

# NEW HORIZONS

Reaching Into  
Conflict With Hope

ChildVoice 

Annual Report 2017

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**more than 65 million worldwide.**



# LETTER

## From Our Founder

*Dear Friends of ChildVoice,*

According to UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, we currently are witnessing the highest levels of forcibly displaced people ever due to conflict and persecution—more than 65 million worldwide. Among them are nearly 22.5 million refugees, more than half of whom are vulnerable, at-risk children under the age of 18. For other staggering numbers, look at the statistics on pages 10 & 11 of this report. Sadly, considering the world in which we live, the need for what ChildVoice does is increasing, not diminishing.

### **TOUCHING LIVES IN REFUGEE SETTLEMENTS**

This past year saw us casting a wider net to draw in and help even more adolescent girls who are hurting and at high risk for gender-based violence. We began exploring the feasibility of working directly with young girls in the South Sudanese refugee settlements along the border in northern Uganda. These overcrowded and underserved camps have left hundreds of thousands of children without basic necessities and with little or no hope for the future.

Recently, ChildVoice was approved as an official emergency partner with Uganda's Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). We immediately started work on strategies to provide aid to those at Imvepi refugee settlement near the town of Arua in northern Uganda, mostly in the form of Empowerment Communities that will bring love, counseling, and vocational training to young South Sudanese girls who are desperately in need.

Nigeria also appeared on our radar as reports of violence by the Boko Haram became more alarming. More than two million people, mostly women and children, have fled their homes and villages to live in IDP (Internally Displaced Persons) camps in northeastern Nigeria. Sexual violence against women and young girls in these IDP camps is rampant, and adequate food, hygiene items, and medical care are virtually nonexistent.

At the end of May, I traveled with ChildVoice Board Member Mark Hoffschneider to northeastern Nigeria on a fact-finding mission to assess the possibility of bringing the ChildVoice model to that region. The results from meeting with various Nigerian delegations and government officials were so positive that ChildVoice's Board of Directors gave the go-ahead for a staged approach toward establishing a presence there.

### **NEW HORIZONS AT THE LUKOME CENTER**

We continue to fine-tune our programming at the Lukome Center to better serve our young students. This year, we added a three- to six-month transition phase to the ChildVoice model, along with a new section of more independently located transition housing, to help graduates successfully make the changeover from student to independent community member.

It has long been our dream to make the Lukome Center self-sustaining, and we took a giant step toward accomplishing that goal through our growing hog operation. We also developed more farmland that will allow our students to sell their crops and earn a decent income.

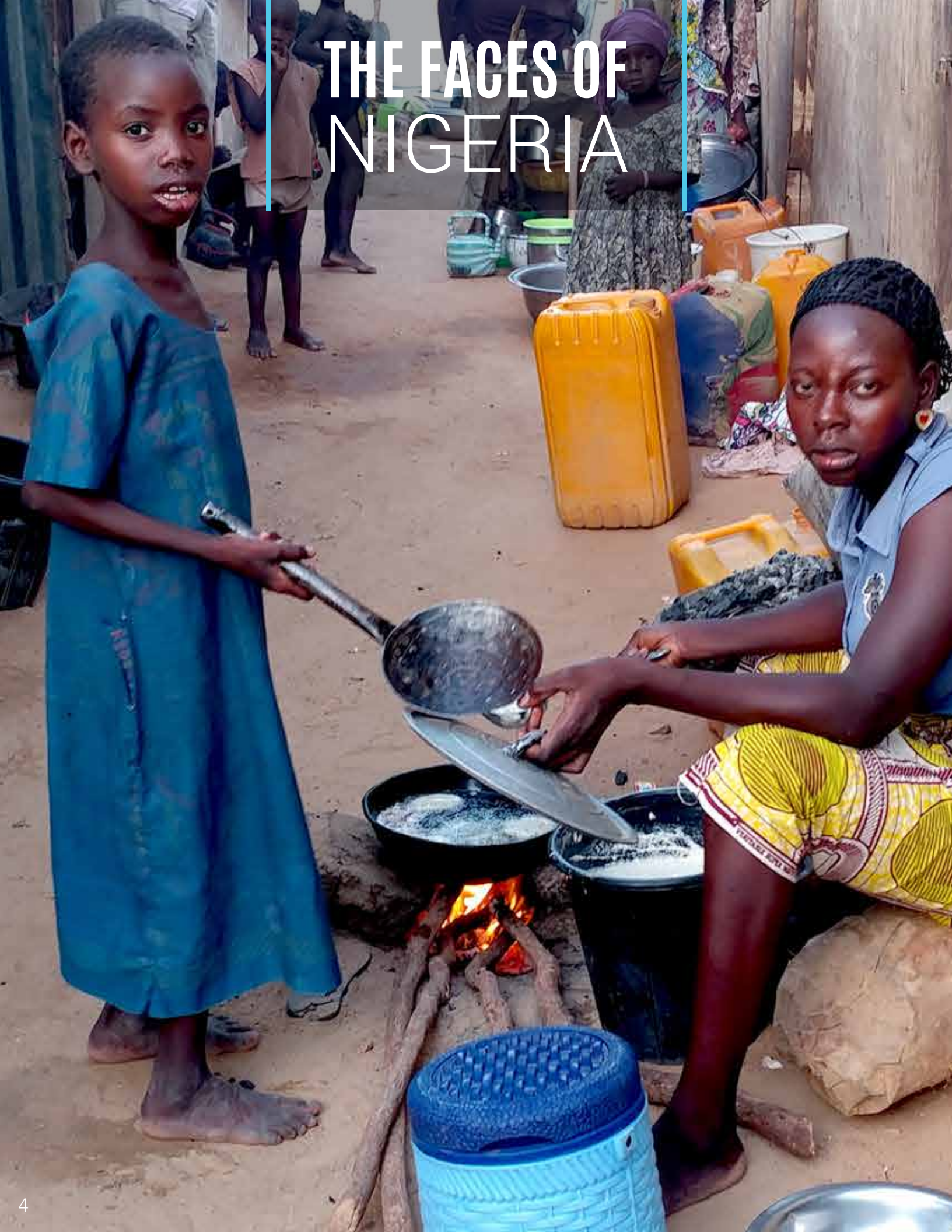
This has been an unprecedented year of growth and expansion for ChildVoice, as we answered the call to work with war-affected girls in new regions of the world. I realize this is only possible because of your continued partnership as you walk alongside us. Many heartfelt thanks!

**Conrad Mandsager**  
*Founder and President*



*Conrad greets displaced children at Nigeria's Shuwari IDP camp*

# THE FACES OF NIGERIA



## ANITA'S\*

### Story

When she was just 15 years old, the unimaginable happened to Anita. Her entire village in northeastern Nigeria's Borno State was raided by insurgents of Boko Haram, one of the most violent Jihadist militant groups in the world. Many villagers were killed, including Anita's father. Her mother fled to Cameroon, as Anita later learned. Anita was abducted and carried off to the forest where these particular Boko Haram terrorists were hiding.

When she was just 15 years old, the unimaginable happened to Anita.

This highly vulnerable young girl was kept there for three to four years (she is uncertain how long). She was forced to change her religion, forced to marry one of the insurgents, and repeatedly sexually violated. Finally, the Nigerian military invaded the area and she was rescued, but not before she had suffered greatly and become pregnant. Anita was taken to

Maiduguri, where she went to live in her grandfather's home and gave birth. At the time of her abduction, Anita had been preparing to marry a man from her village. He now refused to accept her and her newborn child.

In the months that have passed since she was rescued, Anita has had no news of her baby's father, whether he is alive or has been killed. She lives under the provision and protection of her grandfather, cleaning office compounds and doing other small jobs to help support her and her child.

Anita is one of six girls with Boko Haram babies who are living in their host community. Anita says when she first arrived, she was stigmatized as a Boko Haram "wife," but she has been accepted back by her family. Many kidnapped girls and their babies, however, have not been as fortunate. These girls want to return to school, but their children receive little or no help from the government and relief agencies, so they can barely support themselves let alone afford the school fees.

To further add to these girls' concerns, violence from the Boko Haram is always an issue. No one, including those living in northeastern Nigeria's towns and cities, knows who from the Boko Haram might be living among them, waiting to stage the next attack or suicide bombing.

*\*"Anita" is a pseudonym used to protect her true identity.*



# THE FACES OF SOUTH SUDAN



## SUSAN'S Story

It's hard to comprehend the trauma of being 17 years old, having a young child, and then having to flee for your life as armed combatants invade your city. But that's exactly what happened to Susan, who—along with her 18-year-old brother—fled from her home in South Sudan to escape the civil war there.

"I ran alone and my parents ran alone," she says. "I don't know where they are. We hid sometimes for fear of being killed by the Dinka troops—because when they find that you are not a Dinka, they kill you. So we hid in the bush. Then, later on, we were brought together with other people to Imvepi camp."

Through a sense of responsibility borne of war and necessity, Susan and her brother now take care of 11 other refugee children at their small hut in Imvepi refugee settlement. All were separated from their parents when they fled; Susan thinks her parents might have escaped to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but says that for all she knows, they could even be dead. She also doesn't know where the father of her baby is; they, too, were separated when she fled South Sudan.

"I ran alone and my parents ran alone—  
I don't know  
where they are."

Susan wants to go back to school, but that seems nearly impossible for an adolescent girl who is the leader of a household of children. "My dream is to go back to school and continue my studies," she says, "but there is always the problem of school fees." This small band of children struggles each day just to have enough to eat and to get other necessities, as they face an uncertain future in a country not their own.



# THE FACES OF LUKOME CENTER



## SHARON MARY'S

### Story

Sometimes the effects of conflict last long after the war has ended. That is the case for Sharon Mary, who recently arrived at the Lukome Center as part of Class 11. Sharon is a child of the bush, born to a mother abducted by the LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) when conflict was raging in northern Uganda a decade ago. Her mother was kidnapped by the rebels when she was very young and forced to become a "wife" to one of them. Eventually, she gave birth to two daughters.

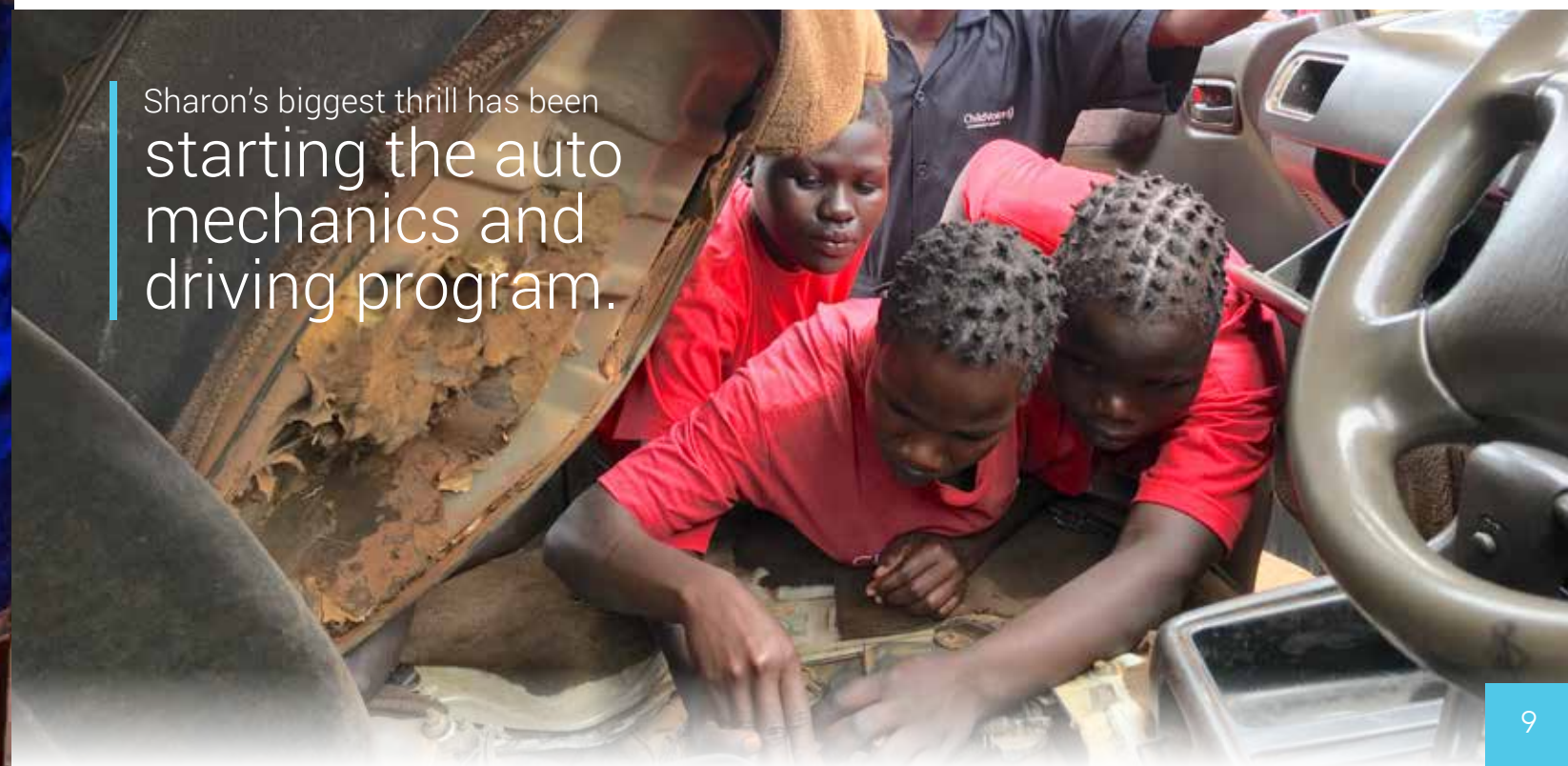
After Sharon was born, her father wanted them all to escape from the LRA, but he was killed in the process. Sharon, her mother, and her sister did escape, however, and made it safely to Gulu town in northern Uganda. At that point in the conflict, a child-protection agency was set up in Gulu for people escaping the LRA and coming out of the bush. Sharon's small family was hosted at this rehabilitation center for a short period of time before they found and returned to her mother's family. Soon, her mother remarried.

At first, Sharon's stepfather welcomed them all into his home. She began going to school and says she was happy for the first time in her life. But things took a sad turn when Sharon's stepfather decided he did not want her and her sister—children who were born in shame and were not his own—living under his roof. He began to abuse the girls and told their mother she had to choose between him or them. There was constant fighting within the family. Sharon's stepfather stopped paying her school fees, and she was forced to drop out. She met a young boy who promised to take care of her but soon got her pregnant. Shamed once again, Sharon was forced out of her home and sent to stay with her elderly grandmother. Things got worse; she was neglected and abused by both her family and the village for being a child mother as well as a child born in captivity. She was just 14 years old.

When ChildVoice found Sharon, she was deeply submerged in a sense of hopelessness, having no education, skills, or means of earning an income to support her and her child. She was despised and openly rejected by many in her community. Thankfully, someone in the local leadership of her village identified her as a struggling adolescent mother and recommended her to ChildVoice.

Today, Sharon and her two-year-old daughter, Daisy, are thriving at the Lukome Center. She is loved by the staff and has made many friends among the other girls. Her biggest thrill has been starting the auto mechanics and driving program recently launched at the Lukome Center. She tells everyone that this is the field she hopes to work in some day—quite a dream for a young girl who, until recently, felt she had no future!

Sharon's biggest thrill has been starting the auto mechanics and driving program.



**85** The number of children (the majority of them girls) forced to act as suicide bombers in 2017 by Boko Haram insurgents in **Nigeria** (almost 4 times the number in 2016, according to a 2017 UNICEF report).

**19,000** A conservative estimate of children recruited into armed forces and armed groups in **South Sudan**. Consequently, more than 2,300 children have been killed or injured since the conflict first erupted in December 2013 (according to a 2017 UNICEF report).

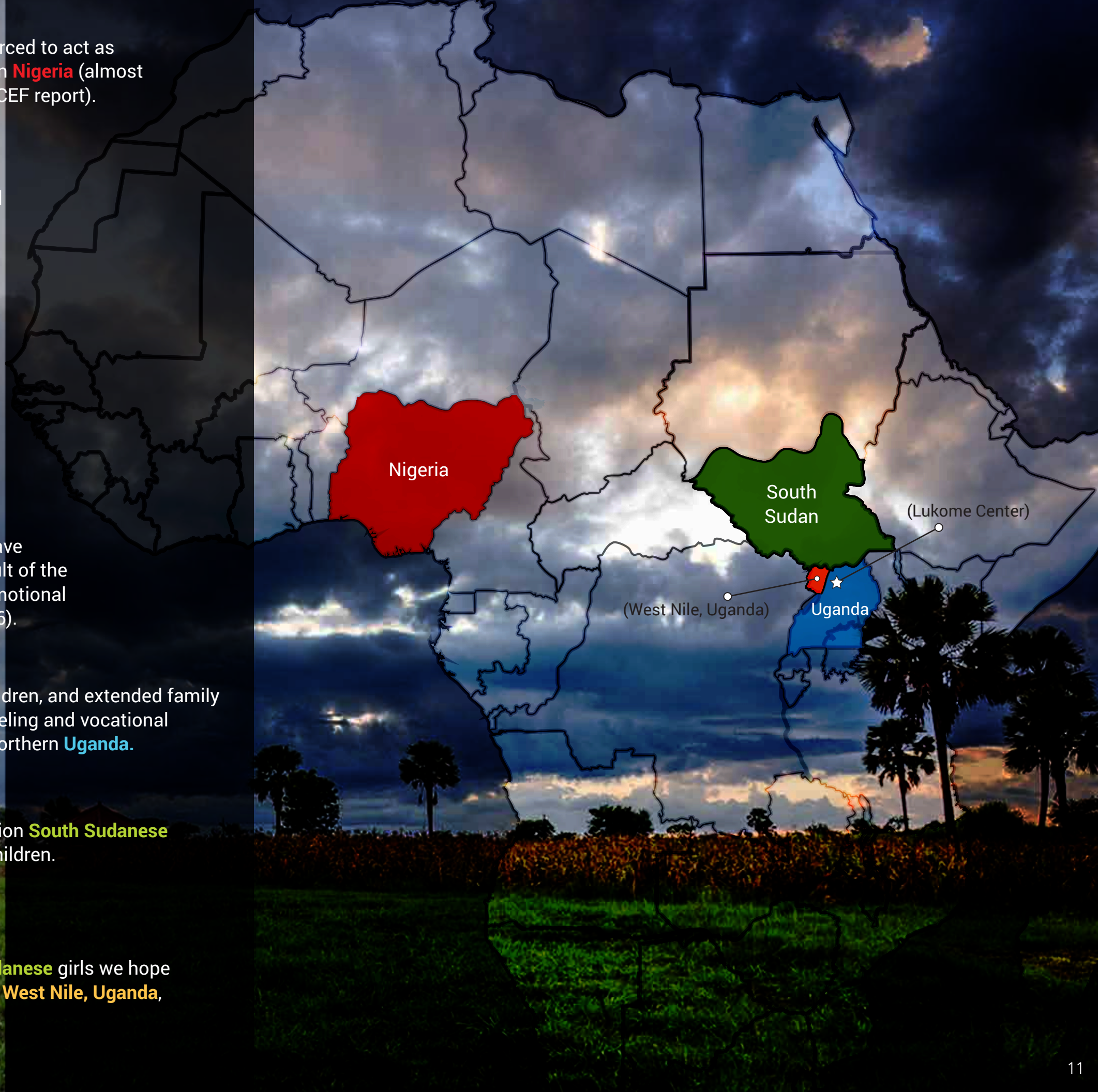
**3 MILLION** The number of **South Sudanese** children suffering from severe food insecurity, both as refugees and within their country's borders (according to a 2017 UNICEF report).

**6 OUT OF 10** Women and girls in northeast **Nigeria** who have experienced gender-based violence as a result of the Boko Haram insurgency, leading to severe emotional trauma and poor sexual and reproductive health (UNFPA, 2016).

**1,221** Total number of beneficiaries (girls, their children, and extended family members) of ChildVoice's therapeutic counseling and vocational training programs at the Lukome Center in northern **Uganda**.

**86%** Current percentage of the more than 1 million **South Sudanese** refugees in **Uganda** who are women and children.

**2,500** Moving forward, the number of **South Sudanese** girls we hope to impact at Imvepi refugee settlement in **West Nile, Uganda**, with ChildVoice's life-changing programs.



# 2016-17 GIVING REPORT

## 2015-2016

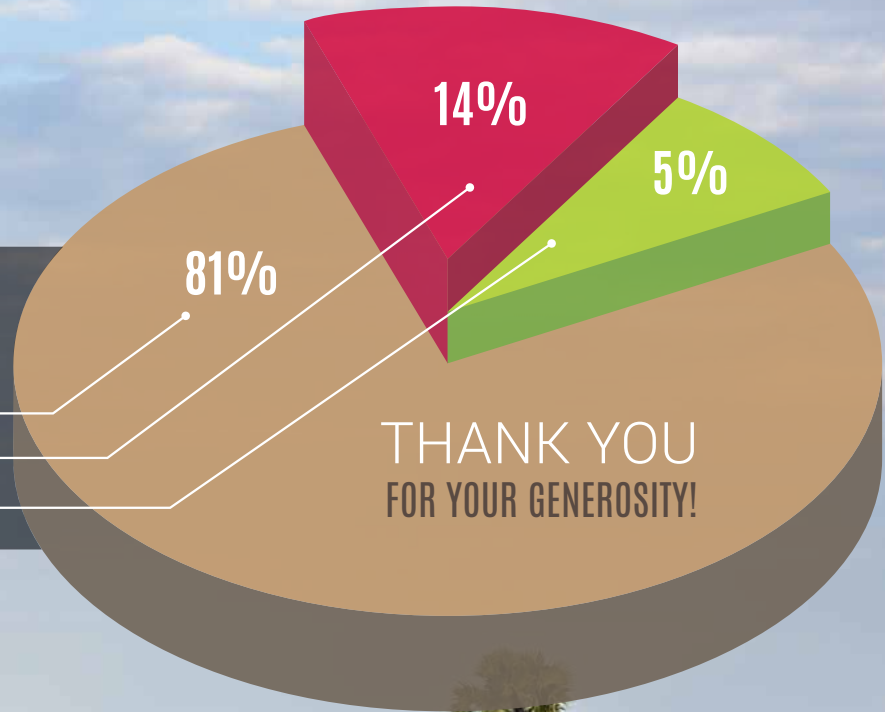
Gifts Received  
\$825,398

Expenses  
\$773,679

## 2016-2017

Gifts Received  
\$906,585

Expenses  
\$720,545



THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

## 2017-2018 CHILDVOICE PROJECTED BUDGET

Total Budget: \$692,530

Program: \$560,949

Management & General: \$96,954

Fundraising: \$ 34,627

DID YOU  
KNOW?

EVERY GIFT MADE  
TO CHILDVOICE IS  
**100% TAX  
DEDUCTIBLE**

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Restoring the Voices of Children Silenced by War.

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\*To request a copy of our most recent audit statement, please contact ChildVoice: [info@childvoiceintl.org](mailto:info@childvoiceintl.org) (603) 842-0132