



# Impact

report  
2023





# Lives and communities transformed

through encounter with Jesus Christ

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### A REFLECTION FROM OUR NATIONAL DIRECTOR CHRIS BINDER

"Lives and communities transformed through encounter with Jesus Christ" is the vision of Interserve. Many people dedicate their lives to see all kinds of positive transformation in the communities they serve. At Interserve we believe that the deepest transformation comes through encounter with Jesus. In this Impact Report we celebrate together some of the stories of Jesus-enabled transformation that Interserve Partners are privileged to be a part of.

The world seems to be ever-more chaotic and unpredictable. We face significant challenges. However, I was recently at a meeting where Ed Stetzer, missiologist and academic, reminded us that, "The moment we are in does not pause the mission we are on." In the Gospels we see people healed, set free from oppression, discover the truth, even raised to life as they encounter Jesus. We believe that the same transformative power that we see in the Gospels is at work today as we engage in wholistic mission. We see it, for example, as people and communities are transformed through studying the Bible, through changing attitudes in a community as Christians care for and provide dignity to those who are differently abled, through offering friendship and prayer to those of other faiths, through the impact of investing in young lives.

We do what God calls us to do in partnership with Him – after all He is the only one who can bring about the complete transformation that we long to see. We also do it in partnership with you, our faithful supporters. Once again 2022 is a testimony of God's faithfulness

to us as Interserve GBI. Prayer groups and individuals who intercede for us and remember the communities that we work in. People who take a keen interest in the individuals and families that make up our teams. Churches and donors who give the finances needed to keep the work going. You are a vital part of this effort to see Spirit-enabled whole-life transformation. It makes a real difference!

God's work of transformation in us does not stop with that first encounter with Jesus. It is a life-long process. As the church in the UK becomes more culturally diverse, we believe we should actively work to see Interserve become more culturally diverse and to learn to respond faster to the opportunities that God gives us. As we pray and work together to see transformation of Asian and Arab communities, would you pray for Interserve, that we would allow God to do his work of transformation in us as well.

We always love to hear from you, our supporters, about what God is doing in and through you and how we can be praying for you. Thank you for your partnership in the Gospel!

**Chris Binder**  
National Director





# A brighter future

## HOW GOD IS USING AN INTERSERVE PARTNER TO HELP TRANSFORM THE LIVES OF CHILDREN WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

A little girl in a pink tracksuit sits next to her mother, full of concentration despite her legs wriggling with excitement. Her face is animated as both hands explore the sensory materials of her book, revealing to her an image that she cannot otherwise see. As the story is read to her, the world comes alive under her fingertips.

Each week, An\* and her mother travel through the busy streets of the city to exchange books at a small library dedicated to serving visually impaired children. Her parents diligently read these books with her at home, growing her love of learning and preparing her to read braille, offering her a much brighter future than she might otherwise have had.

Children with visual impairments in this Southeast Asian country are among the most marginalised in their communities.

There is no suitable provision in mainstream schools, and they are not accepted at special schools, whose teaching methods rely on use of vision. Even at the national 'School for the Blind' in the capital city, teachers have never received training in working with visually impaired children, and students have little or no access to Braille textbooks. Opportunities to learn are so limited that these children rarely manage to complete their education.

But within this unassuming centre, there is fresh hope and opportunity for children like An. Run by Interserve partner Joy\* and her local colleague, alongside a dedicated team of volunteers, they have gradually been developing a library of hand-sewn tactile books for visually impaired children over the last six years. Books are shipped to preschools and special schools across the country, and also added to their onsite library: a light, airy room decorated with bright colours, plants and soft furnishings, with tactile cues throughout to aid children's mobility. Staff not only read with children but can assess their literacy, vision and

development. Regular family storytelling sessions involve parents and carers, offering families tools to aid their children's development and prepare them for school, and most importantly, offering them hope for the future.

Over the ten years that Joy and her husband have served in this country, God has increasingly opened her eyes to the desperate plight of children with additional needs. She has been thrilled to see how He has now begun opening doors to bring hope and life to many children, working increasingly in partnership with local colleagues and professionals. She writes: "When I came here, I laid down all my skills and experience as a teacher of the visually impaired, and was willing to do so. It truly is God who has opened up all the opportunities and I never imagined that one thing would lead to another in this way."

The work is now expanding from tactile books and early literacy to supporting carers with their child's development from birth right through to starting school. Recently recognised as a social enterprise, they are increasingly involved in raising awareness of the needs of visually impaired people. They have begun offering functional visual assessments for older children, allowing staff to make recommendations for inclusion in mainstream schools. They are also developing training in tactile books, literacy and teaching braille in the local language, enabling parents, carers and teachers to better support their children. Through their work, the lives and futures of children across the region are being transformed.

\*For security reasons the names in this article have been changed.

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*It is truly God who has opened up all the opportunities.*



# Transformation

## through theological education

**INTERSERVE PARTNERS HAVE BEEN INVOLVED FOR MANY YEARS IN SEEING COMMUNITIES TRANSFORMED BY DESIGNING AND DELIVERING THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION ACROSS ASIA**

### TEE? WHAT IS THAT?

Traditionally, the letters TEE stand for Theological Education by Extension. But often that doesn't communicate the powerful things God does when his people commit to intentional study and application of his Word. So, we also like to talk about Tools to Equip and Empower. That is, Tools that local churches can use to Equip and Empower all their members for mission and ministry, and some for leadership.

### HOW DOES IT WORK?

TEE is a church-based learning method for life-long, whole-life discipleship. People learn together, where they are, in the time they've got, alongside their daily responsibilities, applying what they learn straight away. The learning method is a repeating cycle of three elements:

personal study, group meeting, and practical application.

With your TEE Personal Study, you'll use your TEE interactive workbook - and some national TEE programmes are now offering courses digitally. You study Scripture, answer questions, reflect on your situation and challenges, and think how the Bible connects to your life.

And that prepares you for your TEE Group Meeting. There's no sermon or lecture - you learn from one another as a trained group leader asks good questions. And the underlying questions for followers of Jesus are always: 'What is Jesus saying? What is he asking? What should we do?'

So then you turn your learning into action, on your own or as a group. Joining what God is doing in your local church and in your community. That's your TEE Practical Application.

Partners from the Interserve International Fellowship have been involved over many years with different national TEE programmes across Asia. They've been helping to run programmes, acting as advisors, writing and editing courses,

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Interserve GBI Partners are currently engaged in **theological work** across the globe.



involved in curriculum design, training, and just been there to encourage and pray.

God has used TEE, among other things, to bring transformation to a village in a rural area of Southeast Asia. When one of the TEE team moved to this village with his family, he met with a group of church leaders every week, using TEE materials with them. When he first arrived in the village there were pigs wandering around, there was rubbish everywhere and very poor hygiene. However after several years working with the people of that village, mostly with the leaders, this village is transformed! It's clean, it's tidy, the pigs are in a pig pen, and crops can be grown closer to home because the pigs don't dig them up anymore. People from other villages came and asked, 'Why is your village so clean and so green?' The response? 'Jesus changed our hearts and our place!' And that led to invitations to come and help in other places, and opportunities to share what God had done.

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*Jesus changed our hearts and our place!*

God is using TEE programmes in unexpected places. New TEE groups have recently started across many areas of South East Asia. We have also heard of just over 1,500 new students starting to study the Life of Christ course, based on Matthew's gospel! Let's pray for more communities transformed as a result!



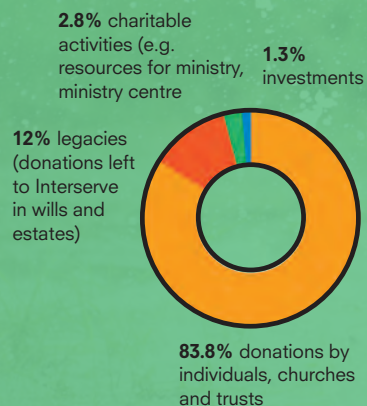
# You make a tangible difference

## HERE IS A QUICK SNAPSHOT OF OUR FINANCIAL STANDING DURING 2022

We continually seek God's guidance in our stewardship of your generous support; God is our provider but He chooses to do this through people like you who respond to His call as part of their giving ministry.

### INCOME

**Total income: £2,424,770**

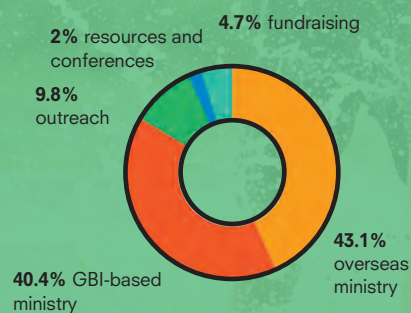


- ◆ **59.7%** of our donated income (£1,447,931) was given in support of Partners and their projects (designated income).
- ◆ **78.5%** of donations come from regular giving and approximately 21.5 % from one-off gifts.

\*All figures taken from our 2022 accounts

### EXPENDITURE

**Total expenditure: £2,543,967**



- ◆ **£1,415,354** (58 % of our total expenditure) was spent directly in support of Partners and their project work.
- ◆ We gave out **£245,932** in direct project funding.
- ◆ Outreach includes producing GO magazine, our various prayer materials and other printed resources; **£42,119** was spent on these.

Do you want to play a part in community transforming work that is happening through Interserve?

If you are feeling called to ministry and to work among people of Asia and the Arab world here in Great Britain and Ireland, or overseas, then, we would love for you to journey with us.

At Interserve, we have a dedicated team who will guide you through every step of your journey, from your first enquiry, to supporting you whilst you are working in your place of service.

The stories in this Impact Report show just a handful of ways in which you can work through Interserve. If you would like to find out more about how you can get involved please go to [www.interserve.org.uk](http://www.interserve.org.uk)

**78** Partners in total

**33** Serving overseas

**45** Serving in Great Britain and Ireland





# Community transformation through a *community hospital in South Asia*

## AN INTERSERVE GBI PARTNER, A PHYSIOTHERAPIST, SHARES WHAT IS HAPPENING WHERE SHE IS WORKING

Through the invitation of a Gurkha soldier to a Scottish physician in the British Army, a community hospital began its life in 1962 as a clinic in a small mud and brick house, in a hamlet on a hillside. Over time, beds were added to the clinic and it slowly grew to become the 50-bed community hospital it is now, providing health care services to a population of more than 250,000 people in the community and surrounding

districts. In 1978, the hospital's community work started by training villagers to become health workers, and opening maternal and child health clinics in the villages. The focus at the beginning was on immunisations, nutrition, sanitation (toilets) and drinking water. In those days there was very little understanding of hygiene, and diseases were often directly attributed to poor hygiene.

From those early days onwards the hospital has always kept its focus on improving the health of the local communities, working with the government health posts, and educating society on a wide variety of health issues. As a result, the population's health has improved considerably over these last few decades. Life expectancy has increased from 46 to 68 years. More recently, the hospital's community focus has moved into Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) to work with people with disabilities (PWD). This diverse group of people are some of the most marginalised in the world and are often living in deep poverty. Our CBR programme, with over 30 dedicated and enthusiastic local field workers, has been running for three



|| Interserve GBI Partners are currently working in **medical centres** across the globe.

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*...a small community hospital being faithful to the call of Jesus to transform society.*

years and is now combined with a mental health project. We are currently working in two municipalities in mountainous and remote areas totalling about 15 square miles, accessible only on dirt roads by sturdy jeeps, unless it is monsoon. The field workers work closely with the local government and civil societies, such as mothers groups. They raise awareness on disability issues and educate people on the rights of PWD to reduce the attitudinal, physical, and communication barriers that prevent people from accessing health and education services, and from being included in social life. They provide basic physiotherapy, occupational therapy and assistive devices like toilet chairs and crutches to those with physical disabilities.

Disability committees have been established in all 17 municipality wards to enable PWD to advocate for their rights. Attitudes that were once harsh towards PWD, or, at best, ignored PWD,

are changing as the community realises that these people too are valuable human beings who can earn a living and contribute to society if they are given the opportunity. It is such a joy to observe this transformation. Children with disabilities who were left out of school are now receiving an education. Cottage industries led by PWD have been established and are thriving, such as a noodle-making factory, chicken farms, electrical and wholesale shops, a sanitary pad industry, and a business making colourful stools with local materials run by a blind man and his wife. We have helped numerous people with mental illnesses - some so severe they were unable to eat, dress, or walk, and were kept hidden away from the outside world - to get the correct diagnosis and medication. Some have undergone a complete transformation - like Shanta, a Sherpa girl in her twenties who is now running her own restaurant! And Dol Bahadur, whose leg was crushed by a rock. He needed many operations in the hospital to remove the bone infection. He is now finally pain-free and so happy, walking on a leg that nearly had to be amputated, and having an accessible toilet that CBR helped him build. Also, Dalamu, a lady in her late twenties with three children, who had a spinal cord injury from falling out of a tree while cutting leaves for her goats. She now has a wheelchair-accessible house and kitchen, and her longing to cook again for her family has been fulfilled.

These are a few snapshots of some of the beautiful things happening through a small community hospital being faithful to the call of Jesus to transform society through healing, education and empowerment to people with disabilities who are so often forgotten by society.



# No judgement

## CREATING A SPACE FOR WOMEN

Interserve was formed by a community of women who helped women, and to this day, Interserve is still very much involved in working amongst communities of women. Here is a story of transformation told through the eyes of a woman who has been supported, loved and cared for by an Interserve worker in a community centre in the South of England.

“One of my friends told me about this place I could go to with my kids. The kids could play in a safe place while I could just sit and think or talk over my current issues with the other ladies who were there. It was a very different kind of place. They didn’t quiz me on my life, they didn’t want to know anything really but just let me be myself and talk when I wanted to. I had the freedom to say nothing if I felt like doing that. I could sleep or I could cry, it didn’t matter. I was accepted. No one had ever treated me like that before.

“My relationships had taken away all my confidence and I just ‘knew’ everything was my fault. The ladies who ran that group were so loving and understanding - I knew I could trust them.

“I can’t remember who told me the ladies running the group were Christians who came from several different churches. I was amazed that they gave up their time to be with me and others like me. Knowing they were Christians encouraged me to

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Interserve Partners work in **community centres** across the globe.



ask them to pray for me and my family. They were always happy to pray for me and then, sometimes, when it was quiet, they would pray with me - that was so special. I just knew their prayers worked. They were ‘connected to God’ in some way that I wasn’t and their prayers were often answered. Even when the group itself was closed for the day I knew there was always someone I could contact to ask for prayer.

“I have a good job now which has improved my confidence, and the ladies in the group were so supportive as I tried to transform my sad life to a life with purpose.

“Life is still not easy but I now have somewhere I can go and offload to, where I know I’m not judged by anyone and I know they are praying for me. These ladies have shown me that I don’t need to stay in my dark life but that there is another way. They showed me films and told me about the power of Jesus.”

The centre has been running for over



20 years and has a reputation in the community for being a place where women can come freely without finding judgement. It now runs out of a church building, and has maintained a good reputation and relationships, so that local services and many husbands encourage their partners to come to us when they know they are lonely, depressed, or in need. Jesus has used his people to impact the local community. Our Christian faith and beliefs are evident but still, those who don’t know Jesus as we do, come along and share their lives with us as we share our stories and our prayers with them. God is doing an amazing thing!

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Knowing they were Christians encouraged me to ask them to pray for me and my family.



# A safe and nurturing Christian community

## SERVING AT AN INTERNATIONAL BOARDING SCHOOL

Ralph and Dagmar serve at an international boarding school in South Asia with a long history of providing an International Christian education and home away from home. The school serves mainly the children of full time Christian ministers of the gospel in Asia, but is also open to children of other backgrounds who want an international education.

One week, in our weekly staff meeting, our time of worship was followed by hearing over Zoom from parents of two of our local students. We were inspired by their ministry which started 20 years ago when they moved to a spiritually and economically needy city and began a small school for ten slum children; the ministry has now grown to include medical, educational and job training projects in other very needy states in this vast land. Over the years the opposition to ministry in the name of Christ, especially in South Asia, has grown, and persecution is real. They explained that this is a big part of the reason they decided to send their children to our school to enable them to live, learn and grow in a safe and nurturing Christian community.

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Partners work in  
**educational centres**  
across the globe.



A good number of our students are also from Korea or the West and their parents serve in a variety of countries in Asia, such as Bangladesh, Nepal, Japan, Central Asia and the Gulf - as well as in all parts of South Asia. Twice a year parents join us at school for parents' week and this is a highlight for us all as we learn more about the impact of the parents' ministries across the region.

Day to day, our ministry is focused on the 330 plus students, most of whom are teenagers. As we live, learn and teach in community, this is 24/7 youth work with limitless opportunities to mentor, disciple and develop the whole child. Through our interaction in classes, in the dorm settings, during sports, drama and music, treks and community, we rub shoulders and grow together in a Christian community. Students attend church services, run their

own Youth Fellowship, attend age-appropriate groups and Bible studies, student-led prayer breakfasts, and informal dorm worship times.

This year we have had the privilege of running our weekly 'alternative service' for the year 10-13 students who do not feel comfortable attending a normal church service. Each week about 25-30 students attend. We have been exploring scientific evidence for God's existence; the historical evidence for the reliability of the Scriptures; and will soon move on to the question 'Who then is Jesus?'. Students also bring their own questions of faith and identity for discussion and to learn from each other – such as, 'Did God hear my prayers?' or 'Why are people not healed or raised from the dead these days?'

Our calling as a Christian staff body here is to serve the youngsters in our community – whether their parents are in full time ministry or not, and whatever their faith background - by living out our walk with the Lord as we nurture



and teach them. The long-term impact we entrust to the Holy Spirit: we rejoice in encouraging contact with, and visits from, ex-students serving in challenging places around the world. We also rejoice in those from non-Christian backgrounds who are now following and serving Jesus – some came to faith while at school, and others took that step at university or later! Last summer one of our local year 9 girls from a non-Christian background was so influenced by her experience of living in the dorm, and seeing how her Christian peers were being transformed through worship and study of the Word, that she voluntarily attended dorm devotions and Youth Fellowship camp. She then decided to ask her dorm parents for help giving her life to the Lord.



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*Our calling as a  
Christian staff body  
here is to serve the  
youngsters in our  
community.*





*Thank you for being part of  
God's work seeing lives  
and communities  
transformed across Asia and  
the Arab World.*



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Printed by Yeomans

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Scottish charity number SC005316

