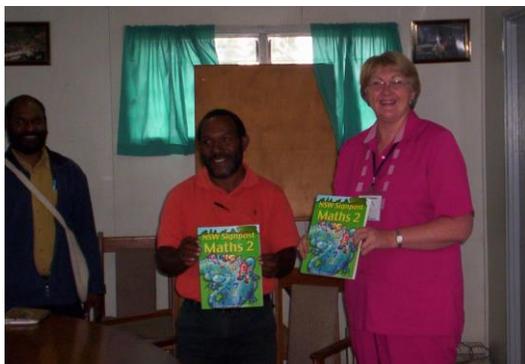


New Hope on Monday 17: Hope in a Bilum

One of the joys I have as CEO of New Hope International is the opportunity to travel to developing countries to help train teachers and leaders in the Effective teaching and Learning Series and to look encourage Asset Based Community Development.

I have been to the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, Indonesia, and next Year I will go to Uganda and the Solomon Islands (God and the finances willing).



I remember when I returned from PNG some time ago that I said to my school community, “No, I haven’t come home with fuzzy hair. No, I won’t walk to school with my books in a bilum on my head. No, I won’t be chewing betel nut and showing my beautiful red teeth and gums.

But I have come home with a deep appreciation of the wonderful comfort and facilities we have at home and at school.

I appreciate warm showers and good roads.

I appreciate classrooms with books and resources.

I appreciate having electricity for more than three hours per day.

I love our infrastructure and ongoing maintenance and the limit to corruption we have in this wonderful country.

And, I love the beautiful Christian people I met who are working under such difficult conditions to serve the children of the beautiful country of Papua New Guinea.”

This isn’t true just of PNG but of many of the countries we visit for this work. The secretaries in the schools I visit are still using typewriters. Some computer classes have cardboard replicas of computer keyboards.

In Australia we are so blessed. We have so much choice. I can see the danger in spoiling our children; in not asking them to earn all they have, but to accept it without appreciation; in over-protecting our children from physical challenge and dirt; from preventing them from failing in case they damage their self-esteem.

The kids of PNG and so many other countries, the regular village children, have next to nothing, but they survive. They have a deep appreciation of the benefits of education, even to the compulsory Year 8 level, and they want more. Borders are willing to sleep two to a bunk and to have food more like



an army on rations, rather than to miss out on their schooling to Year 10 level.

But whether kids carry their book in a bilum on their head or a backpack on their back, they all deserve to be exposed to Christ-centred education where Jesus is Lord and the Spirit transforms their lives. Then our kids can become adults who can make a difference; who can fight for justice, who can counter corruption with integrity; who can bring hope to a needy world.

Is that what you want? It is certainly the passion of my life.

If you would like to support our ministry go to our website

www.newhopeinternational.net

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