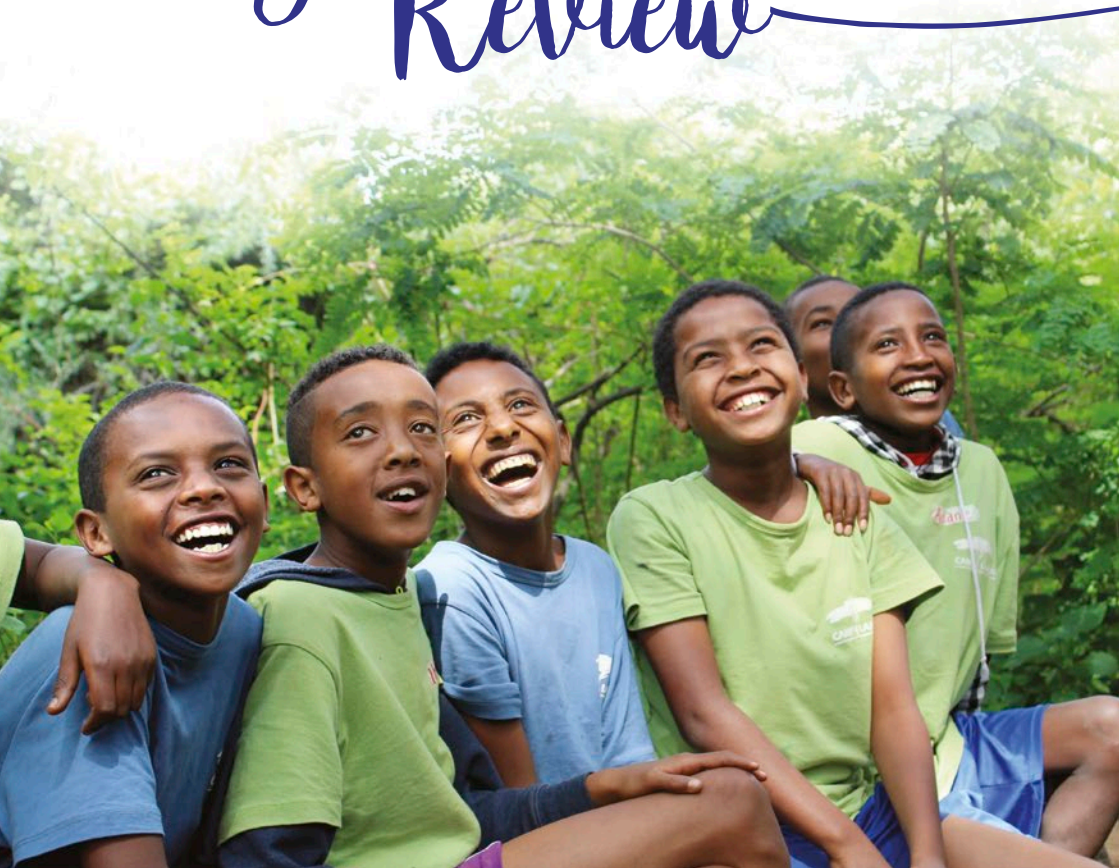


2017



Year-End Review



EQUIPPING
CHURCHES
TO MAKE

disciples

OF YOUTH
THROUGH
STRATEGIC
SPORTS
MINISTRY.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Throughout Scripture, God encourages His people to step back and remember – remember His faithfulness, provision, and marvelous deeds. And as we remember God’s faithfulness in the past, our faith is strengthened as we look to Him for our future.

This year marks 125 years of SIM, and also 15 years since the Sports Friends ministry began. A lot has happened in these last 15 years! What started with just a few people in Ethiopia has now grown to 13 countries on 3 continents. Today, more than 10,000 Sports Friends-trained coaches are ministering to over 240,000 youth on a weekly basis. Lives and communities are being transformed by God’s grace!

Many of you have been with us from the very beginning 15 years ago. Others have joined along the way. As I reflect on these last 15 years, I am so thankful for so many of you! Thank you for praying, for giving, for loving and encouraging, for going to Africa, Asia or South America to serve, and for serving us and this ministry in untold other ways. May you be encouraged as you read about what God has done around the world through the Sports Friends ministry in 2017. All praise and glory be to Him!

Blessings,



Tripp Johnston

Sports Friends Co-Founder and International Director

“ONLY SPORTS COULD
OPEN THE DOOR TO THESE
COMMUNITIES THAT WERE
SO HARDENED TO THE
GOSPEL.”



CROSSING BARRIERS THROUGH SPORTS

ALL ACROSS THE WORLD, through the Sports Friends ministry, God is using something as simple as a ball to build His Kingdom. In parts of Northeastern Nigeria, militant extremists have in large degree driven out the Christian community – killing many and destroying much property in their wake. Yet, in the midst of such hostility and suffering, it’s encouraging to hear the testimony that the Nigerian Church is effectively using sports to minister to youth in these areas.

Recently, 10 new churches have been established through sports ministry programs. One of the Nigerian leaders of this church-planting movement shared that, “only sports could open the door to these communities that were so hardened to the gospel!” Sports is the bridge that God is using to build meaningful relationships, open hearts, and create acceptance for His workers in this difficult region.

Over the years, Sports Friends has trained more than 1,400 Nigerian missionaries to effectively use sports ministry in the communities God has called them to. They share testimonies like this:

“For the last two years, I have tried to build relationships in my new community, but I did not have much success. I tried many different approaches. But still, I didn’t know people. People never invited me into their homes. But since starting sports ministry, I go through the town and all of the youth are calling out to me: ‘Hey Coach! Coach, how are you? Coach, will you come visit my home today?’ Now, people know me and accept me. They invite me to their homes and into their lives. I wish I had known about sports ministry earlier!”

It’s incredible to see sports crossing the barriers which so often divide us and hinder the advancement of the gospel; race, ethnicity, age, gender, social and economic class, physical or mental ability, religion. If you have a ball, young people will come! Praise God for the thousands of young people coming to faith in Christ and growing as His disciples as a result of the love, example, and witness of Sports Friends trained coaches around the world. ■

STORIES FROM THE FIELD: NIGERIA



243,498
YOUNG PEOPLE
ARE BEING
MINISTERED TO
BY MORE THAN
10,000 COACHES.

2017 AT A GLANCE

Persecution and ethnic violence has intensified in parts of Kenya where we work.

Camp Langano: Due to ongoing instability and conflict in the local community, management of the Langano camp property is being transitioned to our Ethiopian church partner. Please pray for continued ministry opportunities at this location.

Expanded efforts in Tanzania.

In June 2017, SF Nigeria celebrated **10 years** of ministry!

Country leadership in Malawi handed over to **Malawian leader**.

Severe persecution in parts of South Asia has caused us to put the SF ministry on hold.

Pioneered first camping programs in **Perú**.

New office and expanded team in **Bangkok** to better serve Central Thailand.

Began pioneering initiatives to minister to **refugee communities** in the USA.

"SF Road Trip" in March 2017 brought two of our African leaders to participate in over 15 fundraising events across 5 cities.

Launched new group of **Atlanta Ambassadors** to help us mobilize engagement and support in this city.

85 new churches established.

Potential expansion discussions and/or pilot projects underway in over **10 new countries**.

Thousands of youth coming to faith each year.

Substantial expansion of denominational partnerships in **Ghana**.

New missionary family arrived to begin ministry in **Burkina Faso**.

MEET COACH FRANCO

AFTER A LONG WEEK of work at the local glue factory in Lima, Peru, Franco faithfully spends his Saturdays coordinating sports ministry in his home community. His passion and commitment to sharing the gospel with these young people is driven by his own experience of God's love despite tremendous hurts and hardships as a child.

When Franco was just 8 years old, his father passed away. Four years later, his sister died too, followed by his Grandmother. Soon after, Franco's uncle – like a second father – died, and finally the following year his mother passed away. At just 12 years old, Franco lived on the streets of Lima where he joined other teenagers in pickpocketing, making trouble, and evading the police. He would frequently spend nights behind bars.

Franco's formative years were marked by deep pain and grief, but today we've seen an incredible transformation. The saving grace of the Almighty God has given Franco the hope, love, and help he needs to deal with such a tumultuous start to life. His training by Sports Friends to be a coach in his community has given him the platform to use his experiences to minister to the young people on his teams, many of whom are experiencing hurts and hardships of their own.

In the end, just like the Apostle Paul, Franco understands that his past, as rough and difficult as it was, can serve as a diving board for the work God has in store for him. What Franco experienced of God's sustaining grace and sovereignty through his own pain and grief, he is now able to give away in increasing measure to the youth on his teams.

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God."

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 ■

“FRANCO’S FORMATIVE YEARS WERE MARKED BY DEEP PAIN AND GRIEF, BUT TODAY WE’VE SEEN AN INCREDIBLE TRANSFORMATION.”



FINANCIAL REPORT

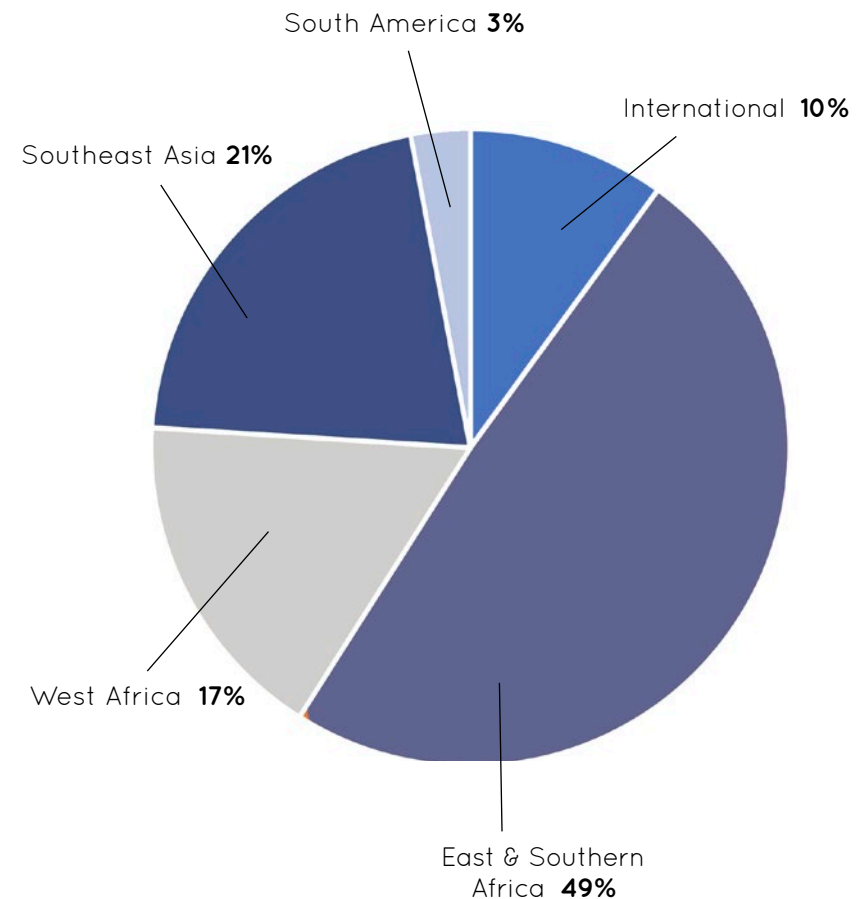
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2017

PERCENTAGE OF 2017 PROGRAM EXPENSES BY REGION

TOTAL REVENUE FROM DONATIONS:	\$729,801
EXPENSES:	
Sports Friends program expenses:	\$580,389
Construction costs at Camp Langano:	52,480
SIM administrative expenses:	104,502
Sports Friends promotion & fundraising expenses:	16,007
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$753,378
Deficit funded from prior years surplus:	(\$23,577)

Our annual ministry cost is **less than \$4** per youth participant

We are 100% funded by contributions of friends like you!



partner with us



Receive a daily request:
sports-friends.org/pray



Serve on a short-term trip:
sports-friends.org/go



Make a gift:
sports-friends.org/give



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