

 **PARTNERS**
RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT



**WHERE
NO ONE
ELSE
GOES**



FIRST WORD

PLEASE DON'T TELL ME IT CAN'T BE DONE

In May I was in Sittwe, Burma. Our team visited Rohingya people whose homes have been destroyed and loved ones killed by communal violence. The Rohingya are Muslims in a Buddhist country and are among the poorest people in the world. They are also referred to as the most friendless people on earth.

We had been told it's impossible to go there to help them. It could have appeared like we had a solidly shut door in front of us. Without help these Rohingya children would keep dying in silence and continue to be marginalized and abused.

No. Not acceptable. Rohingya children bear the very image of God. Until we have done what is possible to help them, we have not done our duty to love justice like God does. Until we have attempted what is possible, how can we appeal to God asking for impossible, even miraculous interventions?

It would take pages to describe the multitude of impossibilities that turned into opportunities as we have sought to find ways to help the Rohingya. Since June 2012 we have been there. When I was there in May, we fed a community of 5,000 people who hadn't eaten in six days. We helped evacuate approximately 1,500 people in the face of a coming cyclonic storm.

When we left Sittwe I felt overwhelmed with gratitude. The work we are doing in many of the different ethnic states (Karen, Kachin, Shan, Chin, Karenni & Arakan) is in the face of impossibilities.

Even now, as Burma is featured for reforms and progress in the news, we continue to face the challenges of major roadblocks on the ground. The fact is, very little has changed in the ethnic states. People continue to suffer because of systemic injustice and violence.

Don't tell me it can't be done. We are capable of much more than we believe ourselves to be. Don't underestimate the power of God! Great things can be done by small groups of transformed people. That is good news, and you are part of our community efforts.

Your brother and thankful friend,



Steve Gumaer
CEO

82 students educated in
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
& empowered to develop
their own communities.



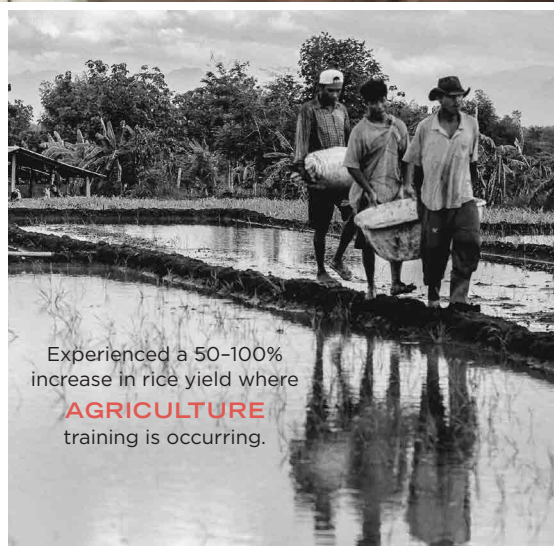
PROJECT UPDATES



43 COMMUNITY SUPPORT
workers trained to help empower displaced
& vulnerable people in Kachin State.

SHELTER

provided for 5,000 displaced
people in Arakan State.



Experienced a 50-100%
increase in rice yield where
AGRICULTURE
training is occurring.

> **100,000**
KACHIN IDP'S
FACED THE BRUTAL **COLD**
WITH VERY FEW SUPPLIES
+ **SMALL SHACKS**
TO LIVE IN.

+++

KACHIN
STATE

BY BRAD HAZLETT

I WAS IN THE MIDDLE OF A SITUATION BIGGER THAN ANYTHING WE COULD POSSIBLY SOLVE.

Already high in the mountains and surrounded by steep rugged terrain, I found myself somewhere on the border, chilled and wet. It is a place where around 1,000 Internally Displaced People (IDP's), at least 600 of them children, are suffering in difficult living conditions and desperate for help. I had just taken a grueling four hour car ride with my four new friends on a former logging road that followed up the mountain to more than 9,100 feet. The road, if you want to call it that, was carved out of the mountain, winding between a rock face and a cliff. At least in the dark it looked like a cliff. There, we found Christian Kachin families, straddling the border, in their simple shelters of bamboo and plastic perched like birds nests over the cliff along the road. There were also government officials on the road and at one point my hosts wanted me to hide until they passed. About the time we arrived, it started to rain. And for the next 15 hours we had rain and snow and sleet.

I felt overwhelmed. This is hardly a safe haven for so many families. It didn't take long for me to realize the needs around me were greater than we could meet. Even so the people were not going to benefit much from our feelings of sympathy. Together, with some local contacts, we strategized. It was decided that we would buy shelter and send it in by trucks. Sadly, the materials were going to cost more than I had to give. We decided that food would be the next best alternate response. I only had enough money to buy food and to rent three large transport trucks to feed the people for less than a month.

I spent that night in a cold army bunker. My thin jacket was hardly a defense against the sleet and rain striking through a flap of plastic. The next morning while it snowed four of us walked up the hill, well above 10,000 feet, behind the bunker to the front line. We stood in a trench drinking hot tea with the soldiers, listening to their stories of recent attacks by the Burma Army.

The villagers had their own account of what had happened and how it changed their lives. They described how they could hear sounds of fighting close to their village and how they ran for their lives to a nearby mountain, taking only what they could carry. After two days of constant hiking they continued on until they reached this hide side on the border. One villager was captured and tortured by the Burma Army. Some risked returning to their village to get their belongings, only to find all their houses destroyed and animals killed. *"How can we have hope of returning to our village," they cried, "when the Burma Army's artillery is in the hills surrounding our village? We have lost everything."* They are afraid of further attacks and I didn't know what to say. For quite a while we talked about the difficulty of living here high in the mountains. I saw hundreds of children shivering as they sat in school. I expected their greatest hardship to be the cold. However, they all agreed that their biggest problem is because of their elevation they cannot grow rice. >>>



"We have no way to provide for our families." I realized then how important it was that we were there. For the 148 families living in these horrible conditions, not knowing what their future holds, **PARTNERS HAS GIVEN THEM AN OUNCE OF HOPE.**

This trip, as with so many others, has helped reinforce a few things in my mind. First that the work of Partners is far from over. Talks of peace, sanctions lifted, relationships warming, new hope for Myanmar/Burma; we've all heard the dialog. Some have asked about Partners becoming irrelevant. All valid questions in light of what fills the news. But it's what isn't in the news which becomes our concern. That's why stories like this should be in the news. That's why the plight of the Rohingya should be in the news. That's why land confiscation in Shan State and the future of the refugees at Mae La refugee camp should be in the news. These things are proof that all is not as it seems. Secondly, we are unique in that we as an organization go where very few others are willing to go. Finally, we can't do all of this alone. And, by alone, I'm not referring to others coming alongside us, while that too is extremely crucial. I'm talking here about us not doing it all, by ourselves.

While at this hide site on the border I fought the urge to hop on the back of a motorcycle and travel further inside. I wondered what desperation was out there, yet not discovered. More injured? More hungry? More sick? More suffering? More waiting for help?... But, wait! Are we the answer for all these needs? That's when I realized that as God provides, it's up to us to be available. Responsible in all that we do and leave the rest up to Him. As long as He provides, we will respond. It will always be part of our DNA! ■

MAY 2013 Cyclone Mahasen formed in the Bay of Bengal & headed towards Arakan State. Thankfully, the storm weakened and tens of thousands of vulnerable Rohingya were saved from the onslaught of the storm.

Prior to the cyclone we did everything we could to warn those who would be the most affected and worked tirelessly to evacuate as many as possible. The Rohingya, however, refused to move because of fear. Days before, the authorities had trucked in about 200 police and soldiers carrying guns, formed a line, and marched into the camp intending to move the people by force. While women and children began to scream, our team leader ran out waving his arms, putting himself between the soldiers and the people. The soldiers



ARAKAN STATE LATEST UPDATE

backed up until they were out of the camp and the people finally calmed. After being targeted and brutally attacked in the past, the Rohingya were unwavering in their distrust saying "we would rather face the cyclone than the government".

But, miraculously, they trusted us. And, after uprooting 1,600 people who were so poor that they redefine the word, we worked to help them return to their makeshift camps. We bought tarps to replace their straw, and helped them with food and basic needs for the days to come. As our time in Arakan State came to a close, I was deeply moved when a Muslim leader graciously thanked us for being such a support and good friends during the crisis, clearly knowing we're Christians.

The Rohingya people are our friends. We did for them what we would hope for ourselves. God is good to lead us and keep us humble; His affirmation is all we need. We don't apologize for helping people out of compassion because that is what we do.

BY STEVE GUMAER

GIVE
ONE
%

"Eight million people die every year for the price of going out with your friends to the movies and buying an ice cream. Literally for about \$30 a head per year, you could save 8 million lives. Isn't that extraordinary? Preventable disease - not calamity, not famine, nothing like that. Preventable disease - just for the lack of medicines.

That is cheap, that is a bargain." —BONO

WHAT IS YOUR 1% ?

\$46,044
CAN
AVG. YEARLY INCOME

1%
\$460.44

\$1,950
BURMA
AVG. YEARLY INCOME

1%
\$19.50

THE AVERAGE AMERICAN SPENDS



\$960
PER YEAR
COFFEE

2%



\$6,336
ANNUAL REPAYMENTS
NEW CAR

14%



\$799
FOR A PRETTY
IPHONE

1.7%

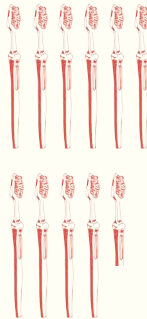
YOUR 1% COULD PROVIDE



9

**FAMILIES
GIVEN RICE**

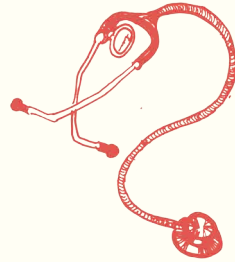
ENOUGH FOR 3 WEEKS IN
ARAKAN STATE, BURMA



nearly **11**

**HEALTHY
CHILDREN**

PROVIDED WITH
HYGIENE SUPPLIES
FOR A YEAR

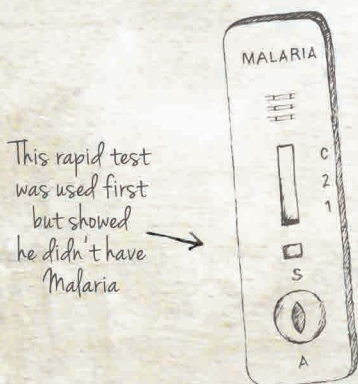


a little **< 1**

**COMMUNITY
MEDIC**

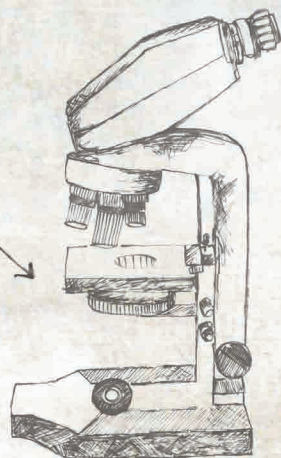
TRAINED NEAR THE
THAI-BURMA BORDER

2 YRS OLD
JAW EH KU
— LITTLE BOY —



This rapid test was used first but showed he didn't have Malaria

not convinced... the medics were able to double check on the microscope.



BY HEIDI FRIESEN

I STOOD NEAR THE OUTPATIENT AREA, SMILING as two Karen medics stapled up new additions I had brought for the laminated photo gallery on the wooden wall of the clinic at Lay Tong Ku. They stepped back and grinned with a sort of shy pride at the images of their team in action.

Our attention then shifted to the live action of that moment. The other nurses and medics were gathered around our newest patient, and as I moved toward them I could sense an atmosphere of unusual urgency. Then I saw the child. He was resting weakly against his father's chest, his soft brown eyes blinking often and slowly. His dad had carried him to our little jungle clinic from their nearby village in Karen State, Burma. Good thing too. Two-year-old Jaw Eh Ku was obviously very sick.

The medics kicked into gear. One began a head-to-toe assessment, a second took vital signs, and a third asked the dad questions about his son. There was no fever on exam, but dad said there had been earlier, so another medic drew blood for a rapid malaria test and a malaria slide. His rapid test was negative, but interestingly, after an hour had passed and it was possible to examine the microscope slide, we found that he did in fact have malaria - the *Plasmodium falciparum* (Pf) strain. Malaria Pf is the most life-threatening variety because it has the ability to invade the brain of its host. From the look of little Jaw Eh Ku, we suspected that this was exactly what was happening to him. He was becoming more lethargic, eyes closed, arms and legs dangling limply.

My heart flashed back to the memory of another little boy from Burma, a Rohingya child the Partners medical team cared for in Arakan State during a short

relief trip last December. We had no way of testing for malaria then, but we were pretty sure that he too had malaria Pf. And that it had gone cerebral. We prayed. We did what we could for him medically. But because the treatment we had to offer was too late and too little, because there was no other health care available, and because oppression and violence had paved the way for disease and prevented an appropriate response, we had to watch that child die. I miss him, and I never even knew his name.



Mercifully, Jaw Eh Ku's story would be different. As I watched it unfold, I was very aware of why. He had access to a good clinic with trained medics and a supply of medication less than a day's walk from his village. Thanks to the fledgling ceasefire in Karen State, his father was able to bring him for care without being blocked or attacked. And on arriving, he received an accurate diagnosis because the equipment and knowledge to do malaria testing were available in the middle of the jungle. This is no small thing. The clinic in Lay Tong Ku exists because of the cooperative work of Partners, the Free Burma Rangers, the local church, a committed team of medics, and a faithful donor in the United States named George. It provides the best source of healthcare in the area. If it had not been there, Jaw Eh Ku would have been defenseless against the deadly disease racking his little body.

As it was, our little fighter had excellent reinforcements. A nurse volunteering with Partners had just given a training update on malaria the day before, so the medics were armed with the most up to date knowledge on treatment. We coached them through a difficult IV start, dose calculations for the required medications, and a plan for monitoring the child's condition. We all prayed, and often. It was a rough night, but one of the medics took care of Jaw Eh Ku the whole time. And in the morning, he woke up alert and able to sit on his own. His eyes had that two-year-old spark again. He even found the strength to protest a bit when it was time for him to take his medicine. Our team breathed a prayer of thanks. He was going to be all right.

A month later, I was back - another visit to Lay Tong Ku, another batch of laminated pictures. I asked about Jaw Eh Ku. Home and healthy. As new photos were stapled to the wall, I looked around at the ongoing work they were there to celebrate. My heart suddenly filled - with love for these people, hope for their future, and strongest of all, praise for the evidence of God's goodness in that place.

KAREN STATE *EDUCATION* ESTD 2005

8 years of support has increased the number of students being educated by 124%

this year... **25,000**

PEOPLE WALKED FOR
2 WEEKS *apx.* TO COLLECT

160,000 *kg*
OF SCHOOL SUPPLIES

556,781

PENCILS &



913,295

NOTEBOOKS

— MORE
& TO HELP

5,579 *TEACHERS*

TO EDUCATE ... 

122,620

STUDENTS 

IN SHAN STATE
IT'S JUST BEGINNING...

ONLY 4%^{apx.}
OF KIDS GO TO SCHOOL

WITH INVESTMENT FROM PARTNERS,
COMMUNITY ACTION HAS BEGUN
TO HELP SCHOOLS BECOME SELF SUSTAINING.

 **SEVEN**
CORN FARMS
4 CATTLE FARMS 
 **1** COMMUNITY SHOP
ONE  **FARM** & more...

ARE PROVIDING FOR
16 SCHOOLS, 21 TEACHERS

 **462** 
STUDENTS

WE ARE DREAMING OF FREE, FULL LIVES
FOR THESE CHILDREN & MANY MORE

*Meet the
team*

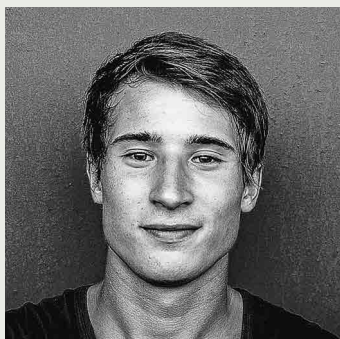
ALONE WE CAN DO SO LITTLE; TOGETHER WE CAN DO SO MUCH

HELEN KELLER



SAYBOH

Sayboh started working with Partners at the end of last year. He is from Karen State, Burma, and loves that he can help his people and bring hope for their future. He is married to the lovely Esther, and they are new parents to Nathaniel, born on 14 July 2013. Sayboh is a part of the Mapping & Monitoring team and lives in Mae Sot, Thailand.



RUHAN SNYDERS

Ruhan is a South African/Kiwi who found his way to Partners because of a strong desire to follow God wherever He sends him. Ruhan has been working with Partners for the past four months as the Teams & Volunteers Coordinator, helping others to come and serve. When he isn't coordinating, he is traveling all over Burma and capturing extraordinary photographs.



Goodbye to THE CHARMAN FAMILY

The Partners family is sadly saying farewell to Dan, Kathryn & Zach. They are moving back to New Zealand and their departure is a big loss to us all. They have been with Partners for five years; Dan in Member Care as well as Teams & Volunteers and Kathryn as a leader in our Medical Team. They are fun, passionate people and they will be missed greatly. Thank you, Dan and Kath, for showing us how to love and live more like Jesus. We will miss you more than you know!

DIRECTOR'S DESK



WE ARE THE RESPONSE

Dear Friends,

At the time of penning this, the city of Mae Sot, Thailand, where Partners has one of its field offices, is currently experiencing some of the worst flooding in decades. This follows on the heels of the worst flooding to hit my city, Calgary and Southern Alberta, in recorded history. In both instances, large numbers of people are affected but it is always those who live closest to the margins of poverty who suffer the worst. The response to these two disasters, however, will not be the same.

Having worked in the field of crisis relief for the past 12 years, it has been very encouraging for me to see friends, neighbors, and government agencies responding with such compassion and generosity here in Southern Alberta. We truly are blessed to live in such a great nation, even though at times we will go through some hardships like this. I can hardly think of a better response possible to this crisis. Although some errors have been made, communities will return to some semblance of what they were before the flood.

In Thailand, the flood response will happen on a much smaller scale and if government relief funds are given it might not help those in the direst of circumstances. In the agriculture-based economy surrounding Maesot, it is estimated that 80% of the work force is comprised of migrant laborers, mostly illegal migrants. They cannot appeal to the authorities for assistance because they risk imprisonment and deportation or, at the least, stiff fines that they most likely will be unable to pay.

This is where nonprofits like Partners step in and fill the gaps between what is offered by the government and what the community is unable to provide. In fact, I just heard that we're even giving temporary shelter in our office to over 50 migrant laborers whose field huts are flooded. Specifically, we seek to help people and communities in the country of Burma as the government is either primarily the reason behind the displacement or is complicit in it.

Our ability to help families and communities in Burma is only possible because of your generosity. For this, I am immensely grateful, and I urge you to continue with us as we fill the gaps in education, healthcare, and community development. At times of crisis, we do as much as we can to assist these victims.

Thank you again for your support and please consider joining us with the 1% campaign as we continue to make a difference in the lives of thousands of people in Burma today.

Greg Toews

Check out our events page on WWW.PARTNERSWORLD.CA for a full list of our fall speaking tour dates!

Partners Relief & Development
33130 Springbank Road
Calgary, Alberta
T3Z 2L9
CANADA

info@partnersworld.ca
www.partnersworld.ca

OUR VISION Free, full lives for the children of Burma

CONTRIBUTORS Steve Gumaer, Brad Hazlett, Heidi Friesen, Ruhan Snyders, Craig Garrison, Sacha Olson, Stephen & Kelli Spurlock.

PHOTOGRAPHY Stephen Spurlock, Sacha Olson, Brad Hazlett, Steve Gumaer & Heidi Friesen

DESIGN Sacha Olson

Partners Relief & Development is a registered charity in the USA, Canada, UK, Australia, Norway, New Zealand and Thailand

NORWAY

Partners Norway
Staffeldtsgate 4
0166 Oslo
Norway
Telephone +4799 301 919
info@partnersnorge.no
www.partnersnorge.no

CANADA

Partners Relief & Development
33130 Springbank Road
Calgary, Alberta T3Z 2L9
Canada
Telephone 403 538 2870
info@partnersworld.ca
www.partnersworld.ca

NEW ZEALAND

Partners Relief & Development NZ
PO Box 40284
Upper Hutt 5018
New Zealand
Telephone 027 587 2865
info@partnersworld.org.nz
www.partnersworld.org.nz

USA

Partners Relief & Development
PO Box 912418
Denver, Colorado 80291-2418
USA
Telephone 909 748 5810
info@partnersworld.org
www.partnersworld.org

AUSTRALIA

Partners Relief & Development
PO Box 4117
Narre Warren Sth VIC 3805
Australia
Telephone +61 3 9013 7676
info@partnersworld.org.au
www.partnersworld.org.au

UK

Partners Relief & Development UK
PO Box 557
Mexborough
S63 3EN
Telephone +44 (0) 1709 578904
info@partnersworld.org.uk
www.partnersworld.org.uk

SUBSCRIPTIONS For a free subscription to Partners magazine and for information on how you can help us in our mission, please contact us.

NONPROFIT STATUS NOTICE Partners Relief & Development (Partners) Canada is a nonprofit organization with federal tax exempt status. Any contributions given to PRAD are tax deductible for Canadian taxpayers.

DISCLAIMER In the event of a particular project being over subscribed, Partners Relief & Development will redirect your donation to other needs of the same community project, or to an equally worthwhile project.