

# CONNECT with ora<sup>®</sup> NEW ZEALAND

Hope for every child

MAY / JUNE 2013



WORKING TOGETHER...CHANGING LIVES

# Hello friends of ORA New Zealand

Is there a difference between a loving, generous concern for the poor and making disciples of all nations? The single most powerful and lifesaving gift we can offer is knowing the love of Jesus, but does this negate the call of God to help the poor in other ways?

I recently read an article in which the writer protested that the western church has lost its mandate for the great commission and become focused instead on the relief of poverty. So I thought it's time to once again share with you ORA New Zealand's vision, mission and values. ORA aims to provide children with hope for the future by providing holistic help for individuals and communities, by meeting physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual needs. In Acts 3 the lame beggar was healed and walked into the temple praising God. He was healed physically, emotionally and spiritually. To us at ORA the relief of poverty and making disciples go hand in hand.

Lots of words, let me put some flesh on them... the cover photo shows witness bracelets on the wrists of former Arua street children and New Zealand sponsors who 'gave their hands to serve, and their hearts to love'. The colours on the bracelets tell the Gospel story in a personal way for each child. There is a prayerful and peaceful ambience in the home these children now live in. I cannot imagine the children could have found such peace and healing if we'd left them on the streets and simply preached the gospel to them. On the other hand, how could we give them a safe environment without also giving them the TRUTH.

There are a thousand words in the story behind our cover photo, but to put it simply... Hands together, working together change lives – both physically and spiritually!

*Jan Barker*

ORA NZ Country Director

*'Give your hands to serve and your hearts to love.'* Mother Teresa

## **Vision**

Every child should grow up in a protected environment and be led into a promising future through a loving upbringing and a good education.

## **Mission**

To change the lives of children and their communities who are affected by poverty, disease and exploitation. Through the love and power of God, in cooperation with families and through sustainable projects, we aim to provide children with hope for the future.

## **Values**

- Hear God
- Promote justice
- Encourage partnership
- Be family
- Welcome innovation



## **IN THIS ISSUE**

- Read about ongoing projects ORA NZ supports in Uganda, Moldova and Burma
- Hear from child sponsors who visited Uganda in April
- We revisit a project in Tajikistan, started in the 1990's with New Zealand input



Check out our website:  
[www.oranewzealand.org](http://www.oranewzealand.org)

Check out our facebook page:  
[www.facebook.com/oranewzealand](http://www.facebook.com/oranewzealand)

## JANE - A WOMAN OF SUBSTANCE

As I travelled on the back of a motorbike over the red dirt tracks of rural Uganda I marveled at the amazing strength of character of the woman I had just met.

In her late thirties, Jane has suffered such adversity. When a rural Lugbara woman marries she leaves her family to live in her husband's village, usually becoming a servant to the extended family, and only receiving recognition when she produces a son. In the late 1990s Jane's husband served in Ugandan forces in the Congo war and died on the battlefield. Jane had only produced girls. Her in-laws confiscated all her husband's land, casting Jane and her two preschool daughters out. They squat on Jane's brother's land, but even he refuses to give her enough land to feed her small family as he believes the children do not belong there. The family often goes hungry.

We visited Jane as she has received a small grant from ORA Uganda's Microfinance Project. All the women who have received grants have amazing stories and have been successful, but we were drawn to Jane as we'd heard she had built a new house. We walked through the impoverished village, coming to the smallest hut, barely 3 meters in diameter, the home of Jane and her two teenage daughters. We saw firsthand the blessings of several ORA projects. Despite all Jane's effort, the family is so in need that both her daughters are on ORA sponsorship, receiving education and health care. Over the years they have also received goats and fruit trees from ORA.

After training and qualifying for the microfinance grant in early 2012 Jane started buying and selling small food goods such as beans, greens, small fish and peanuts. From the proceeds, she has paid for the supplies her

older daughter, Diana, requires at secondary school. Very few people in this village value girl education; most believe girls are only useful to produce children. Diana is the first child from either side of the family to reach this level of education. Jane has also purchased a goat, avocado and fig trees, and has almost finished building a second hut from her business proceeds.

We went to see Jane's new house, but we found so much more. We found a strong woman who is raising two strong daughters. I truly believe that the ultimate change factor in the lives of Jane's girls is their mother's faith in God and her determined hope for a better future for them.



*Jane and her younger daughter*

**Jane's older daughter, Diana, does not have an individual sponsor. Her education and healthcare are covered by ORA NZ undesignated donations. Please see over page for more information regarding sponsoring Diana or another ORA child.**

# A FAMILY EXPANDED .....

As we walked hand in hand with our sponsored child down the path leading to his grandmother's compound in Northern Uganda, the realisation came that our influence on this seven year old boy's life was enormous. Philliam had been just a face in a photo which we prayed for and paid an unnoticed amount of sponsorship money for each month. Now he is flesh and blood, holding our hands.

As we stood on his home ground, welcomed by his grandmother, we were confronted by their subsistence lifestyle. This little boy was at first apprehensive at the attention given to him and then later overwhelmed by our love and concern for his life. The grandmother works tirelessly and gives all her life and love to her four grandchildren; they've all lost the ones who birthed, loved and nurtured them.

As we cast our eyes around the compound we see that this small area of ground is all they have to sustain and nourish them – a family of six. The land, no bigger than a small residential section in New Zealand, is all they have to grow their crops and fruit on. The fruit along with the goats tethered at the door, progeny of a goat given by ORA donors to aid sponsored children, supplement their meagre livelihood.



Without the ORA sponsorship programme Philliam would not have education or hope for a brighter future that should rightfully be his. His dream of being a teacher is now made possible. The little that we do seems just that – yet it is making a huge difference to them in their survival.

As we prayed a blessing over Philliam, his grandmother and his home we will always remember the tears on his grandmother's face. Speaking through a translator, words were futile as we tried to express all that is in our hearts? We can't – but the love of God can.

We too are overwhelmed this day – the slight shy boy, the hard working grandmother, the simplicity of their life – all wrapped up in the Love of a Father for His children. Our hearts have been forever changed, our family expanded.

*Phil & Wendy*



**In April two Kiwi families visited their ORA sponsored children in Uganda. They went to visit the children whose lives they are changing, and had a life changing experience of their own.**

# OUR AFRICAN ADVENTURE . . . .

What a crazy idea to consider taking your family to Africa... more like a wild idea.

As we flew into the Arua district we were greeted by green pasture dotted with hundreds of thatched roofs grouped in small communities. The red dirt air-strip was clearly visible from the small plane, but that hardly reassured us.

We landed safely and were met by the ORA Uganda team. What a cool bunch of people and so committed to the physical well-being and spiritual health of the children of Arua. With all they have they love the children in many practical ways on behalf of those of us who are sponsors.

The highlight of our trip was most definitely meeting our sponsored children. None of us were fully prepared for the emotional impact of meeting the two children

we have been supporting for years. How do you convey love to someone who speaks a different language? It was hard to explain our feelings but the tears in everyone's eyes seemed to be a clear message in itself.



The idea to visit our sponsored children came out of nowhere in 2011 but quickly became a regular topic of conversation at the dinner table. Shortly after that it became a Family Goal - our African Adventure. Wild? Yes, for sure. But we have absolutely no regrets in having made this decision and the commitments that were necessary to make this idea become a reality.

We now have had a family adventure that will shape each of us for a lifetime, the impact of which will affect our family for many generations.

More importantly, there are children in Uganda who have met some of the New Zealanders who regularly send love, care and prayers. We can only pray that our being there in person conveys a message of faith, hope and love. But may the greatest message be love.

## *The Strong Family*



**Sponsorship programs change children's lives and impact their communities. Sponsorship costs \$45 a month and the impact of those funds is enormous. For more information please contact the ORA New Zealand office.**

# MASHA'S STORY

In summer 2010, a Moldovan couple met three girls at a playground, including fifteen year old Masha whose alcoholic father and mother had abandoned her and her older sister in the autumn of 2009. Over the harsh winter the girls had lived in various places, with friends or strangers, but often spending the night on the street. The couple took the three girls into their home, fed them, cleaned them up, and washed their clothes.

A year after the first meeting in the playground ORA International partnered with this couple and their church. They started looking for a rental apartment so they could help more girls. Some girls live on the streets of Moldova after graduating from orphanages; others have been abandoned by parents who have gone abroad looking for work. In January 2012, Lifegate Moldova was launched initially as a drop-in centre. Many girls would arrive each evening to shower, eat with the family and talk about life.

Thanks to support from New Zealanders they now have good beds and some of the girls live at Lifegate. Masha still stays with them. As her living conditions have improved her performance at school has also improved. She is even winning school competitions. Masha is actively involved in Church life, helping in youth and children ministry. At the beginning of winter she was given a warm jacket, winter shoes, textbooks for school and dental care.

## Lifegate Programs

- Thursdays: Bible lessons
- Fridays: Health & Hygiene
- Weekends: Cooking Together
- Do It Yourself - making jewelry, cards etc.
- Cinema - viewing and discussion of Christian films
- The Girls of God – moral/spiritual education, psychological support

Masha's life has changed so much after that chance meeting in a playground in 2010. Only three winters ago Masha was at high risk of being trafficked, spending many nights on the street in the freezing snow. In the northern hemisphere winter has just gone and Masha didn't go hungry, and she didn't need to give herself to a stranger to have a roof over her head for the night.

When it snows now, Masha can't wait to have a snowball fight! All because a young couple took three girls into their home and some people on the other side of the world heard their story and gave a little support.



**So far eleven girls have benefited from love and care in Lifegate Moldova. There is a great need for funds to purchase long term accommodation for this ministry. Can you help? Every little bit you give will rescue more girls and go a long way to alleviate the ongoing tragedy of human trafficking in Moldova.**

# BURMA

## SAGA'S STORY

Saga is typical of a child in Project: AK-47's Upper Mekong Basin projects. The social workers best guess is that Saga's dad died when he was a few months old and his mother succumbed to tuberculosis when he was six.



Burmese children in weakened family structures are at high risk. They die of malnutrition and disease, become indentured slaves of the wealthy, or are conscripted into the military. Saga doesn't remember much about his earlier years. He has only one thing to say about them: Hunger!

Young Saga was getting shuffled around the village's bamboo and thatch homes and had no real place to settle. It was just a matter of time before something worse happened to him.

Saga was brought into a Project: AK-47 home seven years ago. He's now sixteen. As he's been loved he's gradually opened up. He's always been a bit introverted and a deep thinker. He cares about others though, and is eager to help... especially the orphaned and impoverished. He can empathise. He's a polite kid, a hard worker in school and an awesome young man. ORA New Zealand partners with Project: AK-47 to fight for children like Saga.

**You could join our rescue and care campaign today with a one off donation, or by sponsoring a Burmese child for \$47 per month.**

# TAJKISTAN

## SALIM'S STORY

Catch a glimpse down the track of a work started about 15 years ago with deaf children in Tajikistan. How encouraging to read of the on-going influence of New Zealand donations and personnel. Voice of the Deaf is still thriving under local management, and is changing the lives of deaf children and adults through the gift of sign language.

Salim's enthusiastic sign language account of his holidays enthralled and entertained his classmates, teachers and visitors. His outgoing friendliness belies the fact of his isolated upbringing – cut off from his family and village by the wall of profound deafness.

Only when he started school did he learn sign language, start to build friendships and begin to understand the world around him. Being a bright boy, he's learnt fast, but when boarding school lets out for the year, he returns to his remote village and spends a summer unable to communicate with others – perhaps that's why his story was full of fisticuffs and blood!



**Would you help Voice of the Deaf to extend their project – your generosity will transform the lives of Tajik children.**



# HOW CAN YOU HELP?

## PRAY!

Prayer is the essence of ORA. Please pray for the children and work of ORA worldwide.

## GET INVOLVED!

### Movie Night

We're having a movie night in Hamilton to raise funds for ORA projects. Come hear from sponsors who have recently visited ORA Uganda and see *The First Grader*, a heart-warming, African movie based on a true story. 14th June, 5.30 pm at the Lido Theatre in Centreplace. \$25 per person, refreshments included. Phone or email the ORA NZ office to purchase tickets.

### Garage Sales

A wee reminder about garage sales for ORA, it's a win/win! You de-clutter your home and children's homes around the world benefit.

## GIVE!

### Sponsor a child

Sponsorship programs change children's lives and impact their communities. For more information please contact the ORA New Zealand office.

### Donate

We are very thankful for all donations and regular payments received towards the many ORA projects. You can donate in several ways:

- Online at [www.oranewzealand.org](http://www.oranewzealand.org)
- By cheque with the enclosed response slip
- Directly into ORA's ANZ bank account: Chartwell Branch, Hamilton 01 0370 0032261 01



The ORA NZ office sends out six email newsletters per year – a great way to keep up with ORA news in-between **CONNECTS**. If you'd like to go onto our email database drop us a line at [info@oranewzealand.org](mailto:info@oranewzealand.org) We promise not to overload your inbox!



## ANNUAL RECEIPTS

If you regularly donate to ORA New Zealand an Annual Receipt is enclosed, or you will have received an Annual Receipt via email. If you have not received an Annual Receipt please contact the ORA NZ office.

ORA New Zealand is a registered Charitable Trust (CC24875). However as most ORA funding goes to serve people in need overseas, ORA does not have IRD donee organisation status and donations are not eligible for tax credits.

We would love to hear from you! If you have any questions about ORA New Zealand or just fancy a chat, you can send us an email, give us a call or post us some mail...

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