



# Myanmar Hope Christian Mission, Inc.

“You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving.” - Amy Carmichael

January 2015

Warm greetings in the Name of Jesus, and happy new year!

2014 was a great year. Your prayers, love gifts, and encouragement were the means through which God was able to accomplish some amazing things in Myanmar. Palal, Kikim, and all of the many dedicated volunteers send their love and thanks to you.

If they could sit down with you, one on one, they would tearfully express their deep gratitude for all that you have done and what you are enabling them to do in the Name of Christ for their people.

This ministry is a team effort, and you are a vital member of this team! Please be encouraged by the fact that our Father in Heaven is perfectly aware of all that you have done and are doing for His Kingdom, both in Myanmar and around the world.

2015 looks to be a momentous year for Myanmar Hope. There are big projects underway, and even bigger projects on the horizon. We really need prayer warriors to lift us up this year more than ever before.

Our prayer for you, and we hope your prayer for us, will be:

**“Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.” Galatians 2:5-10**

## December Trip Report

In December 2014, Chuck and MaryAnn Cherry, and Kevin and Joseph Hughs traveled to Yangon to visit with Palal, Kikim, and everyone at Hope Boarding School. It was a wonderful experience, as always.

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Chuck and MaryAnn arrived first, on December 16th. Having made this trip for five years in a row, we are starting to get used to the long flights. However, the trip is still exhausting and we are always very happy when our plane finally arrives and we see the smiling faces and happy waves of our loving family as they greet us through the glass partition at Yangon International Airport.

This trip was especially noteworthy in that we did not have to take multiple taxis back to the hotel from the airport. Palal and Kikim picked us up in their very own vehicle! It was so exciting to watch Palal drive up in the new (for MyHope) 1998 Toyota Land Cruiser. We have been praying and saving for years, and in 2014 God provided the rest of the funds needed to purchase the vehicle. Praise God!

Thank you to everyone who prayed and gave sacrificially in order to make this great blessing a reality. The new vehicle has made an incredible difference in the lives of everyone at HBS.



Kikim, Cherry, Palal, and Solomon



Palal and Kikim were very happy to greet us with the new Toyota Land Cruiser

Palal shared with us that the new vehicle has reduced their monthly transportation costs by roughly half. Even more important, though, is the reduced stress level in their lives made possible by the new vehicle.

If you can try to imagine living, working, doing ministry, and caring for thirty children in a city of five million people, and doing so without a vehicle of your own, then you will begin to understand some of the stresses they experienced. When you add in the additional anxiety of not knowing the taxi drivers (some have been known to be violent at times) and you will understand even more why this new vehicle is such a blessing.

Palal and Kikim said many times how grateful they are to have this vehicle, and they wanted us to be sure to let everyone know how thankful they are.

## Trip to Northwest Myanmar

Two days after we arrived in Yangon, we headed back to the airport to fly up to the northwest for the Annual Kuki Christian Convention. It is over 1,100 kilometers from Yangon to Tamu, and driving takes over twenty hours on some very dangerous roads. The flight from Yangon to Mandalay to Kalay, however, takes four hours, including the stops.

In Kalay we hired a van with a driver for the final four hour leg of the trip to Tamu.

### Visiting with Nukha

On the way to Tamu we stopped in Canaan Village to visit with Kikim's mother, Nukha. She was involved in a bad accident on November 14th and nearly died. She was on her way to Tamu to settle some affairs related to her late husband's military pension when the truck she was riding on rolled over.

It seems the only transportation at the time was on the back of a truck loaded with sacks of rice. Nukha climbed up on the rice, along with a dozen or so others who also needed a ride to Tamu.

Somewhere along the route, the truck went off the road and tipped over, spilling the 100 pound sacks of rice and throwing off all the passengers.



Sacks of rice being loaded onto trucks

One woman was killed outright and several were seriously injured. Somehow in all the confusion everyone forgot about Nukha. When they finally realized she wasn't standing among the survivors they immediately spread out looking for her. However, she was nowhere to be found.

When they started turning over the large sacks of rice, someone noticed her foot sticking out among the pile. They quickly and carefully lifted the heavy bags of rice off of her limp and broken body. She was not moving and did not appear to be breathing; they all thought for sure she was dead.

Finally, after all the injured were tak-



MaryAnn Cherry, Nukha, and Chuck Cherry

en away to the hospital, the bodies of the two "deceased" women were put into the back of a pick-up and driven to the morgue. By this time it was several hours after the accident.

When the two bodies arrived at the morgue, the doctor on duty inspected them. Much to his surprise, Nukha was breathing! They immediately rushed her into intensive care.

As soon as we got word of the accident we sent out an emergency prayer request. Within hours, hundreds of people around the world were praying for Nukha's recovery.

She remained in the hospital under observation for a couple of weeks, but miraculously she had only a small fracture in her right arm and no internal injuries. Within a week she was able to sit up, eat food, and visit with people. She is an amazingly strong woman!

It was just over a month since her accident when we arrived at her home. She was on her feet, smiling and very eager to serve us tea. She still has some pain in her chest, and she had obviously lost some weight, but otherwise she looked quite well.

Thank you all for your prayers for

our precious Nukha. We are so grateful to God for sparing her life, and for allowing us the chance to visit with her in her home again!

### Visiting with Palal's Father, Mr. Lut Kho Sei

We were also able to stop in Bokkan Village for a brief visit with Mr. Lut Kho Sei, Palal's father. Several months ago he fell and broke his hip. Because of his advanced age (93 years) and no access to quality health care, he did not receive a hip replacement. Since then he has been bedridden and in a lot of pain. Everyone expected him to pass soon after his accident, but he was still alive at the time of our visit.

A few weeks before our visit MaryAnn had a dream in which Palal's father came to us and said that he would not see us again on Earth, but that we would meet him in Heaven. In her dream, MaryAnn asked him, "Please wait until after our visit."

On Friday, December 19th, we stopped at his home to greet him and Jonah, and pray with them. And, though he was not completely lucid because of his pain, he knew us immediately and warmly greeted us.

While we sat by him and prayed for him, he kept squeezing our hands and saying, "Chuck and MaryAnn." When we

saw how he was in so much pain, MaryAnn felt bad for wishing that we could see him again. Yet, it was such a blessing to sit by his side and hold his hand, and to know that he was aware of us.

Palal's father went Home to be with the Lord on January 18th, 2015. His funeral was attended by hundreds of people who came from near and far to pay their respects and comfort the family in their time of grief.

We will meet Lut Kho Sei in Heaven again, but until then, may he rest in peace in the arms of his Savior and Lord.

### Khampat Christian Church Dedication Service

On the way to Tamu, the team also stopped in Khampat Village to see the new church construction and to help them dedicate their new building.

**Khampat is one of three church construction projects that Myanmar Hope was able to help with in 2014.** The other two were Namihan and Tingkaya. (The annual convention was held in the new Namihan Christian Church.)

The concrete covering the brick walls was barely dry, but the congregation was very anxious to have the dedication service while we were all there. It was



Preparing for the ribbon cutting ceremony at Khampat Christian Church

our joy and privilege to take part in the service, and we shared greetings from all of you in America who have given sacrificially in order to make the new building a reality.

### 5th Annual Kuki Christian Convention

We are still praising God that the Christians of northwest Myanmar were able to celebrate their annual convention this year **in one of their own churches!** To fully grasp the importance of that statement a little history is in order.

In 2010, the first Kuki Christian Convention was held in Kalay town in Chin State. At that time, the country was just beginning the transition from a brutal military dictatorship to a quasi-civilian government. However, many tight restrictions were still in place, and foreign visitors to Kalay were warned very sternly by the immigration officials not to even attempt to travel outside the city limits.

That first convention was held at Christmastime, since that was the only time of year the Buddhist government would allow such a large gathering of Christians. We rented a small Christian college campus for the weekend, and held the convention in the college's chapel.

It was a wonderful time, and we had a great convention, but at the same time



Pastor Jonah and his son with Palal and their father, Mr. Lut Kho Sei



The 1st Annual Kuki Christian Convention in Kalaymyo

we knew that many more people could come if the convention was held further north. Still, everyone was extremely grateful to God that the convention was even allowed at all.

The second and third annual conventions were held at the same location the following years. Each time, though, the government restrictions were fewer, and there seemed to be a growing sense of freedom among the people. And when the convention would draw to a close, everyone would say, "Next year in Tamu!" (Tamu is the largest town that is most centrally located for the people and churches that Myanmar Hope works with.)

In 2013 Palal took a big step of faith and decided to have the fourth annual convention in Tamu. He felt the time was right for such a move, and so the plans were made.

There was a problem, however. The only place in Tamu with enough space for our gathering was the Town Hall! Would the officials allow a large gathering of Christians to meet in a government-owned building as prominent as the Town Hall?



Worshipping God in the Tamu Town Hall



Dr. T. Lunkim of Manipur, India

The local officials took some convincing, but Palal was up to the job, and to the wonder and amazement of everyone, over 600 Christians gathered together for a whole weekend of singing, dancing, preaching, teaching, and fellowship!

That brings us up to December 2014. When we began discussing plans for the fifth annual convention, it was assumed that we would again hold the convention in the Tamu Town Hall. However, the cost to rent the hall, and to transport 600 people back and forth between the eating place and the hall was pretty high, and our funds were limited. So Palal decided that if the Namihan church building was completed in time, the convention would be held there!

Well, as you all know, Namihan Christian Church was completed on time, and that is where the Fifth Annual Kuki Christian Convention was held, from December 19th through the 22nd, 2014. Praise God!

Since at least 1986 it had been illegal to build or repair church buildings. But, praise God, in 2014 the local and regional government began issuing official permits to build new churches!

One of those churches was Namihan

Christian Church, on the outskirts of Tamu. The people were so happy and excited to be able to meet and worship together in their brand new church building!

**Dr. T. Lunkim of India**

Dr. T. Lunkim, from Imphal, Manipur, India, came over to speak at the convention on Sunday and to help dedicate the new building.

This man of eighty-eight years spoke for nearly three hours on Sunday morning. The people sat listening in silent respect and appreciation for this great man of God. Many of them had only heard stories of Dr. Lunkim and of his many exploits. Now that they had a chance to see him and hear him in person, they were soaking it in.

He probably would have spoken non-stop for three hours, but he was interrupted in the middle of his talk by an earthquake!

As the building shook, he kept right on talking, as if nothing were happening. Many of the mothers, however, got up and took their children outside. Palal made the decision that we should take a fifteen minute "potty break," as by that time it was after noon and the people had been sitting in church since before 9:00 am.

Fifteen minutes later, Dr. Lunkim got up again and finished his talk, speaking for another hour or so.

After the service we all broke for lunch, and then went over to the Tamu preschool and church office building, where all the food was being cooked and served to the 600 plus people that were attending.

Later that afternoon Dr. Lunkim returned home to India. It was such an honor and blessing to visit with this great man of God again, to share a meal with him, and to watch and listen as he taught his people in their own language.

Dr. Lunkim is a church planter, a Bible translator, a seminary professor, a Bible teacher, and much more. He started a seminary, a hospital, an orphanage, and he is instrumental in the government of hundreds of villages and churches scattered across Manipur, India. <http://kukiforum.com/2006/04/the-most-rev-dr-t-lunkim-our-man-of-destiny/>



Two incredible men of God: Dr. Nehkholal and Dr. Lunkim

Lord willing, we will return for the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Kuki Christian Convention, to be held March 4-6, 2016, somewhere in northwest Myanmar. We hope that you will join us at that time. It will be a life-changing experience—we guarantee it!

Chuck and MaryAnn Cherry

## Report by Joseph Hughs

*[Joseph was accompanied by his father and MyHope Board Member, Mr. Kevin*



At The Golden Duck Joseph gets some free chopstick lessons from Ngam Len and Lhing Neo

*Hughs. They left for Yangon the day after Christmas, and stayed through Wednesday, January 7th.]*

When I went to Myanmar I didn't really know what to expect. We had an itinerary which laid out what we were supposed to be doing each day, but I still had no idea what the trip would be like. I expected to help the kids over there, and to help Palal and Kikim, but what happened was just the opposite.

I thought when I went over there the kids would learn things from me, such as English and other related things, but I ended up learning more from them than I ever could have taught them.

Seeing how happy they are with what little they have is so humbling. We have so much over here that we simply take for granted. Seeing the kids and how happy they are was a valuable experience. It taught me that no matter how much stuff we have, it will never make us happy.

The only thing that can make us satisfied is a relationship with God. It seems the kids understand that, while I still want the newest video game console, even though it is the last thing I need.

Going to Myanmar isn't just about helping the kids. While the kids are overjoyed to have you there, and your presence does do them a lot of good, I found that going over there did more for

me and my relationship with God than I did for the kids. I am tentatively planning to go back next year, and words cannot describe how excited I am to go back.

Joseph Hughs



Miss Hat Nei Hoi (Nei Boi) and Kevin Hughs

## HBS Update

### New Fire Escape

Last fall, our good friend Karen Siehr volunteered to organize a garage sale to raise funds for Hope Boarding School. Laura Crater agreed to host it and several other friends volunteered to help with the sale.

The fund-raising goal was \$3,000.00, which would be used to build and install a fire escape on our new three-story building. At that time the back doors on the new building still opened out onto nothing but air!

The doors obviously remained locked



New fire escape under construction

for safety reasons, but we needed to install a fire escape, both for the safety of everyone living in the building and to bring the building up to local code standards.

Praise God that the sale was a great success! The funds were set aside until Palal could get back home and have time to work with the contractors to design and build the fire escape. As of this writing, the construction is nearly complete, and the new stairwell is looking very good!

Thanks to Karen, Laura, and everyone else who helped make the sale a resounding success!

### Student Exams

The school year in Myanmar is quickly coming to a close, and the students will take their end-of-year exams in late February and early March.

For our eleventh grade students, this exam is especially important. If they can pass this exam, they will graduate from High School and will be able to go on to university. However, the odds of them all passing are very low.

We have written in past articles about how difficult the high school matriculation exam is, and how few students in Myanmar actually pass each year. The numbers are staggeringly low, and it is rare for students to pass the

exam on their first try.

The numbers are even worse for ethnic tribal people, since they have so many more challenges, such as language barriers, poverty, access to good schools, and so on.

We really hope and pray that our students will pass, but even if they don't, their time at Hope Boarding School has been an incredible benefit to them and to their families. As Palal reminded us earlier this year, success is measured in different ways by different countries.

In America, we measure student success by academic achievement. This includes graduating with a high G.P.A. and going to college, at a minimum. From there, students are judged by which college or university they qualify for, whether their family can afford to pay, and so on.

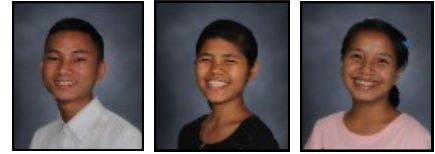
For an eye-opening look at the state of education in Myanmar, please go to this link and watch a short video:  
<http://goo.gl/GCO9de>

In the ethnic tribal areas, the standard of success is very different. For instance, the first measure of success for a child is whether he or she survived long enough to even attend school! Beyond that, if a student gets beyond third grade it is considered a success. If a student makes it all the way to middle school, that student is doing very well. To make it to high school, and then be able to finish high school, is a great achievement, limited to a small number of students each year.

To actually graduate from high school with a passing grade on the national exam is well-nigh a miracle for most of the ethnic groups, but especially for the Chin people.

Will you please pray for our eleventh grade students to be able to pass their

matriculation exam? They are very nervous and anxious, and this stress is affecting them physically and emotionally. Please pray for Mang Pu (Hao Gao Mang), La Lam (Neng Ja Lam) and Ci Cing (Neng Nei Cing). Thank you!



Please pray for our 11th grade students Mang Pu, La Lam, and Ci Cing

### Thang Len Mang

The trials and tribulations of Thang Len Mang (Ma Mang) are not yet over! This poor boy was diagnosed with leukemia in January of 2011, and since then he has been in and out of the hospital countless times.

Last summer it appeared that he had finally beaten the disease, and we were ready to hear the doctors declare him to be cured!

Then in November he got very sick again and had to go back into the hospital. He has been in the hospital since then, receiving more chemo treatments. His loving father came down from Bokkan Village to stay with him in the hospital and take care of his daily needs.

For the very first time we had the great privilege of visiting Ma Mang and his father in the hospital. We delivered some Christmas gifts, prayed for him, and tried to encourage him as best we could.

Please pray for his complete healing,



Visiting with Ma Mang at the hospital

but also that he will not fall so far behind in school that he won't be able to catch up. So far he has done very well in his studies, in spite of his cancer.

According to medical reports provided by Palal, MyHope Board Member Dr. Saira Silas believes that Ma Mang is doing well. However, he is not yet cured of his disease, and he really needs our continued prayers.

### Annual HBS Field Trip

Thanks to your generous donations, we were able to take the children on a field trip again this year.

We started out with an educational visit to a local soy milk factory, run by our new friend Mr. Rick Chase, CEO of Snowball Soy, Inc.

The director and staff at the factory location very graciously took time out of their busy schedules and gave us a tour of the facility. They explained how the soybeans are turned into milk and other nutritious products, and they showed us the machinery and equipment used in the process.

At the end of the tour they provided us with free samples of their delicious soy milk and packages of soy crisps, a crunchy chip-like snack.

After our visit to the soy factory, we took the kids to the amusement park. This was such a big hit last year, and the kids had so much fun, that we decided to do it again.

We spent the rest of the day at the



At the Snowball Soy milk factory



The water ride is always a big hit with the kids!

park, and the kids had a blast riding on the rides, over and over again. We stopped mid-afternoon for an ice cream break, and then the kids went back to the rides for another couple of hours.

Finally, we ended the day by taking the kids to their favorite restaurant, The Golden Duck. They love going there because they can really stuff themselves full of their favorite foods and then go out back and play on the playground.

### Upcoming Summer Break

After the students finish their year-end exams many of them will be returning to their villages for the summer break (March, April, and May). This is the first time that Palal and Kikim have determined that the students should return to their villages.

Most of the students have been at HBS for four or five years now. Some of those who have been there the longest are starting to forget what life in the village was like. They are now used to three good meals every day, a clean and healthy living environment, and so on. Some are even beginning to take such things for granted.

Palal believes that they need to be reminded of where they have come from, and what their friends and families still struggle with on a daily basis, in order to better appreciate how far they have come.

Not all students will go back, however. The 8th grade students, who will be transitioning into 9th grade, and the 10th grade students who will be transitioning into 11th grade, need to remain at HBS for extended tutoring during the summer break. Without this additional tutoring they will fall behind the other students at their school, and will have a hard time getting caught up.

Please pray for the students who will be returning to their families and villages over the summer. It will be a culture shock for some of them! We will continue to provide funds to their families to feed, clothe, and care for them while they are there, but it will still be a difficult time for some of them. They will return to HBS at the end of May in time to get registered for the next school year.

### Hope Boarding School Needs List

Some of you may be wondering how you can help the students and staff at

Hope Boarding School. We have a lot of items on that list! Here are a few:

Tile and Paint the Stairwells.....	4,000.00
One Commercial Washer .....	1,500.00
One Commercial Dryer .....	1,500.00
One Water Tank.....	650.00
Two Electric Meters (each) .....	300.00
Two Gas Stoves (each) .....	85.00
Soy Milk (60 bottles per week).....	40.00

Please feel free to contact us with any questions you may have regarding this list, or anything else related to Myanmar Hope!

## Snowball Soy Milk

We hope to begin providing Snowball Soy Milk to our HBS students at least twice a week, starting with the new school year in June.

CEO Rick Chase has generously offered to provide us with milk at near his cost of production, but even at that low price, sixty bottles of soy milk each week is more than we can squeeze into our current budget.

However, the amazing health benefits of soy milk for our children will be so great that we really want to try to accomplish this goal.

A weekly supply of sixty bottles, including delivery, will cost about \$40.00. Will you please consider helping us to provide this super-nutritious soy milk for our children?

We encourage you to visit the website of Snowball Soy Inc. to learn more about the incredible health benefits of soy milk, especially for children.

<http://www.snowballsoy.com/>



At the Snowball Soy milk factory

## Palal's Visit to America and Israel

On Wednesday, October 8, 2014 Palal arrived in the U.S. for a visit. It had been 2 ½ years since his previous visit. After only a couple days to rest he left for a twelve day tour of Israel with a group from Harvester Christian Church in St. Charles, MO. This trip was provided through a gift from a very generous friend. Palal said that he always dreamed of going to Israel but he never thought it would actually happen!

His visit there gave him a better understanding of many passages in Scripture, and he believes his experience will benefit his people in Myanmar as he shares these insights with them through his teaching ministry.



Palal on top of Mt Carmel in Israel

One big problem the people have, he says, is trying to visualize the places and things referred to in the Bible. Palal took many pictures and videos which he will be able to share with them to help increase their understanding of the Scriptures.

When Palal returned to the U.S., he attended the 31st Harvest of Talents in Lincoln, Illinois. The Harvest of Talents (H.O.T.) raises funds for worldwide hunger relief. These funds are distributed by International Disaster Emergency Services (IDES) to ministries like Myan-



Mrs Carolyn Neal introduced Palal at the Harvest of Talents as he prepared to pray for the live auction

mar Hope. IDES and the Harvest of Talents have been such a great blessing to the work of MyHope in Myanmar!

On Sunday, October 26th, Palal shared a ministry update to two joint Sunday School hours at West Side Christian Church. West Side has also been a great supporter of the work in Myanmar, and we thank God for the Missions Team, the Prayer Team, and all the generous individuals from that congregation.

On Monday, Tuesday, and Friday of that week Palal also had the opportunity to share briefly with the three "Alive With Christ" women's Bible study groups at West Side. The Tuesday and Friday morning groups each sponsor a student at Hope Boarding School, and all three groups have generously donated funds for special projects and gifts for the HBS students. We want to give a big shout-out "Thank you!" to the ladies of WSCC Alive With Christ and their leaders: Caren Hughs, Tari Butler, Laura Crater, and Nicole Rottinghaus.

On Saturday evening, November 1st, we shared a meal with the folks from Martinton and Darrow Churches of Christ. followed by a ministry update from Palal. Board Member and Senior Minister Dr. Chauncey Lattimer Jr. and his wife Jesse were so gracious to open their home to us for the night.





Palal sharing at the MyHope Fundraising Dinner

On Sunday morning Palal spoke during two services and the adult Sunday school class at Milford Christian Church in Milford, Illinois.

The first week of November Palal spoke during two Chapel services at Springfield Christian School. He also went to each classroom to personally thank the teachers and students for their valuable prayer partnership with Hope Boarding School.

He gave updates on the HBS students that each class has been praying for. Many of the SCS students had never met Palal, and it was a special week for all of us. We want to especially thank Laura Crater for making this Prayer Partnership a reality. These two schools, locat-

ed over 8,000 miles apart, are joined together in the bonds of love and in the Holy Spirit.

On Friday, November 7th the 2nd MyHope Fundraising Dinner was held at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Springfield, with almost 300 people in attendance. The theme of the evening was "Building on a Firm Foundation; Jesus Christ the Cornerstone."

We want to thank all who contributed to make the evening a success: those who worked behind the scenes to coordinate the event, the individuals who shared from the podium, Nelson's Catering for a delicious meal, and everyone who generously donated to the **Northwest Myanmar Church Rebuilding Project. Enough funds were raised that evening to finish three buildings and begin a fourth!**

The next day Chuck and MaryAnn hosted an open house for anyone not able to attend the dinner or who wanted to visit one-on-one with Palal. We are so grateful for the many good friends we've made through the ministry of MyHope!

Besides all of the events listed above, while Palal was with us he was able to get an eye exam, a general physical ex-

am, and some overdue dental work. Thank you to Dr. Saira Silas and Dr. Rob Burris for their care and generosity to Palal!



Khampat Christian Church's new building



Namihan Christian Church's new building

After 2 ½ weeks in Springfield, Palal left for the east coast to spend some time with our board member Tom Spoons and his wife Terri. He also spent time visiting some relatives in Maryland. While out east, Palal spoke at Mid-Atlantic Christian University several times and at Fairview Christian Church.

On November 25th, Palal left the U.S. to return to his home and family in Myanmar. He arrived at Yangon airport just before midnight on the 26th, Solomon's 10th birthday.

As much as we all love to visit with and hear from Palal when he is here, it puts a lot of stress on the ministry and their family when he is gone. Thank you, Palal and Kikim, for your great sacrifice and service for God's Kingdom! We are so blessed to know you and to partner with you in God's work.

MaryAnn Cherry



Palal with Mrs. Pettys' class at Springfield Christian School in Springfield, Illinois

## Long-Term Sustainability Projects

Have you ever wanted to get involved in a Kingdom sized project that will lead to long-term sustainability and help the poor to become self-supporting and less reliant on handouts and donations? Well, then read on!

One of the foundational principles of Myanmar Hope has been to help people learn how to help themselves without fostering dependence upon Western aid. For this reason, education has been a major component of the ministry of Myanmar Hope. Lack of education is one of the main reasons so many remain stuck in a cycle of poverty.

Palal and Kikim have always been on the lookout for projects that will help their people learn better ways of earning enough income to break out of their poverty, so they can then help each other.

It was with this goal in mind that Palal approached the MyHope board with a proposal to begin cultivating some of the undeveloped land in Kabaw Valley, starting with a model sugar cane farm.

There are currently about 38,000 acres of undeveloped land in the area, and many foreign companies have been petitioning the government for permission to develop and farm the land for their own commercial purposes.



Most farms in northwest Myanmar produce barely enough for one family

The state and regional government officials in Sagaing are reluctant to lease the land to these foreign companies, as they want the local people to be able to use the land for their own benefit. If foreign companies develop the land, they know the produce and profits will not benefit the local area.

Unfortunately, the people are uneducated and do not understand how to farm more than an acre or so at a time. Also, they lack the necessary financial

resources to develop previously uncultivated land.

Palal is one of the most highly educated men in his tribe. With six earned degrees, three of them at the graduate level, he is greatly respected by his people and also by the many officials with which he has made contacts and friends.

Because of Palal's background in farming and his ability to do research he believes he now understands what needs to be done. And, because of his humility, he can easily relate to people at all levels, from the poorest farmer to the highest government official.

Palal has now met with local, regional, and state-level administrators of the various departments—surveying, agriculture, forestry, social works, etc.—and has received permission at every level. The officials are both relieved and excited that someone from the local area has stepped up to take on this kind of project.

The government has agreed to award our organization a long-term lease, at no cost, to work forty acres of undeveloped land. If we are successful, they will award more acres as necessary and available.



Undeveloped land in Kabaw Valley. There are almost 40,000 acres of land available for agricultural development.

The plan is to start this year by developing up to five acres of sugar cane. This is a crop that is easy to grow, requires minimal work throughout the year, and is relatively easy to harvest and sell.

Next year the profits from the harvest will be used to develop more land, and then branch out into other crops, such as soybeans, potatoes, ginger, etc. Eventually, we would like to start processing and refining the sugar and other crops into products which can be sold at a higher profit.

This farming operation will employ local people and serve as a model farm to teach others how to begin working on a larger and more productive scale. It will also serve as a source for micro-loans to other farmers, so that they can begin expanding their own operations.

An additional benefit of this project will be to provide employment for some of the young people graduating from Hope Boarding School in Yangon. Currently, the employment prospects for our HBS graduates are very bleak. Even for students in Myanmar who are able to pass their high school matriculation exam and go on to get a university degree, the unemployment rate is very high—75% to 95% in some areas of the northwest.

The new model farm operation in Kabaw Valley will be a good place for our young men, in particular, to gain some valuable skills while earning a modest income.

**Our hope is that these new development projects will grow and expand to the point that Myanmar Hope Christian Mission will no longer be necessary.**

That's right! We want Palal, Kikim, and the people of Myanmar to take over the work of helping their own widows, orphans, disabled, and homeless, with-



Harvesting sugar cane in Myanmar

out needing to rely on donations from the West. For now, though, they need as much help as possible from as many people as possible.

To clear one acre of land and make it ready for farming takes a lot of resources. The trees and brush have to be cut and removed, the land leveled and cultivated, and so on. To do this, we need to purchase animals, equipment and seed, hire workers, and pay for fees and permits.

### Project Details

#### For the Sugar Cane Project:

Cutting down trees, clearing the land, and purchasing seedlings must begin this month. The dead trees and branches will dry in the hot summer months of March and April, and will be burnt off before the end of April. Then the young sugar cane seedlings will be planted during the last week of April.

The mature sugar cane will be ready for harvesting the following January. The entire process of planting and harvesting sugar cane takes about eleven months.

For the first year, the cost estimate for clearing, planting, and working the land is \$2,500.00 per acre.

This price includes the machines and workers to cut, burn, remove debris,

level the ground, and dig the holes for the shoots. It also includes the price of the sugar cane seedlings for planting, and also for paying workers to watch and work the land for the entire year.

Another \$1,000.00 is needed to purchase two large water buffaloes to use for hauling the larger logs and other heavy work. \$500.00 is needed to pay for permits, fees, time for surveyors, and so on. \$200.00 is needed to pay for transportation of the sugar cane seedlings from farms in the north. Finally, Palal estimates another \$300.00 will be needed to cover any miscellaneous expenses that arise.

Palal has already made an agreement with an experienced sugar cane farmer from Tamu to be onsite to oversee the project.

Based on his family's farming experience and on his research, Palal believes the sugar cane crop will reap a profit of around \$1,500.00 per acre. In the second year and onward, the cost to plant and harvest the sugar cane will be much less, since the land will already be cleared. The profits will then be reinvested in even more development projects.

### In Summary

Continues on next page

"You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving."  
- Amy Carmichael



# MyHope Newsletter

**Myanmar Hope Christian Mission, Inc.**  
624 Garvey Lane  
Chatham, Illinois 62629-5086  
217-415-9187

Place  
Stamp  
Here

Place address label here

**Bringing the eternal hope of Jesus Christ to the people of Myanmar in a holistic manner  
by addressing their spiritual, physical, emotional and educational needs**

[www.myanmarhope.org](http://www.myanmarhope.org) | [info@myanmarhope.org](mailto:info@myanmarhope.org) | [facebook.com/myanmarhope](https://facebook.com/myanmarhope) | [twitter.com/myanmarhope](https://twitter.com/myanmarhope)

Myanmar Hope Christian Mission, Inc. is a federally recognized, not-for-profit corporation organized under the laws of the State of Illinois. All donations made to this organization are 100% tax deductible according to the IRS Code, Section 501(c)(3). Federal Tax Identification: 26-0324244. NGO License Number: BU-1679.

In summary, then, in order to begin this project, we need:

- \$2,500.00 per acre in the first year
- \$1,000.00 for two water buffalo
- \$500.00 for permits and fees
- \$200.00 for transportation of new sugar cane plants
- \$300.00 for misc. expenses

We can develop as much land as we have funds for, up to about forty acres. **We currently have enough on hand to clear and plant just one acre, but we could do so much more if we had more resources!**

**Will you please help us to launch this project in a big way?**

If you are interested in investing in Kingdom sized projects which will have long-lasting effects and help the people to become self-supporting and self-sufficient, then this is the project for you!

Your investment of financial resources will have an impact on potentially hundreds of families by raising the standard of living, providing jobs, educational opportunities, and so much more.

This is your chance to get in on the ground floor, so to speak, and really make a big impact in the Kingdom of God and in the lives of poor families who really need a "hand up" more than they need a "handout."

Please call us or write us today, and tell us about your desire to get involved in this wonderful project. If you know anyone who might be interested in helping, please pass this along to them.

And if you want to travel to Myanmar to see this project with your own eyes, we can arrange that. Call us today!

## Current MyHope Needs

Here are some of the most pressing needs for Myanmar Hope Christian Mission at this moment:

Monthly Pastor Sponsors (15).....	60.00
Concrete work for HBS.....	2,500.00
Chef Training for Kikim.....	1,000.00
Canaan Christian Church.....	12,000.00
Joljam Christian Church.....	15,000.00
Homalin Christian Church.....	15,000.00
Janoi Christian Church.....	15,000.00
Agricultural Project (per acre).....	2,500.00
General Fund Donations—Any Amount	
Sponsors for P & K Budget—Any Amount	

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO GIVE SACRIFICIALLY TO MYANMAR HOPE EACH MONTH!! Your regular donations are what make this work possible!

**Myanmar Hope Christian Mission, Inc.**  
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