



ChildVoice))

2021

ANNUAL REPORT

15 YEARS

OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO YOUTH AFFECTED BY WAR AND CONFLICT



**"If we are going to see real development in the world,
then our best investment is women."**

-Nelson Mandela

FROM **OUR PRESIDENT**

Dear Friends of ChildVoice,

Looking back on the past fifteen years, it is hard to believe that what began as a novel idea has grown into the multinational organization it is today. Over the years, ChildVoice has helped empower thousands of war-affected Ugandan, South Sudanese, and Nigerian youth with restored health and spirit. We have equipped them with the skills they need to build new lives for themselves and their families.

I laid the groundwork for ChildVoice in 2005 with help from Ian Lethbridge, a good friend who at that time was International Director of Feed the Children. He had witnessed the horrors unleashed by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda. They had kidnapped thousands of children, forcing them to be soldiers. Those who had managed to escape faced rejection, poverty, and post-traumatic stress. Thousands were crowded into internally displaced persons camps, where the trauma continued. Before his untimely passing, Ian helped me develop a set of program concepts to address the unmet rehabilitation needs of these children. At first, I did not intend to establish a charitable organization. The idea was to present these concepts to existing non-governmental organizations already working in the field that could then implement them. But the response was always either "not now" or "not ever."

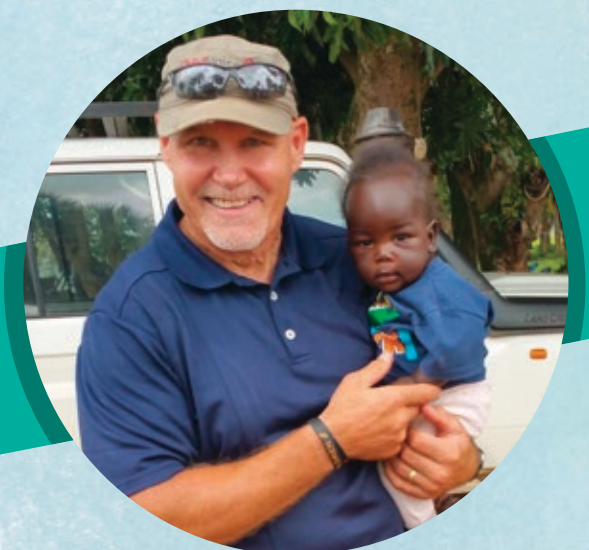
I knew that I could not just stand on the sidelines. I sensed a need to jump in with both feet, because for those kids, every single day mattered. Thus, ChildVoice was born.

The stories in this report will provide some idea of how far we have come in our work to empower conflict-affected youth with the resilience and skills they so desperately need. Every day at ChildVoice, we see not only how important the work we have done has been, but also how it needs to grow and become available to so many more war-affected youth across the globe. Right now, tens of thousands of adolescent refugee girls from the Democratic Republic of Congo and other East African nations are languishing in Ugandan refugee camps, including Imvepi Refugee Settlement. In the coming year, we hope to open a new Girl Empowerment Center in Imvepi to begin serving many of these girls. That is just one example of how we need to continue adapting to an ever-shifting landscape of global displacement.

At some point during the past fifteen years, I came to realize that empowering conflict-traumatized youth through my work with ChildVoice had become a life mission. It is my hope that in the years to come, more and more people—whether they be employees, board members, volunteers, or donors—will come to see ChildVoice the same way.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Mandsager'.

Conrad Mandsager
ChildVoice CEO and President





UGANDA: THE LUKOME CENTER

Center-Based Programming

▲
Members of Class 10,
which graduated in 2018

The Lukome Center started with the idea that food and shelter relief efforts in war-affected regions simply aren't enough. For conflict-affected youth to recover, they need to obtain the skills to navigate life's challenges and lift themselves out of poverty.

Fifteen years later, we can see how the concepts on which the center was founded have been validated by the ongoing success of our students. And we have learned that these concepts can and should be broadened to include marginalized adolescents who have been traumatized in any number of ways, including poverty, domestic violence, and human trafficking outside of the context of war and conflict.

The negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic that began in 2020 spilled over into 2021 and continued to present students with unexpected challenges. From July 2020 to September 2020, the Lukome Center was locked down due to a mandate by the Ugandan government. The center reopened in October of 2020, welcoming back classes 13 and 14 to complete their studies, which they finally did in April 2021. But food insecurity continued to cause significant hunger issues for students, their families, and countless others as market prices shot up and availability of goods plummeted. ChildVoice responded with a drive in the spring of 2021 to address hunger issues.

LUKOME PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2021

- Total number of Lukome Center graduates by end of fiscal year: **205**
- Number of graduates in post-residential program by end of fiscal year: **167**
- The 18 students in Class 10 who graduated from the Lukome Center in 2018 completed their post-residential program in 2021



UGANDA: IMVEPI REFUGEE SETTLEMENT

Community-Based Programming

▲
A hairdressing session at a
Girl Empowerment Center, Imvepi Refugee Settlement

ChildVoice established its first community-based programs in Imvepi Refugee settlement in 2018. The past three years have seen us become a firmly established and respected presence within the South Sudanese refugee community as well as the local Ugandan host community.

2021 brought ongoing challenges to operations within Imvepi, first and foremost hunger, lack of access to medical services, and disputes over land use as the COVID-19 pandemic continued to force the Ugandan government to enact new measures to combat the virus. In response, ChildVoice ramped up efforts in Imvepi to address pandemic-related hunger issues and other needs.

Some activities, such as dance and sports, were put on indefinite hold as the pandemic wore on. Despite the many challenges faced by both students and staff, we were able to continue running limited counseling and training sessions, with particular emphasis on our agriculture program as well as psychosocial and spiritual recovery.

IMVEPI PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2021

- Total registrants as of the end of the fiscal year: **2401**
- Active participants during the fiscal year: **132**
- THRIVE menstrual hygiene kits distributed: **195**

**Total number of sessions at
Girl Empowerment Centers:**

- Mental Health sessions: **237**
- Health Education sessions: **110**
- Business and skills training: **297**
- Vocational skills training: **489**

NIGERIA: MALKOHI AND MUBI Community-Based Programming



▲ Skills training session at Malkohi IDP camp, Nigeria

ChildVoice's programming in Nigeria has come a long way since our initial efforts in Pare camp in 2018. The Nigeria team's operations have since been firmly established in Malkohi Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp. In the past fiscal year, we saw two major positive developments: First, a new Youth Empowerment Center (YEC) was designed and construction started. The YEC will serve adolescent girls and boys who have registered for ChildVoice programs.

Secondly, we began the implementation of adolescent boy's programs for the first time in the organization's history. As with girls, boys received counseling and agricultural training. And a new vocational training program in electrical circuitry proved to be so popular that boys we weren't able to enroll were crowded outside the classroom.

Our Nigeria team also ran a pilot THRIVE training program in Mubi IDP camp. It was highly successful and led to the strong possibility of establishing an ongoing presence in Mubi in partnership with another non-governmental organization operating in the region.

While programming in Nigeria was less affected by the COVID-19 pandemic than in Uganda, many students and their families continued to struggle with food insecurity due increases in market prices.

NIGERIA PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2021

- Number of registered students: **427 Girls / 20 Boys**
- THRIVE kits distributed: **494**

Total number of sessions at Youth Empowerment Centers:

- Mental Health sessions: **311**
- Health Education sessions: **228**
- Business and skills training: **119**
- Vocational skills training: **61**

STORIES FROM **THE FIELD**

Betty: Displaced twice, now owner of two businesses ▶



Betty is a former student of class 10. She graduated from the Lukome Center in 2018 with certificates in Salon, Tailoring, and Agriculture.

Betty first came to Uganda from South Sudan when she was a very young girl. Uprooted by ethnic violence, her family fled to a refugee camp in Uganda's Koboko district, where they lived for a time before returning to South Sudan.

In 2016, Betty was once again forced to flee to Uganda with her mother and siblings when violent tribal conflict erupted in the capitol city of Juba and spread throughout the country. Eventually, they landed in Bidi Bidi Refugee Settlement in Yumbe District (northwestern Uganda). Sadly, her father died amid fighting in South Sudan. From there, she was referred to ChildVoice.

Now a mother of two children, Betty applies the skills she learned at the Lukome Center to run her salon and tailoring businesses in Bidi Bidi. She's also bought some land and built her own home – a situation she could not even have imagined five years ago.

Aber: Achieving stability and gaining experience ▶



"ChildVoice has changed my life greatly. I now have so many skills. When I leave ChildVoice, I'll have experience."
- Aber

Aber's life was marked by domestic unrest prior to her coming to the Lukome Center as a member of Class 8. The second of five children, Aber became pregnant as a young teenager. After Aber's father threatened to shoot her, her mother hid her at her uncle's home, where she continued to live in fear of her father's anger.

For Aber's family, just having enough to eat was a constant struggle. She tried selling pancakes and digging other people's gardens to make what little money she could. "My life was not easy. I didn't have work. I would go to dig to get money to buy things for my child," she said.

It wasn't long after she came to ChildVoice's Lukome Center in 2015 that Aber began to see a brighter future for herself. Through psychosocial counseling, she learned to overcome severe emotional trauma and manage the anger that used to overwhelm her. Soon she was enjoying soccer and dancing, making friends, and learning catering and agriculture skills. Today, she works on the Lukome Center's farm, feeding the fish, rabbits, and chickens, and planting vegetables.

STORIES FROM **THE FIELD**

Madu: Looking forward to a brighter future ▶

▶ Madu and fellow students learn about basic electrical circuits.



When 19-year-old Madu connected with ChildVoice, he had been living in Malkohi Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) Camp for about a year. He and his mother were forced to flee their village in Borno state during an attack by Boko Haram insurgents.

They became separated during the attack, and Madu spent two days wandering in the bush before he and a few other villagers were able to get a ride to the city of Maiduguri. In time, he learned that his father had been killed, but his mother and nine other relatives had managed to escape and were now living in Malkohi. He joined them a short time later.

In 2021, with the establishment of new Youth Empowerment Center programs in Malkohi, ChildVoice was able to run skills training sessions for displaced Nigerian adolescent boys—including Madu—for the first time. The programs included basic electrical skills training. He excelled in the program.

Madu is eager to learn more. “Sometimes the food we have at home is barely enough for us in the house,” he said. “I would love to learn one or two more job skills so that I can support myself and my family.”



“Getting a job without any skills is very hard here in the camp.”

- Madu

TIMELINE:

HOW FAR WE’VE COME SINCE 2006

2006

Conrad Mandsager founds ChildVoice.

2007

- ChildVoice renovates Lukodi Primary School in northern Uganda for use as a therapeutic program for highly traumatized and vulnerable child mothers as a result of the LRA conflict.
- ChildVoice opens the Punena Health Center that runs for 5 years, serving 50,000 patients.

2008

First class of Ugandan girls begin their program at Lukodi.

2012

Lukodi Primary School facility turned over to the Lukodi School Management Committee; construction on the new Lukome Center begins.

2013

- ChildVoice celebrates the grand opening of the new Lukome Center campus.
- ChildVoice registers as an international NGO in South Sudan.

2016

- ChildVoice pulls out of South Sudan because of the escalating violence and deteriorating security situation.

2017

- ChildVoice opens the first Girl Empowerment Centers in the West Nile region of Uganda to serve South Sudanese refugees who have fled into northern Uganda.
- ChildVoice launches the THRIVE initiative to provide adolescent girls with washable and reusable menstrual pads, along with reproductive health and hygiene education.

2018

- ChildVoice starts work in northeast Nigeria to serve adolescent girls who are Boko Haram victims.
- The Lukome Center receives vocational school accreditation from the Ugandan government.
- In Uganda’s Imvepi Refugee Settlement, ChildVoice registers over 2,000 adolescent girls – primarily South Sudanese refugees, but also some local Ugandans – for the new community-based program.

2020

- Nigeria team begins offering a new program for traumatized adolescent boys.
- Emergency relief efforts initiated to help Ugandan and Nigerian beneficiaries affected by COVID-19 pandemic.

2021

- Construction begins on a Youth Empowerment Center in Malkohi IDP camp, Nigeria
- The first class of Nigerian adolescent girls graduates.
- Classes 13 and 14 graduate from the Lukome Center in Uganda.

STATISTICS

ON REFUGEES & INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

Our mission has grown and evolved greatly since we began working with victims of Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army in 2006. While we still work with local Ugandan adolescent girls, we soon recognized the need to expand our reach as refugees fleeing from violent conflict in South Sudan began pouring across the Ugandan border. The rise of Boko Haram in Nigeria in 2014 gave us further reason to expand once again to address the needs of highly traumatized Nigerian youth who had lost their homes, families, and hope due to horrific violence in the northeast part of the country.

According to the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, in 2021 Africa experienced another record year of forced displacement, continuing a ten-year-long upward trend. Over 32 million Africans are now internally displaced or refugees.¹

*There is so much more we could be doing.
The statistics below paint a picture of massive global need.*

82.4 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced by the start of 2021 as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order. Among them are nearly **26.4 million refugees**, around half of whom are **under the age of 18**.²

86% of displaced people globally were hosted in developing countries in 2021.²

73% of displaced people are hosted in neighboring countries. In 2021, Uganda hosted the fourth largest refugee population (1.4 million) within its borders.²

In 2021, South Sudan contributed the fourth highest number of refugees globally, at 2.2 million.²

In 2021, 48 million of refugees worldwide were internally displaced in countries like Nigeria.²

By the start of 2021, over 2.1 million Nigerians were internally displaced.³

References:

1. Africa Center for Strategic Studies June 17, 2021. (2021, September 13). 32 million Africans forcibly displaced by conflict and repression. Africa Center for Strategic Studies. Retrieved December 10, 2021, from https://africacenter.org/spotlight/32-million-africans-forcibly-displaced-by-conflict-and-repression/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=update&utm_campaign=amg&emci=723d808e-b43c-ec11-9820-c896653b26c8&emdi=d2117dba-c23c-ec11-9820-c896653b26c8&ceid=265871.

2. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (n.d.). Figures at a glance. UNHCR. Retrieved December 10, 2021, from <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/figures-at-a-glance.html>.

3. UNHCR - Nigeria emergency. (n.d.). Retrieved December 10, 2021, from <https://www.unhcr.org/nigeria-emergency.html>.

GIVING REPORT & 2021 BUDGET

2018-2019

GIFTS RECEIVED

\$1,298,117

EXPENSES

\$1,251,318

2019-2020

GIFTS RECEIVED

\$1,114,846

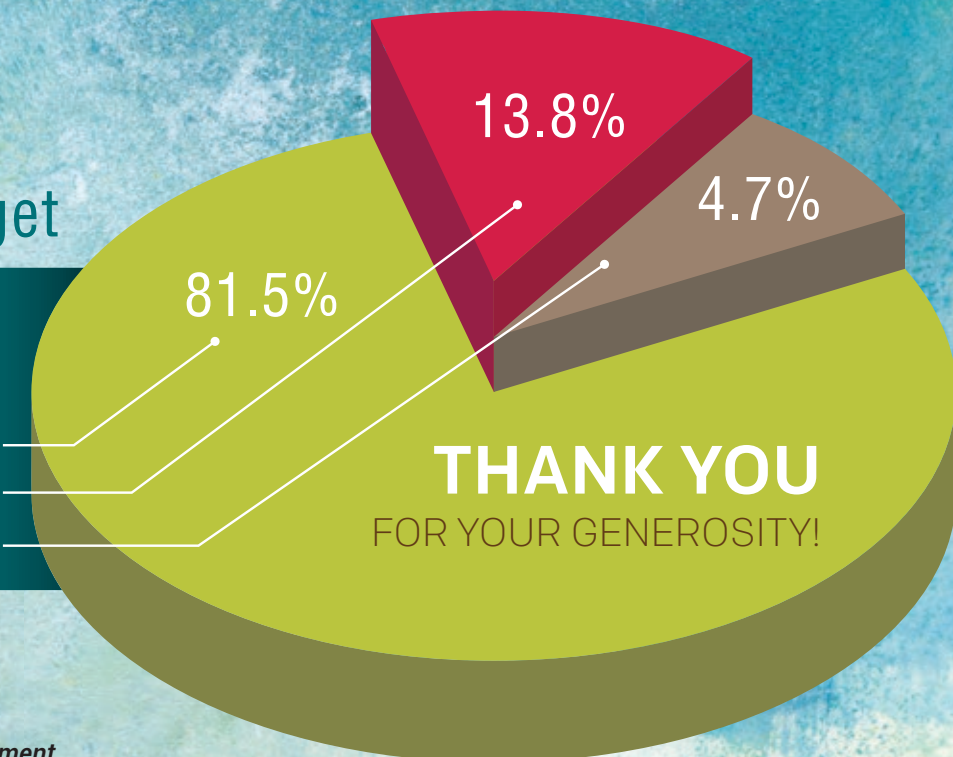
EXPENSES

\$1,181,701

2020-2021 Budget

Total Budget: \$947,324

Program Expenses: \$ 772,353
 Management & General: \$ 130,636
 Fundraising: \$ 44,335



THANK YOU
FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

To request a copy of our most recent audit statement, please email ChildVoice at info@childvoice.org or call (603) 842-0132.



ChildVoice)))

Restoring the Voices of Children Silenced by War

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Photography provided by Larry Lindell, Neil Mandsager, and Mattie Simas