

GO NEWS

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OFFERING HOPE IN Kyrgyzstan

Osh is one of the oldest settlements in Central Asia, and the second largest city in Kyrgyzstan. It has an ethnically mixed population made up of Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, Russians, Tajiks, and other smaller ethnic groups.

Tension increased between the Kyrgyz and Uzbeks after Kyrgyzstan's president was ousted in April 2010, and finally erupted two months later in June. Hundreds of people were killed in the riots, which were centred primarily in the cities of Osh and Jalal-Abad, and thousands more were injured. About 2000 (mainly Uzbek) homes were destroyed, and an estimated 75,000 refugees fled to Uzbekistan, leaving about 400,000 internally displaced people facing an uncertain future in Kyrgyzstan.

Under the coordination of the United Nations refugee agency, various international aid and development agencies, including the one I am connected to, worked together to try and meet the most urgent needs. As winter drew near, the most pressing need was to provide transitional housing for families. Our organisation, working in partnership with one of the larger aid agencies, built about one third of the 1,850 houses that were constructed.

During the rebuilding process our team members heard many stories of loss and grief from residents who had experienced the violence firsthand. As believers we were able to offer some hope and encouragement, including words from the scriptures which were often well received.

We recently took three overseas guests – board members of our local organisation – to view some of the new houses. As we walked through the neighborhood I wondered how the locals would react to our group of obviously foreign people, three of them with big cameras!

We were invited into several houses, where the women shared their stories. One woman broke down as she told us about the medical students who used to rent the back part of the house, who had been shot and killed. She showed us the bullet holes in the metal gate and then told about the girls, three Uzbek and one Kyrgyz, who also had been there. The attackers had escorted the Kyrgyz girl out of the room, and then returned to rape the others.

Inside the house, the woman introduced us to her daughter:

a young woman with glazed eyes, tied up with a rope and curled up in a fetal position. The mother explained that her daughter had suffered a mental breakdown from the stress, and they tied her up otherwise she escaped and did crazy things that brought shame on the family. It was nearly the one-year anniversary of the violence, so she had been in this sad state for many months.

When the young woman was untied, we were surprised to learn that she could speak English, which is rare in this city, and had been a top student at a local university. And that's when we saw the hand of God in our visit: it turned out that one of the overseas visitors was a pastor who was fluent in Russian (Kyrgyz and Russian are the two official languages here), and the second was a psychosocial counselor. The third visitor, a woman, had experience in working with prisoners and the disadvantaged, and had previously lived in Kyrgyzstan for eight years! The visitors spent a long time talking with the young woman, and by the time we left she was amazingly different, alert and talking normally.

What an incredible story of God's provision! But it also highlights the fact that although the initial crisis is over, there are still huge social and psychological needs that are not being met. People feel abandoned and forgotten.

The Uzbeks are open to the gospel now like they have never been before. The harvest truly is ripe. But as Jesus laments in Matthew 9:37, there are still far too few workers. "Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field." Will you join us in the harvest? ☞

The author is an engineer working in the field of appropriate technology. His organisation is desperate for new staff: please contact our office to learn more.



FROM THE DIRECTOR

In previous GO News I have reflected on three of Interserve's International Priorities: 'Deepening Spirituality', 'Building Community', and 'Growing in Fruitfulness'. Our fourth IP is 'Serving the Church'.

For almost 160 years, Interserve has held to this as a key belief. One of its founders, Lady Mary Kinnaird, actually called it the "handmaiden" of the church. In recent years, when referring to our relationship with the church, we have frequently used the term 'partnership'... but this usage was challenged at our recent International Leader's Consultation.

The word 'partnership' conveys a sense of equality between church and mission, implying that they are partners of equal standing. While it's true that mission has assumed a measure of independence, and sometimes functions without accountability to the church,

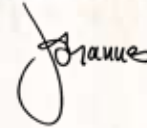
mission was never meant to be an independent entity. Rather, it is an intrinsic part of the church and cannot exist apart from it.

Although Paul and Barnabas were 'set apart' by the Holy Spirit for their missionary journeys, they always returned to the church in Antioch, viewing their outreach as an integral part of the church itself.

Jesus is passionate about His church... and so are we. Serving the church, and being part of the church, is still very important to Interserve. It's what we strive for, both locally and internationally. Across Asia and the Arab world we are committed to empower, resource, and serve local and regional church movements in their endeavour to reach the lost in their nations and regions. Serving their vision, and submitting to their leadership, can mean hard work in crossing cultures and expectations,

but it is our desire that those churches stand tall and provide valuable input to the world-wide Christian movement.

Serving the church here in NZ is equally our privilege, and encouraging it to recapture a sense of global responsibility, our challenge. Just as mission cannot exist apart from the church, the church must never forget mission: without it, the church is not complete.



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



EXTENDING GOD'S KINGDOM

Interserve is pleased to announce a new On Track initiative, Consultants in Mission (CiM).

It is designed to bring together the professional skills of the consultant with the missional goals of Interserve. A small number of consultants have already served through Interserve's short-term programme, but CiM On Track will allow Interserve to channel consultants in a more focused way.

The process is simple. Once approved for CiM On Track, the consultant's name, area of expertise and availability will be posted on Interserve's secure website. Field based teams can then look through the list of possible consultants, select any that fit their needs, and approach them for help.

It is a brilliant opportunity for those people who, although they want to serve God in mission, are unable to move lock, stock and barrel to the mission field. This way they can still contribute their skills and experience while being based primarily at home.

My consultancy work in South East Asia and the Middle East provides amazing opportunities to share about God. I operate on the pattern that the Apostle Paul modelled – one's job is one's ministry, and one's ministry is one's job – and every morning when I wake up I pray, "Who will You connect me with today, Lord? Provide me with conversations where I can mirror something of the gospel truth."

I recently spent three weeks in a country that is officially closed to the Gospel. My purpose for being there was purely professional – I had a task to complete – but the connections I made with local people, and their willingness to engage in conversations over food night after night, made the whole assignment exciting.

One such conversation began with a comment about an aspect of God's creation, and His skill in making it. This simple comment opened

the door for a longer exchange that allowed sharing of ideas about New Zealand, the host country, politics, sports, education and employment... and how Jesus fits into the jigsaw.

This scenario repeated itself several times: different people, different places, but the same pattern of conversation, and the same openness to engage and listen. The most memorable was one that broke all the cultural protocols: a woman and her daughter (both fully covered, I could only see their eyes) invited me to join them at their table. We began by discussing countries, universities, jobs and politics but in the end the conversation came back to Jesus: who He is, and how an understanding of Him adds to one's understanding of, and relationship to, God.

As I boarded the plane to leave that nation, I prayed for the Holy Spirit to keep moving in the hearts of every person that I had talked with. Consultancy in Mission is real and effective, and the opportunities are endless. To learn more about extending God's kingdom through CiM, and how you can become involved, please contact the Interserve office. ☺

The author has a long track record in consulting, the educational business sector and missions.



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!

Sharing Jesus in Nepal

Matt and Jodi are a young Kiwi couple serving in Kathmandu, Nepal, for thirteen months.

“Moving to a new country and culture is often both a challenging and invigorating experience. Our move has, in many ways, been a pleasant transition: Nepalis are lovely people, polite and reserved, and we can even buy vegemite and NZ apples here!

“Both of us are working in support roles. Matt is teaching at a Christian

international school and Jodi is splitting her time between working in the funding team at the United Mission to Nepal and the laboratory at Anandaban Leprosy Hospital. Our work can at times be as routine and frustrating as it is at home, but the same attitude applies, that we are in His service wherever we are.

“We have been learning Nepali very slowly and realise more every day just how precious and important language skills are. Our Nepali baby talk gets us around town and helps us buy groceries but it can be a real barrier to deeper dialogue. We’re grateful that so many Nepalis speak English well!

Since arriving in Nepal we have been able to visit a couple of leprosy hospitals. Observing the care and comprehensive treatment that is given to some of the country’s poorest has been moving. The compassion and respect exhibited by the staff is a real and active display of God’s love for the patients. It is encouraging to play

even just a small part in these daily acts of kindness done in the name of Jesus.

“The Nepali church is very outward focused, and is doing a fantastic job of sharing Jesus with their nation. So many people have come to know Jesus through the church’s witness and God’s sovereignty acting in their lives. It is a privilege to mix with the believers here. Christians in Nepal struggle daily with corruption, culture and social pressures. Yet they do it with a willingness to be a blessing to their country. As foreigners, we have less ability to make an impact in many of the spheres the Nepali Christians are active in. We pray our presence is not a hindrance and we rely heavily on grace to cover our cultural blunders and forgive our presumptions.

“We are so grateful to God for our time in Nepal thus far and for this adventure He continues to lead us on.” 🙏

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.

From housework to faith

Dan and Kim (and daughter, Riana) have been based in Cambodia for the last three years. They support the mission community by providing opportunities for creative worship, and working with Third Culture Kids at HOPE School and in youth ministry.

“One of the wonderful gifts of living in Asia is the opportunity to employ a housekeeper. To the New Zealand mind-set this initially seems like quite a luxury, but, living here, it doesn’t take long to realise that it is a necessity for sanity: the house needs to be swept and mopped every day to remove the ever-invasive dust, there’s an ongoing battle against mould (which grows fast in this humid climate), and shopping takes much longer when you need to visit the market every couple of days.

“Employing a housekeeper not only gives me the time (and energy) to serve outside the house, but it is also a fantastic opportunity to provide a secure and safe job to a local woman (always a woman!) who would otherwise find herself in far less salubrious vocations. While there is certainly no glamour in it, being a house keeper for a foreign family is a well sought after job among many women in Asia.

“We have so far had the privilege of employing three wonderful ladies in our time in Cambodia. Before we employed her, our first housekeeper used to work six days a week in a garment factory, doing twelve hours or more a day, and receiving only about US\$40 per month. But she needed the money, as she had two children, and her husband’s job provided a very erratic income.

“Our second employee received her housekeeping training from a women’s refuge type place... I don’t know the details of her background but this suggests she was at risk of employment in the sex industry.

“And our third employee was a young woman in her early twenties. She is the oldest of six children, her mother has HIV/Aids, and her father died many years ago. Her family were in desperate need of a steady income to

put food on the table in their home in the slums.

“In each case employment in our home has meant a reliable income (significantly higher than other places), reasonable working hours, holidays, family support and assistance with education and health needs. As well as this, they have all had the opportunity to connect with a Christian family and community.

“Through contact with our family and the wider Christian school community, the first lady began attending weekly Bible studies with the other cleaning staff at the school. She has now become a follower of Jesus, is attending church, and is so obviously full of the love and joy of Christ. Our second lady has also recently started to attend this Bible study after having no interest for the last couple of years. We are praying for God’s word to be sown deep in her heart. The other young woman is now employed by several families within the Interserve and school community and we pray that she will come to know the love of Jesus through her relationships with these families.

“It is an awesome privilege to be able to provide secure work and a loving environment for these women, to get to know them, and to slowly see God at work in their lives.” 🙏

PASTOR'S TOUR OF TURKEY

Interserve invites Christian pastors to experience firsthand the vibrant and Biblically-rich Turkey. Learn about the Turkish church, the challenges it faces, and how Kiwi Christians can partner with it.

A special highlight will be attending the 2012 ANZAC Day Dawn Service at Gallipoli.

- ▶▶ Learn about modern Turkish culture
- ▶▶ Meet with local Turkish pastors
- ▶▶ Explore partnership opportunities
- ▶▶ Tour historical Biblical sites

9-26
APRIL

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT [JULIANA@INTERSERVE.ORG.NZ](mailto:juliana@interserve.org.nz)

UPCOMING EVENTS

CHRISTCHURCH: eXplore Day, 6 August. **BAM Breakfast**, 10 August. **Interserve Evening**, 11 August.

AUCKLAND: eXplore Day, 29 October. **Interserve Day 2012**, 28 April, with guest speaker, Libby Little.

ANNUAL REPORT

The 2010 Annual Financial Report for Interserve NZ is now available. It provides an overview of our income and expenditures for 2010.

To receive a copy, please contact us, or download it from our website.

DO YOU CURRENTLY HAVE A WILL? ARE YOU CONSIDERING MAKING A BEQUEST?

If so, we would sincerely appreciate you considering the inclusion of Interserve (NZ) in this. As you well know and appreciate, our work depends entirely on the gifts and donations of God's people. We are conscious that these funds often come sacrificially, and would regard it a great honour and privilege to be entrusted with them. To learn more, please fill out the form below and mail it to us, or contact Johannes Balzer (National Director) by phone **0800 446 464** or email johannes@interserve.org.nz

YES, I WOULD LIKE TO PLAN A GIFT FOR THE FUTURE OF INTERSERVE NZ

- I have already included a bequest to IS NZ in my will
- I intend to include a bequest to IS NZ
- I would like to learn more, please contact me.

NAME

ADDRESS STREET

CITY, POSTCODE, COUNTRY

PHONE

EMAIL

VACANCIES

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

NEPAL Peace Building Advisor with qualifications in peace and reconciliation work, and psycho social and trauma healing (1-2 years+). [610]

CENTRAL ASIA An Adventure Tourism Consultant is needed to help develop a business (1-12 months). [564]

SOUTH EAST ASIA A Manager is needed for a successful chain of cafes and bakeries (2 years+, salaried). [444]

CENTRAL ASIA A qualified Mechanic is needed to help set up a workshop and train local people (1 year+). [673]

ARAB WORLD PE Teacher needed for a city school (1-2 years+, salaried). [395]

CENTRAL ASIA A Handyman is needed for renovation projects and day-to-day maintenance (1-12 months). [334]

INDIA A Christian hospital needs a Surgeon, a Paediatrics Specialist, a Gynecologist and an Anesthesiologist (1-2 years+, salaried). [672]

WWW RESOURCES

Here are some great mission resources available on the Internet.

>> www.30-days.net

This is the website for the 30 Days prayer movement for the Muslim world. You can sign up for the email version of the Ramadan prayer, but also for year-long prayer notification. You will find information and background materials, as well as a bookshop and video clips.

>> <http://prayercast.com/download>

This website offers free downloadable prayer videos for nations – some from the Interserve geographical footprint. A good resource for prayer groups or churches who want to integrate a global prayer focus into their service.

>> www.joshuaproject.net/prayer-cards.php

Download prayercards for unreached people (available in eight languages), plus many other prayer resources.

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www.interserve.org.nz

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transformed through encounter
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