



CHILDIMPACT
INTERNATIONAL



OPERATION CHILD RESCUE

“Set free those who are held by chains without any reason. Untie the ropes that hold people as slaves. Set free those who are crushed. Break every evil chain.” Isaiah 58:6

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Dear Friends and Supporters of Child Impact International,

I've included special photos in this edition of our magazine focused on Operation Child Rescue. These photos are of my son, Andris Christopher Evans. On April 13, 2023, he lost his battle with leukemia after a second relapse. Andris fought long and hard and endured a lot of pain. We are heartbroken but look forward to the promise of Revelation 21:1-5 that Jesus will make all things new and wipe the tears from our eyes.

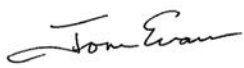
When Andris was still a baby, he was left at an orphanage in his home country of Latvia. His life was difficult. Andris ended up being classified as special needs. However, he always had an advocate. His brother, Daniel, was 17 months older and bonded deeply with his little brother. Daniel took upon himself the protector role. If anyone messed with Andris, they had to deal with him. In the orphanage's rough and tough atmosphere, Andris knew his older brother had his back.

As a family, we first met Daniel and Andris when they were seven and five. They would come to America to visit for summers and Christmases. We also traveled to Latvia and spent time with them there. When we moved forward with adoption, finalized in June of 2021, we received a lot of training about a common condition of detachment disorder among children from orphanages. This is a psychological condition in which a person is not able to fully engage with their feelings or the feelings of others. To our surprise, we never encountered any challenges in this area. Daniel and Andris had bonded with one another so well they were equipped to build healthy emotional relationships with others.

Everyone needs an advocate, especially children, who are the most vulnerable. Andris planned to adopt when he grew up. He realized we are here on planet Earth for a purpose. We are called to make a difference in the lives of others. He desired to be an advocate as well.

Operation Child Rescue is a frontline project of Child Impact focused on fighting the evils of human trafficking. We are bold in our request for financial support for these initiatives so we can do even more in the coming months and years. Some of the stories you will read in this magazine are hard to hear. As advocates, we cannot allow the rampant and concealed crimes against children to remain out of sight and out of mind; we must take action to stop it.

We pray the children helped through Operation Child Rescue will meet their greatest advocate, Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:5). Will you take a stand to make a difference in this important work?



Dr. Tom L. Evans, CEO, Child Impact International



Evans Family



Tom & Andris



Andris & Daniel

HONORING ANDRIS: CONTINUING HIS LEGACY OF HOPE FOR ORPHANS

We often hear comments about how blessed Daniel and Andris are to be adopted by our family (see the CEO letter for more details). It is true their lives would have been very different had they remained at the orphanage in Latvia. However, as we reflect on our journey as a family, one overwhelming thought emerges: We are the ones that have been blessed! These two boys have enriched our lives far beyond anything we have given.

Our hearts have been broken by the tragic loss of Andris at 14 years old. We have received hundreds of messages from all around the world, sharing condolences with our family. Thank you for your love and support.

This post was from an individual in Latvia, "Thank you, Evans family, for the love you showed by adopting a Latvian boy with this diagnosis, doing everything possible, and most importantly - giving Andris the hope of eternal life." Although Andris lost his battle with leukemia, he didn't lose the war. In the battle between good and evil, he chose the winning side.

We made a promise to Andris that we would share the hope of Jesus with as many as possible. He can't wait to wake up with leukemia gone for good this time. He will run again, play soccer with his brothers, hug his parents, and spend eternity getting to know all of you. Will you help Andris' legacy continue? We can think of no better way of honoring him than by helping other orphans through the ministry of Child Impact International. Your generosity will help provide support for other children like Andris to succeed in this life and, more importantly, to make plans for eternity with Jesus.

—By Dr. Tom L. Evans, CEO



Evans Family

THE ANDRIS EVANS MEMORIAL ORPHAN FUND

Child Impact International has set up a specific fund to honor Andris. This fund is focused on the needs of orphans, with an emphasis on new projects to assist the most vulnerable. You can support Andris' dream to make a difference through a gift to the Andris Evans Memorial Orphan Fund at www.childimpact.org/donate. You can also mail the envelope included with this magazine or call the Child Impact office at (423) 910-0667.



Andris

OPERATION CHILD RESCUE



Palawan girls in the jungle

In January of 2022, I sent an email to Tom Evans, newly appointed CEO of Child Impact International, asking a simple question: “My family is always looking for ways to be more involved in service projects. I’m especially interested in ending human trafficking...I wanted to reach out and see if you had any special projects you needed funding for or if there was any way I could volunteer my time to help further your mission at Child Impact.” What started as a simple request turned into an opportunity to lead the fight against modern-day slavery through Child Impact’s Operation Child Rescue program.

Operation Child Rescue is an umbrella program for our projects that offer hope and freedom to children who are currently being exploited or who are at serious risk of exploitation. OCR started in India, supporting Anita Kanaiya of The Freedom Project, who was breaking down brothel doors and rescuing children who were being trafficked. Now we have 16 projects across Africa, Asia, and South America, rescuing children and shielding the vulnerable. We support projects that rescue orphans, fight human trafficking, free bonded laborers, and protect girls against trauma like FGM.

To all those who are still trapped in slavery, we’re coming for you!

To all those who have supported Operation Child Rescue, thank you for joining the fight. For those of you who may be wondering what you can do to make a difference, I would like to offer four practical suggestions:



Share this newsletter. Many people are unaware of the various forms of human trafficking and what they can do to stop it. Use your influence to advocate for children today!



Pray for the over 50 million people around the world who are trapped in modern-day slavery.



Join us in setting the captives free. Become a member of The Rescue Party through a monthly donation to Operation Child Rescue. We have many more projects in development and need your help to expand our rescue efforts!



Watch the latest Operation Child Rescue video with your church/friends. See page 14 for the link.

— By Jason Churchwell, Field Director

NEVER SAY NO: MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR ABANDONED BABIES

I was excited to meet baby Tommy in person on my trip to Tanzania in February. I received a message from Jerry and Valerie Backus of Falco's Children's Village that they had named a baby after me. They had rescued a premature baby boy whose mother had died in childbirth. At two months of age, he was only five pounds and had many medical complications. Valerie's medical expertise was critical in supporting his fragile life as he stopped breathing several times during his first few weeks in their care. Having the privilege to hold a baby whose life had been rescued from the brink of death was such an honor.

When it comes to rescuing children, Jerry Backus lives by the motto, "Never say no." During my visit, I witnessed this commitment firsthand. Social Services called requesting an abandoned baby be accepted by Falco's. Without hesitation, Jerry set aside all other plans for the day. There was a sense of urgency, even in Jerry's driving, a deep understanding that every second counts when it comes to saving children's lives. We learned a baby boy was left lying on the dirt in front of a small home where a woman named Zawadi lived. At 8:00 p.m., she heard crying outside and discovered the abandoned baby. Zawadi had no idea who had left him. She immediately took the baby to the hospital and called Social Services.

As I rode with Jerry and Valerie Backus to pick up this precious baby, I praised God for rescuing another child. This boy was named Jason after our Field Director at Child Impact, who was visiting Falco's with me. Jerry Backus recently celebrated his 76th birthday and continues to live out his motto, "Never say no."

— By Dr. Tom L. Evans, CEO

Abandoned children are particularly vulnerable and at higher risk of being trafficked, with 1 in 4 victims of modern-day slavery being children.

UNDOC



Valerie Backus with a happy baby at Falco's



Jerry and Valerie Backus with Zawadi and Baby Jason



Baby Tommy and Baby Jason

A CULTURAL SHIFT: ENDING CHILD MARRIAGE IN PALAWAN



Child brides with their children

Sold for a box of crackers. This is the reality for some girls living in the remote mountainous communities of Palawan, Philippines. In Palawano culture, girls are seen as property and are given away in exchange for a dowry, which can range from \$18 to \$144 (1,000 to 8,000 pesos). Common dowries are cash, livestock, property, crackers, coffee, sugar, pots, pans, or a mosquito net. For families trapped in absolute poverty for generations, the dowry they receive by marrying off their daughters helps them survive. Forcing a child to marry to exploit them for resources is a form of human trafficking.

Although the Philippines recently passed legislation to make child marriage illegal, secluded indigenous communities have little to no government oversight. **In the Philippines, one in six girls is married before her 18th birthday.**

Maria is one of these girls. Although she was very hesitant, her parents forced her to marry when she was 12. She was robbed of her childhood and is a slave in her own home. Now that she is a wife,

Maria is expected to work with her husband in the fields. Her parents forced her to quit school, but she is determined to pursue her dreams, whatever it takes. Maria is a hardworking girl with a pure heart who desires to become a nurse.

Unfortunately, there is a greater fear than a lack of education for child brides. **Girls 15 or younger are five times more likely to die from complications in childbirth.** This statistic may be higher for girls without access to formal healthcare. The physical terrain in Palawan can make it difficult for mothers experiencing a crisis during childbirth to reach a hospital. Mothers may need to walk for hours or even ride for an hour or more to reach a hospital in the rugged terrain.

Our sponsorship and Operation Child Rescue programs started at Maria's school last year. The sad truth is we got there too late and Maria's life trajectory will be very difficult to redirect. Now, her peers are learning they have options for their life. They could finish high school, go to college, and have a career. Girls are now pushing back

when their parents are pressuring them to get married. Boys are learning of the greater opportunities available to them. Soon the same boys who used to gamble and drink will be able to enroll in a local industrial arts school, **currently being constructed by Child Impact**, learning employable trades that could lift their future families out of poverty.

Child marriage is a complex challenge, made worse by the effects of poverty and isolation. By providing Palawanos with the tools and support they need, we can help them break these cycles. Working together with local schools and advocates, we can come alongside girls like Maria who have unimaginable potential.

— By Sean Knapp, Director of Philippine Adventist Medical and Aviation Services (PAMAS), and Melissa Moore, Sponsorship Manager

Over the last decade, 142 million girls were forced into marriage before the age of 18.

United Nations

FILL HER SHOES

Janelle's shoes and a pillow were the only items found after the helicopter disappeared.

Serving the Palawano people takes a network of selfless missionaries who provide the healthcare, education, church community, and aviation programs that are so vital to the local community. One missionary who will never be forgotten is Janelle Alder. While she was a student at Southern Adventist University, and after becoming a registered nurse, she dedicated a year of service in Palawan. When her term was completed, she returned to serve with Philippine Adventist Medical and Aviation Services (PAMAS) as a nurse.

Janelle regularly provided medical care for the children in the Palawan jungle schools. She met the medical needs of the community whenever she could. Her team recalls that she always helped those who needed it most. Part of her missionary role was to serve on the aviation medical evacuation team and also make house calls. Janelle provided extra support and care to help patients overcome their fears of flying and feel more at ease.

On March 1, 2023, she was assisting with a medical evacuation when the helicopter she was

flying in never reached its intended destination. Despite the extensive efforts of several search and rescue crews, the helicopter and the five missing passengers have not been found (as of May 17).

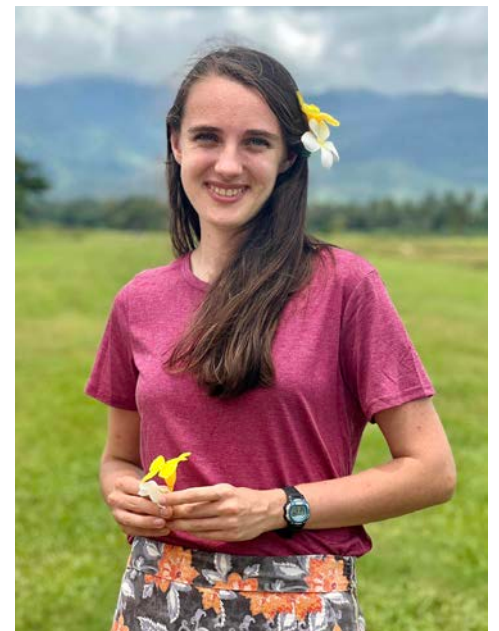
To honor Janelle's incredible dedication and passion for the vulnerable, Child Impact has initiated the Janelle Alder Nursing Scholarship to empower the next generation of future nurses who are dedicated to filling her shoes. Palawano students who will return to Palawan to serve the local people, as Janelle did, can apply for this scholarship. The average cost for a four-year nursing program in the Philippines is about \$10,000.

As a team, we feel excited and hopeful about this scholarship being created to honor Janelle's service. We believe there is a lot of untapped potential in the students living in these isolated communities, and this scholarship can help bring their dreams of becoming nurses to reality.

It's inspiring to see the impact that Janelle has had on the community and the positive legacy she is

leaving behind. We hope to offer many children the opportunity to pursue this life-changing career and give back to their local community.

– By Rosebud Cruse, Administrative Assistant of PAMAS, and Sean Knapp, Director of PAMAS



Janelle Alder

Empower the next generation of missionary nurses through a gift to the Janelle Alder Nursing Scholarship at childimpact.org/donate.

OPERATION CHILD RESCUE 2023 MAJOR PROJECT



Vida Sana Campus

Gabriela making new friends

COLOMBIA: REACHING THE UNREACHED

In April, I spent a week in the jungles of Colombia, learning about the beauty of the culture and the tragedies of trauma so many girls have experienced. In 2020, Fundación Vida Sana Redención (Redemption Healthy Life Foundation) joined with other organizations to serve the unreached people of Colombia. They focused on reaching the region of Vaupes, where there was no Seventh-day Adventist presence. Their director, Michael Moncaleano Hurtado, developed innovative strategies to reach the indigenous people.

Indigenous communities in these regions are very isolated and would not open up their communities to evangelists. Vida Sana presented a unique proposal that included community health seminars, agricultural lessons, an eco-tourism plan, and proposed products that could be made by the community and sold in nearby towns. The team from Vida Sana would not only teach them all these things but also share with them about God.

However, during the project's establishment, the team discovered a threat to the community's children, particularly girls. Oftentimes, men get drunk and then sexually abuse girls in the village. As a result, young girls often become mothers, with some giving birth as young as 14.

Child Impact International became involved when we learned of the high rates of sexual abuse. To care for girls who have been abused and help them escape

their situation, Child Impact and Vida Sana have started an Operation Child Rescue project together in the Amazon. We started by renting a home in Vaupes that serves as a launching base for missionaries and social workers. Children who are in need of rescue stay here briefly before relocating to the campus of Vida Sana, where they receive professional counseling and an opportunity to attend school. The staff at Vida Sana also provide childcare for girls who come with babies. Already, eight children have been rescued from their abusers and are experiencing holistic healing.

Together, we can expand the capacity of our services to rescue many more girls who are being abused. We plan to build a dormitory at Vida Sana, which will help us provide a safe place for rescued children. Our dream is to purchase land and build a permanent rescue and school campus in the Amazon to help provide long term support and education to prevent abuse. Your gift to the building fund can help make this dream come true.

— By Gabriela Garcia, Marketing Coordinator

Sexual abuse is a risk factor for girls who later become victims of sex trafficking, with 92% of sex trafficking survivors reporting having experienced sexual abuse during childhood.

The Foundation United



SPECIAL APPEAL

THE BUILDING FUND

Help us build a dormitory at Vida Sana, which will provide a safe place for rescued children.

Purchase land in Vaupes and build a permanent rescue center and school campus in the Amazon to help provide long-term support and education to prevent abuse. This center will educate girls in their own community and hopefully prevent child sexual exploitation before it begins.



You can go to childimpact.org/donate or call our office at (423) 910-0667.

 **\$57,500**

Dormitory at Vida Sana for 50 students

 **\$258,750**

Purchase Land for Jungle Rescue & Build School Campus for 100 students

 **\$316,250**

Total Project Cost



A JOURNEY TO A BETTER FUTURE

My name is Limbani* and I am a 14-year-old girl from Itezhi-Tezhi (Zambia). I want to share my story, which dates back three years. Growing up in a village wasn't easy for me. Over a year ago, I left my mother's house to live with my aunt. My siblings and mother were hopeful because they thought I had finally found a good home where I would receive help.

We moved to another village. I did basic housework, cooked every meal, and gardened. Eventually, I started going to school, but after school, my aunt would sell me to men and force me to sell vegetables by the roadside. She constantly made me sleep with men to earn money for her. Many times I wanted to say no, but how could I? She was the woman my family had put as my guardian. Months passed, and the situation got worse.

My uncle found out what was happening and took me from my aunt's house. He wanted me to get married, considering everything I had been through, but later he decided to find help for me. He learned about the sponsorship program at Riverside. When I arrived there, I met Ms. M. She encouraged me to talk about everything and helped me by advising and comforting me. Sometimes I will sit on my bed, wishing my life could have been better than it was. I'm grateful for all the help I am receiving now.

By Limbani

**Name changed to protect identity*



Students at Riverside Farm Institute

Traffickers often prey on children from poor households, exploiting their parents' extreme poverty and their desire for a better life for their children. Children can be sold or forced into labor, domestic servitude, or sexual exploitation by their own family members.

UNICEF

FROM TRAFFICKED TO FREE

Koli grew up in Gopalganj, a southern district of Bangladesh, with her parents and two sisters. Her family was struggling to make ends meet, and her father's job was the only source of income. They needed more money to maintain the household and pay for medical treatment for her mother, who suffered from paralysis.

Koli was desperate to find a way to help. This is when her life took an unexpected and tragic turn.

When a friend offered her a job at a beauty parlor in Dhaka, Koli saw it as an opportunity to provide for her family. However, she was unaware her friend was part of a human trafficking ring. When she arrived at the parlor in the city, Koli was abducted and drugged. When she regained consciousness, she was locked in a room in Bangalore, India, 1345 miles away from home. She was forced into the sex trade and was physically and mentally tortured by her captors. Koli said she felt like she was going to die at any moment.

Only one out of 100 people are rescued from human trafficking.

Miraculously, Koli was able to make a call for help to her family. Koli's family sought help from Child Impact's partner in Bangladesh and they contacted the home office in the United States to help in this rescue. Anita Kanaiya, the director of The Freedom Project (a Child Impact partner in India), collaborated with the police to find Koli. They were able to trace the call and rescue her. Anita's team helped bring her back safely to Bangladesh.

Today, Koli is happily reunited with her family, married, and has a child of her own. Koli's story is a powerful reminder of the dangers of human trafficking and the devastating effects it can have on individuals and their families. While Koli was fortunate to escape and return home safely, many others are not as fortunate. Only one out of 100 people are rescued from human trafficking, according to the United Nations. It is crucial to raise awareness about human trafficking and take action to prevent it from happening in the first place.

*– By Shohag, Director of Bangladesh Children's Sponsorship Services,
and Gabriela Garcia, Marketing Coordinator*

Women and girls are disproportionately affected by human trafficking, accounting for 71% of all trafficking victims.

UNODC



Koli and her family with Jasper (Child Impact Field Coordinator)



Koli and her son

TOGETHER WE CAN END HUMAN TRAFFICKING

THE SHOCKING TRUTH

1 in 3 
girls in developing countries will be married before 18.

Countries in **Central and South America** report a large number of girls trafficked for sexual exploitation.



In **Sub-Saharan Africa**, child trafficking is most prevalent for the purpose of forced labor.



The average victim of sex trafficking has a life expectancy of **7 years**



In the United States, the top 3 recruiting sources of trafficking are:

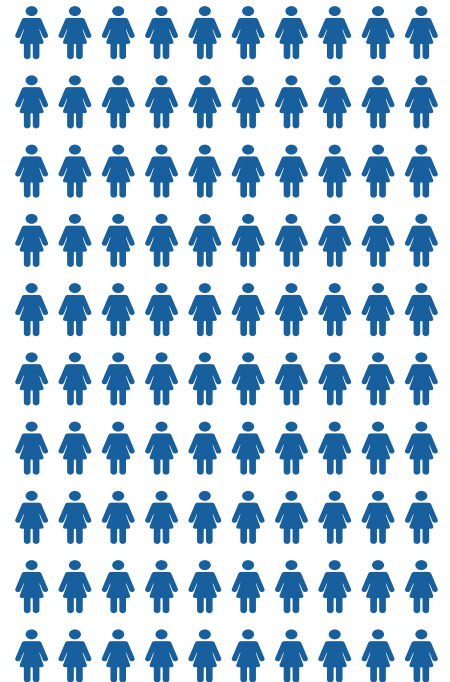
- 33%** Family Member/Caregiver
- 28%** Intimate Partner
- 22%** Employer

JOIN THE MOVEMENT WITH CHILD IMPACT

16 rescue projects in **12**  countries

+5 NEW projects in **2023**

100 Expanded our rescue project at Riverside to reach over 100 girls



2023 NEW PROJECTS

FREING BONDED LABORERS, PAKISTAN

The brick kiln industry in Pakistan employs millions of people and produces 60 billion bricks each year. Around 4.5 million people work in slave-like conditions, many of whom belong to marginalized communities. Children are denied education, perpetuating the cycle of poverty and exploitation.

In collaboration with a local partner, Child Impact has initiated a new program to free workers and their families from bonded labor. The program offers legal assistance, education, and vocational training. We are focusing on families who have experienced sexual exploitation and abuse. The program intends to break the cycle of exploitation and care for them for at least six months to prevent re-enslavement.



VIZAG SLUM TAILORING PROGRAM, INDIA

A preschool in Visakhapatnam serves 30 children from poverty-stricken homes, providing them with education and nourishment. It also runs a tailoring program that empowers women from the nearby brothel district to start their own businesses and earn a dignified living. The pandemic forced the program to close, but with your help, we can reopen the vocational training school. Funds for this project will go towards purchasing new sewing machines.

RIVERSIDE TAILORING PROGRAM, ZAMBIA

In 2022, Child Impact and Riverside Farm Institute began a new project to rescue children trafficked in communities surrounding the campus. Thirty six girls were helped last year through sponsorship at Riverside Secondary School, and a new girl's dorm is under construction to help rescue 100 girls. The girls must pass a government-mandated entrance exam to enroll at Riverside. Some of the girls have been out of school for a long time. To help the girls that would have difficulty passing the exam, we are starting a tutoring and tailoring program. Girls will receive tutoring, but if they are unable to pass their exams, they will have skills to start their own sewing business and no longer be subjected to traffickers.

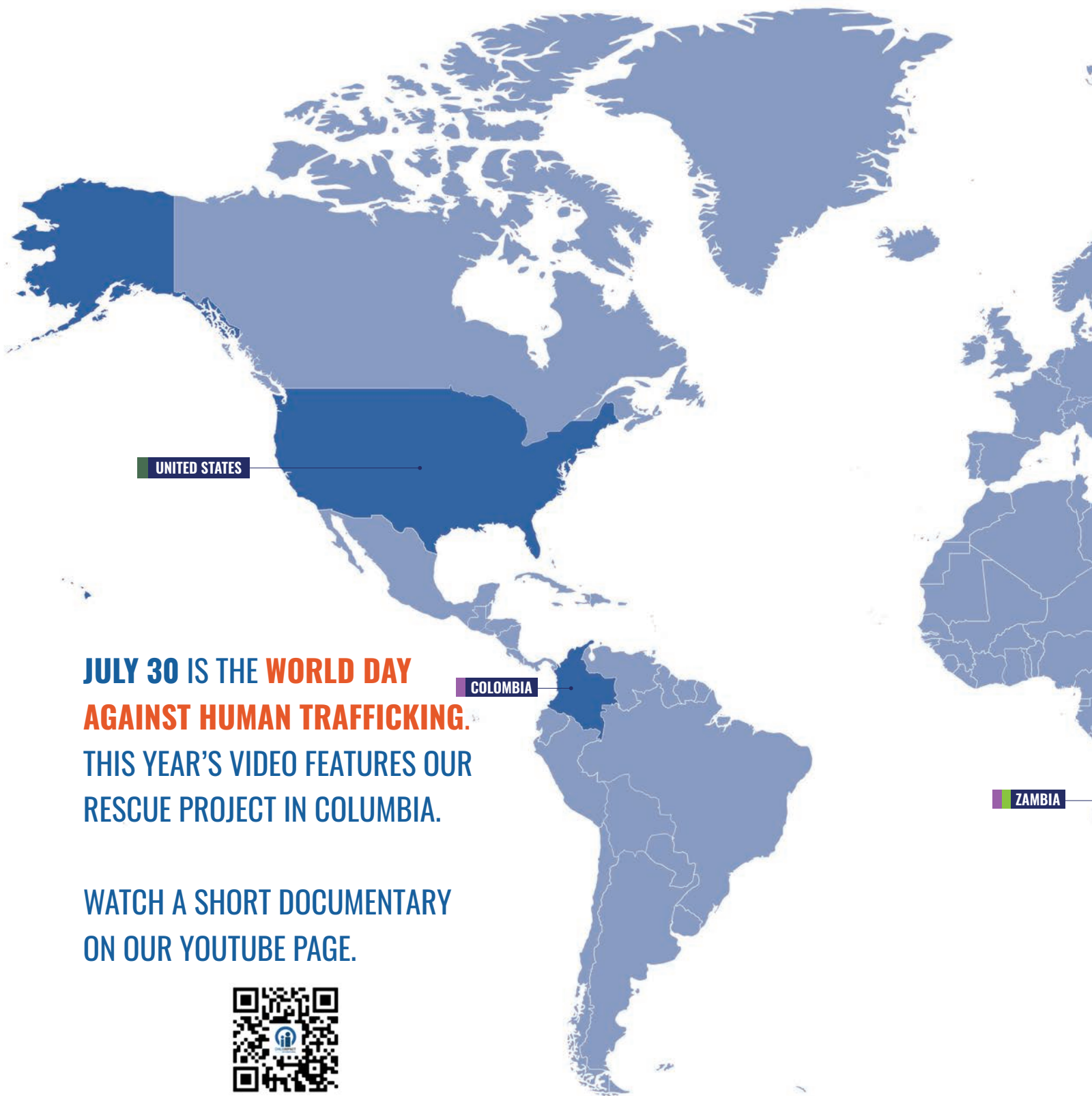


Stay updated on the latest project details and stories from the field.



OUR **IMPACT** AROUND THE WORLD

OPERATION CHILD RESCUE PROJECTS



UNITED STATES

COLOMBIA

ZAMBIA

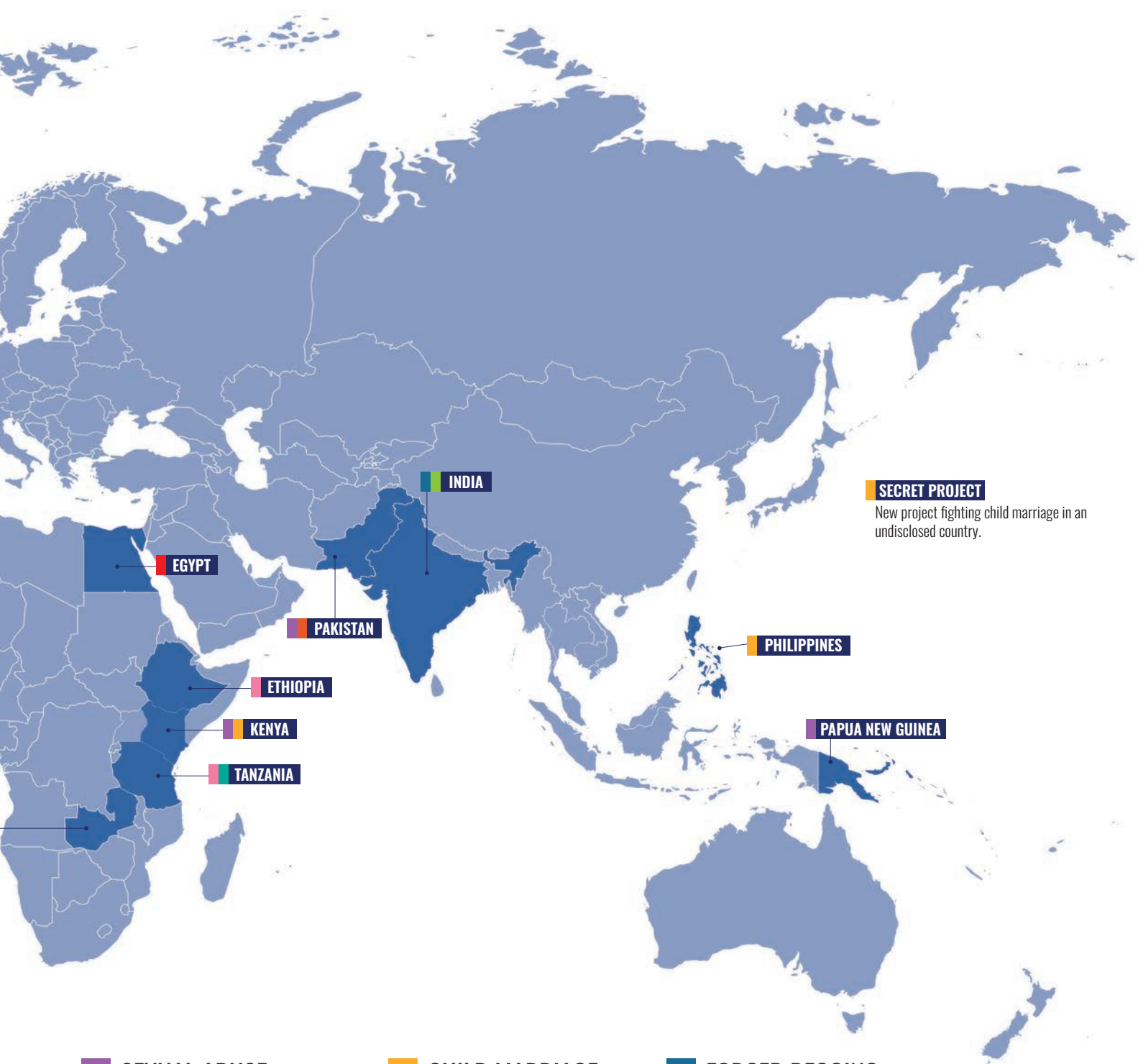
**JULY 30 IS THE WORLD DAY
AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING.**

THIS YEAR'S VIDEO FEATURES OUR
RESCUE PROJECT IN COLUMBIA.

WATCH A SHORT DOCUMENTARY
ON OUR YOUTUBE PAGE.



WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/@CHILDIMPACTINTERNATIONAL



SEXUAL ABUSE

CHILD MARRIAGE

FORCED BEGGING

GANG RECRUITMENT

BABY RESCUE

BONDED LABOR

ORPHAN RESCUE

SEX TRAFFICKING

UNSTABLE HOUSING



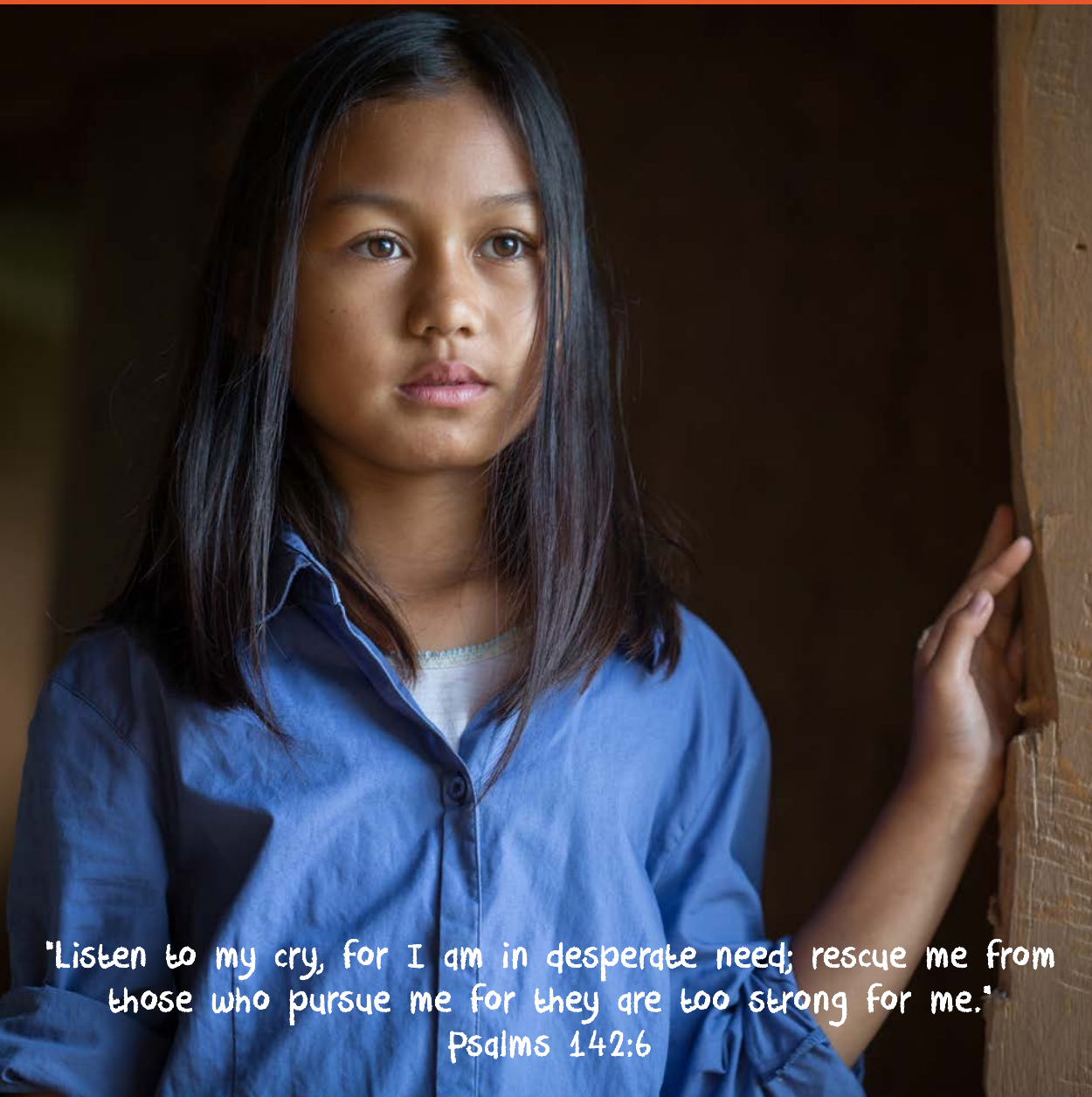
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College Press

JOIN THE RESCUE PARTY TODAY



"Listen to my cry, for I am in desperate need; rescue me from those who pursue me for they are too strong for me."
Psalms 142:6

The Rescue Party is an exclusive group of donors who commit to giving every month to support projects rescuing families and children from exploitation.

To join, scan the QR code or visit childimpact.org/donate and set up a recurring donation to Operation Child Rescue.

Once you become a member, you will receive exclusive updates on our rescue operations each month in your inbox.



Make your monthly donation at
childimpact.org/donate

