



2019 Year-End Review

Equipping churches
and church planters
to use sports to
make disciples of
Jesus Christ among
young people, their
families, and their
communities.

sports-friends.org | We are a ministry of **SIM**

To Our Partners

As I reflect on Psalm 24, I am reminded of the comfort and joy it is to know that the Lord is sovereign over this world and over each of our lives. Although we do not know what tomorrow may bring, we know that God remains our rock and our fortress!

*"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for He founded it on the seas and established it on the waters."
(Psalm 24:1-2)*

In times of crisis, it's more important than ever to look back with thanksgiving and to praise God for all that He has done. We give thanks for more than 13,000 coaches all around the globe who have been boldly using sports to share Christ's love: spurring on the spread of the gospel further and faster in the lives of the young people on their teams, their families, and their communities.

I pray you will be encouraged as you read these ministry highlights from the last year. Thank you for the important role you play; whether by praying, giving, going, or championing us from the side-lines. We are grateful for each one of you!

Blessings,



Tripp Johnston

Sports Friends Co-Founder and International Director



A Tale of Three Souls

STORIES FROM THE FIELD: KENYA

Viktor plays on a Sports Friends soccer team in Kenya. He is 8 years old but doesn't look much older than his six-year-old teammate Julius. Although we're uncertain of all the details about Viktor's life, his small stature suggests chronic neglect even before his abandonment. Young and single when she found herself unexpectedly pregnant, his mother was unable to create healthy living conditions for a child. After 8 years, she was finally overwhelmed by the task of raising her son, and she abandoned small Viktor without arranging any care for him.

Anne is a faithful follower of Jesus, though of humble background. She lives with her children on the church compound, where they care for the cows and chickens, cook for church meetings, and make sure the building is ready for Sunday services. Anne is raising her children alone. They, like so many young Kenyans, are fatherless. So, she bears the weight of providing for the family



by herself; she loves, trains, and disciplines her children without a husband.

*“Father to the fatherless and a defender of widows, is God in His holy dwelling... God sets the lonely in families...”
(Psalm 68:5-6).*

The grace of God, our Father and Defender, is astounding. He loves Anne, and has blessed and provided for her. He has filled her with a love that reaches beyond herself, even in the midst of her own painful challenges. Her life is marked not by bitterness or despair, but by love, empathy, and compassion. God loves Viktor, and drew sweet Anne’s attention to the boy. She has embraced him into her family. Six-year-old Julius is Anne’s biological son, and the friends have become like brothers. They play together on the under-8 soccer team, and when they’re not on the field, they are building cars, rolling tires, or creating some other fun for themselves.

Our tender, mighty, compassionate God works still more redemption into the story. On the soccer field, the boys even get to feel their Father’s heart for them. Their Sports Friends coach, Joseph, treats them as his own sons. He pours love and encouragement, character training and hope into their lives. He visits his boys outside of practices and gets

to know them. He spends time with them one-on-one, to communicate clearly to them that they are loved, cared for, wanted.

This knitting together of lives has changed Viktor, Anne, and Joseph. Viktor is like a new boy. When he first came to live with Anne he never smiled; instead, he’d run into the forest, crying, screaming and asking for his mother. While we still pray that Viktor’s mother will return and care for him, we praise God for how He has provided for the child already. Within a month of his time with Anne and Joseph we saw him smiling, running with friends, and playing. Anne’s family has been grown by grace, and she has the joy of seeing God extend love through her. Joseph serves as a Sports Friends Country Leader, but has truly been touched by his time with Viktor, as he sees such a dramatic transformation in his life through the love of Christ. All three have been blessed; all three have been made into a blessing.

Father, we praise You for Your kindness and compassion. We praise You that You don’t leave us in our desperate state, but You reach out to us to make us Your own. Thank You for caring for Viktor, Anne, and Joseph. Raise up more of Your people to serve Kenya’s young people and families in need, to live and minister in Your name. ■



**More than
290,000
young people
are being
ministered
to by more
than 13,000
coaches.**



Enock's Bravery

STORIES FROM THE FIELD: MALAWI

Sports Friends coordinator Enock's* courage after a violent machete attack proved to be a powerful witness to the gospel in Malawi.

He was due to lead a Sports Friends camp on the eastern side of the country when a hostile group of men brutally beat him. They left him with a serious gash to his forearm, which exposed the bone and required many stitches.

Pushing ahead with camp

Enock's colleagues advised him to postpone the camp until he could recuperate, but he was determined to go ahead, saying: "No, there's nothing that can stop the work of the Lord. The camp has to continue."

Although Enock struggled to overcome weakness from his injury, he courageously facilitated the camp program and connected with the young campers.

Sports Friends' Malawi director, Fostance, said: "He showed us how much he loves the Lord as well as God's people. He forgot about himself and the pain he was going through, and he put God first."

During the week, Enock shared the story of his attack with the campers. It inspired a mix of emotions – some were touched, and some were naturally shocked.

Because Enock wasn't fearful or discouraged by the event, the campers shared in his confidence that God protects his children and is worthy of faithful service.

Enock could not identify his attackers, but many in his community suspected the assault was religiously motivated. He has introduced many young people to Jesus through sports, which has caused them to leave the area's majority religion. Enock has also assisted with two church plants in the heart of the community, and some religious leaders have felt threatened by this.

The camp's impact

Sports Friends welcomed multiple new Jesus followers into God's family at the camp, and Enock's bold faith allowed him to play a pivotal role in their stories.



Enock's arm after stitches

"No, there's nothing that can stop the work of the Lord. The camp has to continue."

Enock's arm has healed at a surprising speed, and despite the extent of the injury, he has avoided infection. He now has a distinct scar, but it serves as a reminder to him of God's power.

He said: "My arm will be a destructive weapon into the kingdom of the devil. Every time I lift my arm up, many will be able to see that heaven is opened for them." ■

*Name changed

2019 at a glance...

REFUGEE MINISTRY

We continue to expand our ministry efforts with refugees, immigrants, and internally displaced peoples across East Africa, West Africa, Southeast Asia and the USA. We pray that this will equip the church to build relationships with the people that God is bringing to their doorsteps.

**19 countries, 11,600 churches,
13,200 coaches, 294,000 young people**

THE HORN OF AFRICA

The Horn of Africa includes several countries experiencing violence, civil war and extreme persecution. Sports Friends is pioneering expansion efforts into some of the places where it costs the most to be a Christian and where there is little gospel witness.

**6 new missionaries
in the pipeline**

**In 2019, more than
19,900 new believers and
9 new churches planted**

New materials and training practices developed for master coaches in each country to raise their level of coaching skills.

BRANDING REVIEW

Over the last year, we carried out an extensive evaluation and review of our Sports Friends brand, leading to the development of a new logo and brand to be revealed in the coming months. Stay tuned!

SOUTHEAST ASIA

In February 2019, we celebrated 10 years of ministry in Southeast Asia with a week of special activities and programs in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Despite increased persecution in some of these areas, the Sports Friends ministry continues to expand.

**Partnered with four
new denominations**

New discipleship resources developed to help our coaches go deeper with the youth on their teams.

MANCHESTER, UK

In 2019, we initiated ministry in the UK focussing on marginalized young people who are without father figures or strong male role models. Research shows that an astonishing 70% of people in the UK aged between 16 and 29 describe themselves as “non-religious”. We pray that sports will be a tool for revival!

Financial Report

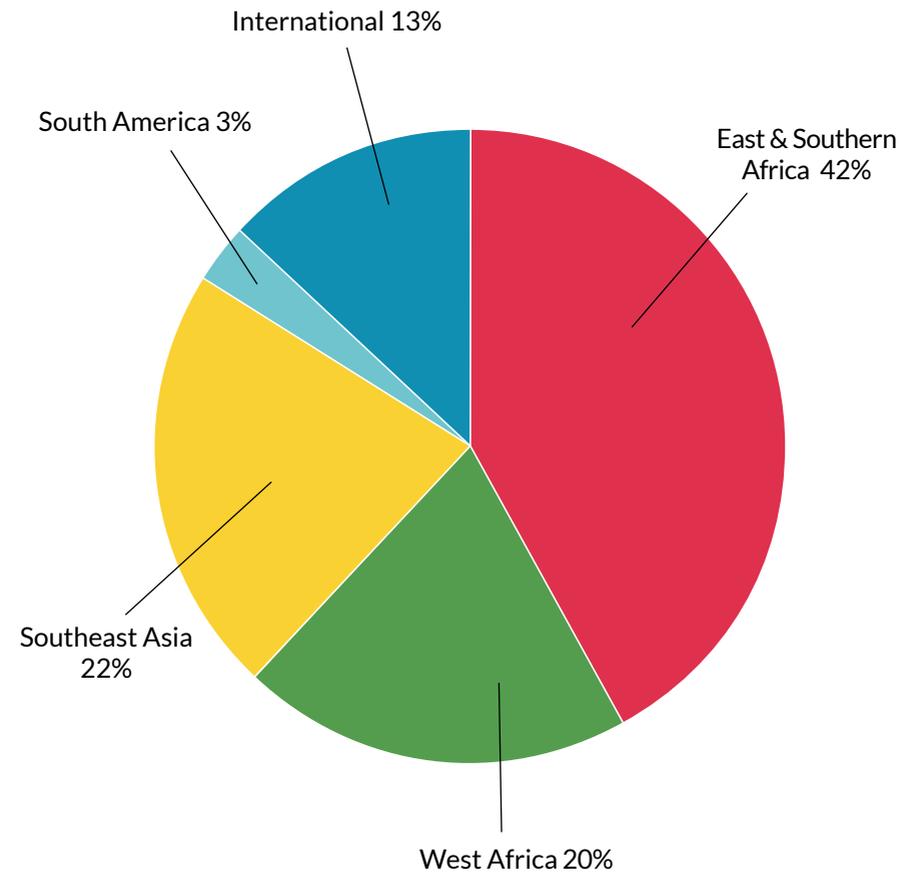
For the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019

Total revenue from donations:	\$795,224
Expenses:	
Sports Friends program expenses:	611,593
SIM administrative expenses:	113,849
Sports Friends promotion & fundraising expenses:	13,959
Total expenses:	\$739,401
Surplus funds carried forward to next year:	\$55,823

Our annual ministry cost is **less than \$3** per youth participant

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

2019 Program Expenses By Region





sports-friends.org/pray



sports-friends.org/go



sports-friends.org/give

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