

CHRISTIAN
DISCIPLESHIP

WHERE MOST NEEDED FUND

» SEMIANNUAL REPORT: October 2018 through March 2019

Prepared July 2019

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

GLOBAL SUMMARY

“We do not teach religion here; we impart God’s love.”

Merlinda Montecillo, a Bible study leader in the Philippines, has learned that children grow in their faith as they experience God’s love.

The Christian Discipleship Program’s training is having a transformative effect on how churches, schools, and communities create loving environments for children and youth to grow and thrive. In Ethiopia, the chairperson for a women’s association said, “[This is] the kind of training that you drink like water. ... it kept me awake the whole night because it

reminded me that we are losing our children.”

In Central America, Sunday school teachers learn that when churches become a “refuge of love,” youth are learning to find refuge in Christ rather than in gang membership.

In Kenya, schoolteachers are beginning to see their profession as a ministry, demonstrating God’s love so children feel safe and can grow and learn.

In Zimbabwe, Celebrating Families



workshops are helping parents to use more loving parenting techniques.

Your gift is helping children and youth to grow strong in their faith, taking a loving Christ as their model. Thank you for your support.

GLOBAL UPDATE

2,053,929 PEOPLE benefited from ministry activities since October 2015, including 196,581 during the first half of fiscal year 2019. This includes parents/caregivers, children, and community members benefiting directly and indirectly.



243,954 children and youth directly participated in discipleship activities, including 64,345 new participants during FY19.



18,944 pastors and church leaders were trained in theology and children’s ministry, including 1,763 new participants during FY19.



2,805 churches engaged in Christian discipleship of children and youth, including 198 new churches during FY19.

PROGRAM-TO-DATE SPENDING

\$9,624,520 program-to-date funding

\$8,082,850 spending to date **84%**

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE FUND

95,601 Bibles made available through the separate International Bible Fund, benefiting 478,005 people.

24%

Seven-Year target: 400,000

CENTRAL AMERICA



In the gang-infested societies of El Salvador and Honduras, the Christian Discipleship Project is having a transformative effect by challenging church leaders to take an active

role in addressing violence in their communities. The project is helping parents confront the abuse they suffered as children and are unknowingly repeating with their own children.

Some key project accomplishments:

- A formal partnership agreement was signed with the Church of God in Honduras, opening the door to implement discipleship ministries for children and families with the second largest church in the country.
- 1,300 Salvadoran church leaders attended the second children's

leadership congress, organized by World Vision and Elim Christian Mission.

- 1,791 parents participated in workshops to learn biblical models of parenting with love.
- 288 Salvadoran church leaders learned to create engaging children's ministry programs.

Please pray for youth who are learning to be mentors to younger children, that they be positive role models in a society that has few role models outside of gang leaders.

35,791 children and youth directly participated in discipleship activities.

Five-Year Target: 75,000 **48%**

3,580 pastors and church leaders were trained in theology and children's ministry.

Five-Year Target: 2,200 **163%**

363 churches engaged in Christian discipleship of children and youth

Five-Year Target: 600 **61%**

Children's drawings create wake-up call

Tirsa Aguilar, Sunday school coordinator for one of the largest churches in El Salvador, says the 2,000 children's ministry leaders she supervises used to focus only on Bible curriculum. But World Vision's training made them realize they also need to be aware of the problems facing children, such as domestic abuse and bullying.

When children at a festival held by World Vision were asked to draw pictures about God's love, many drawings showed that they felt unworthy of His love due to depression or resentment against violent parents. Tirsa is leading a new approach in which ministry leaders reach out individually to each child. As they do, Tirsa says they are preventing violence and helping children avoid joining gangs because they "find in the church a refuge of love."



ETHIOPIA



The impact of the Christian Discipleship Project is expanding dramatically, and more than 58,000 children and youth are engaged in activities such as Sunday schools and youth ministry. In FY19 alone, 1,218 children were involved in leading worship services.

Children are embracing life-skills and

morals training, which complement the academic subjects in school. "We learned in our religious teaching that we need to respect the religion of others," said one child. From another: "I have responsibilities to take care of [the] belongings of others and that of the schools."

Young people are acquiring more godly characters. One youth said their group was labeled as "wicked and ill-disciplined" at school due to constant quarreling, but the training "challenged and changed" them. "We are grateful to the project ... to divert us from evil to good deeds as a new way of life."

In FY19, 500 church youth clubs have been strengthened by training 270

youth leaders. One said the training helped her transform the club from "cliché" activities to using literature, poems, sports, and crafts to share God's Word, as well as organizing outreach activities like blood drives.

In Kolfe Keraniyo, the project's impact also is expanding because churches and the local government office for women and children's affairs are stepping up to duplicate Celebrating Families and Positive Parenting training at their own expense, reaching an additional 231 people.

Please pray for peace in Ethiopia, as the country is going through a time of political transition that sometimes results in incidents of ethnic conflict.

58,830 children and youth participated in discipleship activities.



1,765 pastors and faith leaders were trained in theology and children's ministry.



207 churches engaged in Christian discipleship of children and youth.



Teen's life is transformed as she grows in her skills as a Sunday school teacher

Overcrowded, lecture-style classes made Full Gospel Church's Sunday school a boring ordeal for young children. When World Vision offered children's ministry training, Pastor Eshete immediately chose Bereket (pictured at right) to participate, as she was passionate about helping children grow in their faith.

Bereket says the training was transformative and "had a huge impact, not only on my spiritual teaching but also on the rest of my life." She encourages the children to sing songs, make up rhymes, and create their own home Bible study groups. The training also has made her comfortable talking about her faith with Muslim friends.

"As a teenager, everything I saw and observed in my school made me become a Sunday school teacher to mentor young children about the truths of Scripture, [using] story scripts, action rhymes, and prayers," she says.



KENYA



The Christian Discipleship Project is beginning to permeate every aspect of community life in Kenya.

Children are growing in their faith. "The lesson for today has taught me to decide to serve God with my whole heart," says Grace, age 12.

Pastors and ministry leaders have a new vision for children's ministry that extends into local schools. And schoolteachers are becoming a loving presence for their students. "I no longer teach as a profession, but I minister to the children ... and keep on demonstrating the love of God to them," says Jane Mutindi of Kibiboni Primary School.

Some key accomplishments so far in FY19 include:

- 10,778 children participated in 15 worship rallies, which were held in partnership with local faith-based organizations to reach children outside of the churches and schools already participating in this project.
- 1,806 parents learned loving parenting techniques through Celebrating Families workshops. In Mwala, special sessions for single parent families were held as they were typically left out of the usual Celebrating Families workshops.
- 401 church leaders graduated from theological training with Scott Christian University.
- 144 faith leaders were trained on Channels of Hope-Child Protection, equipping them to be community leaders in protecting children.

Please pray for children who are involved weekly in discipleship activities, that their faith in and love for God continues to grow

50,800 children and youth participated directly in discipleship activities.

Five-Year Target: 75,720

67%

2,058 pastors and church leaders were trained in theology and children's ministry.

Five-Year Target: 2,050

100%

838 churches engaged in Christian discipleship of children and youth.

Five-Year Target: 750

112%

Answering God's call to minister to children

When Salome's 14-year-old daughter, Celestine, became resistant to going to church, Salome felt God tug on her heart to start a children's Sunday school that would better engage the interest of teens. But she felt completely unprepared, as she knew nothing about theology or handling a class of children.

At first, few children came and the parents were not supportive of Salome's efforts. But with training and materials from the Christian Discipleship Project, she developed a dynamic program that is now growing the church's children's ministry. "After this first training, I felt fulfillment of God's calling in my life," says Salome. "The lives of our children are also changing as they allow God's Word in their lives. ... Now our children love church as they feel part and parcel of it."



PHILIPPINES



Children in the Philippines are learning to dream as they discover the empowering force of Jesus' love.

It is your support and prayers that cause children like Kim to say, "Thank you so much for making children as one of your top priorities. Because of you, our dreams can turn into reality some day."

Some of the top accomplishments during the first half of FY19 are:

- 148 church leaders were trained on children's ministry. One commented that learning how children become aware of God convinced her of the importance of listening to children's voices as she helps them grow in their faith.
- 163 teachers and school officials were trained on Christian discipleship.
- Celebrating Families has been incorporated into a weekly government-sponsored program for recovering drug addicts.
- 1,126 youth participated in Dare to Discover workshops, which help them explore their identity in Christ and purpose for their lives. This includes 450 youth recovering from drug addiction.
- Five programs on media outlets enabled the project to reach tens of thousands of people with messages on topics such as strengthening families and the impact of Dare to Discover on the lives of youth.

Please pray for Celebrating Families facilitators and that the obstacles preventing them from leading workshops in their communities will be removed so implementation of this valuable training won't slow down.

53,396 children and youth directly participated in discipleship activities.

Five-Year Target: 118,000 45%

1,016 pastors and church leaders were trained in theology and children's ministry.

Five-Year Target: 300 339%

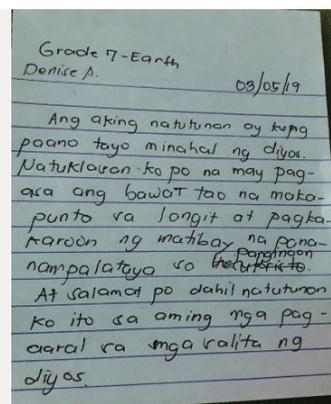
304 churches engaged in Christian discipleship of children and youth.

Five-Year Target: 300 101%

Discovering hope

After being trained in children's ministry by the Christian Discipleship Project, one church leader decided to step outside her church. She convinced leaders at her former school, Baybayin National High School, to hold 30-minute lessons weekly using the Manga Messiah Bible.

At the end of five months, she asked students what they'd learned. Denise, a seventh-grader, wrote (at right in Tagalog): "I learned how we were loved by God. I discovered that there is hope for every person to go to heaven and to have a strong faith in God. I'm grateful that we learned this from our study of God's words."



ZIMBABWE



We are encouraged by the enthusiastic reception we are seeing to this project. Bible clubs for children are growing as we partner with Scripture Union and Awana in children's ministry in seven program areas. In Gokwe, 450 children from eight churches are

now participating in Bible clubs. In Muzarabani, where Bible clubs had previously dwindled, a five-school Bible club competition had 66 participants. In Matebeleland North, 27 schoolteachers were trained to lead after-school Bible clubs. Other key accomplishments include:

- 17 new youth ministry groups have been established in Muzarabani, Hwange, and Limpopo.
- Dare to Discover workshops for 117 youth in Buhera and Muzarabani encouraged participants to explore their identity in Christ and God's purpose for their lives.
- A one-day prayer camp for 512 children in Buhera taught

Bible stories and applied them to practical topics, such as protecting themselves from abuse.

- 29 people trained as facilitators for Celebrating Families reached an additional 325 people by leading workshops in their churches and communities.
- We partnered with One Hope to distribute 6,800 pieces of Christian education materials (such as the Bible picture story shown at left).

Please pray for stability for Zimbabwe, which has been rocked with protests and hyperinflation in recent months. This has serious impacts on families' lives, as well as slowing progress of this project.

21,604 children and youth participated directly in discipleship activities.

Five-Year Target: 69,521 **31%**

822 pastors and church leaders were trained in theology and children's ministry.

Five-Year Target: 424 **194%**

163 churches engaged in Christian discipleship of children and youth.

Five-Year Target: 394 **41%**

Celebrating Families transforms a church

When he and his wife were invited to World Vision's Celebrating Families workshop, Pastor Adeola thought it might help his wife deal with "baggage" from her past. Instead, it opened his eyes to his own baggage—harsh attitudes of his father that he was repeating in his treatment of his wife and two children.

Celebrating Families became transformative for his church too. Members found the lessons so compelling they invited family and neighbors to attend, and the church has grown significantly. "As a pastor, I continue to reap benefits of this model," says Pastor Adeola. "There are less of family disputes to be addressed and more time to build more families. I am truly grateful for this program, more than I can express in words."



INTERNATIONAL BIBLE FUND



During the first half of FY19, we purchased Bibles, distributed Bibles from bulk purchases made last year, and ordered additional Bibles in three countries.

In **Abkhazia** (a breakaway region from the country of Georgia), we distributed 810 children's Bibles. The Chiburkhindji

and Sukhumi churches will use the Bibles for their children/youth ministries. The Kaman Monastery is using Bibles with teens who visit the monastery as part of World Vision's Dare to Discover youth program and for the community Bible reflection sessions held by monastery leader, Father Ignaty.

In **Romania**, Bibles obtained at the end of FY18 continue to be distributed through our church partners and schools with religious education. During the first half of FY19, Bibles were made available in the Ialomita and Vaslui program areas.

We also have orders for Bibles in process in **Armenia** (4,500 Bibles, including three types of children's Bibles

to cover a range of ages from 6 to 17), **Honduras** (13,000 Bibles for children ages 7 to 10, to be used in conjunction with the Central America Christian Discipleship Project), and **Guatemala** (30,000 New Testaments, which will be used for peacebuilding projects in a culture known for violence).

As additional funds become available, our future plans include purchasing Bibles in **Zimbabwe** and **El Salvador** (for use in the Christian Discipleship projects in those countries) as well as **Mozambique**.

Please pray that these Bibles are a light that shines forth on the path for people to better understand God's Word.

95,601 Bibles made available since July 2016.

24%

Seven-Year Target: 400,000

“We visited the grotto where the legend says Saint Simon the Zealot spent his last days ... The idea that one of the disciples of Christ was preaching in my homeland and I can visit the place of his stay made me very excited. ... I did not realize before that we are a part of the early history of Christianity. This fact provoked my interest to learn more about the history of Christianity in general, and especially about the Christianity in Abkhazia. So far, I began my journey with reading the biblical stories for children that I was given by Father Ignaty when visiting his church in Kaman.”

—Georgy, age 13



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стоны
ап. Симона
Канаанита

AS HARSHNESS TURNS TO HUGS, A BULLY TRANSFORMS INTO A YOUNG LEADER



"I'm very happy now," says Fredy. "My father doesn't hit me anymore; he hugs me all the time and he hugs my mom too."

Below, Fredy's favorite hobby is riding his bike through his village.



"Nobody at home had ever hugged me."

Ten-year-old Fredy's home life was bleak. When asked to draw pictures of the people who had hurt him most, the young boy drew pictures of his mother and father.

His unhappy home life carried over to his actions at school, where he was well known as a bully.

"I used to believe that nobody loved me. At school, my classmates didn't talk to me. ... I used to misbehave in class and hit some of my classmates," he admits. "It didn't matter if they were boys or girls."

When the school reported his behavior to Fredy's parents, his father's response was to spank him with a belt.

Fredy's life began to change after participating in World Vision's program at his church, especially from the hugs he received from the children's ministry leaders as they taught him about forgiveness. He cried as he erased the pictures he'd drawn

of his parents as a symbol of pain, and cried when he went home and told them that he forgave them.

Fredy's behavior was transformed as he began to act with more kindness at both home and school. The difference in him was noticeable to all.

"My church leaders are proud of me and the child I became at school and church," he says.

His changed behavior also influenced his parents. They were so impressed with his transformation and touched by his declaration of forgiveness that they started attending church too. They decided to participate in Raising Children With Tenderness training, learning how to be better parents who demonstrate their love as they listen to and care for Fredy.

His transformation has given Fredy a new outlook, inspiring his dreams for the future.

"I used to be a bully," he says. "Now I have changed my life because I want to become a leader in my community."

Now that I have changed and my parents have seen that change in me, they also want to change their lives and they are going to church together."

—Fredy, age 10, Saba Jireh program area, Honduras



World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice. Motivated by our faith in Jesus Christ, we serve alongside the poor and oppressed as a demonstration of God's unconditional love for all people. World Vision serves all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or gender.

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INT19ELOREP-CD_WMN_FY19semi_7.15.19 © 2019 World Vision, Inc.

