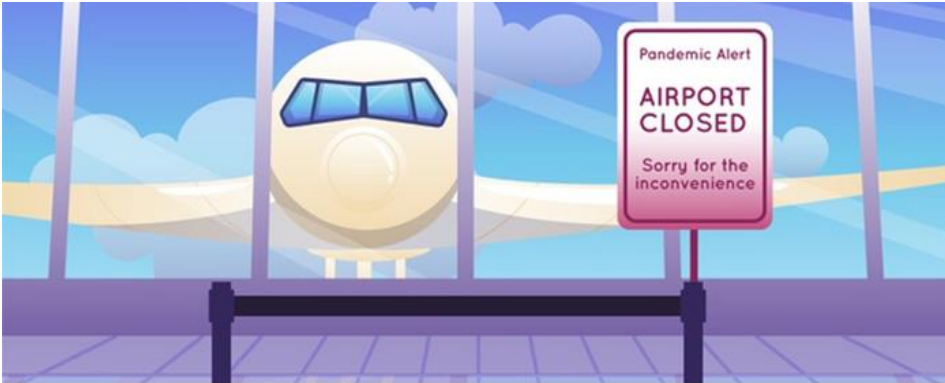


SO...HOW ARE WE GOING TO KEEP DOING THIS?

BRIGHT HOPE NEWS



A few weeks ago, we held our annual Bright Hope World Team Gathering in sunny Nelson. It is a time when we get together, catch up, encourage one another and discuss strategy and issues. But, this year was different. The weekend was mainly taken up with our Partnership Facilitators reporting from 'the field' – stories of heartbreak and hope from our partners in difficult places. We also spent a fair few hours asking ourselves: "how will we keep doing what we do when we can't travel?"

It's a fair – and a critical – question. We are an intensely relational organisation that places a strong emphasis on spending time with our partners. We sit with them, hear their stories, discuss the issues, share food and coffee, and do our best to encourage them and pray for them. We can still do some of this over the internet, but it's just not the same, and we're feeling it. We feel that sense of distance. We feel isolated from the ones we care about and love. We are keenly aware of how good we have it, and how hard-going it is for them.

And yet, we are so grateful for the fact that these exceptional people just keep doing what they do. We don't need to be there to oversee them or tell them what to do next, because they lead the strategy and own the initiative. We have confidence in them and know them intimately, so we don't have to worry about whether funds are being used properly. We know they are. We still value accountability, but we have something better: trust borne of long relationships and experience.

We are also buoyed by how much of a difference Foundations for Farming and small-scale agriculture is making. When the markets are shut down and everyone has to stay at home, the ability to grow crops to feed your family is extremely valuable. We are seeing the fruits of this work everywhere. It is quite literally saving lives.

For so many of our partners COVID-19 is just another in an all-too-long list of barriers they have to face in daily life. For many of us COVID has become all-consuming, but for many of our partners, finding food, ensuring their children can go to school and – at least in the DRC and Guinea – avoiding Ebola are bigger issues. Those that are in places gripped by COVID are seeing the disruption to normality as an opportunity to bring the Gospel to people who are suffering and to provide for community needs. The global church is growing and God is being glorified even as the pandemic rages.

So...we will keep doing what we do. We will work diligently to advocate for our partners and fund their work. We will do our best to encourage them and help them even from afar. We will adapt just as they have. Please continue to pray for us and praise God for what He is doing in strange times!

Fraser Scott
Executive Director

In case you have missed it, we launched a podcast in July of last year. It's called 'It Ain't That Simple Mate!' because when it comes to partnering with local people to reach the poorest of the poor, nothing is ever particularly simple.

We've now done 15 episodes with more than ten hours of content. We've capped these episodes off and called this Season 1. It is mainly concerned with how we in BHW view the world, and what we think works when it comes to partnering with the poor.

And, while we do not deliberately court controversy, it would be fair to say we've said some provocative things! Our most recent podcast takes a pretty critical view of the way short-term mission trips are typically done. We've also done a podcast on 'the Five Worst Ways to Address Poverty', including some pretty common ones!

We're doing this because we want to stimulate thinking. We want to start a conversation that might lead to change in the way we do mission, both globally and locally. We want people to stop and ask some hard questions so that we can better serve the poor together.

If you haven't listened yet, go check them out and let us know what you think.



Sumitra and Binita Kepchaki live in Sotkhola village, 17km from our partner Nabin's home. Sumitra is the grandmother and Binita is a granddaughter in her family. Both of them accepted Christ in October 2020 during Nabin's visit to their village. Nabin was on his way home from visiting some leaders at a church a couple of hours away. Nabin was riding his motorbike and stopped briefly when he met Sumitra and Binita at the side of a stream where they were grazing their ox and goats. He drank water there and talked with them for thirty minutes.

As Sumitra shared, she started to weep and wipe away her tears. She shared that she desired to commit suicide. It is very surprising that she felt comfortable to talk with Nabin. Perhaps God had prepared her heart and led Nabin to her to share the gospel. Sumitra's husband is a drunkard. Her two sons are also drunkards and her son's wife left them and married another man. None of them have a job so there is no income in their family. Her husband drinks wine continually and causes trouble in the family. They have had little food for the family during these pandemic months. Because there was no hope she planned to take her own life.

Nabin shared the Good News of Jesus Christ with her and her granddaughter. He called a grain merchant and asked him to deliver rice and lentils to them immediately. He then prayed for them and left them. They have now joined a local home-based fellowship and continue growing in Christ. Sumitra is happy even though she struggles to survive. Her husband is giving her trouble and trying to stop her attending the fellowship. She is persevering and endeavouring to grow in Christ. Her granddaughter is studying in grade seven and finding the study challenging. Please pray for them to be strong in Christ. Pray also for her husband and two sons.

Read more at <https://www.brighthopeworld.com/partnerships.asp?pid=274>.

1. Thank God for the fact that our partners continue to work and make a difference around the world even though we can't visit them at the moment.
2. Pray for Sumitra and Binita in Nepal – that they will grow in their faith in Christ and also that her husband and two sons will accept Christ into their lives. Pray also for God's provision for them.
3. Pray for Nabin Darlami (our partner in Nepal) as he shares the Gospel and ministers to people in Nepal (where 99% are not Christian).
4. Praise for an uplifting and encouraging BHW team gathering in late January in Nelson. Pray our team would adapt to not travelling!
5. Pray for wisdom for our team as we navigate 2021 and the very real likelihood of not being able to visit our partners again this year.

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