



Doing Good That Is Good™

The newsletter of FARMS International

Nagaland-India Update – February 2014

Providing revolving entrepreneurial loans to poor Christian families - Galatians 6:10

Dear Friends of FARMS,

Greetings in Christ Jesus our firm foundation!

In this newsletter we will highlight our program in Nagaland, India. Nagaland is an unique state in the Hindu nation of India. Along with other states in the northeast, it was annexed by India shortly after India gained its independence from England. The people of Nagaland wanted their independence and an ugly war of independence ensued for over 50 years. In the midst of this turmoil and suffering God began to move in amazing ways among the Nagas. Today, the majority of Nagas are Christian! You can find more of the history of Nagaland by going to our website www.farmsinternational.com and under newsletters select July 2004.

We are very pleased with the dedication of the committee that runs the program. Visiting the project holders and their churches is very difficult and at times life threatening. Our committee chairman, Pastor Bikau Pame, nearly lost his life crossing a flooded river on one of his recent visits. Last month, Pastor Bikau wrote, **"We are very much thankful to you for your kind concern and care and love extended to us. We are praying that the entire**

people group shall be reached in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord." It is our hope to visit them in the near future. In the past special entry permits were needed to visit Nagaland, but recently this restriction has been lifted.

We work with the Zeme people, which is a subgroup of the Zeliangron tribe, which is one of the most disadvantaged tribes in Nagaland. They are wonderfully gracious



Story from the field

Bangladesh, the mere mention of that country's name brings a myriad of thoughts to our minds. Natural disasters, collapsed clothing factories, riots, poverty and hopelessness to list a few. **Maybe you are thinking of not reading on, but please do, you will be encouraged!** This is great story.

Several years ago my wife Pat and I were visiting areas in central Bangladesh where FARMS has a loan program with converts from Islam. The program was a great success and thousands of families were being helped by the program. We were thrilled to visit a village where many had come to know Christ. In fact over half the population of 3,000 were now following Jesus and **the transformation of that village was amazing!** The whole village was prospering because of irrigation pump projects that the believers took loans for. Now the village could grow crops during the dry season, doubling their income. Even the Muslims were happy because of the irrigation water sold to them! From there we traveled to another area of the country to see a training farm that was just getting started.



This training farm had two purposes: to train Bengali Christians in fish farming and agriculture and also during the evenings to do discipleship and theological training. We were there to see the property and to visit the staff of the farm. After the formalities and some

Continued page 2

Continued page 3

people. It is a real privilege to help them. We have included several project reports that I am sure you will enjoy. It is our hope to expand this program significantly as the Lord provides. Please pray about this need.

In addition, I included a "**Story from the field**". These stories are from our experiences as we traveled for FARMS. They are intended to give you new insights into the lives of the poor. I am sure you will find this story from Bangladesh encouraging. *God Bless all of you with the love of Jesus,* Joe Richter, Executive Director

Nagaland Field Report



Ms Kangzangle is a widow. She obtained a loan from the FARMS local committee **Christian Families Helping Hands**. She is a member of Nsong Village Baptist Church. She is an expert weaver, using the traditional backstrap loom. She is shown here with loom and some of her finished products. One shawl sells for \$48 to \$64 each



and she does about 3 a month, clearing about \$100 per month. She tithes faithfully to her church. She hopes to receive another loan to purchase more tools for weaving.

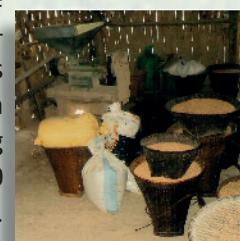
Mr. D. Akwang is a member of Jalukie Baptist Church. He also has three ponds and is earning about \$480 annually. He was not present for this photo. He has now earned enough to be able to purchase a car. He has a reputation of being faithful and a help to his church in many ways.



Mr. G. Adiau is a member of 'Nkwareu Baptist Church. He is a faithful member and worker. He regularly tithes out of his project profits. This is one of his new ponds. He now has three. Last year he made about \$360, but has a great expectation to earn more with this additional pond. The government is so impressed with his success they are giving him some additional help.



Pastor Ruzo Pame is the pastoring Veisumpui Baptist Church. A few years ago he took a loan from Christian Families Helping Hands (FARMS) for \$400 and set up a mini-rice mill. His income now is about \$80 a month. He had been pastoring without a salary for several years. So this project is a great benefit to him as well as his fellow villagers that make use of his services. He faithfully tithes to his church.



Mr. Nangmak Neume is trained in electronics, a service in great demand. He is expanding his shop and doing very well. He helps support his church through his tithing.



Mr. & Mrs. Leiteing run a small grocery shop near their home. This project helps them supplement their income and enables them to pay for their children's education. They are faithful in giving their tithes as well as being generous in other ways.



Story from the field - continued from page 1

lively Bengali Christian music, we did a short tour of the farm and then we were preparing to leave. In the distance we noticed a group of Hindu villagers gathering near the training center. Bangladesh has three majority groups. Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists. These people had come from a very poor Hindu village near the training center.

Missionary work has many surprises, not all of them are pleasant. Many times you are confronted by situations that test your very commitment to Jesus! Sometimes the answers you need, do not come easily and this was one of those situations. My wife had already gone over to meet this group of villagers, while I talked with some of the leaders of the training center. Soon, I was led over to this group by one of the Christians as he anxiously said, ***"Joe these people have something they want to show you."*** What I was about to see literally broke my heart. A young Hindu lady, dressed in an orange sari, was carrying a gray blanket tightly wrapped around some object. She looked very distressed. Standing there in the burning sun, I wondered what was in that bundle. Somebody said that her two year old child had had a terrible accident. They said the little child had fallen into a large cooking pot full of boiling food! I said, ***"Have her unwrap the child."*** The sight of that little body is still etched in my mind. Burns from her little head down to her chest were open oozing wounds! But what really shocked me were her little hands that looked like tiny catcher's mitts because of the swelling. I asked, "When did this happen?" I was shocked to hear, ***"About seven days ago."*** Without help, this child was going to die!



Continued Page 4

Memorial and Honor Gifts

In Memory of:

Larry Durkin

Gareth Miller

Sterling and Marian Newby

Don Snyder

Joshua Tsujimoto - missionary to Bangladesh

In Honor of:

Jack Phillips

Gary Wiebe's Birthday!

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Story from the field -Continued from page 3

"Why wasn't this child brought to the hospital?", rushed through my mind, even though I knew the answer. **Poverty!**

In desperation, these people seeing the crowd at the center, mustered the courage to make their way across the fields to present us with their tragedy. We were their last hope. Maybe they knew we were Christians, but one thing they did know for sure, we were not Hindu. The thought, "**Joe, they are looking to you for a response.**" flooded my mind. Sadly, this horrible accident and other tragedies are all too common in the life of the poor! That same village undoubtedly had many other desperate stories of no hope. The answer that came into my heart, came as a challenge to the believers surrounding me. I simply asked, "**Will they take this child to the hospital immediately if they have the funds?**" The response was yes! Then I said, "**I will give \$100 towards the hospital bill, if you believers will promise to pay the rest.**" They looked at each other and said, "**We will do it!**" I shared with them, that I could cover the cost, but then the glory would not go to God; but If they were the ones that helped, it could open the whole village to the Gospel! We prayed for the child and then told them our plan.

I asked some months later how that child was doing. They said it needed several plastic surgeries but all of them were successful. The child had full use of her hands. They added that the Muslim background believers from the farm paid the rest of the hospital charges which were over \$700! A huge sum in Bangladesh. **This is what happens when the poor learn to give and that is what FARMS is all about.**

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