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VOICE & HANDS



REACH
BEYOND

Just as when He first appeared
A baby, unobserved
His approach is secret still:
Christ, our Light, the Word
In a fraught, distracted world
So easy to ignore;
Yet He brings us light and life
When we unlock the door

— Bruce Gulland,
Reach Beyond UK

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"As you know, a trip out to the villages is never boring"

By Dale Stagg – CEO

It's just over three years since I visited a remote area of Chhattisgarh, India. Leaving behind the city of Bilaspur, we travelled many miles into the hill country that houses dozens of villages (check out the photo), the original epicenter of our *Light up a Village* project.

I recently had the privilege of interviewing Dolly Kirubakaran, one of our key partners 'on the ground'.

Dale: Dolly, can you give us some insight into one of the areas you visit?

Dolly: Our team recently visited this very rural region of Chhattisgarh. This is where we support a pastor and reach out to dozens of villages in this tribal area, using his church as a community hub. It's from here that we've distributed 100's of radios and solar powered lights in recent years.

Dale: I believe you've had some recent challenges to overcome.

Dolly: That's right. It's been very difficult to get into the area due to COVID-19 and other issues. After many disruptions, we finally made it back to the main village.

Dale: Dolly, I continue to see the importance of working through local churches so that people can hear the gospel and be discipled in their faith.

Dolly: Yes, many village leaders come together and share experiences and testimonies of God's faithfulness. By the time one of the services began, there were over 200 people from far and wide in that small church building.

Dale: Tell me the story about two men you met at church.

Dolly: These two men who found out that the community was coming together, travelled over 70 km to

see us, from a remote village that still relies on donkeys as their main mode of transport. Vishal and his friend told me they had come to know the Lord through the radio broadcasts, and how Vishal had got his hands on a Bible and through God's provision went on to study and get his Theology degree. Amazing! He is now ministering in a number of villages in his area. There are many stories like this that take a while to reach us.

Dale: That's incredible! I know there are also a number of things we have bubbling away in this community. What are some of them?

Dolly: Before COVID-19 we began building a community centre in a village. You came with us on that trip. Supporters in Australia helped raise the funds for the roof. The roof is finally being built, not without a bit of struggle. We could only get the load 70% of the way up the hill and had to carry it piece by piece the rest of the way. Remember, not that many years ago, the people of this village worshipped idols and believed in human sacrifice.

Dale: And you had an exciting time on your way out?

Dolly: By the time we got back in our van to head home, it was pitch black. The muddy lane through the jungle was incredibly slippery, we fell into this ditch and ended up being towed out by a tractor. As you know a trip out to the villages is never boring!

Dale: Anything else you'd like to share Dolly?

Dolly: Can I say a big "thank you" to our friends in Australia who pray for us and are so generous in supporting our work. You are a blessing to so many.

To find ways you can support our growing work in Chhattisgarh, go to our website listed below.

A Reach Beyond team member puts the final touches on a newly installed multi-feature pole at a village in Ghana



Global Spotlight - Reach Beyond New Zealand

A Beacon of Hope for Villagers

The sun has barely crept across the horizon in a rural village in Ghana when the words of the gospel, a daily devotion and uplifting Christian music bounces from one front door to the next. For the first time, villagers are able to kick-start their day with the Good News thanks to the collaborative work of the team at Reach Beyond New Zealand and local partner Theovision.

The installation of a solar powered light pole and Wi-Fi "sheep station" now ensures an increasing number of villages – often without power – have a streetlight and a connection to a string of Christian resources. Equipped with a small Wi-Fi server, locals can download everything from Scripture and worship music to discipleship resources or agriculture and community health material.

Reach Beyond New Zealand CEO Russell Grainger said the reaction of the villagers had been incredible.

"Having the big LED lights on the pole have made a huge difference for the village in ways we didn't expect," Russell said.

"During the night, people from other villages would come and steal their cocoa beans that were laid out to dry. Since the pole and lights have been installed nothing has been stolen. It's a very practical application of Jesus being the light of the world."

The sheep station also serves as a mini radio broadcaster, transmitting a message of hope in the heart language of the community.

About five hours of programming plays at set times each day through loudspeakers including dramatised Bible readings, devotions, Christian music, children's

programs and one designed specifically to empower local women.

Russell said the impact had been remarkably positive.

"At night there is another hour of songs and discipleship material and in the afternoon, a Christian program for the kids when they're back from school – all of this at the request of the village chief," he said.

"God is doing something very special in this village and we are excited that this will be repeated all over Ghana as more poles are installed."

The first installation of the multi-feature poles started in August, with the second being worked on now. There are plans for more than 200 across the next five years.

"When I turned on the radio, I could hear a beautiful song followed by a good message. The word "Cast all your burdens unto the Lord" touched me and I cried when I heard the story you told on that message. No one ever spoke that compassionate word in my life. I thought I lost all my hopes and I will never be able to live a good life. Now, I have hope that I will be healed and I am expecting a new life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

— Tamil Radio Listener, India

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Jenni & Nic de Vries, Shelley & Brent Weeks, Tom Golding, Kathy & Stephen Sutherland

Kununurra Team Takes Shape

By Dale Stagg – CEO

As you know, we are in the middle of a significant change to our team in Kununurra with the recent departure of Stephen and Kathy Sutherland, along with their children Jonathan and Carolyn. They have been part of our Kununurra journey for more than 12 years, and have played a pivotal role in the growth of Reach Beyond's broadcast operations.

I am incredibly encouraged and proud of how our team is responding to this change. Led by our Kununurra Manager, Nic de Vries, we are building a new technical team that includes Brent and Shelley Weeks.

Starting in May, Nic has proven himself to be a valuable addition to our team. His diverse background enables him to have a significant understanding of our broadcast operations along with the day-to-day management of Reach Beyond in Kununurra generally. Of course, a key part of this

is knowing how to lead and manage a team of people who are passionate about wanting to make a difference.

We also recently welcomed Tom Golding to the role of Grounds and Building Maintenance Coordinator. Tom is from Kununurra and brings an extensive farming background to the role. His local knowledge and networks will further help Reach Beyond make a vital contribution to the local community.

Brent and Shelley Weeks are usually found in our Melbourne studios, but with their previous experience with our broadcast operations in Ecuador, they have willingly jumped in to help bolster the technical team in Kununurra and will be spending much of 2023 in the Kimberley.

In short, the Lord provides, and we will be okay... maybe even better than just okay!

REACH BEYOND

GIVE, GO & PRAY

GIVE: Help us continue to be the VOICE and HANDS of Jesus to the unreached. **GO:** Has God been speaking to you about serving or volunteering with Reach Beyond? **PRAY:** Pray that God will continue to open doors for us to be able to share the love of Jesus to the unreached.

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