

# MINISTRY INSIDER

SAMARITAN'S PURSE | MAY 29, 2018



## UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS INITIATIVE

### 25 YEARS OF GOSPEL IMPACT

In 1993, with the delivery of gift-filled shoeboxes to suffering Bosnian children, God set in motion what would become a global evangelism and discipleship movement. As Operation Christmas Child (OCC) celebrates 25 years of service, we stand in awe that God has used simple shoebox gifts to transform the lives of 157 million boys and girls through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Through The Greatest Journey (TGJ), 15 million shoebox recipients have then journeyed through the Bible by participating in this dynamic 12-lesson discipleship program.

### TAKING THE GOOD NEWS TO THE UNREACHED

Today, there are 7,078 people groups—representing three billion people—among whom no indigenous Christian community of adequate size is available to evangelize without outside assistance. Through OCC, we are establishing ministry partners within these unreached people groups, equipping them to share the Gospel with children in their communities and invite them on the journey of discipleship.

**But OCC and TGJ are not just children's programs—they are tools in the hands of Christ's body on earth reaching out to fulfill the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20).** As long as there are people who have not heard the Good News, we will mobilize our global network of staff, volunteers, and church partners to share the message of God's eternal love among every tribe, tongue, and people, and nation.

### Unreached People Group

A people group among whom no indigenous Christian community of adequate size and resources is available to evangelize without outside assistance.

Operation Christmas Child is targeting unreached people groups that are comprised of 3% or less evangelical believers.



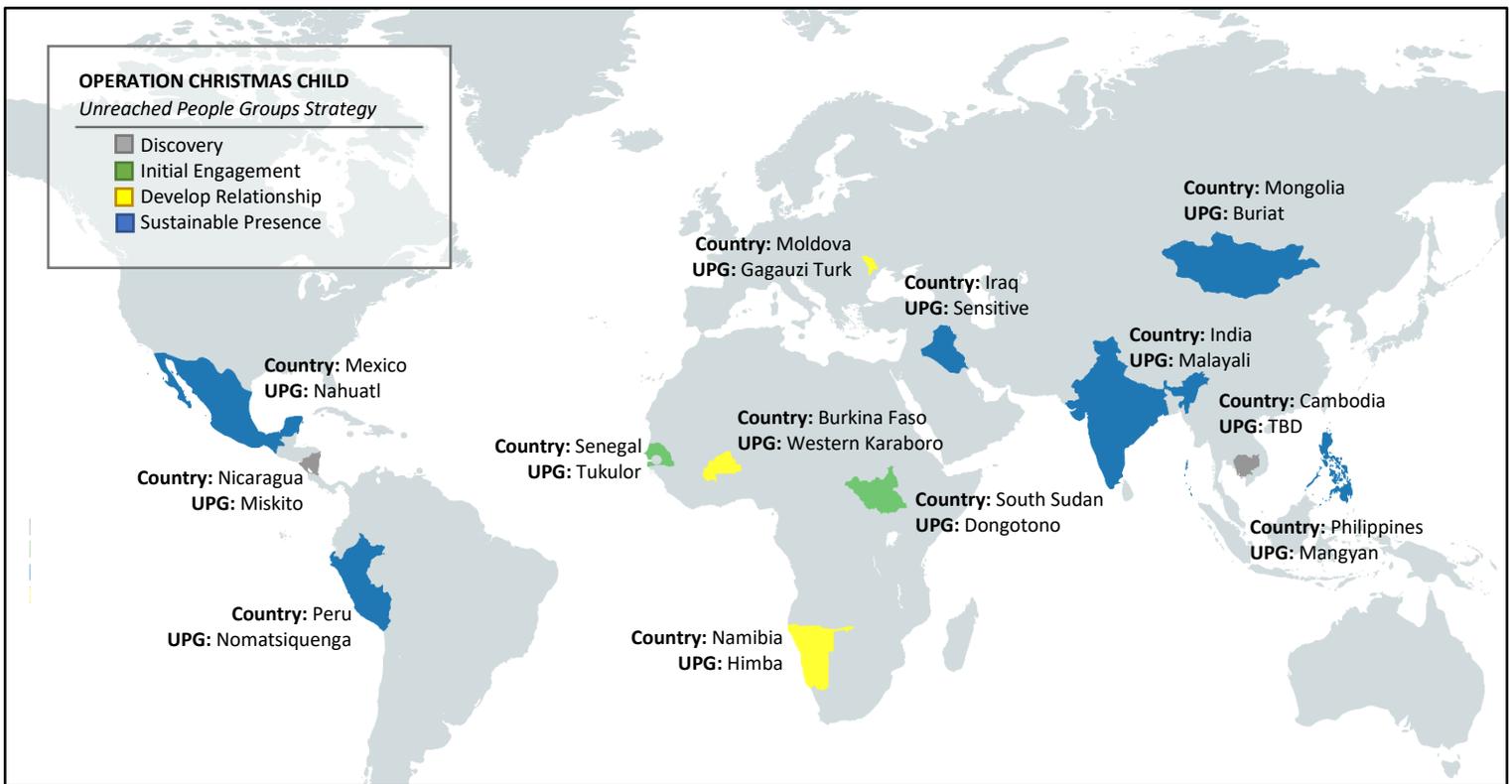
### BY THE NUMBERS

**169,998** CHILDREN IN UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS RECEIVED SHOEBOX GIFTS IN 2017

**190,000** SHOEBOXES WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO UNREACHED CHILDREN IN 2018

**64** UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS IN 32 COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN ENGAGED TO DATE.

**13** PEOPLE GROUPS WILL RECEIVE OCC AND TGJ SUPPORT IN 2018



### 1. DISCOVERY

#### Discovery Phase

Operation Christmas Child selects an unreached people group (UPG) by evaluating the UPG's openness to receiving shoeboxes, as well as their proximity to an established OCC Regional Leadership Team. If these factors are favorable for sustainable outreach, we send an evangelism team of local believers, initiate a prayer network, and establish a three-year plan to engage the UPG.

### 2. INITIAL ENGAGEMENT

#### Year 1

To oversee the UPG initiative, we recruit Christians from within the group to form a leadership team. This team will conduct a shoebox distribution to unreached children and begin to build relationships with leaders from the wider community. These relationships are nurtured and developed, with the intent of planting new churches.

### 3. DEVELOP RELATIONSHIP

#### Year 2

We support the local leadership team as they conduct a second shoebox outreach event and establish The Greatest Journey discipleship classes among shoebox recipients. In addition, we help the leadership team identify additional evangelistic and discipleship resources, further increasing the visibility and outreach of the new church within the community.

### 4. SUSTAINABLE PRESENCE

#### Year 3

In the final phase, Operation Christmas Child completes a third outreach event. Oftentimes a local church has been established by this phase. With the local leadership team, we develop a strategy to ensure the sustainability of the initiative. The goal is for local believers to conduct shoebox distributions and The Greatest Journey program with minimal involvement from our leadership.

## SUSTAINABLE STRATEGY

In 2018, Operation Christmas Child is investing resources to discover, engage, and plant churches within 13 unreached people groups. As we build a sustainable Christian presence within these groups, we are following the four-step strategy outlined above.

After the discovery phase—which can last up to two years—at least three additional years are required to establish a sustainable church presence where none previously existed. We are raising up leaders within each UPG and equipping them with the resources and training needed to reach their community, disciple children, and plant churches.

**The ultimate goal is to see new churches, evangelism, and discipleship programs flourish** until previously unreached people groups are themselves reaching out to share the Gospel and reconcile the world to God.

## SHOEBOX CHURCHES

In unreached people groups around the world, thousands of children are coming to Christ through shoebox distributions and discipleship classes. As these children grow in faith and share God's love with family and friends, these believers are forming the core of new communities of faith that we call shoebox churches.

In Cambodia, we recently trained dozens of church leaders how to use OCC and TGJ resources to plant churches among unreached people groups. Four months later, we rejoice that 37 new churches have been born.

Pastor Jose has faithfully served for 20 years in Mexico, building relationships and trust among the Nahuatl people, whom he is passionate about reaching with the Gospel. At the first shoebox outreach, 109 people came to Christ. We thank God that a new church has been established in the Nahuatl community and discipleship classes are underway.