

...FOR
THOSE
BEYOND
REACH

NEWSLETTER

PARTNERING WITH GOD

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CO-LABOURERS FOR CHRIST

Imagine, you have the task of taking the Gospel to a people group on the other side of the globe. Picture yourself in a vast impenetrable jungle, with mosquitos, contaminated water, dangerous animals and poisonous arrows. Many of us wouldn't stand a chance! That is why *HFA* assists indigenous evangelists, with aviation and technology, through local partner organisations. We enable people who master their surroundings and understand the local culture, to bring the Gospel to isolated people groups.

John* (*all names have been changed for privacy reasons), the leader of our partner organisation in an undisclosed location on this planet, never stops praying for the unreached and isolated people with his wife, Melanie*. Whenever their team can obtain government permissions to do outreaches, they go to the jungle. Some weeks ago, John and Melanie had a memorable encounter at an indigenous conference. Irpay*, a muscular young man with short black hair and a bronze tan sat with them and shared:

"I want to help my people get saved and know more about God and the Bible."

While this might not seem unusual at a conference organised for and by indigenous evangelists, the story leading to this encounter goes back three decades: David*, a missionary along with his family had gone to live with Irpay's tribe before he was born. They had learned the language to translate the Bible and to share the gospel. After the missionaries had become friends with chief Amipia* and lived with the tribe for some time, anthropologists came to the village. The outsiders influenced chief Amipia, who didn't really understand the national trade language, to sign some demarcation papers.



Local jungle transport

These documents would be used to force David and his family to leave the village and the newly established reservation! Decades passed while Chief Amipia and his people waited in vain, for the promised help of the anthropologists to come about.



When a few members of Amipia's community visited David's jungle station he had set up just outside the authorities' demarcation line, they noticed his well which provided fresh, clean water. Inspired, they went back to their village and soon Amipia signed another document – this time requesting the authorities to allow the missionaries to come back and help them build wells. Finally, the missionaries had an official mandate to return! But how should the drilling equipment get to extremely remote jungle locations?

When the missionaries told our partner organisation of this transport need, John, the team leader, had just experienced setbacks, was going blind and had injured his hand. After pouring out his heart to an HFA staff member over the phone, he concluded: ***"What can I do? I feel like a broken duck!"*** The conversation had turned more positive with the HFA man giving 'the broken duck' a good pep talk. John got back to work, starting with some phone-calls while recovering from his injury. Eventually he had located a helicopter operator, willing to do flights into the reservation, and the needed permits where obtained.

On request of our partner organisation, an HFA team member flew over from Australia, to assist John and his team with the helicopter outreach, to ensure the safety of everyone involved. The wells were drilled and the indigenous community received access to clean water. Later on, Chief Amipia told missionary David: ***"Little brother, you guys are the only real friends I have."***

Living at the jungle station outside the demarcation line, David had continued to translate Bible portions for decades.



Helicopter to the isolated jungle station: a short trip with a long-term impact!

Now, after gaining a new level of trust through the water project, Amipia and the community were happy to receive a few audio Bibles in their heart language.

Soon after, chief Amipia sent messengers, asking his missionary friend to return and to teach him about Jesus. However, David still didn't have permission to enter the reservation for teaching. Soon, strong young people from Amipia's village hiked through the forest for days to visit the missionaries' jungle station. *"David, we understand that you can't come to us,"* they said. *"Can we stay here instead, so you can teach us? We'll then go back to our villages and teach our people what we learn from you."* The Bible stories from the audio players had stirred up their hearts.

Many of them felt convicted. Contrary to popular belief, life in the untouched jungle isn't a carefree and happy one. Violence and sexual abuse of children and women is part of the culture. The emotional scars of perpetrators and victims are deep, leading to extreme suicide rates. Many of them turn to narcotics (which the jungle offers free of charge) to numb their physical and emotional pain.

The Bible stories offered a glimmer of hope and the people longed for change for the better! Scores of them listened intently to learn more about the God who created them and wants them to spend eternity with him in heaven. So many came to hear, that David had to limit the visitors and split them up into groups. He would teach one group for two weeks before the next one would get a turn.

Meanwhile, the first group of listeners would go back to their communities to share what they had learned.



Eventually, Chief Amipia himself struggled through the jungle with his walking cane to come and hear the plan of salvation. He arrived during a Bible devotion on *Revelation 21:27* that speaks about heaven:

"But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of life."

When the group ended with prayer, the chief prayed as well:

"Dear God, I'm Amipia, please write my name in the Book of life!"

Missionary David and his family had laboured for decades to bring the Gospel to these people while enduring unspeakable personal hardship. Finally, the Holy Spirit was working in their hearts and many of them turned to Christ! God had used the water project to build the people's trust in the missionaries and opened their hearts for the message they had come to bring: The message of Jesus Christ, the giver of 'Living water' (John 4:10-14).

At the end of his life, chief Amipia called together other important leaders and his own grandchildren, to give his final advice: *"Do allow the missionaries to come. Listen to them, they are good people who want to help us. It was a mistake to send them away, back then."* He also warned them about other outsiders, that had come through their area, who hadn't kept their promises.

Irapay, the young man who recently talked with our partners, John and Melanie, at the indigenous conference was chief Amipia's grandson – the one who had led the chief to Christ! Irapay is now involved in translating the Bible into his language and feels God's call to go to seminary, to learn more about Jesus and His Word, to serve his people more effectively. ***"Please pray for me. I really sense that this is what God wants me to do."***

THE NEXT CHAPTER

Many more communities like chief Amipia's are under threat. They may be unknown to outsiders, yet God knows every one of their members' names and loves them! They are precious in His sight – and therefore in ours too. We may not be capable to go and tell them about Jesus ourselves, but we can assist those like our partner John and indigenous evangelists like Paulo* who invest and risk their lives for the task. We assist our partners by providing satellite pictures, enabling aerial photography flights and analysis of footage, to locate people in the dense jungles. Through our partners we provide navigational equipment, water-filters and first aid kits for the hazardous trips Evangelist Paulo and others take. Sometimes what's needed most is a good pep talk!



Evangelist Paulo – whose own faith journey started at the said indigenous conference, years ago – is once again gearing up to visit newly discovered people. A few months ago, he scouted out the villages closest to their area and made connections, but the water levels haven't yet been suitable for travel by canoe all the way. So, he had to wait for a more favourable season and in December he wants to try again.

Will you join us in prayer for this outreach, for safety on the trip and prepared hearts of the communities they want to reach?

Or would you like to partner with our team in Melbourne to work on administrative or technical solutions to reach isolated groups in the jungle, along coastlines or behind barbed wire fences? Please get in touch!

The HFA Team



Vast untouched expanses of the jungle, searching for unreached communities

THE BENEFIT OF PARTNERSHIP

It's a lonely task being sent to set up something new in a place familiar yet remote; your birthplace but not home for a long time. But that's what the HFA Board has sent us to the UK to do. Both of us were born in England but lived in Africa and Australia for most of our lives. For the last ten years we had been part of the Australian HFA team. HFA has been networking from the beginning with Christians around the world, tapping into any resources to help fulfil its mission "that the Gospel would be preached to all nations..."



Apart from HFA in Australia there are currently network-organisations in Switzerland, Germany and the Netherlands. What an encouragement to know that others have done it before and we're not in this alone! If embers, flying ahead of a bushfire, had emotions, they might feel cold and lonely, landing in a place far away from the blaze that sparked them. However, if these embers find the right conditions, they're not extinguished, but start a new fire, eventually merging with the original one. This is what we strive to do in the UK: starting a new 'fire', a HFA network organisation with the goal to mobilise Christians in the UK to get involved in reaching the last unreached and isolated people groups with the Gospel.

Using technology to overcome isolation is in the DNA of HFA and from our start in the UK it was a joy to join the monthly online-prayer meetings of our network-partners to share, update, encourage and pray together. Short online meetings, however, can't replace the warmth of personal fellowship. An attempt by our German partners in 2024 to find a suitable time and location for a European network meeting had been unsuccessful. 2026 seemed the nearest option for a personal get-together. During another prayer meeting this January, our friends pleaded with God to open a way to meet in person this year. A few days later the surprise came: A Swiss HiL member suggested a beautiful Christian retreat centre in Germany near lake Konstanz. It turned out they'd just had a cancellation for the Easter weekend! It got even better: most of the network members of HiN, HiL and Nachtswaluw who hadn't been able to find any common date before, were free. So were we! God's timing and ability to make a way where there seems to be no way never ceases to amaze us!

People arrived by train, airplane or car (a Dutch family left home at 3AM)! Finally, we could put faces to names in emails and meet in person with folk only seen on screen; who turned into surprisingly tall or petite, laughing, hugging and chatting brothers and sisters in Christ with their lovely families. For three days we were not only united in ministry but also around meals, sharing experiences and praising the Lord together. It was great to see first-hand the gifts and talents the Lord had brought together and hear about the work they were involved in. We came away praising God for this amazing team.

During this time, one thing we recognised was a shared need across the Networks for the right trustees and board members to be involved. Also, a challenge we encountered while preparing to set up a new HFA network organisation was the

need for remote storage for documentation which could also be accessed by other network members. The Dutch team had already gone before us and set up a cloud-based documentation system for the whole *HFA network*. A German team-member had since added a filing system, ready for us to use and extend according to our needs in the UK. On the Saturday, we had an opportunity to learn more about it from one of the designers, help get files set up for *Hope BB* (the emerging new UK Network) and learn how to use it. God's perfect timing and an answer to a big need!

What an amazing Easter weekend of worship, learning, challenge and prayer. But also walking together in a lovely location or just sitting and chatting with people, hearing their stories, and getting to know each other. As we prayed and worshiped together in different languages it was like a taste of heaven.

We returned home encouraged, knowing that setting up a network organisation is possible and now have a better understanding of the teams we work with. Even though we are separated geographically, we're even more connected in our hearts and common goal as we serve together with our unique gifts and abilities. This is truly a team co-labouring together for Christ. When the team in Australia come to the end of their skills and resources for a task, they can seek help from Switzerland or the Netherlands, Germany or the UK.



'Secure' group photo of European Network gathering

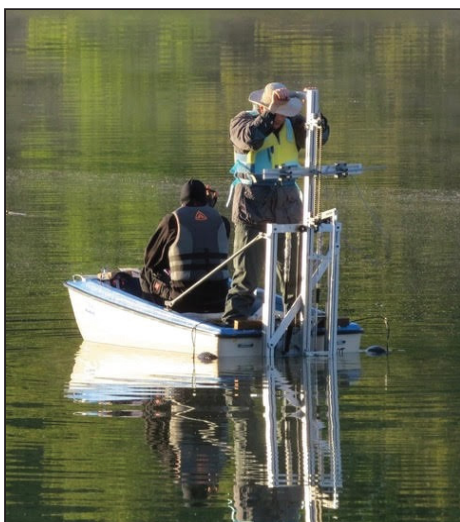


'Brains trust' meeting for network partnership

Potentially, there is a world-wide network of skills waiting to be tapped into. Even those tiresome time zones that can make things difficult at times can be used to our advantage. When there was a hitch while working on the hulls of the two latest water drones in Australia earlier in the year, the team asked a *HiL* engineer in Switzerland for help and went to bed. The Swiss team-member then used his workday to find a solution to this problem, with new drawings ready for the next morning's work in Australia.

In God's economy, all things are possible. We feel privileged to be involved with such an amazing and gifted team as we network together. And we're so blessed by the contribution of our faithful friends in the UK! Thank you for being part of our team by praying and giving or stepping up to be trustees or volunteers of the emerging new *HFA network* organisation *Hope Beyond Barriers*! We look forward to the day when we'll get to fellowship with you as well.

Carol
HFA Advocate



Water drone wave propulsion team in Europe

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