

PIM Schools

Imagine being a Papua New Guinean living deep in the interior. You have no electricity, no telephones, no vehicles, and no running water other than the stream running through your village, no schools, no access to health care and no income-producing jobs. The only food available is what you grow in your garden or what you are able to glean from the jungle.

But a ray of hope! You hear that a certain mission is willing to work with the people in your village to start a school. The word is that other schools started by this mission have been established and are functioning well. The education level being offered is limited to K-2nd grade, but something is better than nothing. Your hope is that through education your four kids might be able to escape the grinding poverty of the village.

You are totally disillusioned with the public schools because in most instances public teachers are willing to work only in cities and towns. Plus you've heard stories of villages getting a public school teacher who arrives, stays for a month or two, then leaves on vacation and never returns.

You learn that the mission has considerable requirements of the people in your village prior to the establishment of the school. You and those in your community are to build two classrooms, two houses for the Papua New Guinean teachers that will be sent, as well as two pit toilets. It's going to mean a lot of sweat in the steamy tropical climate, but you and the others move forward in faith, believing the end product will be worth it.

The contribution of the mission seems significant. They will supply trained teachers as well as the teacher's salaries. The tables and benches built by the mission and the school supplies have to be paid for by your village. After 3-5 months of work, you and your friends have completed your end of the bargain and you are waiting for this mission known as Pacific Island Ministries to hold up their part of the deal.

Sure enough, a month or two later outboard canoes arrive carrying the teachers, equipment and supplies. A great sense of excitement abounds as everyone looks forward to the big day. On the day the school opens its doors, a special service is held in which the teachers dedicate the school facility to God.

Once the school has started, you discover your work is not over. The school grounds need to be kept clean to keep the snakes away, which means getting together with other villagers and using grass-cutting knives to hack away at the grass that grows relentlessly due to the 150 inches of rain that falls annually. Also, you are required to pay an annual school fee of 40 kina (ca. U.S. \$13), which you will try to raise by selling some garden produce or vanilla beans.

In addition, the PIM teachers are in need of village support because they don't have their own gardens in your village. They are very grateful when you share with them the fresh produce from your garden. The education of the teachers varies between 6th grade and

10th grade which seems like a lot of schooling to you because you've never had the opportunity to learn how to read and write.

The school functions well for four months, but then in July the teachers announce that because the mission is low on funds, the school will be closed for two or three months. They ask you to pray that supporters in North America would give generously to the mission.

In September, you receive the news via two way radio that additional funds have come in and that the teachers will soon be arriving again. You've grown to love these teachers because not only do they teach your children, but they also have started a Sunday worship service in your village and in their preaching they place a strong emphasis on Jesus Christ and his love for you.

How can you get involved?

GIVE

VISIT

PRAY