

# YOUNG LIFE

## AFRICA/MIDDLE EAST



## 2017 IMPACT REPORT



## LETTER FROM STEVE LARMEY

Senior Vice President,  
Young Life Africa/Middle East

**OUR TARGET:** Every kid in every neighborhood in every village in every city in every country in Africa and the Middle East.

**OUR COMMITMENT:** Introduce them to Jesus and help them grow to be transforming, multiplying, disciple-making leaders for the kingdom of God.

Crazy big ... we know it. Impossible ... it would seem. But God called us in Young Life Africa/Middle East to this vision when we started with a handful of clubs in one city and one country 15 years ago. And He has continued to renew this call:

**“Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes. For you will spread out to the right and to the left; your descendants will dispossess nations and settle in their desolate cities.”**

**– Isaiah 54:2-3 (NIV)**

With Him all things are possible.

Every. Kid. Every. Country. Jesus. Kingdom. Leaders.

Simple, clear, daunting, daring. And if it were not from God this would be irresponsible, irrational, impossible. But it is from Him.

This takes my breath away every time I say it and drives me to my knees, because we have learned and know that only fully surrendered to God and led by the Spirit can this happen.

And wow! God has been making this happen year after year. And as our friend and partner you have been a witness of this ongoing miracle that God plays and replays over and over in the hearts of hundreds of thousands of African and Middle Eastern kids.

Thank you for saying yes to us and to Jesus. You have helped this to happen.





# A HUGE TASK

Seventy-three countries.

Over 500 million kids between the age of 12 and 27.

Over 2,000 tribes and languages in some of the hardest spiritual and political places to live on the planet.

Forty of the world's 50 poorest countries are in Africa and the Middle East.

Already at 1.24 billion people, Africa has the fastest growing population in the world and the largest percentage of people below the age of 25.

Can you imagine any place more strategic to change the world? Can you imagine any place where God's glory and power can be seen more clearly?

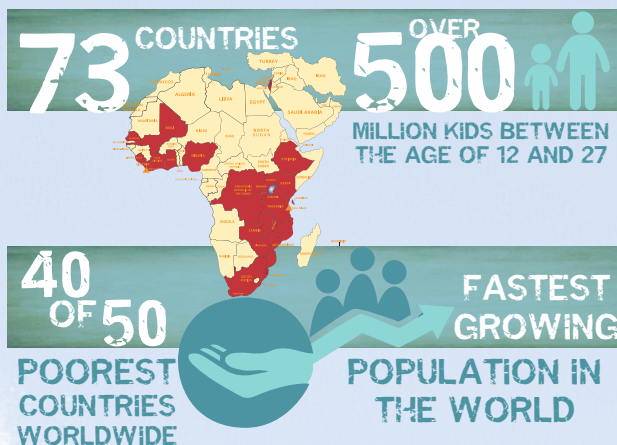
To impact the young people – the fastest growing demographic in the fastest growing region in arguably the most dynamic, resourceful and hopeful continent on the globe – this keeps our staff and leaders up at night and launches us out of our beds every morning.

## HOW DO WE DO IT?

**We Go:** We don't invest in buildings and properties and events. We invest in leaders who then go and seek out lost kids and love them, build relationships with them and their families, and model the love and hope of Jesus in their lives and communities.

**We Lift Up Jesus:** We believe there is nothing more powerful and transformational than to introduce young people and their families to Jesus. We don't peddle religion or Christianity. We don't get stuck in the weeds of doctrinal disputes. We lift up and introduce kids to Jesus.

**We Empower Indigenous Leaders:** We are ruthlessly committed to finding, equipping and coming alongside local men and women



to reach the kids in their countries. We are convinced that God has prepared leaders everywhere we go and He will direct us to them. We don't bring teams of workers from other countries to work with African and Middle Eastern kids.

**We Become Friends:** We build friendships with kids and their families and commit to journeying with them for years as they learn to follow Jesus.

**We Know the Slow Way Is the Fast Way:** We want to reach every kid and every country but we know the way to reach the continent is to reach one kid and one neighborhood first, then the next kid and the next neighborhood. We go slow and deep and the Lord honors and multiplies His people.

**We Make Disciples Who Make Disciples:** We know we are called not to make believers but to make disciples: transformed, transforming Jesus followers who in turn make transformed, transforming Jesus followers. Our visual guide for this is our Leadership Tree, which we prepare and expect every volunteer and staff person to be planting in their countries.

**We Laugh. We Sing. We Welcome. We Accept. We Risk. We Persevere:** These are marks of a full life and these are the marks of our lives, which we share with kids. This is the life we feel Jesus is inviting them to be a part of and we give them a taste of that in all we do.





## IS IT HARD?

Yes. We have many trials, difficulties and failures. Among our current challenges:

- **Difficult political situations** in places like DR Congo, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Horn of Africa, Mali, Israel and Palestine where insecurity, economic meltdowns, war and political battles impede our work and access.
- **Rapid growth** has us scrambling to ensure that we have the necessary operational infrastructure to support the work God is doing. We have made great strides but are still a few key players short on our operations team.
- **Shortage of Bibles** and too few volunteers and staff who have solid foundations in God's Word and theology make it difficult to go as deep as we desire for all of our kids and leaders. What our leaders lack in theology they make up for in faith and courage and sacrifice.

Everywhere I turn it seems like there is another book or workshop on "How to start a movement." I'm not really sure that movements of the Spirit start in a workshop or as a result of our strategy and our planning. Maybe they can. My experience is that movements start when God starts them and when the Spirit moves with grace and power. And men and women who join God in faith, courage, sacrifice and obedience get invited to join the movement.

That's what I think has happened and continues to happen in Young Life Africa/Middle East. The Holy Spirit has stirred up a monster wave and God has put us on our surfboard in the right place at the right time and we – you included – are riding this wave of a lifetime, the wave of the century. And it is incredible.

## WILL IT LAST? IS IT SUSTAINABLE?

Only God can answer those questions. But the wave is higher and stronger this year than it has ever been. And we don't feel God letting up. We think He is continuing to call us farther out into the ocean on this wave of faith with Him.

Thank you for riding the wave with us. We hope you will continue this ride ... and invite friends to come along.

*Thank you. Surf's Up!!!!*  
Steve



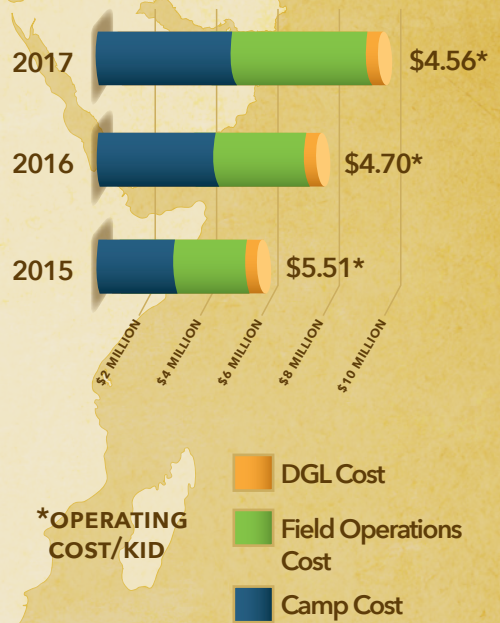
# DOES IT WORK?

In 2017, we knew **837,088** kids by name.

## LEADERSHIP PIPELINE



## COST ANALYSIS



## MEASURING IMPACT

The final numbers are in for Young Life's Reaching a World of Kids (RWOK) campaign, the mission's seven-year initiative to double its outreach from one million to two million kids. During the period from 2009 to 2016, Young Life Africa's contribution to overall RWOK growth was astonishing, as Young Life Africa doubled, then doubled again and then doubled a third time, along with adding the Middle East to become the Africa/Middle East Division in 2015. Young Life Africa/Middle East was reaching 60,000 kids when RWOK began. Over the course of that seven-year campaign, Young Life grew by 1.1 million kids. Africa/Middle East accounted for over half of that growth adding 555,000 kids! And the growth continues ... doubling in size every three years.

Young Life Africa/Middle East  
**REPRESENTED 51 PERCENT**  
of the Growth of Total Kids Reached  
During RWOK

**GROWTH OF TOTAL KIDS  
REACHED 1,093,415**

538,097  
Outside Africa/Middle East

555,318  
In Africa/Middle East

**51%**

# YOUNG LIFE FORWARD INITIATIVE

As we move into fiscal 2018, Young Life will begin a five-year campaign called "Forward." Over the five-year period, 2018 through 2022, Young Life hopes to double its worldwide impact by focusing on four key areas listed below. Young Life Africa/Middle East has been preparing for this and has set specific objectives, including the following:

## Deeper in Christ



Put a Bible in the hands of every leader, in their own heart language, throughout Young Life Africa/Middle East and train them

in the Discovery Bible Study method to bring kids and leaders closer to Christ. We want to listen more closely to the Lord through His written Word and through His Word spoken into our lives. We want to make disciple-making disciples. We will take training to a new level. Key leaders will receive University-level courses on the Life of Christ, Biblical Interpretation and Basic Theology.

### DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY METHOD

Select a short passage in the Bible and discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like most about this passage?
2. What is most challenging?
3. What do you learn about God?
4. What do we learn about ourselves?
5. What is God directing us to do in response?

## Together



Leadership development is critical to the mission of Young Life Africa/Middle East, which pioneered the Leadership Tree as a tool to train and develop volunteer leaders through intentional Bible study and mentoring. "Pamoja Pamoja" ("Together, Together") has defined our culture with

leaders training and leading together. Senior volunteer leaders are trained at Rika, an intensive 17-day immersion to expose all aspects of the ministry and prepare them to be disciple-making disciples. Leaders mentor volunteers through Hands On Training (HOT) to give practical experience and instill confidence. Moving forward, we will: significantly increase volunteer leaders; challenge leaders to raise substantial local funding; significantly expand our U.S.-based Young Life Africa/Middle East Committee; enhance our performance review and compensation structure; and fully implement the Three-Legged Stool plan (infrastructure of field operations, bookkeeping and logistics).

## Innovation



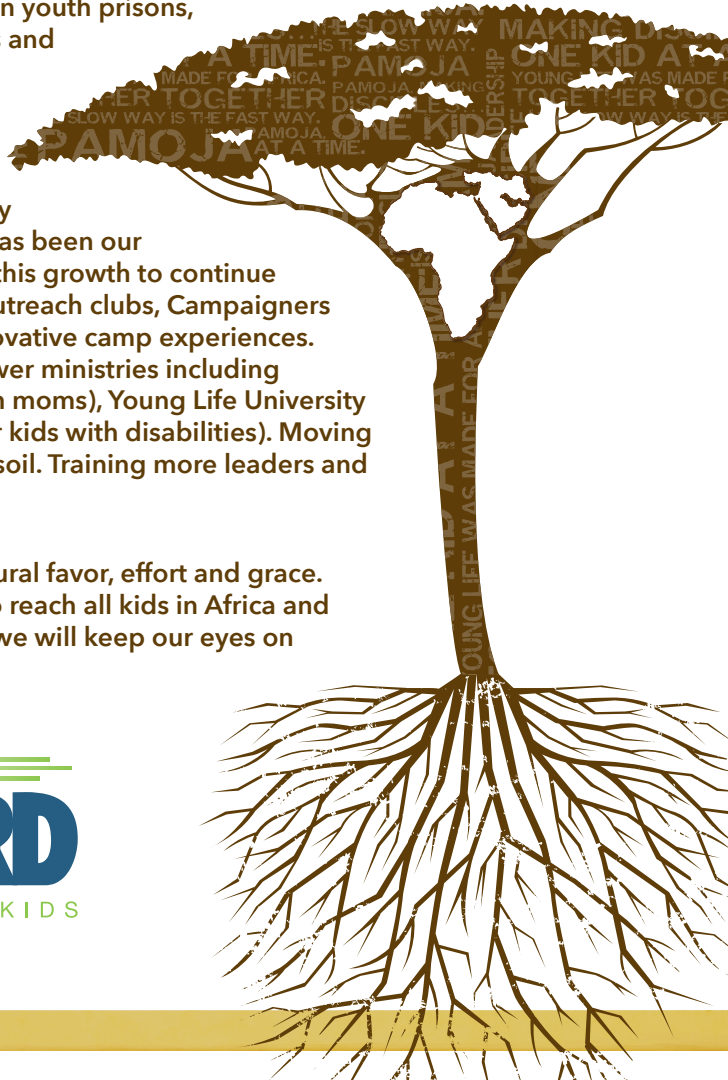
Young Life Africa/Middle East has been an innovation leader. Tools like the Leadership Tree and our Staff Sponsorship model have been widely adopted within Young Life. A few years ago we rolled out (literally) Camp On Wheels, HOT training techniques and Three-Legged Stool infrastructure. This year we developed the Data Portal to enable our staff to plan, manage and oversee camp operations using smartphones. We will continue to innovate: an Incubator Program will partner key leaders with mature counterparts from the United States to share ideas, train and experience cross-cultural fellowship; our "Big City" Program will jumpstart ministry in key capitals across Africa and the Middle East; teaching English online will enable access to kids in closed countries; and programs for Muslim-background kids, kids in youth prisons, and kids in camps for Refugees and Internally Displaced People.

## Growth



Doubling in size every three years, growth has been our norm. We anticipate this growth to continue as we will focus on outreach clubs, Campaigners discipleship ministries and innovative camp experiences. In addition, we will expand newer ministries including YoungLives (Young Life for teen moms), Young Life University and Capernaum (Young Life for kids with disabilities). Moving into new places. Plowing hard soil. Training more leaders and expanding our tent.

All of this will require supernatural favor, effort and grace. But we believe we are called to reach all kids in Africa and the Middle East for Christ and we will keep our eyes on that horizon.





# Young Life was made for AFRICA/MIDDLE EAST



## YOUNGLIVES

In countries where young women experience hardship on a daily basis, YoungLives leaders are reaching out to teen moms, offering hope for the future. During the past year, over 1,500 teenage moms were reached through YoungLives ministry in Liberia, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe and Kenya. Over 400 girls came to club each week and almost 170 were in weekly discipleship groups. In January 2017, Liberia held a YoungLives camp where 76 teen moms and their babies came and 37 accepted Christ. Dyan Larmey is the divisional coordinator for YoungLives and oversees leader training and development, a critical component to reaching more young moms for Jesus and making a powerful difference for these young women and their children.

**Over 1,500  
teenage moms  
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through  
YoungLives.**





# YOUNG LIFE UNIVERSITY

The first Young Life University camp in Zimbabwe and Southern Africa took place in February 2017. Seventy-two kids attended. While Young Life University is still a new ministry, it is already making a notable impact. Emmanuel is a first-year student who has been attending Young Life club since the beginning of his freshman year. Because of his excitement about

Young Life, his friends started to attend with him, and his best friend even recommitted his life to Jesus at the camp. Emmanuel feels like being part of Young Life has "given him family he never had." Because he has no siblings and his parents both died when he was a toddler, Emmanuel's life has consisted of moving from one extended family member's house to another. This upheaval made Emmanuel feel like a burden, and his life was heavy with guilt. Because his extended family was Muslim, he grew up Muslim. Yet his parents had both been Christians, and he often struggled to understand how his faith worked in the midst of that. Emmanuel was excited to explore faith on his own while in college, and found Young Life to be the best place to discover it. His time at camp helped him discover who he is in the Lord, as a child of God belonging to the kingdom. We are so excited to see what the Lord continues to do in and through Emmanuel's life as he is mentored and shares his faith with his friends.

**"Emmanuel's time at camp helped him discover who he is in the Lord, as a child of God belonging to the kingdom."**





## CAPERNAUM

**YOUNG LIFE IS FOR ALL KIDS. IN AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST, LEADERS PURSUE KIDS WHO ARE HARD TO FIND BECAUSE THEY ARE DISABLED, SHUT IN OR LIVE SEPARATELY FROM THEIR FAMILIES. IN PALESTINE, CAPERNAUM MINISTRY IS FLOURISHING AS LEADERS SHOW THESE SPECIAL KIDS HOW MUCH THE GOD OF THE UNIVERSE LOVES THEM. HERE'S ONE EXAMPLE:**

Abdullah is a blind teen from Hebron, a 99 percent Muslim town, who lives at The House of Hope in Bethlehem, Palestine. The House of Hope provides a caring and a safe environment for the disabled, giving them an alternative to the streets as many are cast out of their families. This is where Abdullah was introduced to Young Life.

The Bethlehem Young Life leaders got to know Abdullah, pursued him and offered him a chance to hear about Jesus. Abdullah went to visit Young Life camp for a day and experienced the goodness and joy of worship songs being lifted to heaven. Although he isn't able to see the silly costumes, his leader's bright smile or the holy chaos that ensues when a Young Life club is dancing together, Abdullah's ears were filled with the words sung at camp. As he has returned to clubs and camps, he has memorized the lyrics to each worship song he hears.

Abdullah is truly gifted in his ability to memorize lyrics and sing, and as he returns to his village he sings these worship songs freely, loudly with no inhibitions. The Lord has not only met Abdullah exactly in the way that he is designed to be met, but through Abdullah, the Lord is becoming real to Muslims living in Abdullah's village who are able to hear the good news through his singing.





# MINISTRY TO REFUGEES IN IDP (INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS) CAMPS

Young Life leaders go where kids are. In Africa and the Middle East, leaders are responding to large-scale challenges within the region, which are taking our leaders into refugee camps, prisons and, more and more, into IDP camps. As reported in global media, severe drought has led to full-blown famine across widespread regions of Africa and the Middle East. As a result, millions of people are streaming into neighboring areas or countries to give their families a better chance of survival. IDP camps have been set up in Horn of Africa (Horn of Africa IDPs), Uganda (Congolese and South Sudanese IDPs), Ethiopia (South Sudanese IDPs), northern Kenya as well as western Tanzania. Young Life leaders are going to these camps, reaching out to the teens who have little to do there, getting to know them, hanging out, and hearing their stories and the stories of their families. Leaders plan to start Young Life clubs in several of these camps in the near future with the hope of expanding the ministry to this growing and desperate population.



## LEADER DEVELOPMENT

Leadership is at the core of our mission. As a leader journeys with kids, they identify two or three who exhibit unusually strong leadership aptitude. Selected kids are added to the leader's Leadership Tree to receive mentoring over a two- to three-year period. These kids are taught from God's Word, given one-on-one leadership training and learn, by example, a life in Christ from this leader. After one to two years, these young leaders are ready to become disciple-making disciples themselves, leading the next group of kids and extending our reach. Pictured is Rika Tisa (the ninth group of trained Young Life Africa/Middle East leaders).

After years in the field, key leaders are selected to attend "Rika." Rika takes place annually at the Young Life Training Center in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Rika is a "tribe" of peers that is initiated into the next phase of leadership, similar to initiation from childhood to warrior in African culture. Rika participants are together almost three weeks, sleeping in bunks next to each other, sharing each other's cultures through food, dress, language, stories and worship. They emerge as a unique Rika, a family that, for many of them, may be closer than the family they grew up in. They leave ready to train others back in their home countries and to reach lost kids with the gospel.



