hope in our community has changed my life.”

## **Growing Goals: Bimala's Thriving Field**

*Link to Article:*

<https://convoyofhope.org/womens-empowerment/growing-goals-bimalas-thriving-field/>

Bimala, a woman living in Nepal, works hard to provide for her family. She and her husband are farmers, and although they take care of their field, they have always had to worry about having enough to provide for their children. When they couldn't harvest enough vegetables from the field, they had to purchase them from the market instead. This created some financial uncertainty, especially when Bimala's husband had to have surgery.

"We were in darkness," Bimala said. "We had to buy everything."

But her situation changed when she connected with Convoy of Hope's Women's Empowerment and Agriculture programs.

Through Convoy's training, Bimala learned many good agricultural practices, such as commercial tomato farming, garden preparation, organic manure preparation, and off-season vegetable farming.



"Support from Convoy of Hope has made a drastic change in my life," Bimala said. "Before this organization came into our village, we used to buy vegetables from the market, and we didn't have any knowledge about commercial farming. But now, not only are we able to have green vegetables in our meals, but we are able to sell in the market and earn a good amount of money. People trust us and we are able to save for the future."

Now that Bimala harvests enough food to provide for her family, the trajectory of her life and her children's lives has changed. She hopes that her children continue to have good health and success in their studies, and that others can learn from her story.


Bimala's training and hard work make the future that she wants for her family seem possible.

"I am not able to express all the gratefulness I have towards Convoy of Hope," Bimala said. "It's been a blessing to us. Thank you."

## Convoy of Hope General Audience Email



# Energized *for* Excellence




"It was difficult to stay motivated when I felt so weak."

Stephanie, a young girl living in Haiti, often went through the day hungry. She didn't have the energy to focus on everything she loves — her family, her friends, and her studies at school.





When Convoy began sending food to Stephanie's school, she experienced a new sense of hope. Receiving a nutritious meal made it a lot easier to focus on her studies.

Now, Stephanie is committed to her dream of continuing in school, a dream that is starting to seem more possible.

[Read the Rest of Her Story](#)



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**Heath Adamson: *Hope Breaks Through*  
Book Trailer Script**

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Open on a black screen.

HEATH (V.O.)

Hopelessness respects no  
boundaries.

FADE IN:

Image/video that shows people/landscapes in "states of hopelessness." Landscapes that are destroyed due to natural disasters, dry deserts without water, etc.

HEATH (V.O.)

From refugee camps, to corner  
offices, in our common human  
experience, we can all share this  
form of spiritual poverty.

CUT TO:

A MAN sitting in his office. He closes his LAPTOP and runs a hand over his face.

HEATH (V.O.)

Surrounded by situations where  
change doesn't seem possible, we  
are resigned to passive  
acceptance or religious cliché.  
We say it is just impossible.

As Heath says each phrase, images of people dealing with these things are on screen. Images include those living in poverty or difficulty.

CUT TO:

Heath, holding a copy of his BOOK.

HEATH

*(talking to the camera)*

But impossible is a word we use  
when we forget that God sees us  
all. The power of hope is this:  
it accepts reality without being  
intimidated by it.

CUT TO:

The man who was at his desk takes his hand off his face and  
looks up. As he asks all of these questions, the people who were  
previously shown begin to look up or show signs of "something  
has changed" (Smiling/standing up/etc).

HEATH (V.O.)

Through hope, we can exchange  
deep pain for immeasurable  
flourishing.

Moving from passive acceptance  
into active hope.

Combating all inferior ways of  
thinking.

Finding the nearness of God among  
life's heartbreaks.

CUT TO:

The camera is back on Heath.

HEATH

In a world where circumstance  
often doesn't line up with God's  
preferred design, hope interrupts  
our brokenness and invites us to  
dream again. Finding the catalyst  
for meaningful change lifts you  
beyond your current struggle and

enables you to also walk  
alongside others in theirs. Hope:

CUT TO:

As Heath says these next phrases, the words also appear on  
screen. There is video of more positive situations.

HEATH (V.O.) (Cont'd)  
Empowers and transforms  
Whispers and cries out  
Invites us to let go of what  
is, and take hold of what could  
be.

CUT TO:

The camera is back on Heath.

HEATH  
Hope breaks through.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

Image of the book cover. Words on the screen show release date  
and info.

FADE OUT: