

RESTORING HOPE

a ministry to ORPHANS

HopeUpdate
July/August 2004

Reviewing our goals

Dear Friends & Partners in Ministry,

I continue to be amazed by the persistence of so many of you in prayer and the provision of vital resources for this ministry. I don't ever want to take your commitment for granted. Likewise, I hope that none of us, through familiarity, lose sight of what we believe God wants to accomplish through these efforts. So I decided that in this edition I would take some space to review some of the basic motivators for why we do what we do.

1. The real needs of orphans are often misunderstood.

Considering God's design for the family, orphans have **one** fundamental material need - **parents**. It is the absence of parental advocacy that causes orphans to experience rates of disease, early death, suicide, substance abuse, sexual promiscuity, and criminal behavior many times those of the general population. We may use clothing, food, and other commodities in the course of our work, but the goal is not to produce well-dressed chubby orphans. In the long term, this accomplishes nothing. Our goal must continue to be to advocate for these little ones with at least the smallest fraction of the care we show for our own children. Only in this way can we hope to impact their outcome.

2. Orphans are exploited. Every country is guilty of this. The methods simply vary according to culture and affluence. In rural Albania, healthy pre-teen and younger orphans are sold into sex slavery or to pedophile groups. The typical purchase price is US\$100, but you can 'rent' them for much less. In Moldova, numerous adoption programs have been stopped because government officials repeatedly demanded more than US\$5,000 as a 'facilitation fee'. We like to distance ourselves from such obvious vile exploitation. Yet in North America and other wealthy regions, the plight of abandoned children overseas has been refined as a powerfully emotive marketing tool. An even more insidious exploitation, given the excesses we enjoy. Almost every orphanage has at some time been the subject of 'orphan tourism', with endless streams of missionaries, aid workers, and the curious, all using the children as photo opportunities. Relatively few do anything to actually help. Orphanage directors are usually very accommodating – there is always the possibility that a visitor may show something more than verbal support. But they know that most of the pictures are just to enhance the fund-raising appeal of a web-site or newsletter. The affluent are just as willing to exploit as the desperate. They're just more sophisticated.

Our response is focused in four main areas:

1. Researching orphan management methods and devising new programs to impact the final outcome for the children.
2. Exposing exploitation.
3. Initiating or participating in projects with measurable outcomes.
4. Motivating and mobilizing churches and fellowships to embrace a strategic approach to orphan ministry.

Thank you for your continued support. We can make a difference - one child at a time.

In His service,



Visakhapatnam, India

The medical mission in October is now confirmed. Sue will be in North Carolina August 6th to 8th when she will meet the rest of the team for orientation and final planning. Her main role will be to provide primary care to villagers who have never attended a medical clinic. She will also be assessing the orphanages established by P. Yesupadam's Love 'N Care Ministries. Full details of the mission are on the web site at www.orphans.ca/vizag.html

Sue's total travel expenses will be more than \$4,300 including the orientation meeting. Over \$3,000 has been generously donated so far, but we need the remaining \$1,300 soon. Please pray about your involvement; this is an opportunity to demonstrate God's love through dramatic short and long-term impacts on the villagers and orphans of Vizag. Thank you.

Kenscuff Orphanage – a vision fulfilled

The children of Kenscuff orphanage have a new home! We are deeply grateful to Dave Blundell at Hungry for Life for his leadership in this ambitious venture. A full report with photos of the new facility will be posted to the web site soon.

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