

January 2017

Dear Friend,

In the late 1700s, British missionary William Carey answered a call to minister to the destitute in India—a venture which seemed to his friends to be “as deep as the center of the earth.” In a courageous response to their uncertainty, he told them, “I will go down, but remember that you must hold the ropes.”

There were times this past year that felt like we were going as deep as the center of the earth. We continued to reach into some of the world’s most broken, heart-wrenching places—Aleppo, Syria; war-ravaged South Sudan; brothels in urban slums. Places where courageous mothers, fathers, and children are desperate for hope. Our 44,000 staff around the world are present in nearly 100 countries. Holding the far end of the rope, they are your representatives—bringing your compassion and generosity, as an expression of God’s love, to those who need it most.

And this expression takes so many forms: advocating for the rights of women and girls to live safe, fulfilling lives. Bringing clean water to families who are suffering without it. Protecting children’s health by providing essential medicines, nutrition programs, and education for community health workers and parents. Helping pastors learn how to support both physical and spiritual needs in their communities.

These acts of service, and so many more, are made possible by friends like you, faithfully providing prayer and financial support for our sponsored children, their families, and so many other people in need. In a beautiful and miraculous display of God’s power, you and our other partners—which include close to 1 million individuals, plus churches, corporations and foundations, and government donors—helped us touch the lives of 41 million children and their families this year. The total value of private and public donations to World Vision U.S. this year totaled \$1.014 billion, a slight increase over last year. See the [letter from our CFO](#) for more details on our FY16 financials.

There are a thousand stories of triumph and hope I could tell you, but I want to share just one.

As you may know, the plight of refugees in the Middle East weighs heavily on me. I was in Northern Iraq in May and met a group of 16 women I’ll never forget. Because they are Christians, the Arabic letter “N” (for “Nazarene”) was scrawled on their homes by ISIL, marking the occupants for death or forced conversion.

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These women fled with their families, and when I met them in a distant city they had formed a group to make mosaic tiles. With assistance from World Vision's economic development programs, they are able to sell these tiles for income to survive while in exile. Their favorite design? The Arabic letter "N." One of the women told me, "ISIL could destroy our church, but they can't destroy the small church inside us."

Your partnership with us this year made it possible for me and our staff to come alongside families like these—helping a total of 1.9 million people in the Middle East displaced or affected by the Syrian conflict.

When I consider what we accomplished together globally this past year, I'm overcome with gratitude for you, and praise to God. Here are some high points:

- We responded to 130 humanitarian emergencies around the world, offering a second chance to 15.4 million disaster survivors, refugees, and displaced people.
- We helped transform the lives of 4 million children registered in child sponsorship programs worldwide.
- We helped more than 4.6 million children and adults in 50 countries gain access to clean water, as well as improve practices for sanitation and hygiene.
- We partnered with 14,716 churches in the U.S., giving them the opportunity to show God's love to their neighbors at home and abroad.
- We disbursed more than 1.3 million loans to poor entrepreneurs in 31 countries, helping to create or sustain over 1.7 million jobs and benefiting over 4.3 million children.
- We distributed 32,934 pallets of gifts-in-kind to benefit people in need in 40 countries, including the U.S.

You are part of a global movement that is demonstrating God's love and compassion for "the least of these." Collectively, we are changing the world!

Thankful for partners like you,



Rich Stearns
President, World Vision U.S.

