

prayer  focus

# disillusioned youth



Hope is not a  
natural product  
of poverty.

When young people growing up in many rural communities of the developing world think about their future, they face the reality of:

- ▶ an inheritance of family land that, after being divided among their siblings, will not be enough to sustain them;
- ▶ crop yields that will continue to decrease due to over-farming and changing climatic conditions;
- ▶ few, if any, local opportunities for employment, even for those with a public or high school education;
- ▶ the same economic struggles as their parents experienced, or perhaps even worse.

Many young people dream that they can escape poverty if they move to the large cities, or perhaps even make it to a rich nation.

## Their dreams might lead these young people to:

- ▶ dangerous factory jobs where they are mistreated and subject to unsafe working conditions and poor wages.
- ▶ a life of loneliness and isolation from their families and communities. In times of great despair they start drinking, taking drugs, or sniffing glue—habits that quickly become addictive.
- ▶ discover that their bodies are a marketable commodity if there are no jobs. Young girls seeking a brighter future in the city find themselves quickly entrapped and permanently scarred as they enter the sex trade so they can eat.
- ▶ falsify documents, lie to officials, and illegally cross dangerous borders by night. Some are imprisoned by immigration officials, and others are killed in the attempt.

The reality is better for some children. Orphaned children from the Tumaini and Achego homes are finding local employment after graduating. Young people in Guatemala find encouragement and hope from Bible studies.

Antiretroviral drugs enable young people in South Africa with AIDS to maintain their health and become contributing members of their communities.

**CRWRF BEST PRACTICE:** Working through Christian partners, skills training and the hope of the Gospel are presented in youth projects that are designed both to improve local living and economic conditions and to strengthen families and communities.

## family devotions - PROVERBS 7:6-15; 8:1-11; 7:1-5

These texts from the book of Proverbs illustrate the choices facing youth and the voices of folly and of wisdom calling out to them. What difficulties and fears lure youth to listen to the voice of folly? What does the seductive voice of folly tell them to do? Christian programs that work with youth are designed to encourage them to listen to true wisdom and make wise choices. How do Christian principles help us avoid the seductive voices of our own culture?

### PRAY FOR

- ✎ Young people pressured by their parents or spouses to engage in illegal activities as a solution to financial difficulties
- ✎ Governments, businesses, and institutional leaders to provide appropriate training and create an environment of greater employment opportunities for young people in low income regions
- ✎ Wisdom for CRWRF's program leaders as they investigate new development programs