



# ANNUAL REPORT

2020

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## CONTENTS

02	LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER
03	MISSION & VISION
04	COVID-19
05	RESCUE & REHABILITATION
06	LIVELIHOOD PROGRAMMES
08	FINANCES
10	PARTNERS



Dear friend,

I want to start this letter by acknowledging the ways in which COVID-19 impacted the world and the immense loss that it has left us with. Millions of people lost their loved ones to the disease, and many more lost their livelihoods and entered a period of uncertainty and vulnerability. This global health catastrophe has reiterated the interconnectedness of our world and how one organism can change the way we live our lives.

This interconnectedness has also led to unexpected collaborations to protect our communities. People from all walks of life have come together to help in their own ways and serve those in need. At Challenging Heights, we knew that our work would be immediately impacted, but also that we would rise to the occasion.

Most of our programmes are conducted in-person, from our rescue efforts to our community vocational trainings. These had to be suspended and we did not know for how long. But in order to keep everyone safe, we knew it was the right decision. Nevertheless, this did not mean our work had to halt all together.

With generous and timely support from our partners, such as yourself, we were able to mobilize our structures to help slow down the spread of COVID and keep the children in our care, our employees, and the larger communities where we work, safe. This report will further elucidate how we went to extraordinary lengths to ensure that the cycle of poverty, which is the root cause of child slavery and trafficking in Ghana, is not exacerbated by this crisis.

We also remained prepared to pick our operations back up as soon as it was declared safe to do so. As we enter 2021, all our projects have fully resumed while adhering to the strict health and safety guidelines set by the Ghanaian Health Ministry. Though 2020, was an unexpected and unfortunate bump in the road, we are certain that with your support, the dedication of our partners, and the enthusiasm of our staff, our work will continue to bolster child rights in the region.

Sincerely,

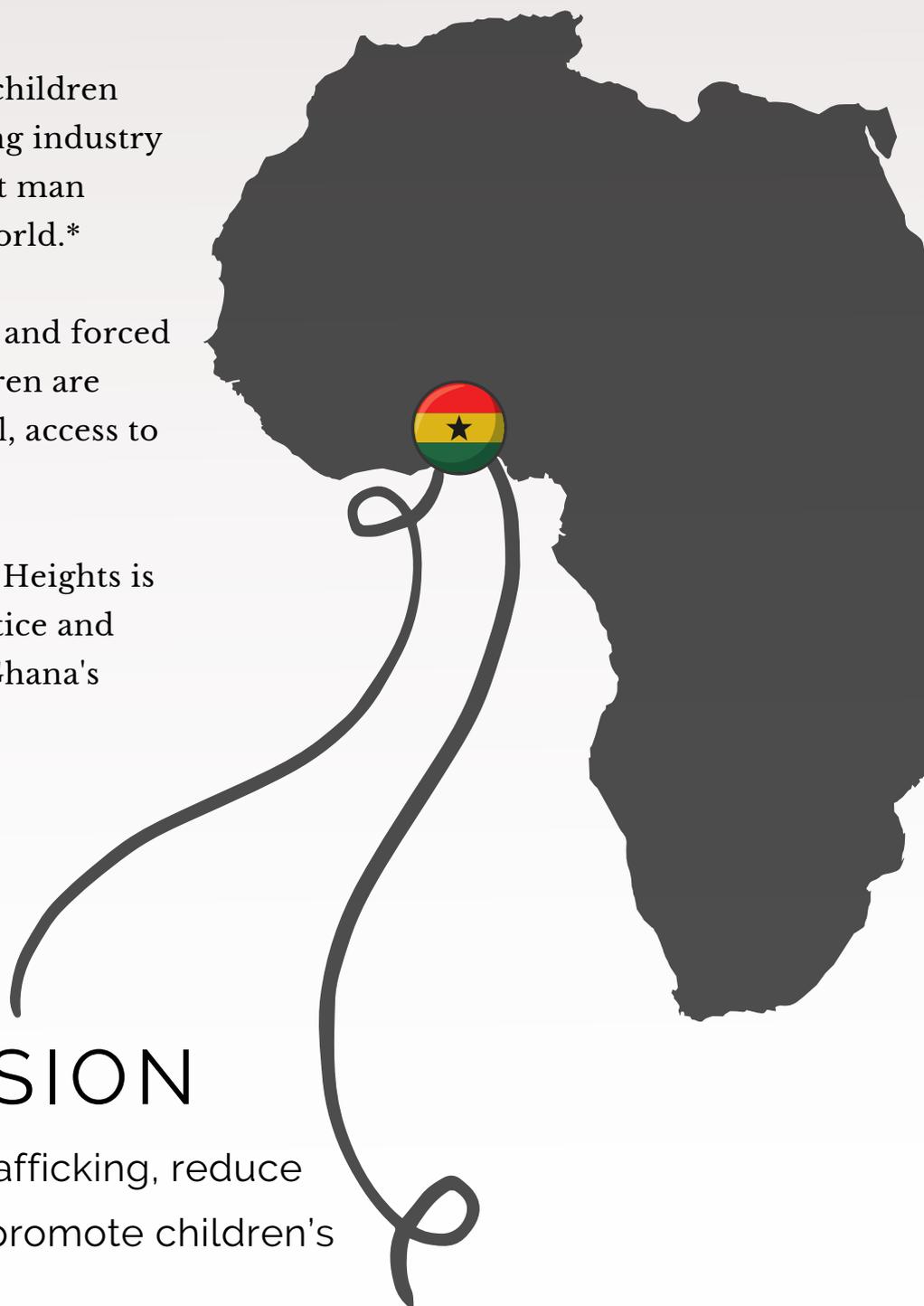
Doris Annan Nortey  
Acting President



Approximately 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.

## VISION

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

\*ILO, Analytical study on child labour in Volta Lake fishing in Ghana, 2013

# COMBATTING A CRISIS

In March 2020, we realized that we were entering a public health crisis that would upend not only our work, but also the lives of millions of Ghanaians. As the government advisories and restrictions started coming in, and uncertainty took over the community, we decided that providing support to the most vulnerable sections of society was essential.

With the generous and timely help of **The Sophie Stenbeck Family Foundation**, **Family For Every Child** and **Many Hopes**, we were able to set up a comprehensive community training and micro-grant program. It focused on educating our staff and community members on COVID-prevention measures, providing them with masks and sanitizers, and offering between \$50 - \$100 to women to support their existing businesses and meet their day to day living expenses.

Ultimately, we trained all of our staff on COVID safety protocol so our work could continue as safely as possible, and provided financial support to 1,200 women in the community. The remaining funds also went towards supporting our livelihood programs. This urgent work helped alleviate the suffering of many Ghanaians, and we are grateful to our partners who went above and beyond to assist us during this crisis.



# THE NUMBERS

Because of the pandemic, we were forced to stop our rescue efforts in March. For the same reason, we also closed the Recovery Center to the outside world for the safety of the children residing there. Thankfully, in the latter half of the year, following the guidelines set by the Ghanaian Health Ministry, we were able to resume recues and return to the normal functioning of the Center.

**70**

Total children rescued

**14**

Girls

**56**

Boys

**88**

Total children who lived in the Recovery Center

**19**

Girls

**69**

Boys

**59**

Children reintegrated

**238**

Children actively monitored

**1656**

Total number of checks conducted

\*Out of the 88 children who resided at the Center, 18 of them were placed in our care by our partner, Mercy Project



# YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME

Funding partner: UBS Optimus Foundation, EMpower

Courses offered: Tailoring, Driving, Beauty Therapy, Shoe Making, DSTV Installation, Catering, Fashion, Computer Training

**191**

Total number of YEP graduates

**15-26**

Age range of participants

**6 months- 3 years**

Duration of course (depending on programme)

**50%**

Rate of employment



# WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME

Funding partner: **Family for Every Child**

Courses offered: **Soap Making**

**30**

Total number of YEP graduates

**20+**

Age range of participants

**2 days**

Duration of course (depending on programme)

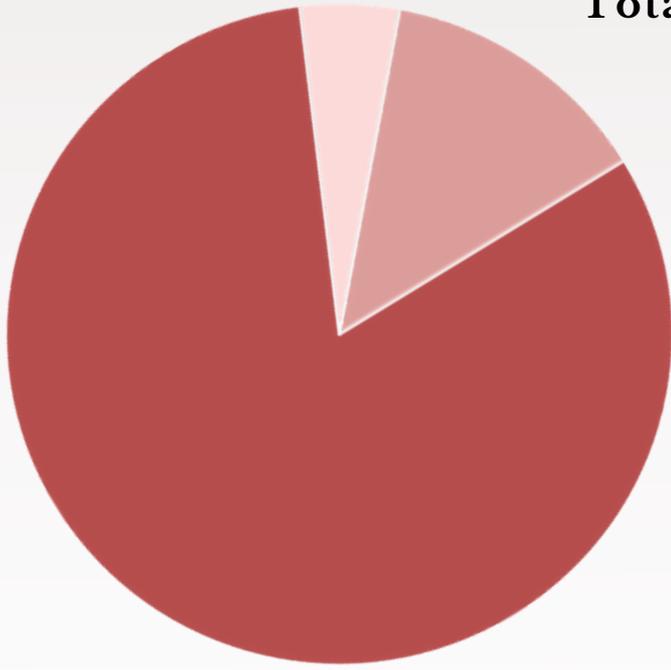
**50%**

Rate of employment



# \$854,155

Total funds raised



- **Foundations:** 81.9%, \$699,189
- **Individual donors:** 13.3%, \$113,866
- **Government/ IGO:** 4.8%, \$41,099

\*All figures have been rounded up to nearest US dollar amount, \$1 = 5.74 Ghanaian cedi (average exchange rate of 2020)



# EXPENDITURE

## 38.3%

(\$325,447)

**Recovery & rehabilitation**

## 18.8%

(\$159,440)

**Special projects - COVID Response**

## 17.9%

(\$151,677)

**Livelihoods**

## 9.4%

(\$79,479)

**Administration**

## 8.0%

(\$67,803)

**Rescue operations**

## 5.3%

(\$44,815)

**Awareness & advocacy**

## 2.4%

(\$20,078)

**Reintegration & monitoring**

\*All figures have been rounded up to nearest US dollar amount, \$1 = 5.74 Ghanaian cedi (average exchange rate of 2020)



# THANK YOU

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

**Barbara J. Duff / Bobbie Duffy**  
**Beauty For Freedom**  
**Brad Chambers / Buckingham Foundation**  
**Curt & Jennifer Sidden**  
**Doug Edwards / Abolish Slavery Now**  
**Family for Every Child**  
**Freedom for All**  
**Friends of Challenging Heights**  
**Global Fund for Children**  
**Global Giving Foundation**  
**Global Slavery Index**  
**Hovde Foundation**  
**James & Marion Boyd**  
**Kerk in Actie / ICCO**  
**Lisa Halsted / Bindon Foundation**  
**Many Hopes**  
**Mark Hamilton**  
**Mercy Project**  
**Minderoo Foundation**  
**Sarah Lutterodt**  
**The Sophie Stenbeck Family Foundation**  
**Sunwest Bank**  
**United Nations**  
**UNICEF**  
**UBS Optimus Foundation**



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