SWIM SOLOMON NEWS March to June 2013

Bulletin points

* The start of this year saw the building of a new base manager’s house at Bethesda. Ant and Petra (from NZ) with their 3 children are now settled and enjoying working alongside Gideon (Principle) and Susan (Head of therapy) in taking on the challenges of a new school year at Bethesda.
* Rev Eric and family have been busy with a trip to East Koyo for an inter-denominational ministry workshop and leadership seminar. Jemima also conducted some KYB workshops within Honiara and the outer villages of Guadal Canal.
* Jair, Lauretta and Theresa fitted in a quick break to Fraser Island followed by facilitating the work of a number of SWIM teams. In a combined effort with SWIM staff, Bethlehem college and Reagents Park college from NZ, carried out building, maintenance and support projects at Suu Secondary school and Kilusikwalo school in Malaita province.
* Simon and Ana settled into their respective roles at SWIM and with Solomon Island National University (SINU). Early tasks have been planning for workshops and teaching, organization and delivery of container donations and plenty of meetings!
* Thinking Feeling Doing training course run at SWIM by Tom Clarke (Tasmanian based Prison Counsellor) aimed at training leaders for counselling prison inmates on issues of violence and gender abuse.

Prayer points

* Spread of tropical disease, particularly the outbreak of Dengue which has affected two SWIM staff families.
* Bethesda - in their ongoing leadership and organizational transition as a government recognised training centre. Also prayer for improved production in their key Income Generation Projects (IGPs).
* The local ‘Lunga community’ where SWIM is based, has seen rapid population growth but lacks the support and infrastructure services for a healthy environment. Pray for the local outreach SWIM is involved in, especially with the children in the community.
* The amount of economic inequality and abuse suffered by women in the Solomons (ranks in the worst ten countries globally for gender based violence) Particularly pray for education programs in schools.

In more detail….

Rev Eric Maefonea and his wife Jemima have had the opportunity to travel to remote East Koyo in Malaita province for a ministry and training workshop. The area is still heavily involved with spiritual animism and tribal villages with ritualistic practices. Jemima has also been involved in coordinating a more widespread KYB network and facilitating directives from the new Australian based KYB management Jaqui Guy.

Cross roads Bible Institute program leader, Rev Japhlet Folia is really enjoying his new prison ministry and counselling role. He splits his time between three prisons Rove and Tetere and also travels to Auki in Malaita province. Japhlet has invested significant time and effort in his prison role and we thank God for the opportunities he has provided to bring the hope of Forgiveness in Christ to men who often have little hope in their lives.

Sarah Numoaa has been instrumental in providing some organisation to the SWIM administration office in the absence of Kevin and Machi. Simon (and Ana who have now joined the SWIM team) has started to settle into his new role. He has been busy navigating Solomon port customs and import and visas office complex webs. This involved organizing the unloading of containers from both NSW and Qld which were greatly appreciated. SWIM also recently hosted the Thinking, Feeling, Doing course run by Tom Clarke from Prison services Tasmania, aimed at education and awareness for violent offenders.

Jair, Lauretta and Theresa took a deserved short break to Fraser Island and had a great time in Queensland. Since returning, they have helped run a number of workshops and organize two NZ school teams on building projects in Malaita province. The SUU school has been one ongoing project, whereby students and teachers from Bethlehem college in Tauranga have helped to raise money for new water tanks and piping for the SUU secondary school. A two week stay allowed the students time to install the new tanks and get involved in some activities with the Solomon students there.

In Bethesda news, the year began with two workshops, the first in wheelchair sports, featuring wheelchair basketball. This provided a great opportunity for increasing the profile for disability sports within Honiara. Bethesda also hosted a ‘Save the Children’ campaign which brought co-ordinators from Australia to help map out projects for the Solomons. Susan Larson and new CBR graduate Chris have just begun the 2013 training classes with a group of 10 participants from Guadal Canal. Bethesda Principle, Gideon Row is liaising with the ministry of education to help change the framework for disability training and has a fantastic vision for Bethesda’s long term sustainability. This work has been greatly boosted by the arrival of Ant and Petra, and their three kids, who have finally moved into their new house has which has been finished (thanks Jair and carpentry team!).

So for now, thank you all for your prayer and support, we really need and appreciate it.

God bless

The team at SWIM and Bethesda.