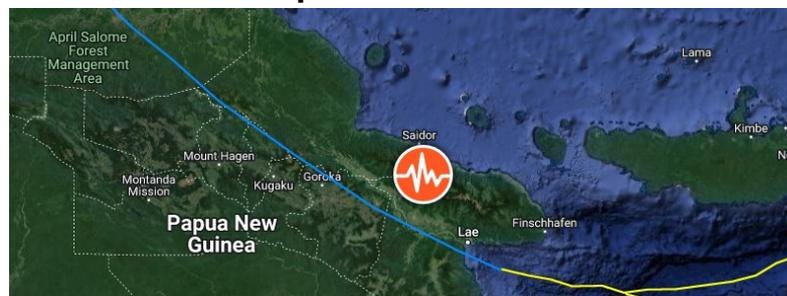




Reaching the isolated communities of Papua New Guinea



7.6M Earthquake rocks the Eastern Highlands on Sep 11!

Sunday morning, I'm sitting in church, listening to the sermon, when the ground suddenly begins to shake. This is the third earthquake I have felt since arriving in PNG, but this one is much bigger than the rest! As the ground rumbles beneath my feet, I tilt my head backwards and gaze up at the high beams above, rocking to and fro. "Uhhhh ohhhh - shouldn't we all get outside?" I think to myself. But no one does anything, no one is moving; the congregation sits silently, waiting to see how bad it will get. I too, sit, with my eyes wide open and no movement. Then, as the trembling gets worse, people start to panic. No one wants to be the last one left inside the church when the building falls down! In a mad rush, the congregation scampers outside to open safety to await the rumbling as it passes...

*It is a surreal and strange phenomenon, to feel the fixed ground
beneath your feet come undone...*

We were very lucky in Goroka to have experienced only a mild shaking. Very little damage was done to the church house and surrounding buildings and the same could be said for the rest of the town.

The epicenter, about 200km away at a village called Hoperang and closer to the eastern coast, radiated damage as far as Morobe in the north and Hambia in the south (place names on google maps), with multiple villages destroyed, landslides sweeping the hillsides, and a number of casualties and deaths. I am not a seismologist, but I wonder if the mountain peaks that surround our beautiful valley acted as a barrier to the full force of the quake.



View of Goroka valley from Gahavesuka Hill – about a 2-hour hike from town

This is a perfect example of why MAF Technologies exists in Papua New Guinea for the remote communities. Monday morning, the day after the earthquake, the team went straight about to putting together an earthquake response plan. We were instructed to, "***be prepared for med-evac emergencies and try to contact as many remote communities as possible to assess the damage***".

As Corporate Services Manager, the task of responding to medical emergencies and catastrophes falls to my team in the admin office where our main radio operator stands-by to receive incoming emergency calls.

MAF are a lifeline to so many people across PNG.

Without our HF radio network and aircraft, reaching isolated communities would be next to impossible.



Some Key Facts about Papua New Guinea

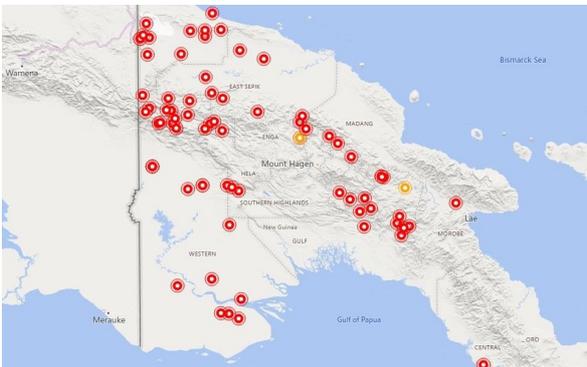
- **80%** of Papua New Guineans live in rural locations, without access to electricity or other modern amenities.
- **Papua New Guinea's** road network only covers about 20 to 30,000 km's, compare that to the UK which has around 200,000 km's of road network.
- **Many remote villages** and locations can only be accessed via aircraft (plane or helicopter) or by foot.
- **Papua New Guinea's** dense tropical and mountainous terrain is the biggest

barrier to access.

- **The mobile phone** infrastructure in PNG is still developing, therefore many remote locations rely solely on HF radio to contact the outside world.
- **850 languages** are spoken in PNG with the common tongue being Tok Pisin (Pidgin English).



Communication is possible through our HF Radio Network! (MAFTech HF Radio Location MAP)



Meet the MAF Technologies team :)

So what exactly does a Corporate Services Manager do? Well, theoretically, my role manages staff, finances and resources, and oversees all operational activities. So far, I have been working on mainly HR duties, refining and updating our policies and working with other managers to strategize on staff development. 80% of MAF Technologies staff are made up of nationals, with myself and another Swiss family being the only full-time expat missionaries for the program. My role is vital to the success of our work here as it supports our hardworking nationals whose passion and heart are for this ministry. As a non-profit, many of them are not paid very well compared to western standards, but still believe that God has brought them to this work. We employ and train; IT technicians, electrical engineers, admin staff and technologists who are responsible for the technical solutions that we use to bring the word and love of God, to remote communities.

My arrival is timed with the transition of the organization's former identity as Christian Radio Missionary Fellowship to **MAF Technologies**. This brings about a unique set of challenges that I must navigate well. I will keep writing about these challenges in future letters...

As promised here is a timeline of events since my departure from the UK



28 April 2022 - Left Manchester Airport, Cairns bound. On the way, I was lucky enough to make a quick stop by in Perth (Western Australia) to say hello to my older brother and his family whom I had not seen for 5 years! It was a lovely encouragement after leaving my mum, dad and sister behind in England.

02 May 2022 - Arrived in Cairns (QLD, Australia), head office of MAF Asia Pacific to orient myself to the pacific team and get an overview of MAF's service in this part of the world. The hot humidity; a warm welcome to oceania.



Whilst in Cairns, I visited the MAF pilot training center in Mareeba and enjoyed seeing MAF aircraft up close! As I was touring the hangar, I was blessed to hear of stories from MAF staff of how God has blessed the organisation with new land, aircraft and aviation equipment.



12 May 2022 - Boarded a flight to Mt Hagen Western Highlands Province, to complete 4 weeks of orientation to highlands life in PNG. Being so diverse, PNG culture and attitudes vary greatly dependent on what province you are in.



Historically, the highlanders have been notorious for their headhunting and cannibalistic practices, though a ritual of the past, they are still renowned for tribal fighting that frequently takes place. Therefore, gaining a cultural understanding of the highlands regions of PNG was essential during this time.

12 June 2022 - I get news that my maternal grandmother currently living in a remote island region of PNG is very sick and in the hospital. I am filled with worry and anxiety, being in the highlands and unable to visit her before she dies.



MAF kindly grant me 2 weeks to attend to her needs and I fly to Kavieng, New Ireland province to visit her. During this time I experience first-hand what it is like to live in a remote location, travelling 4 hours by speedboat from the mainland to reach the island of New Hanover.



27 June 2022 - Praise God for my grandmother's recovery! I leave the village with peace knowing that I have done my bit to show her after all these years that she is still in my heart and that I love her. She is quite old now, her memory is declining and she lives without the luxuries of modern healthcare. I fly back to Goroka to officially start my new role.

16 September 2022 - PNG celebrates its independence from Australia and the UK since 1975. The annual "sing sing" festival takes place in downtown Goroka - An awesome experience, with many different tribal groups coming together to showcase their "bilas" (cultural dress), songs and dances. I am emotional at the sight and sound of so much diversity but also the history of Papua New Guinea's people groups! Culture that should be preserved, not lost to modernization. *(Picture courtesy of my Canon point-and-shoot)*



There is always so much to write about and I will try my best to include stories of how MAF Technologies serves isolated communities throughout PNG.

Without your support, I would not have made it this far. Without your faithful pledge which keeps ministries like MAF Technologies alive, I and the team could not do the work that we do to impact and support the remote communities of PNG through the gospel; with aviation and technology.

I am so happy to devote my life and service to this ministry. Can you partner with me and help me reach my monthly support target?

Visit: www.maf-uk.org/tordoff

THANK YOU!