

A close-up photograph of a young child with dark, curly hair and large, expressive eyes. The child is holding a clear plastic water bottle to their mouth and drinking. A hand is visible, supporting the bottle from the side. The background is softly blurred, showing what appears to be an outdoor setting with a white structure.

**BE
GOOD
NEWS**

FALL 2017

FIRST WORD

Friends,

Last week, I heard lots of stories from people who had suffered a great deal under ISIS, but none affected me more than one grandmother's story. This woman was raising her three grandchildren alone because in 2015 she was shot in the leg and face by ISIS fighters in her hometown of Kobani, Northern Syria. She showed me her scars and asked through her tears, "What good is it to talk to you? This will not bring back my life, my son, or my daughter-in-law."

Her grandchildren watched when ISIS soldiers shot and killed their mother and father. When I visited them, they sat beside their grandma in the blistering heat of the Syrian desert in silence, heads down, expressionless. At the time of the massacre that left more than 400 people dead, the oldest child was just 8 years old. One of the ISIS fighters cut her finger off. The youngest was 9 months old, just a baby. Another ISIS fighter attempted to cut her leg off, abandoning his macabre task halfway, leaving the child with a permanent disability. The middle child miraculously came through this nightmare with no physical wounds. This is hard to read, I know. But I want you to see how desperate these kids were for Good News after surviving that ordeal.

You showed up with me last week to bring this family some really Good News. Sitting on the concrete slab, we affirmed with them that they are loved by God and us. We talked and prayed with them, gave them money for food and essentials, and contributed to an after-school program for them - and the 886 other children we know were orphaned that same day - where they will get help dealing with the trauma they experienced, their homework after school, and social integration with their new community of friends.

For these three siblings, and tens of thousands like them affected by war and conflict, we show up to be Good News. This is central to our shared ethos and faith. To do for others what we want done for us defines the integrated life we endeavor to live; a life that meets the diverse needs and suffering of children with God's great love. What good is it for her to talk to us? Your generosity answers her question: it is very Good News indeed.



STEVE GUMAER

President, Partners Relief & Development

Good news in the numbers

We're forever being impacted by the reality that behind every number our team captures in their reporting lies someone's story. While every single figure of a person helped is Good News to us, more important is the Good News these figures bring into the story of every individual reached by your love so far this year.



69

The number of people provided with **seeds** and trained in **organic farming techniques**. That's good news for **Saw Kho**, who now has new skills and seed to plant on his land.



226

The number of **feminine hygiene kits** two migrant workers have been trained and paid to sew since May, which is good news for them and school girls like **Naw Paw Ler Htoo** who don't have to skip school anymore when they are menstruating.



877

The number of students provided with a place in a **community-based home** so they can attend school away from their village, which is good news for **Naw Paw Ree** who just graduated Grade 12.



70,131

The number of people you've helped in the **Middle East** this year, which is good news for girls like **Shaima**, whose smile reminds us that even a simple gesture of love in a war zone brings life; and more importantly, **hope**.

A FUTURE ON TWO FEET

By Marci Haigh

(Pranee as a child in Shan State)

On a hot and steamy afternoon, she pulled her motorbike into the alley leading to the closely-packed row of migrant workers' homes. Before she even settled both feet on the ground, the shouting started.

"You need to help me!" a gaunt man angrily demanded. "I can't stay like this anymore."

"Teacher, this family is making problems for everyone!"

"It wasn't my fault, he started it!"

For a split second, she considered putting her bike in gear and heading somewhere else. Instead, she took a deep breath, lifted up a silent prayer, and settled in for a long day of counselling. Pranee's mission is to be Good News to suffering communities - even when part of the suffering is what they are doing to one another.

For the past seven years Pranee has led Partners partnership with Light of Love Church to support migrant

workers and their families in Mae Sot. Though migrants might only make \$5-\$7 per day, many are attracted to work in Thailand because it's better than alternatives in Myanmar. Still, when every coin is measured so carefully, any financial problem can be a disaster.

When between jobs in the agricultural season, they face a lot of difficulties: parents begin to argue if keeping their daughter in school is still worth the cost; they put off treating illness because they can't afford medicine. The constant stress of cramped conditions, harassment from exploitative employers, bribes to police, families separated as older children may be trafficked to other cities for higher-paying jobs – it can be overwhelming.

For Ko Min Lwin's family, this feeling of being overwhelmed is all too familiar. As migrant workers with six children, making ends meet is a constant pressure. But your investment in Pranee's work allows her to bring much needed Good News to families like theirs. While they're grateful for the support they receive for their children's education, as well as regular food and medical assistance, the encouragement Pranee brings with her warm smile and compassionate heart leaves a bigger impact than a simple food parcel could ever provide.

Pranee says: "As humans we have three main parts. We have a physical part, an emotional part, and a spiritual part. We try to think of ways to provide help to all those parts. We listen to them and their problems. Some people are not Christian, but

we have the opportunity to explain about God's power."

Her life is a living testimony to God's power. Born and raised in war-ravaged Shan State, Myanmar, she and her husband found their way to the border looking for work after they married. They faced all of these same problems. Unsure if anyone was listening, she prayed and ask God to save her threatened pregnancy. After delivering a healthy baby girl, her faith has grown ever since. Through her work in the migrant community, she now spends many hours taking people to hospital, advocating for a child's right to be registered at the local school, and counseling families unravelling from stress.

Whatever the issue, Pranee tells them: "Partners can help you today to take the sting off of this problem. But the one who can help you your whole life is the Lord. The choices that we make for our lives are important too."

When she walks among her community these days, she is gratified to see the change. "When we first met them they seemed so desperate. They had no hope. Later, after we explained to them about the life of Jesus, then they learned how to love each other and love their family."

Some of those she met in crisis are now fellow community workers. One teaches sewing skills, one helps translate at the hospital.

"This is my dream becoming reality. I would like to see the migrant people be able to stand on their own feet. This is what I would like to see the most for the future."



HOW TO CHANGE THE (IR) WORLD

Jenn Tendero & Fran Derocher

"I hate being a Rohingya. We are being tortured in Myanmar. Now in Bangladesh, we have no rights. Nothing. After this cyclone, we don't have a roof. We are living under the sky. We have no future."

When a cyclone hits the coast of, say, Florida, the damage can be extensive and take years to repair. But when a cyclone hits an internment camp whose homes are made of bamboo and reeds, the damage is devastating: houses are swept away like sandcastles, raw sewage fills the dirt streets, and there isn't a dry area anywhere to eat or sleep.

"There's no roof. We are just drinking water. The little food we had in our home was all damaged after the cyclone," said Setara Begum, a mother of two, including a five-month old. "My children are crying for food. I am helpless. I have no money. There's no hope. I don't know how I will raise my children."

This was the scene when our relief team arrived in the aftermath of Cyclone Mora, which skirted the Myanmar coast before making landfall over Bangladesh on May 30, severely impacting hundreds of thousands of people, including thousands of Rohingya refugees living in camps in Cox's Bazar.

Like is so often the case with the Rohingya, authorities and non-government organizations were not present in the camp and refugees had to repair the damage themselves. For one of the world's most persecuted ethnic groups, it was yet another situation in which the international community seemed deaf to their suffering.

But halfway across the world someone was listening. When Devanshi Bangle read a Partners Facebook post about how Cyclone Mora in Myanmar had destroyed over 20,000 homes, she decided to help. She organized a fundraiser to supply tarps, medical



supplies, and bags of rice and invited her friends to join in the relief effort.

Because when something breaks your heart, your friends respond, and when something gives you joy, it gives them joy too. So inviting your friends to invest in something you believe in is a no-brainer way to make change. This is how Devanshi was able to rally her friends and raise over \$1,000 in a weekend, which we used to purchase tarps and bags of rice. Our team then sent photos of the distribution for her to share with her friends.

Thanks to so many who faithfully gave, we were able to provide 320 food packs, 400 tarps, and medicines to help those who were sick from contaminated water and having to live outdoors in the rain. For mothers like Setara Begum, this means a bit of hope where once there was none.

As our relief team member shared, "In this work, it is essential to focus on what we can do, not what is left


undone." And it is in this spirit that people like Devanshi respond with a simple decision to help, because it's not okay for kids to get rained on while they sleep. Or people like Scott and Tina Berry, who paddled their kayak eight miles on their summer vacation to raise money for clean water in the Middle East because every child deserves to drink water that won't make them sick. Or people like the VanLieres, who gave kids access to free early childhood education because that was more important than getting gifts for their daughter's first birthday in August.

Decide what problem you want to help solve, decide how you want to fundraise for it (we have a list of ways to fundraise on the last page of this magazine) and take five minutes to create your page on our website. Then invite your friends to help you reach your goal. This is how you change the world, one dollar at a time.

The background is a solid black color, densely decorated with watercolor-style illustrations of lemons and lemon slices. The lemons are in various shades of yellow and orange, with some showing the white pith and seeds. Two glasses of lemonade are positioned in the upper middle section, filled with yellow liquid and white ice cubes. The overall style is artistic and hand-drawn.

Lemon-Aid

By Jenn Tenderso



This past spring my children and their cousins held a lemonade stand to raise money for our family to adopt a boy with special needs from overseas. Adults came and gave generously because it's hard for grown-ups to resist cute kids in yellow t-shirts waving streamers and holding out lemonade they made. We sure were blessed by those adults.

But we were blown away by the kids. They pulled piles of change and lint out of their pockets; they emptied baggies of rolled-up bills they had been saving for something special; they offered birthday money, Christmas money, graduation money. Some of them gave every penny they possessed to bring home a boy they had never met.

No wonder Jesus wanted the kids to come to him. Kids love so freely and with such hope, and they understand that to love is to act. So when Daynee, Corson and Calynn heard that Rohingya kids living in an internment camp in Myanmar don't have enough to eat, they promptly mixed up a big batch of lemonade, set up a stand, and raised money to buy 4 bags of rice so that those kids would have food to eat.



A few weeks later, our team did their monthly purchase and distribution of rice, oil and vegetables for the Rohingya, only this time they were able to add four additional bags of rice. Four extra bags of rice means that four extra families had food for an entire month, and that is very Good News, brought to the Rohingya by three children on another continent.

But it doesn't stop there. Because teenagers from Missio Dei Church in Wrigleyville, IL - and everywhere - love to eat, they decided to raise money with a spaghetti luncheon so other kids can eat too. We are pretty sure this is what it means to bring God's kingdom to this earth.



Let's follow Jesus' lead and let the kids come: let them sell lemonade or cookies or plates of spaghetti. Help them help others. Because more often than not, when kids see a need their natural response is to help. And kids who love others grow up to be adults who love others, and that is very Good News for the world.

WHERE RELIEF MEETS DEVELOPMENT



Fran Derocher

For 23 years, my wife Lori and I ministered in Africa with Mission Aviation Fellowship. It was a great privilege to be a pilot meeting so many needs in a unique way.

We have been with Partners now for just over one year. I tell folks we used to fly over it all, and now, working on the emergency relief side of things, I have to actually walk through it. It is a very different view from the ground.

As followers of Christ, we all seek to 'Be Good News' right where we are. Your support of Partners means that this Good News can be extended to some very remote areas and to people in great need. Your amazing generosity allows us to truly make a difference to many whom the world has not heard of or remembered. We are being the Good News for you, in the name of Christ.

Emergency relief work is exactly what it sounds like, providing help in the face of various emergencies. Sadly, our work is generally connected to tragedies caused by people. My focus is helping people called the Rohingya, an ethnic and religious minority group in Myanmar, who the government has made stateless. They are now living in a large outdoor prison camp. Partners has faithfully served these folks for over five years now.

We provide people in the camp with as much basic food as we can afford. We look for those who need medical help and provide the funding for life-giving care. We help repair bamboo structures after destructive storms have hit. Through it all, we keep an eye out for a way to move from primarily relief work to development, which is no small task given the context.

Let me tell you about one amazing Good News story. On one of our trips to provide relief in Myanmar, I was introduced to a young man named Amin, who has polio. He has no use of his legs. Imagine living in one tiny room, and never leaving it. That is your life: no ability to move around. No hope, no future – at the age of 21. Can you imagine?

Our friends showed us his home and mentioned that his mother would love to care for him, but they had no ability to construct a home that would fit them both. I asked a question I can only ask because of generous donors such as yourself: "What will it cost?" 1,000,000 Kyat, or US\$800. With that amount of money, we could build a home big enough for his mother and Amin. It would have a strong roof on it, a back porch for cooking and a front porch to hold a shop to allow Amin and his mom to earn their own income and become self-sustaining. Thanks to you, I said "let's do it."

That was almost a year ago. Today I saw that completed home. It is an amazing structure compared to his old room. Their initial business start-up is to sell top-up phone cards. Who knows what will be next? Imagine how that family now feels with a sturdy home and a new business. That, my friends, is truly Good News.

My mantra has become: we can't help everyone, but we sure can help someone. When you invest in others, you don't solve everyone's problems, but you sure do solve someone's problem, and that is Good News. Thank you for being Good News to a young man with polio named Amin, his mother and so many others.



About Time


Ryan McCabe

No amount of training could prepare me for the question:

“What size diapers and how many?”

Well, there it was. I didn’t even really know there were different sizes of diapers. Apparently in Mosul, Iraq, there are five sizes, which makes sense, I suppose, I’d just never really thought about it. The question came in a long line of other questions such as how many rice bags and how

many boxes of formula we could afford and what kind of biscuits do we want (the tastier ones, obviously) and how many boxes of tomato paste, flats of juice boxes, and a plethora of other questions that dragged us slowly through the hot, dusty Iraqi afternoon. I tapped away furiously at my calculator and wrote down lists of numbers and added and changed and subtracted and tried to keep everything straight



with flies buzzing around my face and sweat dripping slowly into my eyes. The clock slowly moved on. Tick tock, tick tock.

We had arrived in Mosul after a long car ride from Erbil, and we headed straight to the shop to organize our supplies for the distributions we would make over the following days to the civilians fleeing ISIS-controlled neighborhoods in West Mosul; civilians more or less held hostage since ISIS took control of their city in the summer of 2014.

We were there to fill a critical gap in services and care between the front line where the fighting was and the camps and other NGOs, the closest of which is around 25 miles (40km) away, where the fleeing civilians can find a place to rest and a meal. In order to meet the needs of the families fleeing this conflict, we brought cookies, rice, tomato paste, thousands and thousands of water bottles, and yes, diapers, all needing to be ordered, loaded, delivered, and negotiated. It took time. In fact, what struck me the most through all this is that it really always comes back to one thing: time.

Before I started working with Partners, my perception of relief work was very dramatic; lots of loading and unloading of food and last-minute saves and amazing recoveries and herculean efforts and natural disasters, kind of like a much lower-budget, less well-dressed James Bond film. But my experience has shown me something different; it's not usually about dramatics, it's about time. It's about long flights, long layovers, hours spent at check points, waiting for paperwork, negotiating and ordering

supplies, sitting in hot vehicles, sitting on plastic chairs in dark rooms, sitting on dirt floors, swatting at flies, waiting. Nothing I did there took a herculean effort or a skill set that I've honed over years and years of special training. It took time.

And this principle applies all the way down the line. The people back at the office who put in the hours planning the trip and applying for paperwork, and the people who spent time putting together fundraising campaigns, the people who took the time to read about this issue, and took the time to watch the videos and look at the photos and feel in their hearts that something needed to change. The money that was generously given to be spent on five different sizes of diapers, rice, and bottles of water is itself a piece of someone's time in paper form; someone's hard-spent time lovingly collected and handed over to be spent in the service of others. A long chain of spectacularly non-spectacular events that form together through time to bring diapers and biscuits and rice to families fleeing unspeakable horror.

Where we spend our time is the most accurate indicator of what's important to us. We don't need more James Bonds; we need more people who sit in waiting rooms and at desks, and spend hours buying diapers and take time out of their lives to make others feel loved and valued.

Because the paradox of it all is this: taking time out of our lives in the service of others brings life back into our time.

ACTION

It's easy to look at the problems in the world and feel helpless. Here's a list of **TANGIBLE** ways you can make a **DIFFERENCE**.



ACTNOW.PARTNERS.NGO

Without Spending A Cent

Email your friends and invite them to invest in kids affected by war and conflict. A personal invitation from you is **THE** most effective way you can make change.

Decide what you want to do to raise money and **create a fundraising page** in less than five minutes. Spread the word about your campaign, and help transform bad news into good.

Pray that our team members can embody the love of Christ in some of the darkest places.

Share our Facebook posts with your friends to spread the word.

STEPS

With a Little Time

Host a cocktail party/coffee/dinner/game night/picnic for your friends and invite one of our team members to talk about why we do what we do.

Have flexibility in your life at the moment? **Apply to intern** with one of our teams in **Southeast Asia** or the **Middle East**.

Invite Steve to preach at your church when he is in the States.

With a Handful of Cents

Support our team members.

Sign up to be a monthly donor and know you are changing the world, one child at a time.

Go to our fundraising page and invest in someone's campaign.

ACTNOW.PARTNERS.ORG

Free, Full Lives
For Children affected
by **CONFLICT**
& *oppression*

WWW.PARTNERS.NGO

PHOTOGRAPHY/DESIGN: Ryan McCabe, David Hoppe, Fran Derocher

EDITORS: Jenn Tendero, Claire Gibbons, Thalia Kehoe Rowden

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

USA:

Partners Relief & Development
PO Box 912418
Denver, Colorado 80291-2418
USA
Phone: +1 909 748 5810
info@partners.ngo
www.partners.ngo

CANADA:

Partners Relief &
Development
33130 Springbank Road
Calgary, Alberta T3Z 2L9
Canada
Phone: +1 403 538 2870
info@ca.partners.ngo
www.partners.ngo/ca

NORWAY:

Partners Norway
Postboks 58
7633 FROSTA
Norway
Phone: +47 99 301 919
info@norge.partners.ngo
www.partners.ngo/norge

AUSTRALIA:

Partners Relief &
Development
PO Box 552
Mentone, VIC 3194
Australia
Phone: +61 3 9013 7676
info@au.partners.ngo
www.partners.ngo/au

UK:

Partners Relief & Development UK
Box 161
2 London Bridge Walk
London SE1 2SX
info@uk.partners.ngo
www.partners.ngo/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) is a nonprofit organization with a 501(c) (3) federal tax exempt status. Any contributions given to Partners are tax deductible for U.S. taxpayers.

DISCLAIMER

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