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# VOICES

## Rising



*Darina, a Kokhana Krayina beneficiary and House of Youth volunteer*

## KOKHANA KRAYINA'S HOUSE OF YOUTH

### HELPING DISPLACED TEENS IN UKRAINE — WHO IN TURN HELP YOUNGER CHILDREN

**WHEN CHILDVOICE DEVELOPED** the core concepts for our counseling and skills training programs and put them into practice in both center- and community-based contexts in northern Uganda starting in 2006-2007, founder Conrad Mandsager envisioned that our programs should be adaptable to a variety of cultural and situational contexts. Since then, proof of this adaptability has been born out in our Nigeria community-based programs. The next step has been training partner organizations in other regions to utilize our core programmatic concepts. In 2024 we began doing just that in war-torn Ukraine as well as Moldova, one of the most impoverished countries in Eastern Europe.

Our partnership in Ukraine with Kokhana Krayina (“Beloved Country”), an organization that has been providing summer programs and other forms of relief for kids affected by the ongoing war, is a unique application of our core programming. We are training young people via Kokhana Krayina’s House of Youth (HOFY) initiative, in which adolescent volunteers work with younger children to provide hope and healing amid the chaos of conflict.

In July 2024, ChildVoice President Conrad Mandsager and ChildVoice Ukraine Program Coordinator Haylie Wright sat down with Darina, a 16-year-old HOFY volunteer, to discuss how the war has affected her and how learning to help war-affected children is in turn giving her hope.

To read Conrad’s interview with Darina, visit [childvoice.org/darina-interview](http://childvoice.org/darina-interview).

## A TAILOR-MADE FUTURE IN MUBI

### HOW ONE CHILDVOICE STUDENT IS BUILDING A FUTURE FOR HERSELF BY MAKING CHILDREN’S UNDERGARMENTS

**HAUWAW IS AN 18-YEAR-OLD TEEN** living in Gella, Nigeria. She didn’t have any regular means of income for herself, let alone to help provide for her family. When ChildVoice established a presence in Mubi and began offering counseling and skills training sessions—including an innovative tailoring apprenticeship program in 2023—she jumped at the opportunity. She didn’t know then that she would be able to turn her newly gained skill into a successful business enterprise.

After completing her tailoring apprenticeship, Hauwaw realized that she could make children’s underwear and sell them within her community for less than



expensive market prices. Soon she was selling underwear outside of her community as well.



A sample of children's undergarments made by Hauwau

Hauwau sold her initial batch for 150 naira (equivalent to about 10 cents) apiece. She earned a total of 9,000 naira (\$5.84), keeping 6,000 after accounting for the 3,000 she initially invested. She now sews 20 units per day, or about 140 per week.

"My hope for my new business is to improve in making quality children's underwear, so I can earn more money," she says. "I've also

joined a community savings group of ten girls. We will each be contributing 2,000 naira weekly. After collecting my own share, I will use it to make bean cakes to sell during Ramadan so I can earn more money."

We are gratified to see how our programs are helping adolescent girls like Hauwau transform their lives and build brighter futures for themselves and their families!

## TEACHING—AND PRACTICING—SMALLHOLDER FARMING

### IN IMVEPI REFUGEE SETTLEMENT

SINCE CHILDVOICE FIRST STARTED OUR AGRICULTURE INITIATIVE in Imvepi Refugee Settlement in 2020, we have made significant strides in empowering hundreds of adolescent refugee girls living there. By teaching them best smallholder farming practices, we are giving them the skills and resources needed to cultivate nutritious crops that both feed their families and help provide income through the sale of surplus crops.



A ChildVoice caseworker helps a student sort through her maize harvest.

Currently, 200 girls are continuing their agricultural training, with an additional 65 post-residential beneficiaries. These girls benefit from access to two block farms, totaling 150 plots, each covering one acre.

Throughout 2024, students planted eight different crops, including maize, cassava, simsim, groundnuts, sorghum, beans, onions, and cowpeas. As of last July, approximately 120 tons of maize were harvested, with the top five students each producing up to 1,433 pounds. Cassava (yuca) —a staple food— was planted by 180 of the

girls participating in the program. Students also planted simsim (sesame), yielding a cumulative total of 48 tons. During the Christmas season, many of the participants sold part of their simsim harvest to buy clothes and nutritious food for their families. Students also planted vegetables in their kitchen gardens, enabling them to enrich their families' daily nutrition intake.

Said Imvepi Program Manager Julius Owori: "The success of this program is why we do not have cases of malnutrition among participating mothers and their children."

**Thank YOU**

*To everyone who gave of themselves in support of ChildVoice's mission in 2024—whether through working, volunteering, donating, and praying—thank you so much for all you do to help improve the lives and futures of war-affected children whose voices have been silenced by war and exploitation.*

*As we face challenges both new and old in 2025, we hope you will continue to walk alongside us.*

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