

A Magazine from **missionary ventures**

INVOLVE

Since 1983

Serving in 70 countries

Giving People
a Hand **UP**
not a Hand **out**

letter from the **PRESIDENT**

Photos from the Agriculture Discipleship Program in Yurimaguas, Peru



Not a hand out, a hand up . . .

Since you're reading this magazine, you have a heart to help poor people. You, more than likely, have been on a mission trip or support missions.

In my world travels, I so often see well-meaning groups who create dependence on themselves by giving a hand out, instead of a hand up. In so doing, they hurt the very people they wanted to help. Just look at our government. Welfare programs have created dependence, hurt families, and caused many people to abandon use of their God given ability to work with their own hands.

I'll never forget visiting an empty church in Jamaica. A mission group built the church, funded, and controlled it. The community soon saw this church wasn't their own. Even though the church was built to benefit the community and for the Gospel to be preached, dependency and resentment developed. The mission organization finally pulled out. Today the church sits empty.

A favorite tool of the enemy is dependency. Once it takes hold, it's very hard to break. It cripples the people it meant to help. It also puts incredible pressure on the people dispensing that help. If the mission community continues to give something for nothing and allows the indigenous to grow

dependent, we will see more empty churches.

So what is the solution? At Missionary Ventures, we always strive to come along side the Nationals and help them reach their own people with the Gospel of Christ. We do this by walking hand in hand with the local indigenous leaders in strategic partnerships. The goal is that all projects and ministry will be self-supporting and self-governing. In time, the Nationals take over the responsibilities, and we gladly move on to another place where the Gospel hasn't been preached.

In this issue of *Involve*, reports from Peru and Guatemala show how lives and communities are being transformed by working together in partnership that leads to interdependence. We want to avoid the self-destructive reality of the proverbial 'Give the man a fish and you feed him for a day, feed him for many days, quit, and he resents you.' At Missionary Ventures, we strive to follow the wisdom key of that anecdote and teach him to fish. It's the hand up that feeds for a lifetime.

Every day we call out to God for the needs of this ministry. You're needed, now more than ever, to help us show the love and message of Christ and offer that important hand up.

Your partner in Missions,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Glen Dubois'.

Glen Dubois
President

P.S. May I ask if you will take five minutes to pray and hear what He would have you give so we can continue to reach out around the world? Please send your gift in the attached envelope.

Transforming the History of a Family

I'm sure we've all heard that Chinese proverb, "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a life time." What if we took it one step farther and said, "Teach a man to raise fish and administrate the profits and you transform the history of his family". Now wouldn't that be something worth doing?

When we speak about poverty we're talking about very complex issues involving a wide range of physical, emotional, social, and spiritual needs. So it's appropriate that the solutions would come from many and diverse sectors such as economic development, health, education, agriculture, spiritual formation, etc. The poor tend to be so entangled in webs of their own and others' creation that it seems impossible to overcome. I don't believe that I or anyone else has all of the answers. Each situation and person is unique and often requires unique solutions. However, there are some "better" methods or processes and before we dive in it's important to do our best to understand the issues involved. Let me share with you a bit of my understanding from working with, relating to, and living among the materially poor as well as lots of reading, research, and talking with other development practitioners.

At its core, I believe poverty to be relational. I believe that poverty is a result of ungodly relationships that don't work towards their benefit. One of those relationships is their image of themselves. The poor tend not to have a good understanding of who they are and the purpose for which they were created. Man, both men and women, are created in the image of God (Genesis 1: 27) to be a reflection of God's characteristics to the world around them as stewards of God's creation (Genesis 1:28-30). Reflecting His characteristics means being a reflection of His love, joy, peace, and all the fruits of the spirit. It also includes reflecting His innovation, creativity, intelligence, and work in our stewardship of His creation.

Often, however, the poor are told by their fellow sufferers, family, and culture that they are stupid and ineffective, or that they are poor because they are preyed upon, and will never be able to rise above their situation. In school, they are taught by rote and memorization as objects rather than being taught reasoning and rationalization skills as intelligent creative beings. Many buy into and believe the lie that "they were born poor and always will be poor". Because of that broken self image, they don't feel they have



Fish harvest



Releasing the fingerlings
into the fish farm

anything to add or contribute to others around them or society at large. They have an instinctual understanding of Jesus words in Matt. 13:12 when he said, "...even what he has will be taken away from him". Then, because of apathy and the demands of poverty they don't have any energy left to be good stewards of God's creation on which they depend for the water they drink, the air they breathe, and the food they eat.

So I believe the key to diminishing material poverty is more about helping people create new sources of resources than it is about redistributing scarce and limited resources. You know the message for the North American is quite different than for the Guatemalan. To North Americans, I say, "We need to be generous with what we have been given. We also need to understand that we are called to be stewards of God's creation and not be overly greedy in our

...with some research, planning, prayer, and a little money, I have helped a couple of families here with fish farming projects.

consumption of resources. We need to understand that God measures wealth, not through material possessions, but by the depth of our relationships with Him, ourselves, others, and His creation. We also need a heartfelt revelation of the depths of our own emotional and spiritual poverty before we can adequately attempt to help others with their material poverty." To the Central American, it's much more along the lines of: "Another's material wealth is not creating your material poverty. It's not so much about redistributing wealth as it is about hard work, using your God given intelligence to create "new" wealth, and being a good steward of creation."

In teaching these themes, I'm looking for ways to demonstrate it locally. Somehow you have to get people to "own" these concepts or they won't act upon them. They will listen to me and nod in agreement, but in their minds they're saying, "Well, those are nice "gringo" concepts and they work well for you Americans. But, things are different here and you just don't understand." While looking for ways to demonstrate these principles, I found aquaponics.

What first sparked my interest in aquaponics was a project here in Petén that's part of a Taiwanese International Cooperation and Development project. They were holding training sessions encouraging Tilapia farming and selling



Fishermen harvesting their fish

fingerlings. I began to research it and Petén, Guatemala seems to be a perfect place for fish farming. The ambient temperature, soil composition, abundant water, and pretty much every factor just seemed to be right. I also checked around and found that a number of local guys had tried it, but no one was really making it work and most had quit. They experienced failure due to lack of planning, poor techniques, and not having the resources needed to adequately set up and develop their ponds. So with some research, planning, prayer, and a little money, I have helped a couple of families here with fish farming projects.

We currently have two “farms” running and hopefully soon, with the lessons we

have learned, we can bless others with advice and knowledge.

One of those farms consists of three ponds and

two concrete holding tanks down close to a river which we use as our water source. They just harvested 1,200 pounds of fish this past month and we hope to have about that amount of fish to harvest again this month. Our goal for this farm is to be able to harvest about 1,500 pounds per month. The next step for this project is adding and developing our own hatchery. They currently buy fingerlings from the development project which is located 130 km (81 miles) away. I would like to help hatch their own fingerlings as well as create a local source for other farmers.

The second farm is smaller. A one pond farm using a hand dug well as its water source. They just harvested their first crop and are preparing to purchase another batch of fingerlings. Our next step for this project is that we are experimenting with adding hydroponics, using the nutrient laden water out of the pond to grow vegetables. I am really hoping to form a model out of this project that we can use with other families in other areas. Protein from fish has traditionally been an important part of people’s diet. However, the rivers are being ‘fished out’ due to the lack of enforcement of the fishing regulations. An



Fishermen sorting their catch

They just harvested 1,200 pounds of fish this past month and we hope to have about that amount of fish to harvest again this month.

important source of protein is disappearing from their diet. In addition, vegetables are expensive because of poor soil quality and too much sun, bugs, and heat which makes vegetable growing difficult. In our area, people generally are not going hungry – there are lots of beans and corn for their tortillas. However, there is a lack of balanced nutrition in their basic diet. We are working to create a model where a family can use just a small plot of land to grow fish and vegetables. Through this, we are hoping to not only lift them out of material poverty, but also impact the health of their whole neighborhood by providing them with better food sources.

At the same time, through this process, we’ve found that good administration skills must be learned, so we are mentoring these families in the administration of the expenses and profits, knowing they will be blessed and hoping they pass the blessing on.

“Teach a man to raise fish and administrate the profits, and you transform the history of his family.”

CLEAN WATER

Everyone agrees that clean water is a basic need and thanks to many people through MV, upriver communities along the Madre de Dios River in Peru are learning how to build their own safe water supply. Many people upriver, including the tribal people, have access to a lot of water; but it is in no way safe to drink!



This grayish-chocolate colored river water is being used daily for bathing, playing, washing clothes and dishes, defecating, disposing of garbage and, yes, drinking. If they have rainwater or fuel for boiling water, the communities would use those first as Plan A and B—however; this water would still

water purifiers designed to clean river water by running the water over pebbles and coarse sand enclosed in a barrel type container—or a simple garbage can. This solution came from a design by Aqua Clara Water Purification out of Michigan and used natural materials and items that could easily be brought upriver to the communities to build a system that could provide over 5 gallons of water, twice daily, for each home. Ten gallons of pure water a day will make a big difference in the health of a native living so far upriver that even emergency medications can take 3 days or more to arrive.

be their Plan C.

We are always looking for ways to help these people upriver who are living such a rugged life. They have many physical needs; however for missionaries to just give them “things” (and in doing so, looking like we are buying our way in) has caused more problems than it has ever helped in the long run. However, in the Amazonian jungle when the rain stops falling or dry wood for boiling water becomes scarce and there is no other alternative, the children see no harm in drinking directly out of the muddy river whenever they get thirsty.

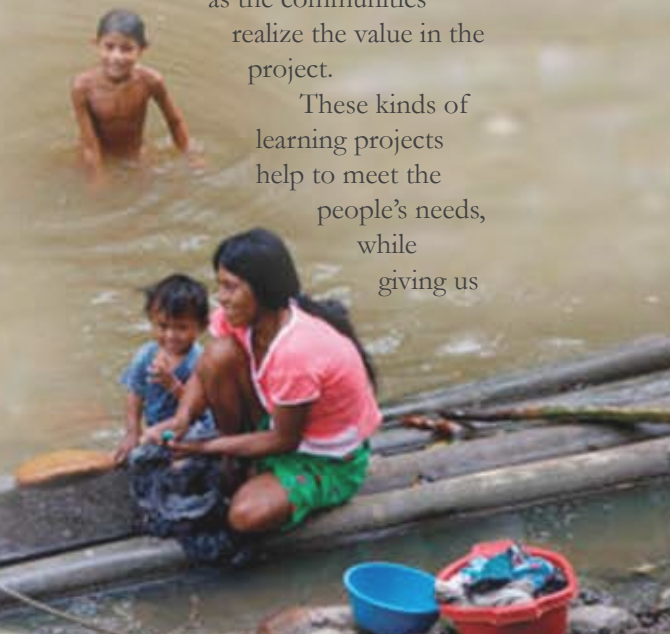
What is the solution? How could we help these families living in extremely isolated areas, improve their health without just handing them an easy flow water filter with disposable cartridges only available in their nation’s largest cities, hundreds of miles away?

Whenever we ask for help, God touches hearts and minds in places so far away that most people here in Peru don’t even know exist. MV sent us a short term team, trained to help build

We set up clinics in 4 different areas upriver and together with the local pastors and men of each community, we all learned how to build a reliable system to clean the water well enough to drink without having to boil it. The system is affordable and each pastor

has directions to build more as the communities realize the value in the project.

These kinds of learning projects help to meet the people’s needs, while giving us



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 A higher purpose.*



credibility. Afterwards, it is not by accident that it's necessary to return periodically to check on the purifiers' maintenance, as this gives the missionary a reason to pass through the community, visit each water purifier location and build relationships with many people in these villages, tribes and communities.

These water purifiers are a blessing to everyone who has one, plus they give us a chance to share about a deeper need for the pure spiritual water in the people's lives as well; that only comes from Jesus Christ. So, really this is only the beginning...

I want to be a part in giving a HAND UP!

- Here is my donation for the **fish farm** in Guatemala \$ _____
- Here is my donation for the **clean water treatment system** for tribes in Peru \$ _____
- Here is my donation to **support MVI** \$ _____

Name: _____
 Address: _____

 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

Please cut out this form and enclose with your check made payable to MVI. Use the attached envelope or mail to MVI P.O. Box 593550 Orlando, FL 32859-7322.

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OPEN TEAMS

July 2010: Chile Earthquake Relief Team



Please pray about joining Missionary Ventures to help those affected by the magnitude 8.8 earthquake that struck the central coast of Chile on February 27, 2010. There is need for construction and evangelism teams.



Fall 2010: Nicaragua Vocational School

Missionary Ventures is in need of men and women who are interested in sharing their unique skills with the people of Nicaragua. We are looking for 1-4 people to teach vocational skills such as carpentry, automotive, electrical, plumbing, etc. Visit MVI Field Coordinators Mike and Lauren Deibert's website to see the school in action - www.esvoministries.com.

You can also give a **HAND UP** online at <https://www.mvi.org/donations>

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Involve Inspire Impact

Youth Skill Center



For the past five years we have been ministering in Ciudad Sandino, Managua, Nicaragua. During the past year we've been strategizing on ways to effectively share the knowledge of Christ with the locals. Recently the Lord put on our hearts to build a youth skill center. It will be a center to train the youth in vocational trades like carpentry, blacksmithing, etc., and also a music school, church leadership and discipleship training. Through this we will be giving the youth a way to pursue God and realize their God given talents and skills which are waiting to be developed and nurtured inside them. We are in need of teams to come and help us in the construction of the skill center. Dates are flexible. Please pray about your involvement in this ministry to change the future of Nicaragua.

— Ben and Susan Estanislao,
Field Coordinators in Nicaragua

Contact Amber
to join a team
407-859-7322 or
anrusselburg@
mvusa.org

HAITI RELIEF TEAMS

Consider sharing some of your time and help rebuild and encourage the people of Haiti. Sign up for an open team at www.mvi.org/help.

August 28-September 4

September 4-11

September 18-25

October 9-16

October 23-30

November 20-27

December 4-11

December 11-18

December 18-25

December 25-January 1



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www.facebook.com/mvi.org