



Doing Good That Is Good

The newsletter of FARMS International

December 2017: New Program- Mizoram, Philippine Update

Providing revolving entrepreneurial loans to poor Christian families - Galatians 6:10

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder:...” Isaiah 9:6

The rest of this verse surely added to the mystery of who this child was *“...and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.* How could one conceive of a child being the *“mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”* What awesome wonder must have filled those who read Isaiah’s words before the birth of this child. Hopefully all of us still have the wonder, the awesome wonder of how God could have come as a child; to die as a man and be raised to life so that we might live with him!

This very truth is the reason for the ministry of FARM International. Because of you, this truth has reached thousands of people who were living in darkness, but now are living and serving the *“Prince of Peace.”* This is good news!

In this letter we share about a place called Mizoram. Mizoram is like many of the places God has called FARMS to work: remote, isolated, difficult to reach, and In some ways forgotten, but not by God. We count it a great privilege to walk alongside our brothers and sisters in places of great need, and we know that you do too. **May the Lord Jesus fill you with wonder during this special season.**

Love in Jesus, Joseph Richter, for the whole FARMS family

Mizoram:

Where is Mizoram?

Mizoram is a small mountainous state in NE India, bordering Bangladesh on its western border and Burma on its eastern. The people of Mizoram are called Mizos.

FARMS International was approached by John Vanlalhriata to discuss a possible FARMS program for those in real poverty in his home state of Mizoram. John and I first met in Nepal, where he previously served as the director for the Evangelical



John Vanlalhriata and his wife Sangi, with one of their grandchildren

Friends Mission. John is a Mizo and has a real heart for his own people, especially those in great need. After our initial correspondence, we felt like it was time for a visit. It so happened that our Asian representative, Jaime Garcia, was making a visit to northern India and happily agreed to visit Mizoram to get a first hand look at the situation and to lay the groundwork for a possible program there. His report was very positive and we plan to move forward with this program in the near future.



FARMS International, Inc. • PO Box 270 • Knife River, MN 55609-0270 • 218-834-2676
info@farmsinternational.com • farmsinternational.com

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Jaime Garcia wrote:

In many ways, the Mizo are an anomaly within their nation - as opposed to the tall, dark-skinned Hindus of India, these people are generally short of stature, fair-skinned, with a slight Mongol complexion. They are thought to have originated in modern Mongolia. They are then said to have migrated through China, and into modern day Myanmar. In their emigrations, they faced opposition at the hands of the Han, the ethnic Burmese, and the Indians of Hindustan. These pressures helped them to develop into skilled warriors. Their young men became competent in war, ready to fight and defend their clan and territory. Being killed in battle became the greatest of virtues, an everlasting honor for their family.

In decades past, the Mizo people were conditioned to survive, and even thrive, in harsh highland regions.

These places were inhospitable and desolate, inhabited by tropical disease and wild beasts. They also faced harsh conditions in the cultivation of crops. The steep cliff sides and high hill grades, though beautiful in appearance, offered no respite for the Mizos. As a direct result of their environs and circumstances, they developed to have a high level of endurance in facing adversity, a relatively tolerant spirit, a sense of austerity, and an unprotesting attitude.

Today, same as ages ago, mountainous village life for Mizos is often rugged, arduous, and monotonous. A great majority of the occupations offered by society involve taxing manual labor - splitting and hauling rocks, laying concrete, constructing roads, erecting precarious hillside homes, and the like. Unemployment is high, and recent school graduates are caught in the assiduous cycle of joblessness. This has left a damaging imprint on the population - leading to soaring rates of drug and alcohol addiction, illegal drug trafficking, and a profusion of other social issues.



The Solution

FARMS will offer a significant discipleship opportunity for Christian Mizo families and individuals. **This biblical alternative to the deeply imbedded and rampant 'poverty mentality' will be transformational.**

FARMS will provide training and revolving loans for income producing projects. Through their discipleship, we expect recipients to become creative, exceptionally generous, and exemplary members of their church and society.

Two of the projects suggested are traditional cloth weaving and clothes repair and sewing. **Mizo women are well known for their skill in making beautiful and very salable cloth by hand looms.** Women will be trained and provided with looms, sewing machines and the materials to begin each of these endeavors. **Project costs will be about \$780 each.**

Several animal husbandry projects were suggested, including goats, chickens, and pigs. Also, fruit growing projects with passion fruit, pineapples, grapes, as well as macadamia nuts were mentioned for rural areas. **Project costs range from \$310 to \$470 each.**

Please be in prayer for us and those that will be running the program as we launch this new partnership in Mizoram. **Also, pray how you might support this needed outreach to Christians in Mizoram.** We trust God will bless this program and many lives will be transformed by Jesus! JR

Philippine Update

I am **Renato P. Descalzo**. I live in San Jose, Aguilar, Pangasinan. I am thirty-eight years old, married to Mary Jane. We have two children named Samuela, 4 and Kate, 2. I came to know the Lord Jesus Christ when my high school teacher gave me a Bible in 1997. She invited me to attend in their church and since then I became a regular member.

After high school, I went to Mindanao and stayed with my Uncle. I need to work to earn income while with him. I met my wife Mary Jane there. We went home to Pangasinan and had our wedding. We built a simple house to start with. We waited for almost five years before God blessed us with our daughter Samuela Jane. **Farming was the only source of our living and due to limited capital; our income was insufficient to meet the needs of our growing family.** It was during this difficult time that FARMS helped us. I used to loan from lending companies with very high interest rates, but never could get ahead. **Then in 2010, the FARMS committee loaned me \$325, which was enough to grow corn.** After harvesting, I planted rice. I continued to be



faithful in serving the Lord and followed the policies of FARMS with every cycle of planting crops. Recently I was able to borrow \$700 to buy fertilizers and other needs. **The yield of my**

farm increased considerably and we now by the grace of God my family has enough income to meet our needs and to continue farming. In addition, we were able to buy galvanized iron for the roofing of our nipa hut. I was also able to buy water pump for irrigation during dry season.



My wife and I serve the Lord and are so honored to be part of our church ministry. I serve in janitorial work and cooking for church events and my wife in teaching children and church programs.

We are truly blessed because of the ministry of FARMS. Thank you so much and may our Heavenly Father continue to bless and use you in blessing even more families!

Gratefully yours,

Renato P. Descalzo - May 13, 2017



FARMS International, Inc.
P.O. Box 270
Knife River, MN 55609



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How can I help?

- Prayer is needed for all our programs. Pray for the volunteers on the committees. Pray for the families and individuals that are being helped. Pray for safety for all of them. Also, pray for the staff and board of FARMS.
- Pray about supporting FARMS on a regular basis. You can do this through your checking or credit card. You can also designate your gift towards a special program that you have an interest in.
- Give a special donation to FARMS this Christmas in honor or memory of a loved one. We will send a card to those you honor.
- Visit FARMS International's Facebook page and share the news with others.
- Share about FARMS with your family and friends. If you need a DVD or other materials just ask.
- Donate frequent flyer miles to FARMS.
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