

## PASSING THE BATON

## BRIGHT HOPE NEWS



In 2024 I retired after 43 years as a lawyer and left a successful practice that I started 34 years ago.

I can now reflect on a rewarding and wonderful career and know that what I did in my workspace made a positive difference for many - no lawyer jokes please! Honestly, although I miss it sometimes, I have no regrets leaving the business. Something that made a difference was planning for succession and keeping it front and centre in deliberations. All succession takes time. Lots of it.

I am now looking at passing the baton on in relation to my facilitation role with the partners that Bright Hope has in Uganda. Unlike leaving my legal practice, I have strong mixed feelings about this. Succession is vital to the health of an organisation, but I will find it hard passing the relationships with our partners on the ground in Uganda to new people. Over time, my wife Judy and I have enjoyed remarkably good relationships with our partners.

It is, therefore, a different process in relation to the Bright Hope World partners. I have a great deal of confidence in them, and we have relationships that go beyond the 'everyday'. Even though, in Africa, friendship and money are intimately linked and cannot really be separated, I have concluded that some of the relationships which have developed over the years could be described as friendships.

I stand in awe of the achievements of many of my colleagues in Uganda. We are able to relate on a person-to-person basis and with mutual respect that goes beyond a donor-donee or transactional relationship. It is much more personal than that and I am going to miss it. This is something that I really love about the ethos of Bright Hope World. The emphasis on quality of relationship goes far beyond the transactional and is surely something that Jesus modelled himself when he called his disciples 'friends'. The people that have trailblazed Bright Hope World have built long-term relationships with remarkable people and, to my way of thinking, this sets this ministry apart.

A key lesson that I learnt in business is that it is not possible to both pass on the business and the client relationships and remain heavily involved. For succession to work there has to be a break. The process of time, change, and development means that new people need to be coming in and starting to be actively taking responsibility for partnerships and stamping their personalities on the roles. This is a good thing, but I can honestly say that I am going to miss the relationships with partners.

I'm really looking forward to an upcoming trip in September, which focuses on introducing to our existing partners the new couple who will hopefully be taking over most of the partnerships and helping them get a feel for the role. I am excited that there are so many people in our organisation who are willing to step up into the role of partnership facilitators. I highly recommend being a partnership facilitator to anybody who might be thinking about it. It is an exciting and enormously rewarding role. At times it can take a lot of emotional and mental energy, and prayer, and there are some sacrifices involved in the level of travel and time commitment. But the commitments that I have made have been hugely outweighed by the quality of relationships, the awe I have for our partners, and the differences that are being made in the field. Sometimes it seems like the Book of Acts is being played out before my eyes. It is such an honour to be able to facilitate this process.

Matt O'Byrne

*Uganda Partnership Facilitator*

As Matt's article notes, succession is a big topic of discussion at Bright Hope World, and one that we are constantly revisiting.

We have been continually blessed as an organisation in that we have quite a few new folks that are willing to give up their time and energy to serve our partners around the world as we have grown and taken on new partners.

But we are now at an age and stage as an organisation in which some of our longstanding team members are moving into different stages of life and may not be quite as available as they once were.

And it's not just us. Many of our partners are in the process of handing on their ministries to the next generation, either along family lines – which is quite common – or simply to the 'willing' who are able to step in.

Our fervent hope here is that the next generations maintain a commitment to serving the poor and the lost, particularly in the Majority World. There are definite moves in the social justice space among young people, but this sometimes focuses exclusively on domestic issues, and focusing abroad may not always be part of the picture.

Please remember Bright Hope World and our partners in your prayers on this issue. We are a relational organisation and having good and committed people are central in what we do.



The Lulamba Lighthouse Orphan Care Project is run by Rebecca Kaumba who is a retired lady who lives in Chivuma. One of her friends in the church she used to attend in Chingola mentioned to Rebecca that there were a lot of vulnerable children in her neighbourhood, and she encouraged her to get them together and try to help them. She did and found there were more than 20 children. Bright Hope World assists these children to go to school with books, shoes, uniforms and bags, and provides some food assistance, health care and spiritual input.

Ruth is a past orphan in the Lulamba programme. She completed grade 12 in 2017. Ruth started with Lulamba in 2014 when she was in grade 10.

At that stage, she was living with her grandparents and there were five children in the home, the youngest being just four years old. Her father gave the grandparents money to help buy food, but they only ate once each day. Ruth did not start going to school until she was 10 years old.

Since finishing school, she has studied at teachers training in Mufulira. She completed her studies in 2022 and now teaches mathematics at Grace Academy at grade 4 level. She has more than 45 students in each of her classes. She loves teaching as she says children are easy to deal with! She also teaches Sunday school at church.

Her brother Godwin was also part of the Lulamba programme, and he now works in the mines with heavy equipment.

These young people have gone from being orphans with little hope to now being able to provide for themselves.

Read more at <https://www.brighthopeworld.com/partnerships.asp?pid=108>.

1. Pray for Matt & Judy O'Byrne and for a successful handover of partnerships in Uganda. Pray for the partners in Uganda as they forge new relationships with our team. Pray for the future of Bright Hope World and having the team members we require.
2. Pray for Ruth, Godwin, and the other young people who have, or are currently, being assisted with their schooling by the Lulamba partnership. Praise for the lives that have been given hope for the future and are now able to break the cycle of poverty.
3. Pray for Jyoti Community Development Service, our new partner in Nepal (for more info - <https://www.brighthopeworld.com/partnerships.asp?pid=524>) and the women being rescued from human trafficking who are being taught sewing skills.

