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CHRISTIAN  
DISCIPLESHIP

Vacation Bible School in Honduras

PROGRESS REPORT: October 2017 through March 2018

Prepared July 2018

# CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

## GLOBAL SUMMARY

*Today, our children. Tomorrow, our leaders.*

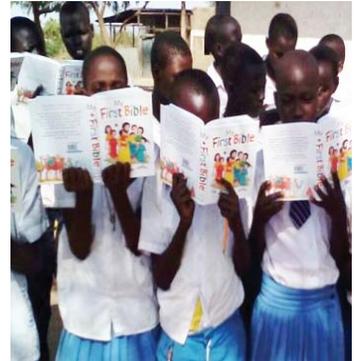
Ethiopian church leaders are uniting around the vision that children are their hope for creating stronger communities and a stronger nation.

Youth in Central America are finding their way out of the magnetic pull of gangs, inspired instead to make the choice to follow Christ.

A community in Kenya is finding that bringing children together to worship Christ is reducing tensions between the local community and the nearby refugee camp.

Filipino families are finding the conviction to more boldly live out their faith and become strong role models for their children to do the same.

Although each of our project countries is very different, the theme we hear from our field offices is the same—the Christian Discipleship Signature Initiative is encouraging the voices of children to become stronger in their faith and more confident in their identity in Christ.



Thanks to your generosity, we were able to start a new five-year Christian Discipleship project in Zimbabwe this year (see page 6). Thank you for your commitment to helping children and youth grow in their faith.

## GLOBAL UPDATE

# 1,099,050

**PEOPLE** benefited from ministry activities since October 2015, including 451,765 during the first half of FY18. This includes parents/caregivers, children, and community members benefiting directly and indirectly.



113,912 children and youth directly participated in discipleship activities, including 30,374 during the first half of FY18.



15,452 pastors and church leaders were trained in theology and children's ministry, including 1,658 during the first half of FY18.



2,794 churches engaged in Christian discipleship of children and youth, including 903 during the first half of FY18.

## PROGRAM-TO-DATE SPENDING

\$6,004,895 spent



## INTERNATIONAL BIBLE FUND

58,355 Bibles made available through the separate International Bible Fund, benefiting 291,775 people.



# CENTRAL AMERICA



"Together, we can be part of something big." These are the words of a young man who stopped following the gang and started following Christ because a pastor trained by World Vision reached out to him in love (see story below).

Your gifts and prayers for this project are part of something big. Together, we are helping children learn about Jesus. Together, we are helping parents break past patterns of abuse. Together, we are helping youth find their identity in Christ, rather than in gangs.

Some of the key accomplishments during the first half of FY18 include:

- Partnering with Elim Christian Mission to hold a Children's Leadership Congress that included 1,276 Salvadoran church leaders learning about children's discipleship
- Partnering with the Honduran Ministry of Education to train 43 schoolteachers on Raising Children With Tenderness
- Piloting the project in the Soyapango municipality, which has one of the highest rates of violence around San Salvador
- Supporting Honduran churches to organize Vacation Bible Schools for 618 children
- Equipping Salvadoran churches as they partnered with local schools to reach 6,691 children with programs on Christian values.

Please pray for safety for our staff and church partners as the project moves into dangerous areas such as Soyapango. We pray that as youth experience Christ's love, they will have the courage to follow a Christian path rather than one toward gangs.

*17,486 children and youth directly participated in discipleship activities.*



*1,735 pastors and church leaders were trained in theology and children's ministry.*



*694 churches engaged in Christian discipleship of children and youth*



## 'Together, we are part of something big'

Diego's\* life revolved around his gang member friends, who gave him a sense of belonging that he didn't find with his family. But something about Pastor Alberto, who was teaching classes on values at his school, drew him in. Diego felt something change in his heart. "World Vision training helped me change my life's way. Finally, I started to walk along with Christ," said Diego

Today, he is committed to helping others experience the same transformation and regularly speaks at schools and in his community about God's love. "I cannot change the world, but if I can change one, and this one joins and changes another ... together, we can be part of something big." (\*Name changed for safety reasons.)



# ETHIOPIA



Church leaders in Ethiopia are inspired by a vision—the future of strong churches and communities depends on their children. Energized by World Vision's training, they leaped ahead of the project's original plan and immediately started sharing what

they'd learned in their churches and in schools.

Teens are embracing their importance as role models to others. "I want to tell to my friends ... about the joyful life I am experiencing in Jesus," said a 16-year-old participant.

Churches in our program areas report an increase in Sunday schools. As one example, the Sibul Sire area reports 10 new Sunday schools started in five churches since this project began.

Other key accomplishments so far in FY18 include:

- Holding conferences for more than 14,000 children and youth to worship and learn about Jesus
- Holding children's ministry training for church leaders in Sibul Sire and Wukro
- Training 1,102 individuals on positive parenting

We are thankful that the Oromia and Amhara regions are peaceful again, after months of civil unrest. We pray the peace continues and that project activities deferred during that time can quickly catch up.

*14,340 children and youth participated in discipleship activities.*



*1,346 pastors and faith leaders were trained in theology and children's ministry.*



*130 churches engaged in Christian discipleship of children and youth.*



## *Youth learns to live out his faith*

Bikila, age 17, emerged from World Vision's training asking himself how he could make a difference in his community. His empathy for children living on the streets resulted in him organizing an informal Sunday school to tell them about Jesus.

He teaches them songs and about how to pray. He also helps provide them with medication and clothing using his earnings from selling corn-on-the-cob after school.

"World Vision has helped me to practice my faith," he said. "I believe that God will give me better opportunities to serve the most vulnerable children."



# KENYA



You are making dreams come true.

For pastors, who never believed they would have the chance for theological training: "I can't believe that I am in the university," said Pastor Martin Lokosen.

For children, who are learning how to pray: "God listens and answers on our needs," said 12-year-old Samuel.

For Sunday school teachers, who didn't have the resources they needed: "Previously, no one ever cared about our children," said Mary Kombe in Changamwe.

Your support is resulting in Sunday schools that are growing and attracting children and youth to participate who were never interested before. A few key accomplishments this year include:

- Leveraging available funding by integrating project activities with other World Vision programming,

resulting in more than 300 additional people trained beyond the original plan

- Holding children's worship rallies (see photo at left) for 532 children in Kakuma, healing divisions between the local community and families living in the nearby refugee camp
- Launching theological training through Scott University for 391 pastors in eight program areas

Please pray for continued peace and stability, as the country was rocked by violence during and after recent elections.

*29,461 children and youth participated directly in discipleship activities.*

Five-Year Target: 75,720

39%

*1,920 pastors and church leaders were trained in theology and children's ministry.*

Five-Year Target: 2,050

94%

*656 churches engaged in Christian discipleship of children and youth.*

Five-Year Target: 750

87%

## *Sharing God's love in the Kakuma local community and refugee camp*

"My name is Dennis and I live in the nearby village [to Kakuma refugee camp], which originated because of being internally displaced due to post-election violence in 2007. Life was not comfortable, but finally, Kabokorit Primary School was opened to cater for our educational needs.

"Last year, the Christian Discipleship Project was started in Kakuma, and my school, Kabokorit Primary, benefited. My life has changed due to school programs supported by the project ... and being involved in children rallies. As much as I came from internally displaced people, I feel my life has changed, and I now realize the love of God in [my] life."



# PHILIPPINES



Your prayers and support for the Philippines Christian Discipleship Project are opening doors for children to grow in their faith as families learn to surround them with Christ-like love.

The first 18 months of the project focused on engaging with churches and pastors, so we've already exceeded our five-year target for these measures. In the coming months, we'll work more deeply with each of these churches to increase their skills working with children.

Key recent accomplishments include:

- Reaching 33,000 likes/views on social media with the news that Iñigo Pascual, Filipino actor and music celebrity, is World Vision's ambassador for the project
- Laying the foundation with school officials to integrate Christian education materials into the

curriculum by training parents, meeting with principals, and working with the Department of Education

- Equipping 1,734 parents/caregivers to take a more active role in their children's spiritual development
- Partnering with churches and law enforcement in Batangas to hold a Man Talk workshop for 166 men (many of whom are recovering drug addicts) on the important role of fathers in children's lives

Please pray for active engagement in this project by all churches in our program areas, especially the Catholic church, which is underrepresented in our activities.

*27,970 children and youth directly participated in discipleship activities.*



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



*304 churches engaged in Christian discipleship of children and youth.*



## *An aspiring teacher learns how much she has to learn*

Cheche was the first in her family to graduate from college, with a dream of being a teacher. Although naturally shy and a bit short-tempered, she was inspired by her teacher's air of confidence. "I thought I could also be like her," said Cheche.

Participating in training for children's ministry leaders gave her confidence in her presentation skills and made her realize the importance of managing her temper. "I'll be dealing with young people ... I cannot lose my temper in front of them," she realized. Now more open to improving her skills, she's asked an older volunteer to be her mentor. "I am more willing to learn now," she said.



# ZIMBABWE



Your generous gifts to the Christian Discipleship Signature Initiative enabled us to launch a new project in Zimbabwe in January 2018.

In just three months, the project team has built a solid foundation on which

to base the planned project activities. Accomplishments so far include:

- Establishing partnerships with local pastors fellowship groups and assisting the Robert Sinyoka program area to form a pastors fellowship group
- Completing data collection for the project's baseline evaluation
- Introducing communities to the project through 26 awareness meetings that included activities for children (see photo at left)
- Working with local pastors to assess the Christian education materials planned for this project

Pastors were excited about World Vision's commitment to work with them more deeply on children and youth ministry. But they also identified community issues that make it difficult for children to feel safe and loved, including the prevalence of sexual abuse of children and families struggling with poverty.

To address this, the project is exploring the use of special curriculum to bring the Word of God to children's at risk in a culturally relevant and appropriate way.

Please pray for wisdom and strength for the project team as activities accelerate with numerous workshops planned for the remainder of FY18.

*1,122 children and youth participated directly in discipleship activities.*

2%

Five-Year Target: 69,521

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

43%

Five-Year Target: 424

*80 churches engaged in Christian discipleship of children and youth.*

20%

Five-Year Target: 394

## *Equipping youth to grow in their faith as they mentor others*

A key focus for this project is to equip youth to put their faith into action by creating space for them to experience Christ's love and grace, deepening their sense of purpose in life, and affirming their hope for their futures. Ninety candidates were identified as potential youth leaders. The first 10 youth in Hwange have been trained and are starting to recruit members for their ministry groups. Training for the remaining 80 is planned for later this year.



In Zimbabwe, women are rarely expected to be leaders; therefore, the Christian Discipleship Project is being intentional about engaging girls as youth leaders (see photo) so more girls will be encouraged to participate.

# INTERNATIONAL BIBLE FUND



During the first half of FY18, the International Bible Fund made 8,773 Bibles available in two countries.

In **Kenya**, World Vision followed up last year's distribution of 21,200 Bibles to churches and schools by

supplying study Bibles to Bible club leaders. More than 630 teachers in 300 schools and churches will have the opportunity to receive a study Bible, in conjunction with the Kenya Christian Discipleship Project. So far, 176 teachers have received Bibles.

The Africa Study Bible was chosen because it provides a unique African perspective on biblical content, with reflections from contributors in about 50 African nations.

In **Swaziland** (which is currently undergoing a name change to eSwatini), the International Bible Fund provided access to 8,597 Bibles, including both English-language and SiSwati versions.

These Bibles are being used in Sunday school classes, after-school Bible clubs, and school religious studies classes. The Bibles also are used in conjunction with Literacy Boost, a World Vision program that dramatically improves children's reading skills.

Future plans include:

- **El Salvador**, about 20,000 Bibles for children and youth
- **Uganda**, about 15,000 Bibles for children and adults refugees from South Sudan
- **Romania**, about 5,000 Bibles for children and adults, and for a variety of faith traditions—Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox.

58,355 Bibles made available since July 2016.

15%

Seven-Year Target: 400,000

*“I am happy for the special gift ... Most of us did not have an opportunity to acquire the Word of God before, but my first children's Bible is here for us and is easy to understand. I share reading with my sibling and other young children in our village. The stories are so good, even elderly people are interested and keen when I narrate the stories and show photos in the Bible.”*

—Mary, student in grade 5 and Bible club leader, Kenya

## Transforming lives through God's Word

Children's ministry leaders in Swaziland welcome Bibles for children and youth to grow in their faith. But the Bibles also are spurring children to improve their literacy skills, as well as doing better in their religious studies classes. Children are participating more confidently in after-school Bible clubs because the knowledge they are gaining makes them feel they have more to contribute.

“I thank World Vision for the special gift. Our life will never be the same again,” said Siphwe, age 12.



## A LETTER FROM KENYA

### Testimony

My name is sila.

I'm 13 years old.

I'm in class 8

I belong to the bible club.

I am saved and I love Jesus.

Since bible club started

- 1 It has helped me to improve in class especially in C.R.E.
- 2 It has helped my parents to bring me up in love.
- 3 It has helped me to know how to pray for myself, for the physically impaired, orphans and the less privileged.
- 4 It has helped me to read the bible every day through the use of daily power.
- 5 It has helped me to read and understand the bible and also I can preach to others.
- 6 I am thankful to world vision for it has provided us with materials for Bible club including
  - 1 my first childrens bibles.
  - 2 childrens ministry resource bibles
  - 3 African study bibles
  - 4 Daily Power among others.

May the Lord bless you.

C.R.E. is Christian Religious Education, a Christian education class that is standard in the public school curriculum.

## A SPARK OF BELIEF

*Pablo's belief in Joel ignited a spark that transformed Joel's life. Working together, these two young men are now helping transform the lives of hundreds of children and teens in their community.*

When Pablo looked at Joel, he saw a young man with potential. But to most of the world, Joel just looked like trouble.

Stealing from his grandparents and hanging out with a bad crowd, he spent most of his time living on the streets. He confessed that his main reason for going to school was to "create chaos and annoy the teachers."

Much to his delight, this caused him to be expelled. He was told he'd never be accepted back in school because he was such a bad influence.

But Pablo saw Joel as a young man who desperately needed Christ in his life. And Pablo's training as a peer educator from World Vision showed him how to reach out to someone like Joel.

He invited Joel to a community youth group. Joel attended reluctantly at first, but was encouraged by the leaders to come to the World Vision trainings. As his friendships in the group grew, he found he had a gift for public speaking. He became more



*Joel (wearing the yellow and white shirt) and Pablo (wearing the orange shirt) participate in a meeting with fellow youth leaders in Honduras.*

deeply involved, and began attending Gethsemane Church's youth group, where he started studying the Bible.

Pablo pleaded with school administrators to give Joel another chance and let him return to school. They agreed, but warned that the slightest infraction would result in Joel being expelled again.

"But that did not happen because my life had already changed," said Joel. "I improved my grades and also I gained leadership since I became the president of the student council."

Joel has reconciled with his parents, and no longer lives on the streets. He now attends the National Pedagogical University.

In his university, Joel is an example of positive and encouraging leadership to his fellow students.

In his church, he is a worship leader and activity director.

In his community, he mentors children and youth in their faith through his leadership in the Awana ministry.

"Before, I did not have dreams or hopes," said Joel. "I now have a complete plan of life in which I am progressing. Because in the training processes, I have learned who I am, where I'm going, and what I can do in the future. All this thanks to what World Vision has sown in the communities."

Pablo's ability to see Joel's potential was the small ripple that keeps expanding outward. Today, Joel and Pablo work side-by-side, influencing hundreds of children and teens to grow in their faith as they realize their hopes and dreams.



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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