

 **Challenging Heights**

# ANNUAL REPORT

2019



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## LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER

Dear friend,

When I started Challenging Heights in 2005, I could not have envisioned how far we would come. As we close this decade, I look back at our work and am proud to have grown this organisation alongside you and our dedicated team. Every step taken in the last 15 years has moved us closer to ending child slavery in Lake Volta's fishing industry. Just this year, we have rescued 59 children and brought them back where they belong – with their families and in the classroom. This journey has been an honour to be a part of.

2019 has been particularly meaningful as we developed a partnership with the Buckingham Foundation. Their generous contribution, in addition to our pre-existing funds, helped us to construct a new building, named Buckingham House, in the compound of our Recovery Center (previously consisting of only the Hovde House). With the construction completed, our capacity to house the rescued children has nearly doubled, from 65 children to 128.

We would also like to thank UBS Optimus Foundation for expanding their grant to us, which allows several more women to be trained under our non-traditional livelihood training programs. These vocational trainings are a pillar to preventing child trafficking by ensuring that households do not get trapped in cycles of poverty, i.e. the leading cause of child slavery in Ghana.

As we end another year of our journey, we are grateful for everyone who sees this cause as worthy and works with us to eradicate the evil of child trafficking, abuse, and slavery. In the next decade, with your continued support, may every child grow up in a caring community, with access to education, and without fear.

James Kofi Annan  
Founder





## MISSION & VISSION

Currently, 20,000 children are working in the fishing industry in Lake Volta, the largest man made reservoir in the world.

Torn from their homes, and forced into slavery, these children are robbed of their potential, access to education and rights.

Our goal at Challenging Heights is end this inhumane practice and ensure a better life for Ghana's future generations.

### MISSION

To prevent child trafficking, reduce child slavery, and promote children's rights.

### VISSION

A country in which child trafficking is a thing of the past and children's rights are celebrated.







# THE PROCESS



Every rescue mission is preceded by months of research on the ground which ensures that we know when, to where and by whom were the children trafficked and how to get them back.



Each rescue mission brings back 30 children on average and can take up to two weeks because of Lake Volta's size. These missions are dangerous and our staff is accompanied by Police.



The rescued children are brought to the Recovery Center, where they are checked for signs of abuse, malnutrition, and diseases. During their stay, all basic needs are taken care of by our staff, including schooling.



During their stay at the Center, our goal is to re-acclimatize them to a safe environment. Our staff, known as Shelter Parents, provide all their basic needs, including medication, food and education.



Once we inform the family of their child's conditions on Lake Volta and assess that they are fit to take back their child, the children are reintegrated into their communities.



We continue to monitor the well-being of the child through regular checks where we interview the them, the parents, and their teachers for two years after they leave the Recover Center.



# THE NUMBERS

In 2019, the Recovery Center expanded to include the Buckingham House and two major rescues were conducted in March and November. We were also able to intercept two buses with children being trafficked.

**59**

Total children rescued

**11**

Girls

**48**

Boys

**150**

Total children who lived in the Recovery Center

**47**

Girls

**103**

Boys

**103**

Children reintegrated

**\$10,380**

Total amount of micro-grants given to **100 families** to support reintegration

**247**

Children actively monitored

**2080**

Total number of checks conducted





# COMBATING POVERTY

Poverty is the root causes of child trafficking and slavery. Child traffickers make false promises to parents claiming that they will be able to provide the child with a better life, while reducing the financial cost to the family by taking the child away.

Our **Women Economic Empowerment Programme (WEEP)** and **Youth Empowerment Programme (YEP)** are designed to help break this cycle of poverty. By training these two key groups in vocational skills, we help them become financially stable.

These programmes are run at zero cost to the participants and under the guidance of skilled teachers. In certain courses, we also supplement their vocational training with classes on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), child protection and trafficking awareness, finance, entrepreneurship, etc.





# YEP: FACTS & NUMBERS

Funding partner: UBS Optimus Foundation, EMpower

Courses offered: Digital Installation, Driving, Phone Repairs, Barbering, Tailoring, Beauty Therapy and Beads making

**127**

Total number of YEP graduates

**15-26**

Age range of participants

**6 months- 1 year**

Duration of course (depending on programme)

**50%**

Rate of employment







# WEEP: FACTS & NUMBERS

Funding partner: UNICEF

Courses offered: Horticulture, Soap Making, Pastry Making

**175**

Total number of YEP graduates

**20+**

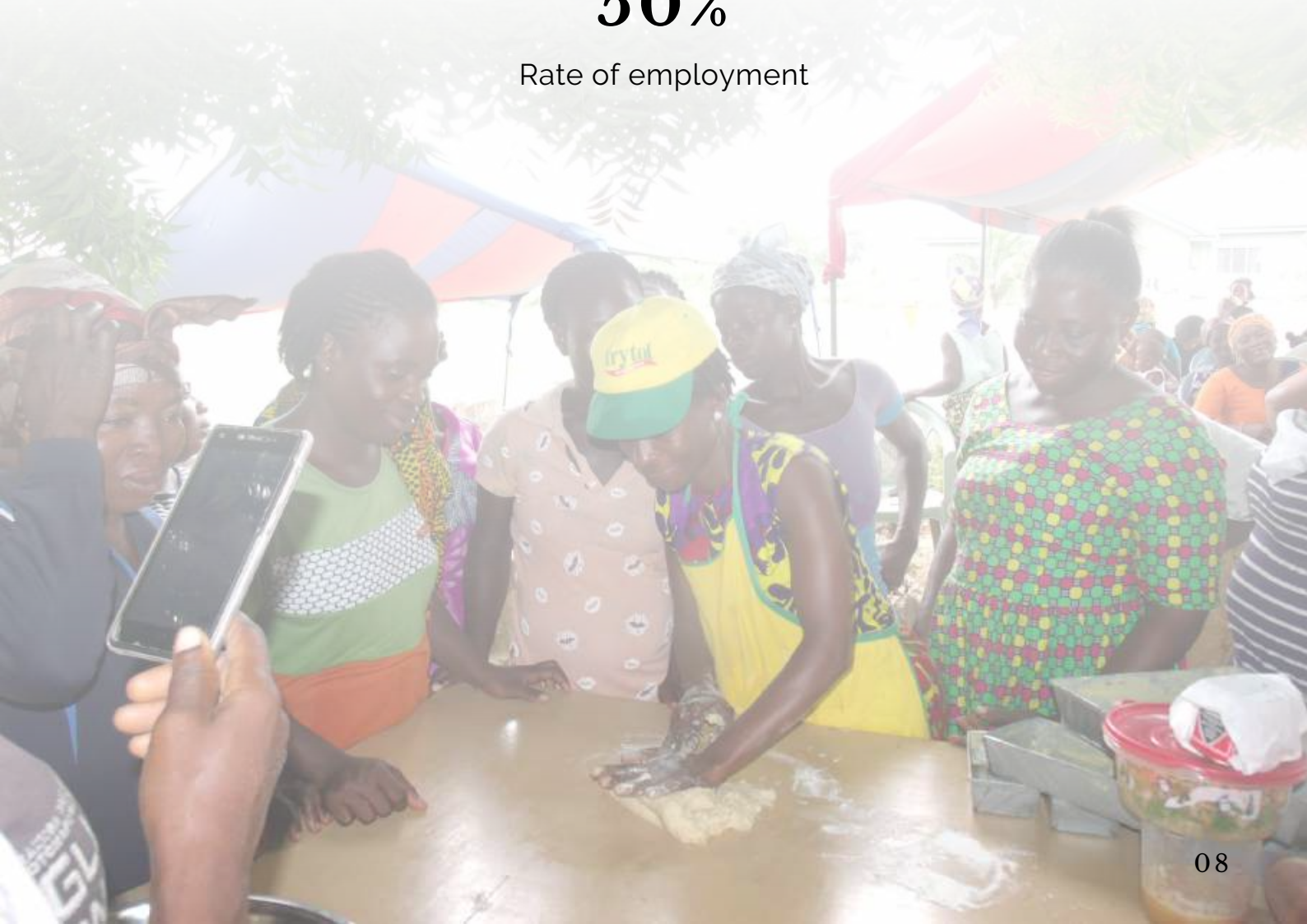
Age range of participants

**2 - 3 days**

Duration of course (depending on programme)

**50%**

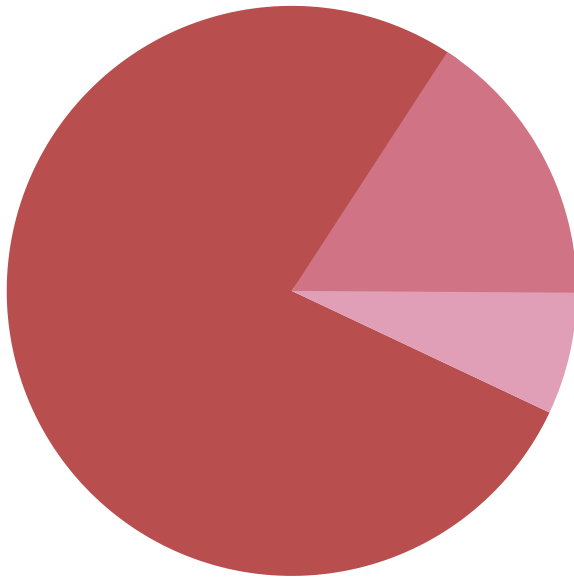
Rate of employment





# \$766,541

Total funds raised



- Foundations: 77.2%, \$591,532
- Individual donors: 15.9%, \$121,995
- Government: 6.9%, \$53,014

\*Rounded up to nearest dollar amount; \$1 = 5.78 Ghanaian cedi as calculated on June 25th, 2020





# EXPENDITURE

**26.1%**

(\$200,956)

**Recovery & rehabilitation****17.6%**

(\$135,660)

**Livelihoods****11.7%**

(\$90,165)

**Rescue operations****9.4%**

(\$72,164)

**Awareness & sensitization****8.7%**

(\$66,938)

**Special projects****7.8%**

(\$59,952)

**Educational support****5.5%**

(\$42,433)

**Capacity building****4.8%**

(\$37,116)

**Administration****3.6%**

(\$27,556)

**Partners in development****3.4%**

(\$26,324)

**Reintegration & monitoring****1.4%**

(\$10,867)

**Advocacy**

\*Rounded up to nearest dollar amount ; \$1 = 5.78 Ghanaian cedi as calculated on June 25th, 2020







# THANK YOU

Our work would not be possible without the generous support of the following organisations and individuals:

**Alphace Coaching Foundation**  
**Amizade**  
**Arizona State University**  
**Barbara J. Duff / Bobbie Duffy**  
**Beauty For Freedom**  
**Brad Chambers / Buckingham Foundation**  
**Children's Helpers Worldwide**  
**Colorado To Ghana**  
**Curt & Jennifer Sidden**  
**Doug Edwards / Abolish Slavery Now**  
**Family for Every Child**  
**Feminist Majority Foundation**  
**Freedom for All**  
**Gardner Webb University**  
**Global Giving Foundation**  
**Global Slavery Index**  
**Grand Valley State University**  
**Hovde Foundation**  
**James & Marion Boyd**  
**Joanne Laport**  
**Kerk in Actie / ICCO**  
**Lisa Halsted / Bindon Foundation**  
**M. Night Shyamalan Foundation**  
**Mark Hamilton**  
**Mercy Project**  
**Sarah Lutterodt**  
**The Sophie Stenbeck Family Foundation**  
**Sunwest Bank**  
**UNICEF**  
**UBS Optimus Foundation**



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