



PARTNERING FOR ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND RENEWAL – TRANSFORMING LIVES

YOUR IMPACT

# Investing in Africa’s Youth

The world is becoming more African! For those of us who have been to and love Africa, we know that’s very good news. But is Africa and the world ready for this seismic shift? At PEER Servants, we’re dedicated to doing all we can to have the answer to that question be an enthusiastic “Yes”!

## The Next Demographic Wave

The median age in the United States and China is 38. It’s 16 in Uganda and many other African countries. According to The New York Times, by 2050, 1/3 of the world’s young people (aged 15 to 24) will be in Africa. We are already in the midst of what many demographers are calling an African Youthquake.

The African youth will bring change. The older generations in Africa learned to live with their problems; younger Africans are refusing to do so. They are growing up in a much more egalitarian world than the hierarchical world of their forefathers. This is leading to generational culture clashes within Africa that have some very worried and others very hopeful.

## Kingdom Come in a Young Nation

PEER Servants has been partnering in one of the world’s youngest countries, Uganda, since 2005. It was in Northern Uganda that, ten years ago, six young people gathered to ask themselves what it meant for the kingdom to come “on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10) and to “set the example” (1 Timothy 4:12) for others even though they were young. What resulted was the birth of PEER Teens, PEER Servants’ youth empowerment arm. The youth movement soon expanded to seven other countries around the world involving hundreds

of young people. PEER Teens wasn’t born in Wheaton or London. It was born in Arua, where a significant portion of the population live on \$2 or less per day.

The Ugandan youth put legs on the gospel. They went to prisons, hospitals, schools, and to the elderly with good news. (The picture above was from a March 17 visit to a secondary school where they spoke to over 800 students and over 40 decided to follow Jesus.) They rebuilt a home of a woman who lost everything in a fire. They formed music groups and dance teams and presented a demanding but attractive call to follow Jesus. They took the time to disciple each other. Those of us in the rest of the world stood in awe and rejoiced. The kingdom came.

## Preparing Job Creators

While the African youth are bringing more of the kingdom “on earth as it is in heaven”, they all acknowledge that the next big focus needs to be creating jobs. That’s what led PEER Servants to establish the PEER Teens Scholars program, enabling over 50 young people to pursue a university degree. More needs to be done. The World Bank notes that only one in four Africans entering the labor force can find a formal job.

This is what has led PEER Servants to sponsor the inaugural PEER Teens Scholars Conference, where these 50+ young Scholars will gather in Nairobi from July 6-13 to learn how to become the job creators Africa sorely needs. (Want to join us? Go to [peerservants.org/trips](https://peerservants.org/trips).) This may be the next big step to investing significantly in an African Youth Entrepreneur Program so that, as the world becomes more African, it may experience more of the kingdom as well.

### Celebrating 30+ Years of Partnership!

**How we thank God for 30+ amazing years of extending more of the kingdom of heaven to earth!** Through your prayers and financial support, God is at work enabling tens of thousands of the materially poor and non-poor to experience economic, social, and spiritual transformation. Thank you!

If you would like to send a tax-deductible donation to PEER Servants, you can direct 100% of your gift to any of our Global Partner Funds. See the back side of the newsletter for contact info. Thank you for your generosity. **God bless you!**

*Todd G. Engelsen*

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President

### Upcoming Event: Walk



Our Walk for Global Empowerment is Saturday, June 1 around Lake Quannapowitt in Wakefield, MA. A light breakfast starts at 9:30 am at the Gazebo (1 Church St., Wakefield). Register for one of twelve Walk Teams and join in the crowdfunding to raise \$200,000+ to invest in the lives of the materially poor (100% of funds will go to these programs). If you want to invest in creating jobs for African youth, join the PEER Teens Scholars Conference Walk Team! To register and get more information, go to [peerservants.org/walk](https://peerservants.org/walk).

## WHAT TRANSFORMATION LOOKS LIKE

**Quality Education in Sri Lanka**

Our Sri Lankan partner, YGro, supports materially poor families outside of Jaffna with education support that enables the children to remain in school and pursue brighter futures.

**Cataract Surgeries in India**

Our Indian Partner, CSS, serves over 30,000 micro-entrepreneurs through microfinance. The surplus from that program, along with PEER Servants grants, enables them to offer cataract surgeries for some in their communities who could otherwise not afford it.

## THE VALUE OF VOLUNTEERS



Ishaku is one of our newest volunteers. Hailing from Nigeria, he was a former missionary to another West African country. He is now serving on PEER Servants' Team South Sudan.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

**We'd love to hear from you!**

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**Celebrating 25 Years of Partnership**

We're getting old. Last year, PEER Servants celebrated 25 years of partnership with Invest Credit in Moldova. This year we have another 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to celebrate – with Kallarisunchis in Peru! Extending the kingdom of heaven to earth doesn't happen overnight. It takes healthy, long-term partnerships built on foundations of trust and mutual respect. We thank God for Kallarisunchis and the steps they took to establish such a partnership.

**First Program: Microfinance**

Kallarisunchis was born out of a vision and concern that the Peruvian people, especially the indigenous peoples, lacked access to economic opportunity. Many were streaming into Cusco from the mountainous countryside looking for some means to support their families. Unskilled, the jobs rarely came. Frustration often did come, and desperation. That led to many men deserting their families and leaving a mother to provide for her children. Given this reality, you can imagine what good news it was when a caring organization like Kallarisunchis was willing and able to walk with and empower these women, building their confidence and assuring them that the future could be bright.

Over 4,500 micro-loans have been made by Kallarisunchis totaling almost \$1.7 million. Over 80% of their clients are women. The women get much more than micro-loans of a few hundred dollars. They get training in how to successfully operate a business. They get a team who believes in them and is willing to pray for and encourage them. As their businesses and their lives are transformed

and they can qualify for larger micro-loans, they become the means through which Kallarisunchis can operate sustainably – covering their operating costs through the interest and fees charged on the micro-loans. Many of these women didn't have the confidence and courage to look up when PEER Servants Volunteers made their visits. Now the PEER Servants Volunteers are greeted with smiles of confidence.

**Education, Healthcare, and More**

Tasked with a mission as big as extending the kingdom of heaven to earth, Kallarisunchis knew it needed to go beyond microfinance, and it invited PEER Servants to join them. In time, they developed strong partnerships with public schools among the indigenous populations. They partnered in areas of healthcare, significantly decreasing the incidence of anemia in the mountain villages. They partnered with local churches to create savings programs and started advocating for the needs of the elderly who were being abandoned by their families. They empowered young people in PEER Teens Peru as they took steps to proclaim the justice that God is so passionate about.

In all of these 25 years, the driving force behind Kallarisunchis has been to love the Quechua communities the way Jesus loves them. What has resulted is much more openness among the indigenous populations to become followers of Him. We'll celebrate these 25 years of partnership on our July 21-28 trip to Cusco. There's room for you! Go to [peerservants.org/trips](https://www.peerservants.org/trips) for more information.