

Board Chairman report for the HOPE *worldwide* Australia AGM 2020

August 2020

On behalf of the board of HOPE *worldwide* Australia, I would like to thank the members for their continued enthusiasm, service and support this year.

This year has seen a sudden shift in our activities across the South Pacific and Australia (SPA) region to respond to emerging needs resulting from Bush fires and more recently, the COVID19 pandemic. There has been regular bimonthly COVID19 response conference calls to plan programs and fundraising activities to support communities adversely affected. The COVID19 pandemic has adversely affected the global economy, with poorer countries, unable to meet the needs of their population. The hardest hit in our region have been Papua New Guinea and Fiji. Response to this has included coordinated fundraising through the partnership with the SPA region churches of Christ, which was able to raise approximately \$50,000 to assist the church members in Fiji and PNG, and a further \$50,000 for the wider community

HOPE worldwide PNG has continued to run and develop its health programs, despite severe funding shortage. They have also engaged volunteers in service programs such as feeding the hungry, caring for the disabled and developing primary education through work in 2 primary schools (Mercy Care and Badihagwa). This has engaged members in the Port Moresby Church of Christ. Unfortunately, the current Coronavirus pandemic has further weaken an already fragile economy and resulted in primary care services across the country not been funded for the first half of 2020. This has resulted in many clinics closing their doors at a time when they were most needed and many healthcare workers have not been paid a salary. The 4 clinics run by HOPE have remained open during this time despite the funding cuts and have treated approximately 18,000 people every month. In addition the PNG Government requested that two of HOPE's clinics be on the front line for the COVID19 response (Lawes Road and Nine Mile Clinic). HOPE worldwide PNG accepted this challenge and HOPE worldwide Australia was able secure the necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for staff and assisting with some running costs for the clinics. In addition, through our partnership with HOPE worldwide Global, in America we were able to provide 2 months of food assistance to the HOPE clinic staff and their families, which make up a total of 226 people. The ongoing needs are huge and if the PNG Government fails on its commitment to fund primary healthcare, HOPE worldwide will require a further \$137,000 AUD to keep it's health clinics operating

We would like to thank Priscilla Mal, who has been working tirelessly and faithfully during this challenging time. HOPE worldwide Australia continues to support programs in PNG through financial giving and technical expertise. Technical expertise has been geared towards improving the quality of primary health care to respond to emerging needs and primary education through engagement of nurses and teachers from Australia and New Zealand.

The COVID19 effect on the Fiji economy which relies heavily on tourism was devastating, resulting in massive job losses. Through funds from HOPE worldwide Australia, HOPE Global and the partnership with the Fiji Churches of Christ, and local corporate enterprise (Rosie Holidays) we have been able to respond quickly to provide food aid and job creation programs benefitting many in need.

In 2020 local programs in Australia and New Zealand are currently on track and hope to impact our local communities. This has been made possible by the continued work of the congregational HOPE Reps: James Macaulay (Brisbane), Angela Corcoran (Gold coast), Ricardo de la Costa (Sydney), Jo Donado (Melbourne), Jordan King (Perth), Phil Bohringer (Adelaide) and Duncan Wilson (New Zealand).

Our largest planned service activity in 2019-20 was the **HOPE Volunteer Corps in Papua New Guinea in Dec 2019** which engaged 30 volunteers from our sister Churches of Christ across the world. The program was a great success and supported the Mercy Care primary school. I would like to thank HOPE worldwide PNG and the members of the Port Moresby Church of Christ who hosted volunteers and facilitated the service program. An added impact of the HVC program is through donations of water filters that each participant is able to deliver to the local community and provide much needed clean drinking water (see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6KE71cRq_c)

Louie Arcilla continues to volunteer his time and expertise to provide robust financial oversight. This has seen a dramatic increase in available program funds. Mary Martinez continues her part time role as our bookkeeper, administrator and company secretary and as is working closely with Louie and the Country Director. We thank her for working hard to ensure efficiency in administration. Jordan King (Perth) and John Esper (Melbourne) have been voluntarily updating and developing the HOPE website- thank you!

The Board continues to meet quarterly and develop strategies to involve more church members in service activities.

We are aware of the limited ability to engage in planned service activity overseas as a result of the COVID19 pandemic and look forward to resuming the successful SPA Mission Corps to Papua New Guinea and Fiji which combined rapid impact projects with spiritual outreach through partnership with the Port Moresby Church of Christ in Papua New Guinea and the Suva Church of Christ in Fiji.

We are grateful for the ongoing financial support from so many. Church based financial support has continued mainly through individuals across the participating churches. The annual HOPE Day of Giving has been especially useful in sustaining regional programs and of note in 2020 we have had our largest collection (over \$43,000) and participation from all the SPA Region churches. The funds for the 2020 HOPE Day of Giving supported COVID19 response programs in PNG and Fiji. We have delayed adding further funds for the planned HOPE Community Centre in Port Moresby in order to meet immediate needs.

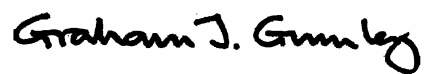
The financial standing of HOPE *worldwide* Australia is stable and this is reflected in the positive (unqualified) result from our audit this year.

Mark Timlin has, again this year, enthusiastically and respectfully undertaken his role as Country Director. The Board is supportive of his continued focus on the development of local programs and support for regional programs, namely in Fiji, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.

For more details of our programs, including financial audit please visit our website at: hopeworldwide.org.au

On behalf of the current active HOPE *worldwide* Australia Board members: Mike Fontenot,

Jun Pablo, Winvie Mendosa and Dave Bliley may I present this brief overview of the activities of HOPE *worldwide* Australia.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Graham J. Gurnley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'y' at the end.

Board Chairman,
HOPE *worldwide* Australia