



Dear MSC Family,

This is the world the Lord asks us to reach.

Every believer, every local church, and we at MSC should all be asking ourselves “**What do we need to do to reach this world?**” Not some world that used to exist, or one that might emerge in the future, but this world that is isolated, uncertain, and unpredictable. Our task for MSC is to make sure that we are “agile not fragile,” so that we can change gears, serve in new ways, support workers in unexpected conditions, adapt to new realities every day, and ultimately help to shape what global missions will look like in the months and years ahead. Fasten your seatbelts, folks. It’s going to be a bumpy ride.

We have prioritized our response to the COVID-19 pandemic as follows. **First**, taking care of our workers around the world by helping them to relocate, repatriate, and be prepared for many changes. **Second**, putting funds in the hands of workers still in their host countries to relieve the extreme conditions being experienced by many of those they minister to. Many people in the developing world literally eat tonight what they earn, pick, or beg for today. The strict lockdown conditions imposed in many countries have impacted the poor the hardest. This is one of the most efficient, effective ways of providing relief. Every dollar directly provides food and supplies into the hands of the people, the recipients are generally known by the workers, and our workers provide a high level of accountability. **Third**, we have provided some assistance to our partner organizations in several countries, including Zambia, India, Kenya, Mozambique, and others. It has been exciting to receive and distribute all of your gifts to MSC’s COVID-19 Fund, 100% of which have gone to these needs.

We appreciate all of the MSC Family who have remained flexible and gracious as we have closed our physical office and worked mostly from home, as we have encouraged donors to give digitally instead of sending cheques, and as we have had to suspend ACCTS and short-term teams for the duration of this crisis. By God’s grace, the work of MSC continues much as it always has - low overhead, high efficiency, and no fundraising. Things just look a little different day-to-day.

In this issue of *InsideMSC*, we’re going to be reporting about some specific needs and opportunities created by the pandemic that are being met with targeted responses by MSC mission workers.

We’d also like to share a report on some of the important work done by our staff team in the early days of the crisis, repatriating workers from difficult places and supporting them during quarantine. In it all, MSC’s National Committee is determined to do what it can to help, in a strategic, focussed manner which maximizes the effectiveness of financial gifts in terms of physical and spiritual benefit.

Please join us in seeking glory for God during these difficult days.

On behalf of the National Committee,

Phil Barnes

Executive Director

RESPONDING TO COVID-19



IN THIS STORM: STORIES

When MSC contacted all our global mission workers on March 14 with a memo alerting them to the seriousness of COVID-19 and the likely trajectory for the coming months, many of them were only beginning to get the picture of what this crisis could become. The virus, and in some cases the latest news, had not yet reached them.

We encouraged all to very seriously consider whether they should remain in their country of service or get back to Canada. We believed the window for travelling home was closing very quickly. There was no certain answer, some should stay put, some should head for Canada, and many were very unsure. MSC was privileged to walk through the decision making process with many and offer assistance in various ways, whether they decided to stay or return home.

FROM LUAU TO SASKATOON: A Repatriation Story



Joel and Kaleigh Griffin and their three young girls serve the Lord in Luau, in eastern Angola near the border with DR Congo. Their initial reaction to our COVID-19 Information memo was that they would stay in Luau for the duration, but as the situation evolved it became clear that they would be extremely vulnerable if they stayed. The difficulty was that all international and domestic flights had stopped. They contacted us on Sunday, April 5 to say that the Canadian Embassy in Angola had contacted them to let them know that an American evacuation flight would be flying from Kinshasa, DRC, and stopping in Luanda, Angola to pick up US citizens, but that they could buy seats on the flight if they could get to Luanda. The tickets would have to be paid by wire transfer Monday morning which MSC was able to arrange.

The difficulty now was that it was impossible to drive to Luanda which would take 30 hours in the best conditions, but parts of the roads had become impassable, and the government was not allowing any road travel between cities. Even trucks with essential supplies had not been allowed to travel. The only option was arranging a Mission Aviation Fellowship plane to go and get them, but the government was not even allowing small private planes to fly. MAF had been refused permission for two flights the previous weeks to pick up British and American families, so it did not look good for them to be able to get to Luanda.

A year and a half earlier, when Marilyn Barnes (MSC WorkerCare) was in Zimbabwe she had been at a friends' place for dinner who had invited the Canadian High Commissioner to Zimbabwe, Rene Cremonese, and she was able to get to know him. Then last September (2019) when Phil and Marilyn Barnes were visiting workers in Africa, they "happened" to run into the ambassador in Luanda, Angola. He was there because he is also the Ambassador to Angola for Canada! He chatted with them and gave them his card, inviting them to contact him. So on Sunday April 5, Phil sent a text to the Ambassador's personal cellphone asking if he could contact the Angolan government to gain permission for the flight to fly the Griffins to Luanda. The next morning the Ambassador sent a request to Angolan COVID Emergency Council asking them to grant permission for the flight and by mid - afternoon on Monday MAF had flight permission in their hands. MSC had gone ahead and paid for the five flights from Luanda to Washington to Toronto to Saskatoon earlier in the morning, trusting that the Lord would make a way for the flight to Luanda, so there was great rejoicing all around to see how the Lord had orchestrated the whole trip. MAF flew them out on Thursday, and four flights, two overnight layovers and three days later, they were quarantining in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The MSC COVID-19 Fund was able to cover all these flights, hotels, and MAFs charges. Thanks so much to those who supported it.

FROM WORKERS



“Seek the welfare of the city where I sent you into exile and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find welfare.” - JEREMIAH 29:7

TARGETED RELIEF AROUND THE GLOBE



Allan & Caulene Bussard - SLOVAKIA / KENYA

*“Hoping that you all are well during this strange time. Things are getting quite desperate at our COVID project in the Kibera slum in Nairobi. People are not able to go out to work and in these conditions, and for many, **‘no work today means no food tomorrow.’** Of course, this hits mostly the children. Your support, which has enabled food distributions, is saving lives.”*

Danny & Vonnie Mejorada - PHILIPPINES

*“Words could not describe our appreciation for your prayers and help to many hungry families in the Philippines. Your partnership in the ministry yields **‘fruit that increases to your credit, a fragrant offering, acceptable and pleasing to God.’**” (PHILIPPIANS 4:17-18)*



Dr. Samuel & Elizabeth Simonyi-Gindele - ANGOLA

*“Church elders had arranged for 39 widows and widowers to meet at the church building in Luena. I went shopping with one of the church elders and we bought enough for each person to have plenty. It was really nice to watch as younger believers helped sort the food, while the elders called up the older folk. There was manioc and beans left over for extra people who came too. It was explained that **most of the supplies were from funds sent by believers in Canada, and so I was asked to please pass their appreciation to you folks.**”*

Vienna Moillet - PHILIPPINES

*“We were able to give rice and other food items to some families in need. They told me to say **thank you so much and prayed for blessing to be added to those who gave.** There was a few items left over and they will go to the nearby birthing clinic to give out to patients”*



Dan & Joan Harvey - MEXICO

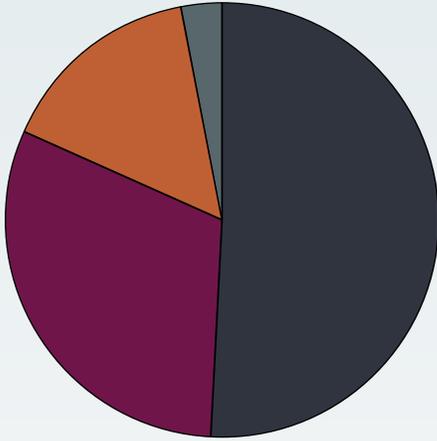
*“We have been sending food and basic supplies over to families that are in the hardest situation. One couple with 6 children has hunted everywhere for work, but their total income is still less than \$60 USD a week which gets them very little as food prices have shot up. God has been showing up in unexpected ways and helping us in our relationships and community amongst the believers as, **with your help, we help.**”*

THE COVID-19 FUND

MSC's National Committee acted quickly and set up the COVID-19 Fund in response to needs both anticipated and unexpected. The Lord's people have supported this fund generously since it was started in March of this year.

Initially, funds were used primarily for repatriating mission workers and short term teams who were in areas unprepared to

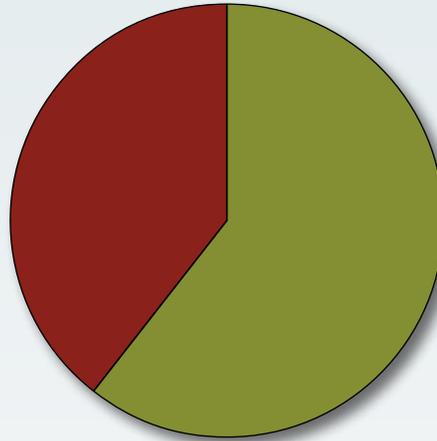
handle the virus. On an ongoing basis, however, the COVID-19 Fund is being used to meet the challenges and Gospel opportunities presented by this global pandemic. Most of the world is hurting, so MSC's goal is to distribute this Fund in a strategic, intentional manner that maximizes the effectiveness of gifts given in terms of their physical and spiritual benefit.



EXPENSES

- Relief & Ministry \$99,243
- Worker Repatriation & Quarantine \$60,406
- Team Repatriation \$29,833
- Masks for Workers \$5,650

TOTAL - \$195,132



RECEIVED

- Donations Received \$107,486
- MSC Relief & Development Allocations \$70,000

TOTAL - \$177,485

WORKER MOVEMENT

16 UNITS RETURNED to Canada

4 UNITS LEFT Country of Service for Another

2 UNITS STUCK in Country of Service

2 UNITS STUCK in Canada

A Mission Worker Unit is a Family OR Single Person

TARGETED RELIEF FUNDS

37 MISSION WORKER UNITS representing **21** DIFFERENT COUNTRIES have accepted and are utilizing **TARGETED RELIEF FUNDS** totaling **\$59,243** to date.

These funds are being used to assist those they know with **FOOD, SUPPLIES, AND OTHER FORMS OF SUPPORT**. Funds are also being sent to MSC projects and to our partner organizations who are doing important work in many hard-hit countries.



FACE MASKS FOR WORKERS

MSC has distributed **OVER 6000 FACE MASKS** to **53** WORKER UNITS representing **23 DIFFERENT COUNTRIES**.

msecanada.org

