Children who previously had little hope, many displaced or orphaned, are thriving at The World Children’s Fund Mama Kevina Secondary School. The students, most from northern Uganda, range in age from eleven to twenty-four. They have been affected by ongoing wars, floods and HIV/AIDS, which have created a large orphan population. Many boys attending the school were forced to be child soldiers and many other children were separated from their families as they moved from village to village seeking refuge.

Beginning in 2012, World Children’s Fund made a commitment to support on-going monthly operational costs at the school, as well as funding desperately needed upgrades to the school’s campus and infrastructure. Prior to the WCF partnership, the school, owned by the Little Sisters of Saint Francis, was in dire need of a humanitarian aid partner. Administrators struggled with limited funds to feed, shelter and educate their students who would have had no other place to go if the school closed.

Generous World Children’s Fund supporters, like you, have made it possible to pay staff salaries, provide nutritional meals for the children and teachers and carry out an ambitious expansion of the school, including four new buildings; classrooms, a new dining hall, and two new dormitory buildings, one for boys and one for girls. The new, hygienic cooking facility replaced a small, wood frame shack with tin siding. The addition of the new dining hall has also provided students with a gathering area. They no longer have to sit outside on the ground enduring direct sun or rain. The dormitory buildings include new beds with mattresses, and mosquito netting, replacing triple stacked bunks with no bedding.

The upgrades include proper bathroom facilities, and the classrooms are equipped with single student

“Many of the students here have faced more trials and challenges in their lives than most people face in ten lifetimes…”
desks, a requirement for the Uganda National Examination Board. The school now has computer and biology laboratory equipment. Students have textbooks and school supplies and teachers have proper instructional materials. The school has also been able to hire a staff nurse, and the on-going financial support from WCF provides the clinic with medications and medical supplies. Now, when students become ill, they can be treated on campus.

“Many of the students here have faced more trials and challenges in their lives than most people face in ten lifetimes. Each one of them is magnificent proof of what survival looks like,” said Doug Kendrick, World Children’s Fund Programme Director. According to Kendrick, the improvements have significantly raised the level of academics. The school’s accomplishments have been acknowledged in the country’s national newspaper, resulting in an increased number of students who have enrolled in the school from families who are able to pay tuition. The increase in paying students, who choose the school for its merits, allow the school to continue to serve the underprivileged while moving toward greater self-sufficiency.

In addition, student teachers throughout Uganda are now eager to do teaching internships at the school. According to Kendrick, the students at the WCF Mama Kevina School are noted for being well-disciplined and ready to learn, so the school is becoming a magnet for young teachers seeking opportunity. “We believe in these children and their future. As we support them in achieving their goals, they will teach and influence others. More than anything, we want our students to know that they are not alone. They have inspired us and it is a privilege to offer our support, friendship and guidance,” Kendrick said.