

# ChildVoice

## South Sudan: A Nation in Turmoil and Overtaxed Refugee Camps

Unfortunately, the South Sudan refugee situation is more desperate than ever. More than 2 million South Sudanese have fled to refugee camps in bordering countries, including Uganda. The camps in Uganda have outstripped their capacity to provide even the basic needs of food and water.

ChildVoice has been approved as an emergency partner with Uganda's Office of the Prime Minister; we currently are working on strategies to provide aid to the refugee camps. We also are working on finding a safe place for our South Sudanese students to live and work following their graduation this fall. They cannot return back over the border to their home villages, and living conditions in the refugee camps are deplorable.



## Visiting Uganda Is Life Changing

By *ChildVoice Intern Krista Tippin*

One word comes to mind when I think of my time at the Lukome Center: Full. Full of love, laughter, community, friendship, and *chapatti* (flatbread)! I was only in Uganda for six weeks, but I feel I learned more about life in those six weeks than I have the past six years.

I learned that I don't need what I have, and that I have all that I need. I learned the true definition of strength, not only physically but spiritually. I learned that real joy comes from community, and that love is a universal language.

Before I left for Uganda, I knew I would fall in love with the people. I just didn't realize how quickly it would happen. I developed relationships not only with the students, but with



Invepi Camp, Uganda



## Welcome! Class 11 Arrives at the Lukome Center

It's always an exciting day when a new class of students arrives at the Lukome Center to begin the journey toward a future filled with hope. And that's exactly what happened last month when 12 young girls from northern Uganda arrived with their 12 children.

The joy and excitement were palpable as the new students gathered for a group photo (above). Each girl there realizes the blessings of having the opportunity to receive counseling, life skills, and vocational training over the next 18 months.

As young Scovia shared, "I hope to acquire skills I can put into practice after I graduate, so I can help support my family in the future."

**Want to learn more? Visit [www.childvoiceintl.org](http://www.childvoiceintl.org).**

their children and the staff as well. We became family.

We laughed and joked together. We played soccer together. We sang, fetched water, and peeled cassava together. We worshipped together. And we taught each other about life. Without the busyness and distractions of life in the U.S. (i.e., the Internet and social media), I was more present than I ever have been, which gave me a new sense of peace. I constantly was in awe of the beauty all around me.

On returning home, I often was asked, "So, was everyone really poor?" When comparing lifestyles, it's easy to think everyone in Uganda is poor because most Americans lead such privileged lives. Yes, the people of Uganda live in poverty. But are they poor? Absolutely not. They are some of the richest people I've ever met. They are rich in community, rich in strength, and rich in relationships with each other. The students and staff at ChildVoice are faced with daily challenges, but they are strong. It was easy for me to forget all the trials they've overcome because of how vibrant they are. Each day is filled with joy and laughter, and it doesn't come from having the newest car or cell phone.

I'm happy to be home, but I still miss the community I left behind in northern Uganda. I miss those sweet girls, their adorable children, and the wonderful staff. I built relationships that will always hold a special place in my heart, and only wish they weren't left half-way across the world. It's never goodbye, only see you later.

### Upcoming Lukome Center Trips

- 2017: August 5-19 and November 4-19
- 2018: April 7-21, August 4-18, and October 13-27

Join an existing trip or schedule a dedicated trip for your church or community group. To learn more, contact our Teams and Interns Coordinator at [teamsandinterns@childvoiceintl.org](mailto:teamsandinterns@childvoiceintl.org).

### Check Out Our New Look!

ChildVoice has a fresh look to its website. You'll find stories of our students at the Lukome Center, slide shows of staff visits, and blog updates on our work with Uganda, South Sudan, and Nigeria. Visit us at [www.childvoiceintl.org](http://www.childvoiceintl.org).

You'll also find the latest news on our work in Africa on our Facebook page — "Like" us at [www.facebook.com/childvoice!](http://www.facebook.com/childvoice!)