



MANY HOPES

HOST FAQs

What is the strategic plan/budget for the next few years?

The total budget for serving over 2,100 children in 6 countries is \$3M per year. We won't be expanding into any new countries in the next three years.

Do you have any upcoming projects? What is your biggest need?

Our two biggest needs are:

1. Regular donations that we can plan around. We know how to rescue children and the only thing stopping us reaching more is not being certain that we have funds for care and education after rescue. That's why we created The Rising (any amount, every month) and The seventy-two (Three-year pledges of \$10K per year).
2. People to do what I did tonight...host events so folks we'd never meet have the opportunity to hear about us.

Some upcoming projects are building three new schools in Malawi, Guatemala and Bolivia.

What do you have going on in Bolivia and Guatemala?

We have the same framework of activities in every country with every partner. The main difference country to country is the nature of the injustice or abuse we rescue children from. In Bolivia that is children who have escaped or been thrown out of violent families and are now living with the violence of street life. In Guatemala it is children who have been orphaned or abandoned.

In all locations we provide rescue, then a safe place to live, either permanently or until we can reintegrate a child with their family (if safe) or a foster family if not safe. We provide high quality education either through schools we build and run or through local schools. We also provide therapy, mentoring, vocational training, and lessons in how the law and the government works.

What is the response of the government in the locations you are in?

The government is not helpful and them keeping out of the way is the best we can expect of them. We do have good helpful relationships with good clean people in government, police, and courts but that is at an individual level rather than institutional.

Do you have schools in all the countries you operate in? What do university options look like?

No, we do not have schools in all the countries we operate in. Building schools is expensive and we only build when we have to (if there is no good local option available) or when there is a long term sustainability reason to (e.g. where we can generate revenue from students from affluent families to pay for the schooling of children in our care).

We currently operate our own elementary/primary schools in Ghana, Malawi, and Guatemala. In other locations, and for high school, we send children to fee-paying schools. We are currently in a capital campaign to raise \$6M to build high schools in each of these three countries and an elementary/primary school in Bolivia.

There are very few universities and only the wealthy can access them. Our students do well, and many attend university through academic scholarships. As more of our children get to the end of high school we are creating a college fund to facilitate student loans. It is also important to note that not all children in our programs will need or want to go to university. The education we provide equips children with a vocational skill/trade needed in the local job market.

Ghana Questions:

Does the government of Ghana approve/help?

If you asked any elected representative or official they would say that child slavery is bad and rescue is good. But they don't help or prioritize anti-trafficking work in any meaningful way. One example is that we are legally required to bring police officers on rescue missions, but we have to pay their room and board.

How did James escape?

In the trunk of a car at a funeral. There was a well-known preacher in the area named James Kofi Annan, and James's slave master decided to bring James to the funeral to pay his respects (since they had the same name). At the funeral, James slipped into the trunk of the car and waited patiently for the engine to turn over and start driving. He had no idea where he was going, but he prayed it was away from the lake. When the car finally parked, he waited in the hot trunk of the car until night, when he popped out and started running to his freedom.

In reintegration do they go to a new family or to their original family?

If their family of origin is safe and able to care for the child then they return to their family. That is of course ideal. If their family of origin is not safe or able to care for them then they do not. Sometimes that means immediate family and sometimes aunts/uncles or grandparents. If no safe family member exists, then we seek what you might call a foster family.

Our reintegration team monitors and supports the child all the way to the end of high school no matter which family situation they return to. This includes ongoing therapy, mentoring, workshops on law and rights, making sure the child is accessing school and health care.

The likelihood of re-trafficking is therefore very low. In 25 years our partner has only seen one child re-trafficked and was able to intervene and free the child and prosecute the parents.

How do you decide which kids on the lake should be rescued?

Great question! Almost weekly, we have people in local communities host events where they speak about the dangers of trafficking and educate people on what to look for and the realities of trafficking. A lot of times, parents don't know they trafficked their child. They think they sent their child off with someone who was going to take them to school. At the end of these events - they offer a time where parents can come and report their children missing (never hearing from them once they got to "school"). With this information, our team starts to research. They have trusted people on the lake, who offer intel and information. They build a case and then go out on a rescue mission. Sadly, some children they can not find enough information on. For the children they can - they work to get that child back and bring them to safety. Our team isn't selective about who they rescue, they will rescue any child they have enough information on to be able to locate them and bring them to safety.

Why can't police shut down slavery when they see it happening?

The police don't really have the resources/don't care that much. Trafficking happens in really poor areas. Areas that frankly aren't as much of a priority to the police.

Do the people that enslave the kids want to kill you when you try to rescue them?

Sometimes but not usually. The slave-masters are fishermen. They make their money from fishing and, because it costs less to buy a child than a net, they don't risk their own lives fighting back.

The real danger comes from traffickers, the people who make their money by taking and selling the children to the fishermen. We are a threat to their livelihood and they are often powerful and well-networked and fight back.

Is poverty the root cause of the desperation that leads to trafficking? How can we fix this so kids aren't sold anymore?

Yes. Poverty is what fuels the trafficking. Most children are trafficked because the parents need to put food on the table, pay a debt, or they are tricked into trafficking their child. If you have a solution to poverty then do let the world know!

Our main weapon in preventing the sale of children is raising awareness in poor communities of how to spot and not fall for the “sales pitch” of a trafficker. The trafficker will usually promise a desperate mother a job for her son/daughter for two years where he/she will send wages home and then he/she will return with a bag of money after two years. Children we have rescued share their stories so parents stop being tricked.

How do you plan the rescue process?

- **Investigation:** Rescue operations begin with an investigation which takes 2-3 months.
- **Find the Child at the Lake:** Our partner's undercover team locates the child on the lake.
- **Rescue Operation:** Then, the rescue team, accompanied by armed police, takes the child from the slave master and brings him or her to the halfway house for immediate medical care and adjustment.
- **Recovery:** Finally, the child comes to our partner's Recovery Center to begin their healing journey and start school.

How often is the rescue process happening?

Depends on the research phase, but usually every 3 months. We like to work in groups of 30 since the lake is so far away. Once we have tracked down 20-30 children to rescue and we feel certain about their location, we execute the mission.

How often are traffickers prosecuted?

If they are caught trafficking children again - they are fully prosecuted. We work with organizations like IJM (International Justice Mission) to prosecute traffickers.

Were you able to find a school when you were 13 or did someone sponsor you?

James fished in the ocean and farmed on the weekends and put himself through school. He didn't have anyone to support him financially, but he looked around at the most successful people he knew and they all had an education, so he made that his mission. He was the first person in his town to attend university.