

Reconciliation



On our latest trip to Africa we got the chance to teach Foundations for Farming methods in a few new places. A big part of what we teach is actually Bible study and mind-set change. We explore what the scriptures can teach us about farming methods. It is a delight to see the lights come on in people when they start to understand the link between the Word of God and farming. We start in Genesis and show that at the fall our relationship with God got broken. That is obviously not new to most. However, that was not the whole story; our relationship with others and with the earth around us got broken as well. But, praise be to God, Christ came to make all things new and now has given us a ministry of reconciliation. This does apply to farming as well, as we are meant to be stewards of the soil God gave us to use and look after.

For many this is a whole new way of looking at soil. As we go through more scriptures, it becomes clear that we are called to be faithful with whatever God gave us. He will reward faithfulness with increase. When we are unfaithful, even what we have will be taken from us.

The people we trained in Uganda got really excited about it all and organised a group to set up a demonstration plot together and visit each other's fields to keep each other on task. Since they are blessed with good soils and a favourable climate, they can look forward to pretty big increases in crop yields.

Another training was in Botswana. They do not get much rainfall, so here the big gains would come from the far more efficient use of available moisture through using these methods. Interesting for us was the much higher levels of education within this particular group.

This message of reconciliation played out in an amazing way while we were at the base for Foundations for Farming in Harare, Zimbabwe. The conference before the training had focused on reconciliation. Some brothers who were there for the farming training had suffered unspeakable atrocities. Some in the genocide in Rwanda and others in other conflicts in Africa. It was amazing to see the Holy Spirit at work in these precious people to the point that they embraced people from the offending tribes who were present. Many tears and hugs followed. This provides a real challenge for me, and probably for you in reading this in more peaceful circumstances in that we have no excuse not to be reconciled with others on much smaller matters (or with the soil under our care for that matter).

John Vlaming
Agricultural Director

Bright Hope News

Two weeks ago, we sent an email to our database regarding two desperate situations that have deeply moved and concerned us here.

As we said in the email, we are not in the habit of making appeals like this (for a number of reasons) and only do so, every few years, when a situation genuinely requires such a boost of finances and prayer.

The situation in DR Congo, because of increased conflict, is having a disproportionate impact – as is so often the case – on women and children. Our focus in seeking to aid our partners on the ground is with children and pregnant women. It is hard to imagine what it would be like to be with child in such trying conditions.

In Afrin and Ghouta we are seeing more devastating conflict, with a focus on the persecution of believers. On the news recently we have also seen chemical weapon attacks in this area. Our Jordan-based partner is wanting to provide aid in the form of food, medicine and blankets.

So far, we have raised about \$20,000 for these needs, which is fantastic. We would like to raise twice this much!

If you're interested in helping out, please visit our 'Urgent Needs' page: <http://www.brighthopeworld.com/urgentneeds.asp>

Life Change Story – Project Namana, Madagascar



We have recently received this encouraging story from Hanitra from Project Namana. Lives are being changed and villages transformed through the impact of OM and this micro-loan programme. The village of Tanantsoa in southern Madagascar was provided with a loan of US\$120 for seed and fertiliser.

Tanantsoa is a small village with 70 families (approximately 1,000 people) in the Androy region of Southern Madagascar. This is one of the villages where a new community of believers was started a year ago. Like most places in Androy, drought frequently hits the area, which causes famine, and because of this, people do not even bother to take the risk to farm again for fear of losing their crops.

When the Gospel was preached in this village, one young woman showed a real passion for God and a compassion for her people. Sinory is only 18 years old. She got married at the age of 14 but her husband left her when she gave her life to Jesus. She is leading the fellowship of believers in her village and, despite her young age, she seems very influential and is changing people's fatalistic mindset towards hope in God.

Sinory, along with her ten fellow believers, has decided to farm again. In the past, they used to perform ancestral rituals and offer sacrifices to the spirits before the start of the season. This time, now the 'Light' has come to the village, Sinory organised a prayer, asking God's blessing on their farming. This year they have decided to grow beans and hope that they will grow well. OM has provided the seeds and helped in other ways.

Sinory is also in charge of the fellowships in another four surrounding villages where she has been preaching the Gospel. She and the village elders are planning to initiate farming for each of these communities for the next season.

This has been a great testimony amongst the people who do not yet know God.

Read about Project Namana (MAD01) at: <http://www.brighthopeworld.com/partnerships.asp?pid=201>

Prayer and Praise

1. Pray for those who are learning what God has to say both about farming and about being reconciled. Pray that Foundations for Farming would continue to impact communities around the world.
2. Thank God for the transformation that is taking place in lives and villages in Southern Madagascar.
3. Pray for wisdom for Sinory as she is leading a number of churches and demonstrating a new way of living. Pray that God would continue to provide for her and bless her ministry.
4. Pray for the many displaced people in both DR Congo and Syria as a result of the wars there and for the people seeking to assist them.



Bright Hope World, PO Box 8928, Christchurch 8440, New Zealand
Phone: (03) 341 0933 Fax: (03) 341 3363
www.brighthopeworld.com
www.facebook.com/brighthopeworld