

GO NEWS

NOVEMBER 11

- 2 From the Director
- 2 New life and freedom
Providing hope in Kolkata, India
- 3 On Track & Partner News
- 4 Book corner
The People Paul Admired
- 4 Service opportunities

CRISIS IN Cambodia

The people of Cambodia are used to high rainfall during the months of September and October; they rely on the regular downpours to ensure a successful harvest of rice, the main source of livelihood for the majority of the population.

This year, however, the rainfall has been the highest on record for fifty years, and the resulting floodwaters have decimated crops, killed more than 250 people, and left thousands more homeless. Water that normally would just cover the rice paddies rose several metres higher: in some areas just the tops of coconut trees could be seen, and in villages the floodwaters forced people onto their rooftops.

Phnom Penh, on the whole, has not been affected by the floods, but students from HOPE International School (where we work) were moved to action, and gathered and delivered 380 bags of emergency supplies including food, candles, mosquito nets and medical supplies. Thirty-one students, staff and parents filled two old wooden boats and chugged across flooded rice fields for over an hour until they reached a temporary island where the distribution took place. It was wonderful to see the students take seriously the teaching on Micah 6:8 and find a practical way to outwork it.

Ruth and David are Interserve Partners from Australia. They live in a poor Phnom Penh community that endures floods every year, thanks to a nearby lake. Although their home is normally just outside the flood zone, this year they had to

wade through knee-deep water to get down their lane. Make-shift plank bridges, cobbled together from flood debris, helped keep them all dry. Ruth writes:

“I’m always amazed at people’s resilience. For some the floods meant relocating to family or friends’ homes on higher ground. For others it meant placing bricks under the bed-legs and sleeping in a room submerged in two feet of stinky black water.

“It’s also a time of revealing those in the community with the least resources. As friends and family pitch together to help each other, it becomes more obvious who the people are without these networks: the elderly widow whose children aren’t around; the young mother whose husband is in prison; the family who fight all the time and

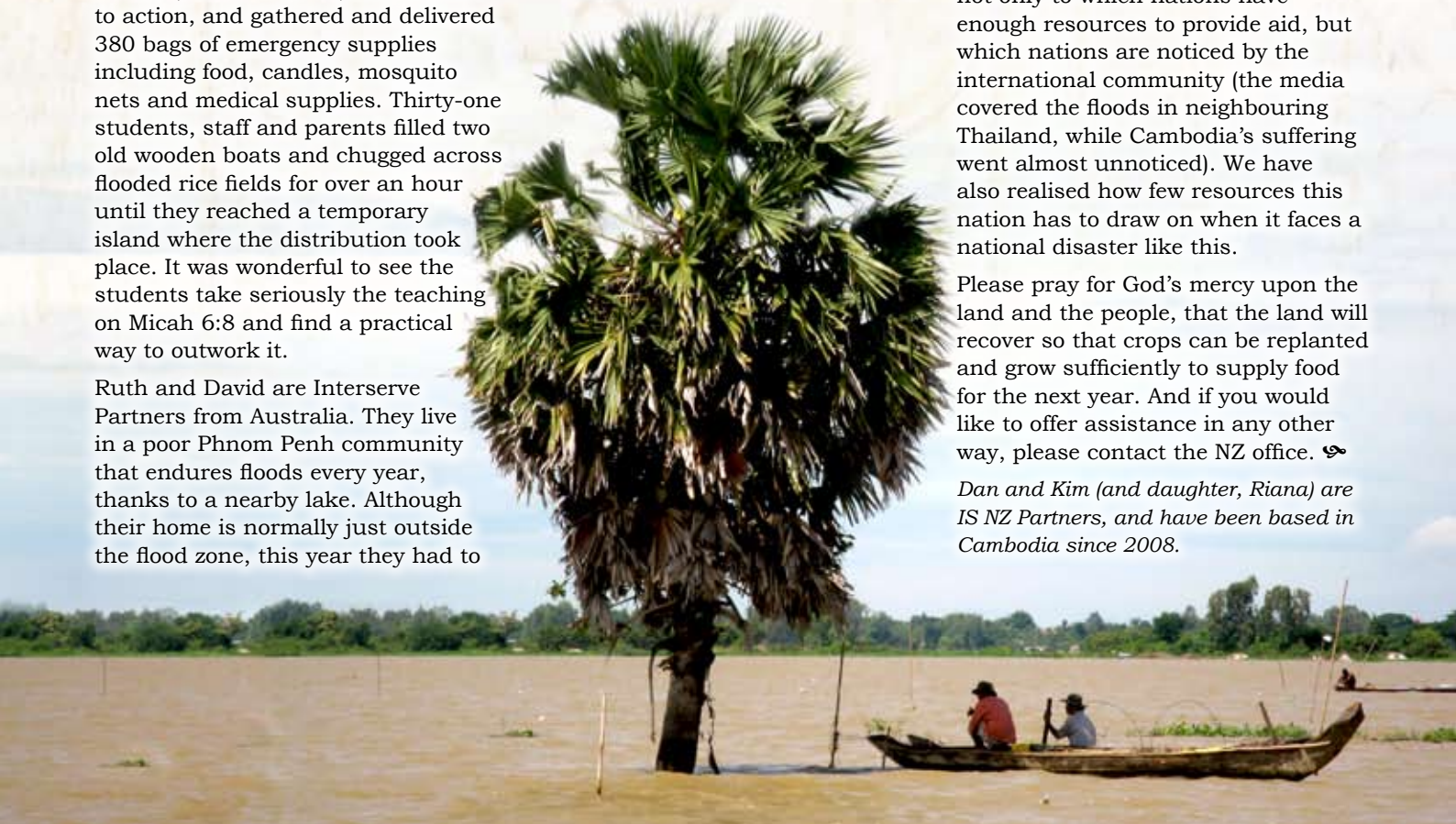
nobody likes. Our local church offered shelter to some of these people. It was inspirational to walk alongside the Christians here who, in amongst moving their own possessions to higher ground, had capacity and concern to visit those they knew were doing it very tough.”

While many organisations have done what they can to deliver emergency supplies to flood-stricken areas, there simply have not been enough resources to help all of the estimated 1.2 million people affected by the floods. The rains are now subsiding but the effects of the floods will continue for many months yet. Incomes have been lost, children who would normally attend school will stay home to help replant the rice crops, water- and mosquito-borne diseases continue to plague poor communities and for many there is no money to pay for medical treatment.

Disasters like this open our eyes, not only to which nations have enough resources to provide aid, but which nations are noticed by the international community (the media covered the floods in neighbouring Thailand, while Cambodia’s suffering went almost unnoticed). We have also realised how few resources this nation has to draw on when it faces a national disaster like this.

Please pray for God’s mercy upon the land and the people, that the land will recover so that crops can be replanted and grow sufficiently to supply food for the next year. And if you would like to offer assistance in any other way, please contact the NZ office. ☺

Dan and Kim (and daughter, Riana) are IS NZ Partners, and have been based in Cambodia since 2008.



FROM THE DIRECTOR

I have reflected on four of Interserve's International Priorities in previous GO News, and now have reached the fifth (and final) priority area: Operational Development.

For most of us, the 'mechanics' of how an organisation works are of little interest, but no serious mission movement can exist without some type of supportive infrastructure, least of all one like us that is stretched across the globe.

The faith challenge is to discern what is both needed and adequate, how to resource it, and how to keep adjusting it to the new, constantly changing environments we live and work in. We all want to see effective and strategically functioning Partners serving in the mission field, and a healthy home office is vital to achieving that goal.

However, developing new ways to

finance our home office is a real challenge when money is tight, costs are increasing, and donors prefer the appeal of Partners and projects overseas. We are seeking ways to create independent income flows that will help relieve the pressure, and allow us to keep providing excellent service to our mission Partners.

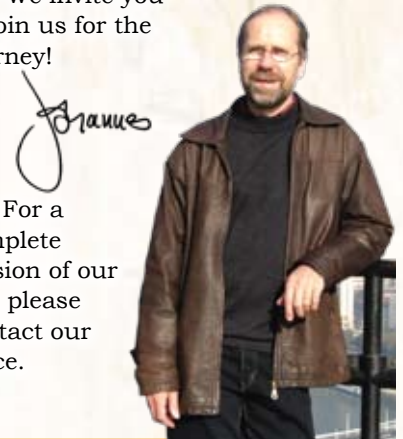
Another challenge is that of strengthening our ability to communicate effectively with our target audiences, so that our message is plausible, sharp, and relevant. We are also working on developing more efficient, effective and responsive recruitment, selection and placement processes. This includes upgrading our IT programmes and equipment, and the subsequent upskilling for personnel.

And last, but not least, is the continuing development of best practice guidelines in governance,

finance and personnel policy, so that we can truly express Christ-like character and values.

Mission is a movement, dynamic, always changing, always on the go, never arriving. Jesus is passionate for His mission, His people, and we long to build with Him what is needed to make His movement stronger and adequate. Will you build with us? We invite you to join us for the journey!

PS. For a complete version of our IPs, please contact our office.



NEW LIFE AND FREEDOM

A red light district isn't normally a place where you would expect to find hope, freedom and new life.

But in the red light district in India where my wife and I live and work we often have the opportunity to celebrate and be challenged by these very things as they unfold in the lives of the women we serve.

One such illustration is the story of Asha's* act of self-sacrificial love towards a woman struggling to break free from a life of exploitation. This story beautifully captures the way in which a new start in a business built on hope, freedom and Jesus is changing and transforming lives.

Asha has worked for many years in the business-as-mission

venture we are involved in. She struggles from chronic illnesses and her accommodation is a sub-standard room under a stairway in a local brothel. Asha needed a new room.

In the red light district, though, good and affordable rooms are hard to come by, and it took months of searching to find a room for her. At the same time, however, a woman came to us wanting to leave behind her life in the sex trade and start a journey to freedom, but couldn't because of pressures relating to her living situation. She also desperately needed a new room.

One room, two equally deserving women, what to do?

When a friend brought up the dilemma with Asha, Asha promptly handed over the room: she said that she already had freedom, but this new woman - who needed a new start, needed love - didn't.

Asha said she was happy to stay in her sub-standard room so this other woman could have an opportunity to experience the freedom that Asha had already found.

It is incredible to be part of a business where Jesus is breaking through heartbreak, desperation, loneliness and fear and transforming lives both inwardly and outwardly. Asha's story captures what new life in Jesus looks like and the change that is possible. This story should fill us all with excitement and joy and remind us that God is alive and at work in this world.

But as well as celebrating this story we must also let this story inspire and challenge us. Asha's story not only reveals a changed life, it also embodies what it means to follow Jesus. We see in her story the deep understanding that it is not only about freedom for ourselves but also freedom for others; it's about laying our lives down for others in costly and often painful ways so that they may also truly experience the deep love God has for them.

Like Asha, are we prepared to let go of what we have - our time, our money, comfort, pride and status - and enter the lives of the enslaved and imprisoned, so that they may be set free? We must be prepared to not only celebrate our own freedom, but to also actively work for the freedom of those who desperately need it. ✨

Dan (33) and Mai (25) are Kiwi Partners serving long-term in Kolkata, India.

* Not her real name



ON TRACK NEWS

Our On Track programme offers short-term service opportunities, that give a taste of what mission to the hard places is like. For ages 18-75+, On Trackers serve from one month up to two years. Planning a gap year, OE, elective, sabbatical? Or wondering what to do in retirement? Contact us to arrange your tailor-made service opportunity!

Obeying God's call

Bob and Irene, a semi-retired couple from New Plymouth, spent six months On Track in South East Asia in 2011.

Five years after Bob and Irene married in 1980, God confirmed something that had been on Bob's heart since he was a child: a call to missions. So when God directed them to a specific South East Asian country, they obeyed His call, in faith that He would somehow use their giftings there.

Bob was able to put his TESOL training to good use (a serious

accident in 2005 had forced Bob out of farming, so he retrained as a TESOL teacher), and Irene volunteered in a government-run orphanage.

"The first question people usually asked was why we were there. Our reply really caught their attention, because local people our age stay at home... to venture out as we were doing was unheard of."

Their On Track experience was a challenging and exciting one. "It's amazing what God is doing in this country - the people were very open to us, and the hospitality was amazing. We never felt in any danger but saw and experienced the tight restrictions imposed and enforced by authorities, and we were also saddened to see how cheap human life is regarded there, and women have no value."

They ran a six-week programme on Saturdays at the orphanage, which culminated with a day trip to a museum and the zoo. "We had KFC for lunch, and ice cream, which added to their excitement. We also gave each child a soft toy with their

own name embroidered on it."

God also opened up opportunities for Bob and Irene to visit places outside the city. "One of Bob's students invited us to stay at his home, four hours away. It was a very small house, so he offered to put us into a hotel but we said he had the best hotel (his home). We had dinner sitting on the floor which was also our bed."

Their adventures continued even after they left their On Track country: they accepted an invitation to visit China, and also spent two weeks in Thailand on their way back to NZ.

"Some of the gems of our short term mission were seeing God's faithfulness in response to our obedience, being able to show love in meaningful ways, experiencing the power of prayer, and gaining confidence from the experience. Being unable to speak the language extended our knowledge and understanding of other people, as we learnt to accept their culture and live in their world. Although we faced many negative challenges, the positive benefits outweighed them all." ✨

PARTNER NEWS

Long-term Partners form the core of our mission, serving some of the neediest people in Asia and the Arab world. We have more than 800 Partners worldwide, from many diverse cultures and nationalities. Contact us to learn more about how your faith, life experience and professional skills can change lives.

Weddings and war

Bob and Sue, and their children Peter and Julia, have been serving in the Arab world since 2004. They are involved in education and micro-enterprise.

"Can you imagine a country in which it seems as though parallel universes are playing out each day, both at the same time, and often in the same place?"

"We are living in a part of the Middle East where the Arab Spring is still very much unfinished business. The current regime still stands, but in many ways is not functioning. The country is incredibly divided: along political, social, philosophical, and tribal lines. When it will end no one knows... what they do know,

however, is how much the current struggle impacts their lives.

"On one hand life goes on as usual. Most things for daily life are in supply. There is food in the shops; petrol, diesel and cooking gas are usually available. Electricity comes and goes - but that is normal here. Weddings are being held, religious holidays are celebrated; this evening there was a wedding just down the road from us, and yet in the distance there is artillery fire.

"There is a real struggle for control of our city, and the country as a whole. Every day there is fighting between government and opposition forces. Much of this is happening in urban environments. Most days people die - a significant number of these are innocent civilians caught in the crossfire. The media is being manipulated by both sides, so finding out what is really happening can be challenging. Sometimes it's the difference between day and night: during the day people go about their daily business, at sunset they scurry off inside before the armed fighters take over the streets.

"So how is this affecting people? In some ways a people used to suffering

know how to cope with more stress quite well. However, many common things (such as fuel, flour, sugar, cooking gas) have more than doubled in price in the last six months, so that means more starving people around the place. And like other widespread tragedies, everyone knows someone directly affected.

"And yet people are very open. Often with troubles like these, in places like ours, the expat community disappears on the nearest plane. They are perceived as 'plain sailing' visitors, willing to be there when things are going okay, but at the first sign of trouble they flee. Upon returning after the dust has settled, locals no longer appreciate and trust the foreigner community so much. Having the opportunity to be here in these days, even if we don't feel like we're achieving all that much, impacts locals way beyond just what we do or say.

"The people of this land have lived through countless trials and tribulations over the centuries, and they will see this one through. Please continue to pray that, through all of this, the Kingdom will become more evident in this place." ✨

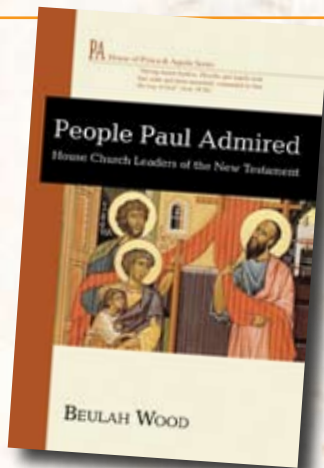
BOOK CORNER

This latest book by Beulah Wood, *The People Paul Admired: the House Church Leaders of the New Testament*, is an inspirational look at those the apostle Paul commends in his epistles, and examines some important questions.

Beulah Wood BD, DMin, has published over thirty books in New Zealand, India and the UK. She now divides her time between writing in New Zealand and teaching at the South Asia Institute of Advanced Christian Studies in India.

"This book will help readers see not only the people Beulah portrays, but insights into their culture and daily existence... For many of us, story is a profound way to teach and learn and Beulah has done a great job of presenting informative detail in a highly digestible form."

Haddon Robinson, Professor of Preaching, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, USA



RRP \$20 (NZD) + P&H

TO ORDER

(09) 630 0981

talk2us@interserve.org.nz

Orders can also be placed through our IS website.

VACANCIES

Contact us to learn more about these positions. Many more vacancies are available on our website.

MONGOLIA Medical doctor needed for Christian NGO (1 year+). [775]

SOUTH EAST ASIA A Graphic Designer is needed for a fair-trade Bakery Cafe that supports the local people and economy (2 years+, salaried). [771]

ARAB WORLD A guesthouse for international workers is looking for a Host or Hosts (couple) who can run the facility. (1-12 months). [753]

BANGLADESH A Christian hospital is in need of obstetricians, paediatricians, GPs, anaesthetists, epidemiologists and a pathologist (1-12 months). [719]

CENTRAL ASIA A Senior Research Scientist needed for a Central Asian university (1-2 years, salaried). [759]

SOUTH EAST ASIA A Farm Manager is needed for an organic silk and tea farm (2 years+). [676]

ARAB WORLD A Christian hospital urgently needs nurses and midwives with at least two years of recent experience (1-2 years+, salaried). [740]

WWW RESOURCES

Here are some great mission resources available on the Internet.

>> www.integralmission.net

What is integral mission? How do we live it? This is a great web resource which helps answer those questions, by sharing experiences, current challenges, reflections and questions.

>> www.usdebtclock.org

This site provides up-to-date debt information for the USA: a sobering look at the relentless growth-cycle of indebtedness western nations are in.

>> www.ted.com

With the by-line 'ideas worth spreading' these sharp, short, and often highly innovative talks are well worth browsing – you may not agree with some of the presenters but the website is a great resource to engage with and learn from.

Interserve turns 160 next year! Book now for Interserve Day 2012, and join in with our anniversary celebrations! If you would like to be involved, or just want to learn more, please contact our office.



YOU ARE INVITED TO



INTERSERVE DAY 2012

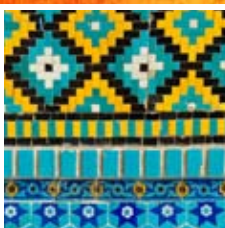


KEYNOTE SPEAKER

LIBBY LITTLE (USA)

Libby will share from her 34 years of service in Afghanistan. She is the widow of Tom Little, who was murdered in 2010 along with most of IAM's Nuristan Eye Camp team.

▶▶ PLUS hear from Kiwi Partners and On Trackers



REGISTER NOW!

0800 446 464
09 630 0981

WHEN 9:30 am - 4:30 pm, 28 April 2012
WHERE Royal Oak Baptist Church, Auckland
COST \$40 (\$30 if registered by 5 April), \$10 discount for students/unwaged
RSVP by 20 April. Registration is needed for catering purposes.

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09 630 0981
talk2us@interserve.org.nz

Interserve NZ
PO Box 10244, Dominion Rd
Auckland 1446, New Zealand

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