

Poverty is Sticky



I recently returned from two weeks visiting Bright Hope World partners in Zambia. It was a challenging time, but a wonderful experience to meet partners whose names and stories I know so well. While away I wrote on our Facebook site that, after visiting our partner in Kaishe (see [ZAM14a](#)) I formed the impression that poverty was 'sticky'. I'd like to explain that a bit more.

We're partnering with a lot of people around Zambia (and throughout the Majority World) to alleviate poverty through Foundations for Farming and skills training (such as carpentry or tailoring). The argument for local people to embrace both new farming methods and new skills is extremely compelling from a Western perspective. The new farming methods can generate yields that are more than ten times what people get from traditional methods. The new skills provide job opportunities in markets crowded by people who often are all doing the same thing and facing overwhelming competition. Yet so often people will appear to accept new ways of doing things, then turn around, return to their homes and simply go back to what they were doing before. Why would they do this?

It's because poverty is sticky. Poverty clings to people and distorts their mindsets - the way they conduct relationships and see the world. It does not disappear as the result of a good argument or a persuasive demonstration of a better way of doing things. Poverty is persistent.

Fear is a big part of this. Our culture celebrates the person who steps out and does something innovative and different, whereas in many cultures this is not the case. To depart from the ways and experiences of one's forefathers is, in some areas, discouraged and seen as foolish. And the stakes are high. If I, in New Zealand, launch out on a new career and it fails, I can probably get some more training, maybe get some income support then try again. For the people of Kaishe in rural Zambia, if they abandon fishing in the wetlands to pursue carpentry, and they can't find work, their family might starve. The apparent prevailing view is: 'better the devil you know'.

So what's the answer? Well, prayer is critical. The battle is not just physical, there are spiritual mindset issues which are pervasive. Then two further ingredients are required: patience and persistence. Development takes decades and generations. Quick fixes are rare. Our partners are there chipping away at these issues and mindsets over long periods of time. We tend to want things to turn around in months or, at the most, a few years. We want to tell the story of change in our newsletters (like this one!) because that encourages us. But that's simply not how it works in many communities and cultures. Poverty is sticky, so we must be prepared to 'stick' with our partners - like Charles Chibale Chola in Kaishe - for the long haul as they impact their communities little by little.

Fraser Scott
Executive Director

Bright Hope News

You might have noticed that our newsletter has changed!

At the recent Bright Hope World summit we asked people what they thought of our communications and, while the response was very positive, quite a few people said the newsletter was a bit too long - it seems there's always so much news to share!

So we've refined things a bit to focus on the items we think are most significant. We'll now share one key article about an issue that impacts our partners and one key Life Change Story in each newsletter. We'll also send the newsletter out a bit more often - every two months.

If you're after information about new partners and reports you can find these on our website. You can also connect with us more frequently by following us on Facebook.

We hope you like the changes. We love getting feedback (whether positive or negative) so send us an email and let us know what you think.

Life Change Story - Yui in Bangkok, Thailand



Yui opened her heart to Jesus while she was staying at the Youth Remand Centre in Bangkok, Thailand (see <http://www.brighthopeworld.com/partnerships.asp?pid=179> which is run by our partner Chuenjit). Prior to joining the fellowship group there, Yui told Chuenjit that she had never heard of Jesus before. In the week after her release from the centre, Chuenjit phoned Yui and Yui invited her to visit her place. At the house Chuenjit was surprised to see that Yui had already started sharing Jesus with one of her best friends - they hadn't even gotten to the part where they tell her to do that! At the house, Chuenjit shared her life story, along with Joshua, another of the workers at the centre. The visit ended with Yui's mother, her brother and her best friend all asking if they could also receive Jesus as Lord and Saviour. An entire family coming to Christ!

Please pray for Yui - that she will continue to grow in faith and in the future that she will be able to look after her friends as well as other girls that have been released from the Remand Centre.

Prayer and Praise

1. Pray for our partners in Thailand coping with the current political unrest
2. Pray for Robert Gitau, a partner in Kenya, whose wife suddenly and unexpectedly died two weeks ago
3. Pray for Matt and Judy O'Byrne and John Vlaming who are currently visiting partners in Uganda
4. Pray for Yui and her family (see Life Change Story)
5. Pray for our partners in Zambia (and those in Kaishe particularly)



Bright Hope World, PO Box 8928, Christchurch 8440, New Zealand
Phone: (03) 341 0933 Fax: (03) 341 3363
www.brighthopeworld.com