

HELPING HANDS

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SERVING WITH NEW TRIBES MISSION



Jonie and I just returned from two very long, full months in Indonesia, our first of many trips in our new ministry of serving the tribal missionaries worldwide. In total we had 31 flights, visited 3 islands, worked in 6 villages and 4 towns. We slept in 11 different beds and in 10 airports. We worked an average of 14 hours a day with one day off in two months, spent over \$10,000, (\$5,500 on flights, \$3,000 on luggage costs, gave away \$1,000 worth of tools and medicine, \$600 for a generator and another \$700 on housing, food, etc.). We installed, repaired or surveyed for 4 hydro power and 5 solar power systems, fixed 13 generators, 3 motorcycles, 3 vans, 6 watches, 3 hot water heaters and an oven. Jonie worked with dozens of tribal people with malaria, pneumonia, elephantiasis, infections, burns, cuts and missing toes. We spent 62 days away from home in an unfamiliar language and



culture, meeting the mechanical and medical needs of many people. One day these people can meet their Savior, and we can worship Him one day, together, in the same language. Now that we're done with our first trip, we can say this ministry will be much more expensive and exhausting than we originally thought! We are so grateful for those that partner with us to reach these people for Christ. The following are a few of the stories and more can be found on our blog: www.ntm.org/jason_mellinger.

Airports were to be a common place for us to sit for hours because the tribes we're working with are so remote and on separate islands all across the country. I (Jason) brought a number of things with me; an entire hydro power



system, pieces to repair and rebuild other solar problems, and many heavy tools to do the work. Usually I was going in blind, not knowing what exactly needed to be fixed. Sometimes the missionary would say, "I don't really have anything broken," but when I got there, they had a list of 10 things I needed needed to fix. So, I learned to bring 80 pounds of tools divided into manageable boxes. The tools and equipment had to come, but clothes and food were left behind. By the end of the trip leaving the food behind, helped me shave off just about 25 pounds. That translated not only into financial savings, but also being able to carry in more tools and equipment.

**EXPAND THE
REACH OF THE GOSPEL IN INDONESIA**

The first tribal visit was one we could drive part of the way, then rent motorcycles to get within a 45 minute hike. Sounds easy enough, but we were fraught with disaster as neither the average Indonesian, nor the average missionary, keep good maintenance on their equipment or vehicles. First, it was a timing belt on the missionaries vehicle that resulted in me tearing the engine apart on the side of the road to replace the belt and two bent valves. Second, the van we rented to finish the trip in while we waited for the valves to come from the city, lost a drive shaft. We made it to the place where we



fortune to send the generators back and forth to be fixed. Our goal is to make sure the missionaries are teaching and translating, not focusing on mechanic issues. In this case we saw that the best way we could help was to buy a new generator. When the tribal missionary found out we bought him a new generator, he wrote:

Awesome Awesome Awesome!!!!

I can't even believe it! It is like Christmas before Christmas!!! I still can't believe you guys did this for us. That is awesome, you guys truly are a huge blessing to us. I think the Indonesian field leadership should make you guys stay over here :) You guys have made more of a difference in just a couple weeks than many make in months. Still can't barely believe you guys want to do something like this for us!!! Viva la Mellingers!!!

Appreciate you guys! -S. Phillips

We went to the second village to install a hydro system. Though we couldn't speak their language, the people worked alongside us all day, every day. They were always helping dig ditches and holes, sinking poles, carrying pipe and wood and diverting streams. We gave away carabiners, knives and a headlamp to show our gratefulness for their help and their friendship.



rented motorcycles and headed up a cliff-side trail, where many places were just wide enough to get a motorcycle past the several hundred foot drop to the river below. Once half way, one of the bikes got a flat tire, and we had to wait for another driver to come along. We finished the 45 minute hike at the end of the motorcycle trail and reached the village just before dusk. I had two days to measure and monitor the sun, where it shines and where it's shaded, as well as the water flow from the river. My job was to give direction for the tribal missionary as to whether they should use solar or water power.

Next we visited the island of Papua where we worked in three villages. We installed a hydro power system, completely wired a house, installed a solar system and fixed a number of issues with existing systems and repaired two generators. One of the generators was beyond repair. The tribal missionary pays \$1,600 each time a flight comes to his village, so it was costing him a



After about a week, the hydro system was in and power was being made. The missionaries had already taught Phase one: starting in the beginning with creation up to the introduction of their Savior and His sacrifice for them. While the missionaries taught Phase One again for the rest of the village, they were teaching the new believers Phase Two which goes through Acts and Romans. Each week the missionaries would print study materials for them to use. However, there wasn't enough power to use their printer, and so they were about 6 months behind in backlogged printing. But now, with the hydro installed, they are starting the day with fully charged batteries



and can start getting printing materials into the hands of the people, and the message can spread.

stove. That night I set up a tiny solar system that could be used by the local pastors to have a light for studying. The missionaries said that it usually takes them a week to get set up when they arrive, but with us being there they were done by dinner time and could start teaching the very next day!



In the next village, I installed a new solar power system for a single woman and fixed numerous broken equipment for the other two missionary families. One solar system hadn't been working properly for some time, and with arcing, fires, and burned wires, it was a mess. Frequently,

The next morning we flew to another village. We were on the ground for 10 minutes before we headed out into the jungle to assess the possibility for a hydro system in the near future. The rest of the day was spent climbing around the mountain and hacking our way through the thick jungle making measurements of water flow, elevation and taking pictures, then we headed back to town, reorganized, got another flight to Jakarta and repacked everything to meet our weight limits for the flight back to the US.

I worked until Midnight and up each morning at 5. I completely wired one house from scratch, installed and repaired solar power problems, wired and installed lights, fans and switches, repaired generators, dug ditches, installed a radio antenna for the daily communications with the town, plumbed, soldered, hammered and nailed until just before the helicopter picked us up to take us back to town.

Most of the tribes we visited had medical clinics each morning where Jonie used her nursing degree and experience to serve the people with their wide variety of illnesses. It was a very growing time for her and stretched her knowledge a great deal. God brought things to memory that she had learned when she needed it most. In one tribe, the older people said, "We have so many kids now that the missionaries have been giving us medicine. No one dies anymore." They have recognized the importance of the treatments and their lives are being saved because of it.

Early the next morning, we flew to another island where two more villages awaited us. In the first tribe, the missionaries had established a strong indigenous church, and every 6 months or so they would return and spend a couple weeks meeting with the church leaders. I reinstalled their generator engine, got both of the missionaries' bikes running (after 12 years of being broken), replaced a rotten tire tube, installed new brakes, made some carburetor adjustments, and fixed a hot water heater and

Through all of our stories, there is no better way to say it except, God did this.

Jason and Jonie

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