

# FLYING FOR LIFE

MAF UK'S QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

JAN-MAR 2023



## 'A fruitful trip'

Growing the Gospel dynamically in Chad

## On the front line

Responding to floods immediately in Suriname

## Mama Waiting Huts

Helping mothers and babies in Papua New Guinea



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Front cover  
MAF is flying for life in Papua

Heather Marx

Back cover  
MAF is flying for life in South Sudan

Jaap de With



MAF (Mission Aviation Fellowship) is a Christian organisation reaching men, women and children in more than 25 countries. Operating more than 100 aircraft, MAF's pilots overcome terrain that has become inaccessible due to derelict roads, natural disaster, or violent conflict. MAF aircraft fly into more than 1,000 destinations — transporting food and water, health professionals and medical supplies, and emergency workers and Christian missionaries where they are needed most. Each flight brings practical help, spiritual hope and physical healing to thousands of isolated people in remote communities for whom flying is a lifeline not a luxury. **MAF is flying for life.**

**Flying for Life**

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# One flight at a time

Happy New Year!

Unless this is the first time you've picked up a copy of *Flying for Life* magazine, you'll notice that we've made a few design changes for 2023 — including an introduction from your Editor rather than MAF's Chief Executive.

However, it's our fervent hope you'll find *Flying for Life* as inspirational as ever — containing new stories of how MAF people and planes are changing the world... one flight at a time.

**But, the real test for *Flying for Life* depends on YOU! Please phone us on 01303 852819 or email [supporter.relations@maf-uk.org](mailto:supporter.relations@maf-uk.org) and tell us exactly what you think of your magazine.**

Thank you for the many prayers and gifts with which you continue to support MAF's mission.

The miracles you read about in *Flying for Life* begin with you.

**Richard Chambers**  
Editor, *Flying for Life*



Wherever you see this symbol, it indicates a flight where MAF responded to a problem caused by the climate crisis, or transported a partner who supports creation care.

 Irina Randriamandrato



## A new season

For the past 16 years, it has been my privilege to serve as MAF UK's Chief Executive. Over the years, I have rejoiced with our teams as lives have been changed and

remote communities transformed through the power of God's love.

We have also walked through challenging times, but I have been so very grateful for your prayers and support, and I want to thank you for your essential part in this ministry.

However, all things have their season and it is time for me to 'hand on the baton' of leadership.

I believe MAF is an exceptional and unique ministry! It has been a joy to be part of this great mission and His Kingdom work through MAF.

It was an honour to have known Stuart King personally — he was one of MAF's great pioneers —

and to have met so many other wonderful, skilled and humble people. It has been a pleasure to get to know many of our overseas mission staff, as well as working with the global leadership team.

But we could not achieve all that we do without *you*.

I have been humbled by the commitment and generosity of our amazing prayer partners, donors and volunteers who have supported MAF so faithfully over the years.

The Board looks forward to introducing you to the new Chief Executive next year. Meanwhile, I want to express my personal thanks to you all for your dedicated support and commitment to the work of MAF.

I appreciate each and every one of you.

**Ruth Whitaker**  
Chief Executive, MAF UK (2006-2022)



## A passion for mission

We have greatly appreciated Ruth's leadership of MAF UK through changes, challenges and — of course — the pandemic.

Ruth has steered the organisation by resourcing overseas programmes, delivering income growth, enabling overseas staff recruitment, championing new training programmes, and keeping a determined focus on prayer and the acknowledgement of our reliance on God.

Her passion for the mission of MAF and God's Word, as well as the meaningful relationships she has developed in the UK and internationally, will ensure her legacy will continue to be seen for many years to come.

We wish her every blessing and success for the next season of life, and we are thankful for her service.

**Matthew Burton**  
Chair of Trustees, MAF UK



**40,000**  
UNREACHED PEOPLE  
LIVE IN THE GOZ  
BEIDA REGION OF  
EASTERN CHAD

KEY

- ★ Capital city
- Destination
- + MAF base



# 'A fruitful trip'

STORY TRACEY FEIL / PHOTOS JUSTIN ROBAYE

**How do you hear about God if there are no Bibles and no believers — let alone a church — in your community? In Chad, one man started by turning to his knowledge of the Gospel of Matthew**

**P**astor Justin has committed his life to serving the unreached people of his own country.

In 2019, his organisation Mission De La Parole Vivante 'adopted' six groups of people living in the remote town of Goz Beida in eastern Chad — a total of 40,000 individuals!

Having trained several Chadian missionaries (pictured above and left), Justin has been able to send two families to live in communities so they can build relationships with their neighbours and run Bible courses.

Matthew 24:14 is central to Justin's ministry. 'And this Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.'

'The Greek phrase for "all nations" is *panta ta ethne*', says Justin. 'This refers to all the ethnicities, or people groups, of the world.'

'We believe that Jesus was very clear in stating that His Gospel would be preached to all people groups before He would return. Therefore, our goal is to assist in

the preaching of the Good News to every people group, in order to fulfil the words of Christ!'

Justin flies regularly to eastern Chad from the capital N'Djaména. A recent MAF trip enabled him to meet the Great Chief of the Runga people.

'When I shared with him our vision to send missionaries among their people,' Justin recalls, 'he was very happy. He took out his phone and called the chief of each Runga village to ask them to receive our team.'

That trip continued with Justin visiting four villages to meet with their leaders. Each time he did so, Justin prayed with them and declared a blessing upon their land.

Although the Runga live in a region that looks green and fertile, they're extremely poor because they use outdated farming methods.

So, at each village, Justin explained there are people who can teach them a far more productive and sustainable way of growing crops.

'A fruitful trip,' Pastor Justin concludes with a smile.

## PLEASE PRAY

— that, in time, great physical and spiritual fruit will result from MAF's partnership with Pastor Justin.

# Farewell, Bangladesh

STORY RICHARD CHAMBERS

In June 2022, the opening of the multipurpose 'bridge of dreams' over the Padma River revolutionised travel in Bangladesh, opening up previously isolated areas

**F**or a country classified as 80% flood plain, MAF's amphibious aircraft was a unique resource for millions of people living in the most precarious isolation.

From 1997, land and river journeys that previously took days were instantly reduced to around an hour by our floatplane. Suddenly, remote communities could be reached quickly in time to save countless lives.

Drowning is the biggest killer of under-fours in Bangladesh. Many children have to wade through thigh-high waters during the June-October wet season just to get to school.

To make school journeys safer, Co-operation in Development builds bridges over waterways — mainly around Bhola Island in southern Bangladesh (pictured middle right).

## FACT FILE



### THE PADMA BRIDGE

#### TYPE

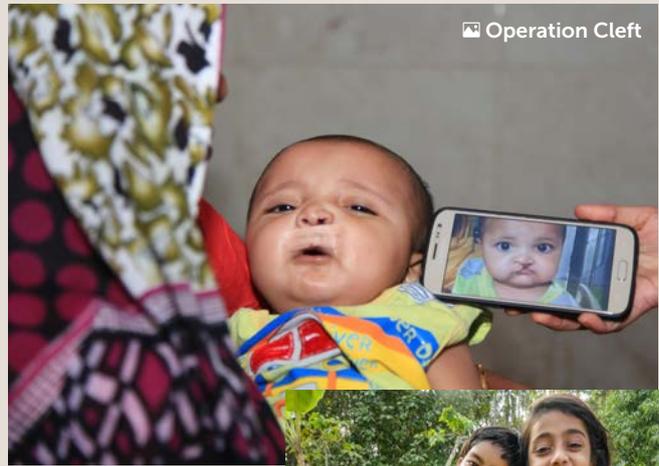
Multipurpose road-rail bridge

#### LENGTH

Just under 4 miles — the longest in Bangladesh

#### IMPACT

Connects 21 districts in the south-west of the country with the capital Dhaka



'MAF is literally the best way to get to Bhola,' Country Director Dr Olav Muurlink explains. 'Flying us straight from the capital Dhaka to the river off Bhola saves our volunteers around ten hours each way.'

From 2003, Friendship's floating hospitals (pictured below) have depended on MAF to transport patients and doctors to its ships.

'For every hour saved, a person's life is saved,' says Friendship's Founding Director Runa Khan. 'If MAF hadn't been there, how many operations would not have been carried out? Maybe a third.'

Operation Cleft (pictured top right), which carries out life-transforming facial surgery, is another organisation that sings MAF's praises.

'One of the cities we served was Barguna in the south,' recalls Secretary Bruce McEwen. 'There was no way we'd have been able to visit this remote area without MAF's very special floatplane services. Thanks again MAF, for looking after us in Bangladesh.'

Bangladesh has made such economic progress in the 21st century it has been proclaimed 'a model for poverty reduction' by The World Bank.

Consequently, MAF has taken the decision to close the programme in Bangladesh and target resources where we can have the greatest impact for isolated communities.

Although we are always sad to say goodbye to a country with which we have developed a deep, abiding relationship, we wholeheartedly celebrate the progress that has been made in Bangladesh.



*For every hour saved,  
a person's life is saved*



LuAnne Cadd



# Suriname's floods – MAF on the frontline

STORY CLAIRE GILDERSON



MAF Suriname



Rutger Bakker

**Suriname's rainy season is nothing new, but last year's water levels caused more devastation than ever before. MAF and the national disaster response agency NCCR responded to the crisis**

**S**uriname's rainy season between April and August has always been challenging. Flooded streets causing vehicles to break down is nothing new.

But last year's unusually heavy rainfall caused riverbanks to burst, flooding dozens of villages across this small South American country.

According to AFP News, more than 3,000 households were damaged by 'unprecedented floods', which also devastated crops and livelihoods. Helmer Maas, MAF Suriname's Office Manager based in the capital Paramaribo, is worried about long-term food security.

'In Suriname's interior, crops are grown next to rivers where people live, but burst riverbanks have completely destroyed the cassava harvest, so their main supply of food has gone. It's a big issue.'

Many residents were unable to reach their village by foot, so they had to travel by small boats to reach their destination. Others couldn't access health centres due to the floodwaters, which rose to 16 feet in some areas.

When Suriname President Chan Santokhi declared much of the country a 'disaster area' and called for international help, MAF responded quickly, joining forces with NCCR staff (pictured right, with MAF Pilot Peter de Winkle) to distribute food to isolated people cut off by flooding.



**Depending on the water levels, it could take three days to reach Tepoe. There are no roads! The only transport is plane, boat or by foot!**

### **Hundreds of families fed**

Last June, MAF flew around 30 sacks of food containing rice, potatoes, tinned vegetables, cooking oil, onions and bars of soap to Tepoe in southern Suriname.

Thanks to two MAF planes and three pilots, further isolated villages in the south were fed including Amatopo, Coeroeni, Kwamalasamutu, Paloemeu, Alalapadu and Sipaliwini.

### **MAF's speedy response**

It took MAF around 2 hours 15 minutes to fly from Paramaribo to these remote villages, none of which are serviced by any roads. Without MAF, it would have taken days to reach these people.

MAF only took 90 minutes to reach Tepoe. Helmer explains the arduous alternative.

'They would have to drive around Lake Brokopondo — one of the largest reservoirs in the world. The road ends at the bottom of the lake, so they would have to travel by boat or by foot to continue.

'Depending on the water levels, it could take three days to reach Tepoe. There are no roads! The only transport is plane, boat or by foot.'

In Suriname's hour of need, NCCR relied on MAF's safe and fast service (pictured above). Colonel Slijngard from NCCR says, 'We are very grateful for the co-operation and security MAF brings in the distribution of food aid. Without these flights, it would be a big problem delivering these vital packages.'

Without MAF, these communities would be cut off from essential supplies and disconnected from the rest of their country.



### **Floods make landing difficult**

Perfect weather makes for perfect flying and landing conditions, but what if it rains non-stop?

Persistent rain can prevent planes from landing on sodden soil so, when MAF planes are the only means of distributing food during floods, this presents a challenge.

'Every morning we get weather reports,' says Helmer. 'If there's too much rain, the airstrips close and we're not able to get there. We've had to close airstrips because we're not able to land when the soil is too soft from heavy rain.'

'The next day, if there's no rain and the soil has dried up, we're able to land there again, but sometimes we need to wait. Unfortunately, we had to delay the food flight to Tepoe by one day because the airstrip was too wet to land.'

With crops wiped out until early 2023, Helmer concludes that MAF is looking into long-term support for Suriname's vulnerable and isolated communities.

'These floods are a long-term problem for people living in the interior because their crops are

gone. For cut-off communities dependent on outside help, airbridges and MAF flights are vital for food supplies when there is no cassava harvest.'

### **PLEASE PRAY**

– for MAF Suriname as it continues to provide medevacs and other flights supporting community development and evangelism.



**Scan me to read more on our website!**



 Mark Liprini

# Body and soul

**MAF Pilot Mark Liprini (pictured above) shares the story of a flight to spread Jesus’ love that also provided a family with urgent medical treatment**

**T**he Malambo medical and evangelistic safari flight (pictured below), is crucial for people in Tanzania’s hard-to-access areas.

Elisha Moita is a Maasai pastor living in Malambo who has been working hand-in-glove with MAF for almost 40 years.

He sends evangelists to remote communities to share the Gospel and nurture believers. Elisha also brings young people to Malambo where they train new generations of evangelists, church workers and Sunday School teachers to run a small Bible school there.

Recently, as I was about to take off on another routine flight, I glanced out of the cockpit to see a man signalling frantically for me to turn off my engine so he could speak to me.

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**‘PLEASE, PLEASE – THERE IS A VERY SICK CHILD THAT NEEDS TO GO TO THE CLINIC! CAN YOU PLEASE TAKE THE CHILD, ITS MOTHER AND THE FATHER WHO IS ALSO SICK?’**

---

As the small family was strapped in next to the three Maasai evangelists we had come to collect, I quickly made some new weight calculations. We had a mere 4kg to spare!

While we prayed for the family and restarted the engine, a Maasai ran to the end of the sloping mountain airstrip to chase away a herd of donkeys that were grazing there.

The journey is only seven miles – one of the shortest in the entire MAF world. However, even a fit and healthy adult would take the best part of a day to cover the rugged terrain on foot.

Flying with MAF gives the evangelists two precious, extra days to minister in a remote community. For parents with a sick child, walking would be a last, desperate resort.

Minutes after taking off, we landed in Malambo where we watched the family walking slowly in the direction of the nearby clinic.

The urgent medical treatment which is so rarely available in their mountain village was now well within reach.



 Jarkko Korhonen



**1 DAY**

**FOR A FIT AND HEALTHY ADULT TO WALK 7 MILES ACROSS RUGGED TERRAIN**



# Is it time you joined our team?

MAF Trustee Ann Saunders invites you to consider whether God is calling you to use your skills and experience to help guide our mission

In 2021, MAF flew more than 3.5 million miles – that’s the equivalent of circling the equator more than 143 times! Each one of those flights took the love of God and the essentials of life to some of the world’s most isolated people.

MAF flights enabled numerous mission and aid agencies to work effectively in isolated, war-torn or disaster-hit areas. Our planes carried essentials such as food,

medicine, shelter, equipment, sanitation and technology.

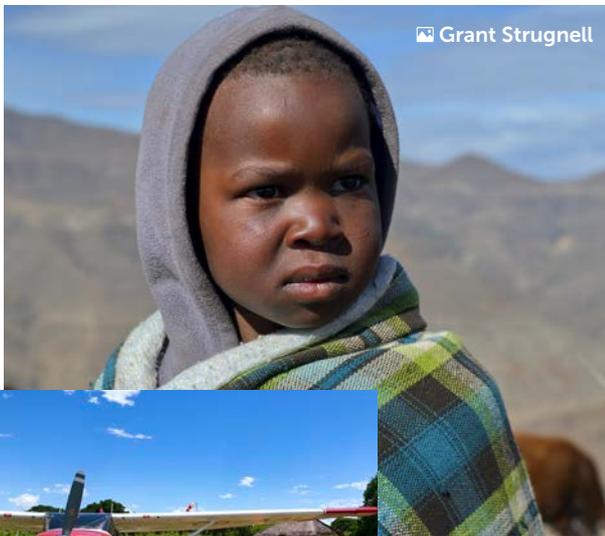
These life-saving flights wouldn’t have happened without you. The tremendous support you give to MAF through your prayers, gifts and time is what enables us to make an impact in the many communities we serve.

The work of many of our staff, both in the UK and overseas, may be familiar to you. However, behind the scenes, a Board of Trustees is

responsible for the governance and guidance of MAF UK.

The Board is a team of volunteers who serve the organisation by contributing the skills and experience they’ve gained from a variety of professions and outside interests.

They set the charity’s strategic direction and oversee MAF UK’s work of galvanising prayer support, generating vital income and recruiting people to serve overseas.



If you think God is calling you to be an MAF UK Trustee, please **scan the QR code** to meet the Board and phone **01303 852819** for an information pack.

## Could God be calling you to contribute in this way?

The MAF UK Board is currently looking for new Trustees to add to its skills. We want to hear from people with experience in one of the following areas:

- Finance
- Pastoral care
- Missiology
- Youth engagement

We meet formally four times a year, and most Trustees are also members of a sub-committee. The total time commitment is approximately eight days a year.

In volunteering for the role of Trustee, you would become part of an inspirational team seeking God’s heart for people in desperate need around the world.

And you would be doing something wonderful – bringing them help, hope and healing.



# Beyond isolation: Kenya

STORY RICHARD CHAMBERS / PHOTOS KEA ARNLUND

*Flying for Life's* featured programme this winter is **MAF Kenya**. Since 1959, our aircraft have served a country where urban skyscrapers provide a modern contrast to the traditional rural existence of the majority

**I**n Kenya, one in three people lives below the poverty line on less than £2 a day.

Around 95% of this semi-arid country's agricultural output is rain-fed, so erratic weather patterns and swarms of locusts continue to keep hunger levels in rural areas extremely high.

Half of all households grow maize to feed themselves or to generate much needed income.

The population is growing at nearly 3% a year, therefore the extent to which millions of families' lives depends on a successful harvest cannot be understated.

Years of low rainfall across Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia have caused the worst drought in 40 years, with millions in the Horn of Africa facing starvation today.

described by media outlets as a 'lawless' or 'failed' state.

A stark reduction to international funding by the world's wealthy nations has reduced refugees' food rations by a life-threatening 40%.

Presidential elections this century have been marred by deadly disputes, tarnishing the country's reputation as a beacon of stability in a volatile region.

In the past, financial mismanagement and widespread corruption have been a serious drain on the country's economy. However, primary and secondary schools now have clubs encouraging active citizenship to promote good values.\*

## **A question of transport**

For the majority of Kenya's people to escape the poverty which defines their daily life, external sources of help and assistance will be needed for decades to come.

However, international and national aid organisations face formidable obstacles in reaching areas where levels of deprivation and despair are greatest.

Fewer than 10% of roads are paved, leaving routes outside the cities as mere dirt tracks that transform into impassable quagmires during the rainy season.

## **Volatile and violent**

In spite of this crisis, isolated border areas host nearly a million refugees from neighbouring countries — more than half of whom are children.

Having fled hunger and violence in their home nations, these new arrivals find themselves in competition with local people for limited supplies of food, water and healthcare.

Although instability in South Sudan has driven the ongoing exodus from that country, the largest number of refugees in Kenya come from Somalia — long



1 IN 3 PEOPLE LIVE ON LESS THAN £2 PER DAY



THE POPULATION IS GROWING AT NEARLY 3% A YEAR



FEWER THAN 10% OF ROADS ARE PAVED



YEARS OF LOW RAINFALL HAVE CAUSED THE WORST DROUGHT IN 40 YEARS

\*<https://borgenproject.org/10-facts-about-corruption-in-kenya/>



All too often, delivering the physical and spiritual resources so desperately needed by rural Kenyans hinges solely upon the question of transport.

MAF supports organisations providing emergency food relief in remote areas struck by famine, in addition to those working to adapt, increase and maintain agricultural production.

Christian organisation ChildFund Korea provides emergency nutrition to pregnant women and – through the distribution of camel milk to primary school students – strengthens the physical development of young children.

### **Mind. Body. Soul**

MAF partner Lokichoggio Emuriakin Development Organisation has helped to reduce poverty by establishing a school in north-eastern Kenya, which also provides 600 students with meals they would otherwise miss.

To avoid creating a 'handout dependency', each child contributes a piece of firewood to the school's cookery lessons.

In just 90 minutes, MAF flights from the capital Nairobi cover the 500 miles to bring doctors and medical supplies to refugee settlements in Kakuma, enabling

**MAF makes it easy for missionaries to move from one place to another. Flying saves a lot of time!**

up to 150 patients a day to receive treatment.

For nearly two decades, Pastor Isaac Kirundi Githu of Deliverance Ministries has served Kenya's nomadic Turkana people.

Each three-hour flight enables larger congregations in Nairobi to provide logistical support and financial assistance to rural brothers and sisters.

The outreach project encourages the nomadic Turkana to attend church services – breaking the traditional hold of witchdoctors and superstition.

'MAF makes it easy for missionaries to move from one place to another,' says Pastor Isaac. 'Flying saves a lot of time!'

## KENYA TIMELINE

- 1959  
MAF Kenya programme begins
- 1963  
MAF maintenance base established in Nairobi
- 1965  
First Cessna 206 added to the fleet
- 1969  
MAF's medical safaris begin
- 1980s  
MAF operates from Kenya into surrounding African countries
- 1987  
Sub-base set up in Kampala, Uganda
- 1990s  
MAF begins providing IT services for mission agencies
- 1993  
MAF's Sudan operation relocates to Kenya during civil war
- 1998  
New MAF hangar and Operations Centre built at Nairobi Airport
- 2007  
Violence erupts in the aftermath of general elections
- 2017  
Widespread drought devastates crops across Kenya
- 2023  
MAF Kenya celebrates 64 years flying 'Beyond isolation'



# A new health service

STORY RICHARD CHAMBERS

Last year, *Flying for Life* announced that MAF and its partners would resume mobile eye clinics (pictured above) in remote parts of Kenya. We're delighted to report that sight is being restored to patients in Marsabit

**D**espite the availability of relatively simple solutions to cataracts — the leading cause of blindness in Kenya — most people suffering with the condition lose their sight.

In June 2022, MAF Kenya flew a team of ten eye specialists and surgeons to a free medical camp at Marsabit. This joint venture was organised by Fred Hollows Foundation, CBM, the Marsabit County Government and the Kenyan Ministry of Health.

Our aircraft reduced the 2-day road journey to a 2-hour flight, enabling an eager, well-rested team to complete 220 operations to correct cataracts.

In all, more than 1,730 people were screened for eye-related disorders including dry eye syndrome, refractive errors, allergic conjunctivitis, glaucoma and trachomatous trichiasis.

'While most cataracts are associated with aging, brightness or UV exposure,' explains Dr Dorcas Chelanga, 'they can also be related to trauma, diabetes and lifestyle factors.'

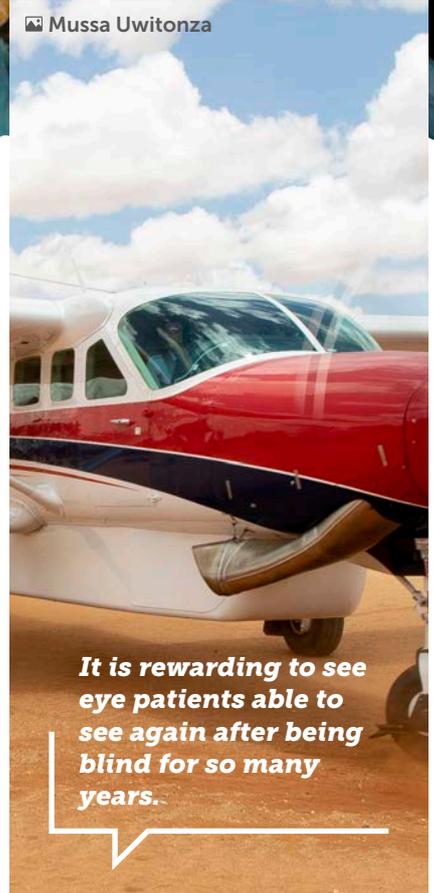
She adds that mass attendance at the medical camp demonstrated the need to establish more eye clinics in remote parts of Kenya.

'It is rewarding to see eye patients able to see again after being blind for many years,' she reports. 'But we need to organise camps in more villages.'

According to eye specialist Peter Galgalo Arero, cataracts tend to affect mainly older people, and can be aggravated using traditional medicines and eye procedures performed by unskilled people.

Later that day, Marsabit County Referral Hospital Chief Executive Liban Wako urged residents to visit its cancer screening and treatment clinic for early diagnosis.

The cancer centre was built as a direct result of Marsabit residents having to travel far outside their county in search of this vital service. Unfortunately, many people have shied away from cancer screening for fear of being told they have cancer.



## PLEASE PRAY

– that men, women and children will have the courage to take up the offer of free health services that will save or improve their lives.

# More than just a job: it's about making a difference and thinking outside the box

STORY CLAIRE GILDERSON

Head of Maintenance Mark Newnham never liked school — he 'endured' it. His love of fixing things led him to MAF 16 years ago, and he's never looked back

**A**ircraft Engineer Mark (pictured top right, with wife Sarah and family) lives in Nairobi and oversees maintenance across MAF operations in Kenya, South Sudan, Tanzania and Chad.

He ensures that engineering work is scheduled and carried out to a high standard. If a plane breaks down away from our base, Mark's role is pivotal to finding a solution. Communication skills are key.

Mark's job enables him to live out his faith and use his God-given strengths. But, in Africa, he has to be creative.

'Engineers obviously have professional qualifications and experience,' says Mark, 'but at MAF, you also need to be adaptable. Sometimes, we don't have parts available for the next day, like we do in Europe, so we have to swap parts between aircraft to keep one flying (pictured right).

'If we don't have a specific tool, we might end up making one! Skills beyond fixing aircraft are required. You need to think outside the box and come up with creative solutions that are safe and legal.'

Mark also enjoys working with people of different nationalities for a common purpose.



Sarah Newnham

'I love being involved with other MAF programmes and having an impact across the region. Even though we are different people from different backgrounds, everyone desires to work together and do what it takes to keep the planes flying safely.'

Working in an international team does have its challenges, Mark admits, but none that God can't overcome.

'I'm working outside of my comfort zone, so I've learnt to rely more on God and the people around me than if I had been working in the UK. Together, we can be effective and make a difference.'

For any engineers out there thinking of joining MAF, Mark has this advice.



Katie Machell

'Don't feel you need to be someone who is amazing — we are just ordinary people at the end of the day. Yes, you need to have the skills, passion and calling, but you don't have to be Superman! God has equipped me, but I can always improve.'

## Working for MAF is more than just a job

For all our latest vacancies, visit  
[www.maf-uk.org/journey](http://www.maf-uk.org/journey) or  
phone **01303 852819**



## STAFF PROFILE



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**PROGRAMME**  
Papua New Guinea



Annelie Edsmyr



Joy Suarkia

# 'I love working for MAF!' A passion for mission

STORY ADAM POPE

In 2022, Natasha left behind her life in the UK to serve with MAF in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

She works with MAF Technologies which provides the Church in PNG with technical solutions to everyday problems.

These include computing, solar lighting, radio communication, digital audio bibles and technical experts.

MAF pilots fly these products and personnel to remote areas, thereby resourcing isolated church leaders and evangelists to advance the Gospel.

Born to parents of multicultural heritage — a British father and Papua New Guinean mother — Natasha was instilled with a love of people, culture and travel through growing up in South Africa.

Her passion for overseas mission began as a young child when she was inspired by the many stories and testimonies of missionaries who'd been sent out from her home church.

At the age of 23, God began to speak to her about Christian service and gave her a desire to demonstrate His love to the impoverished, isolated and marginalised people of the world.

Natasha trained as an accountant, developing her skills in finance and management, which she now uses for the glory of God in this endeavour.

If you would like to join Natasha's team of partners by agreeing to support her through prayer or finance, please visit [www.maf-uk.org/tordoff](http://www.maf-uk.org/tordoff) and follow the links



## 'I love working for MAF!' Tears of gratitude

STORY JOY SUARKIA

I attended high school in Perth, Australia, with the goal of joining the Australian Military Defence Force after graduation. Apparently, that was not something the Lord intended me to do!

Following a gap year, I wanted to develop my growing passion for photography and media studies but had to move back to PNG, the land where I was born and raised.

I found returning to PNG's school system very difficult and it took much prayer, fasting — and a variety of freelance jobs — before the Lord opened the door for me to work with MAF Technologies.

When I joined in 2018, I planned to stay for a year before pursuing media studies. However, I immediately fell in love with the heart and vision of MAF Technologies' ministry to serve our communities and to share the love of Christ Jesus.

The last five years have been nothing short of an amazing adventure. I love what I do — meeting individuals, groups and even

members of partner organisations whose lives have been transformed through the work MAF is doing.

The warm reception and tears of gratitude I get to share as they relate their stories moves me deeply every time. It makes me appreciate what MAF continues to do for my country by providing a vital service to people living in PNG's remotest locations.

I'm also learning that our life may not always turn out the way we envisioned it to be.

However, God's calling is always perfect. He never makes mistakes. We just need to trust Him more and enjoy where He places us, because there is so much peace when you know you're where God intends you to be.

Serving at MAF — investing into the Kingdom of God for His greater purpose and glory — has given me great purpose and satisfaction.

It's a wonderful thought to know that I can be a part of an amazing organisation that the Lord uses in such an incredible way.



**You can watch an amazing MAF video of mountain airstrip take-offs in PNG**



STEP 1: Download Blippar to your phone — visit [www.maf-uk.org/blippar](http://www.maf-uk.org/blippar) for full instructions

STEP 2: Launch the app, hold your smartphone over any page featuring the logo above and hit the 'scan' button

STEP 3: See how your prayers and gifts play a huge part in the lives of others

**Thank you for your life-saving support!**

# Light and life to all He brings

STORY JOY SUARKIA

Thanks to funding and technical support provided by MAF Technologies, 15 health centres in Papua New Guinea (PNG) have become the first to establish 'Mama Waiting Huts' for pregnant women

Although PNG has significant untapped energy resources, the country's electricity supply is woefully inadequate. It's been estimated that 87% of the population lives 'off grid', without any access to electricity.

Lack of both power and a proper health service have left thousands of women at risk during pregnancy, with little option but to give birth at home, where they depend heavily on the assistance of traditional birth attendants.

Thankfully, Dr Freda Wemin (pictured opposite, right) has contributed greatly towards addressing the maternity death rate crisis in PNG. The Highlands Regional Gynaecologist initiated the Mama Waiting Hut project to make it possible for mothers to give birth safely with proper assistance, using a reliable source of light.

Before MAF came to the rescue, community health workers were at the mercy of battery-operated torches. When the torches stopped working, staff had to switch to the torch on their mobile phone, which drained the batteries quickly.

During the installation of this new 'solar system' (pictured above), we received a letter from the Nupuru Health Centre.

'Thank you for the solar light kit we received today through the Mama Waiting Hut project. You have met our difficulty with light during the night, when we have labour patients. We just lost a mother last month, partially due to the difficulty with lighting.

'Once again – thank you very much.'



Simoen Tom



THANK YOU FOR THE SOLAR LIGHT KIT WE RECEIVED TODAY THROUGH THE MAMA WAITING HUT PROJECT. YOU HAVE MET OUR DIFFICULTY WITH LIGHT DURING THE NIGHT, WHEN WE HAVE LABOUR PATIENTS. WE JUST LOST A MOTHER LAST MONTH, PARTIALLY DUE TO THE DIFFICULTY WITH LIGHTING. ONCE AGAIN – THANK YOU VERY MUCH

AUTHOR UNKNOWN



📷 Simeon Tom

For MAF Technologies Technician Simeon Tom, this project has been a lesson in life and death.

***Until I myself did the installation for the Mama Waiting Hut lighting project, I never knew how challenging it was for mothers living in a remote community. I had no idea how much of an impact solar power would have on the health workers, the mothers and their unborn children.***



**87%**  
OF THE POPULATION LIVES  
'OFF GRID' WITHOUT ANY  
ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY



📷 Annelie Edsmyr



# Rainbows and jellyfish

On 30 September, marine biologist and business co-founder Nigel Downing completed his second long-distance fundraising swim in aid of MAF

**N**igel is thought to be the oldest Briton to swim the Strait of Bonifacio, on the southern coast of Corsica.

The Bonifacio crossing has been described as one of the greatest challenges for open water swimmers. Nigel completed the 9 gruelling miles in 4 hours 25 minutes, along with 15 others.

This was the longest distance the 71-year-old from Henley, Oxfordshire, has swum since taking on the mighty Strait of Gibraltar in 2015 — raising £5,500 for MAF in the process.

This time, he's raised more than £6,000!

'At the start,' Nigel recalls, 'the sun lit up Capo Pertusato and out

burst a magnificent rainbow. It was a visual demonstration of God's promise and a real reassurance that all would be well. I burst into tears!'

The rain was almost constant throughout the crossing, adding to the intensity of the swim, and a few jellyfish were also in evidence.

'I had my doubts at times about whether I would even finish,' says the intrepid fundraiser. 'I'd felt so nervous before setting out — I just wanted to complete the distance and make sure all my supporters got their pennies' worth. The pressure was intense, but the rainbow was a great reminder which spurred me on.'

Our love and thanks go to Nigel for another unique, magnificent fundraising event.

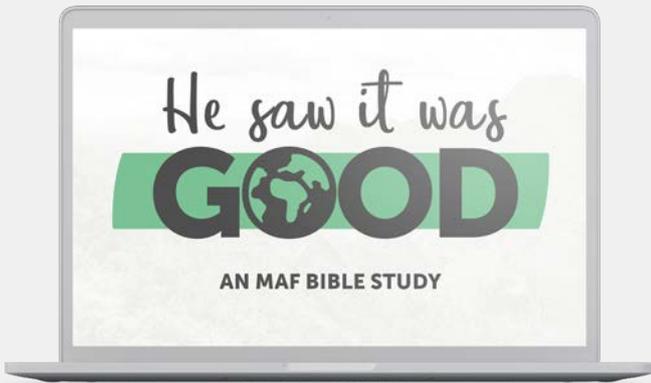


**Open water swimming not your cup of tea? Visit our website [www.maf-uk.org/fundraise](http://www.maf-uk.org/fundraise) for some ideas.**

**Whatever fundraising activity you choose to do, we want to let you know that we're behind you every step of the way!**



**The love you share through your prayers and gifts touches thousands of hearts.  
From the bottom of ours — thank you!**



MAF Scotland has developed a new suite of resources for all supporters. 'He saw it was good' will bless you and your church, and support the UN sustainability agenda

This New Year, why not encourage your church to try something different?

In this series, six Bible studies explore the ways in which humanity is currently unsustainable, the Biblical context of stewardship of the earth, and what the UN aims to achieve through its Sustainable Development Goals.

You'll be introduced to examples of how MAF is striving to advance these goals through our work. To find out more, and to download these Bible Study resources, visit [www.maf-uk.org/hesawitwasgood](http://www.maf-uk.org/hesawitwasgood)

Why not invite us to your church or group to facilitate our new workshop that — through exciting MAF case studies — reveals how we transform lives through aviation and technology?

This workshop will challenge and inform you as to how your church can directly help the isolated communities we serve.

Last but not least, the MAF Flying for Life podcast series, which also explores the theme of sustainability, has landed!

You can now hear from people who are seeing these global goals being reached through MAF's work on the ground (or in the sky!). Phone us on **0141 332 5222** to find out how to listen to the Flying for Life podcast.

We hope these new resources will inspire you to help us play our part in reaching these global goals.



**SCAN ME  
FOR THE  
BIBLE STUDY**



## On fire for God

**World War II was still raging in 1943 when, at just 18 years of age, John Burgess enlisted in the Royal Navy to serve with the Fleet Air Arm**

John served aboard HMS Unicorn, an aircraft carrier based on the small island of Ponam, north of Papua New Guinea.

Classed as a 'repair unit', the Unicorn helped other ships and aircraft in the fleet with any maintenance problems.

On one occasion, a plane coming in to land burst into flames and the wings closed over the cockpit. John's hands and face were badly burnt while trying to rescue the pilot, who sadly didn't survive the night.

After the war, John joined the Fire Service and, in 1960, became a committed Christian — telling people about his love for Jesus while putting fires out! During 40 years' service, he continued to rise through the ranks, eventually becoming an adviser to the Home Secretary.

John spent much of his spare time preaching and teaching, during which period he came to know and support MAF's ministry.

He died at the age of 97 after a short illness, leaving MAF a gift in his Will.

**We are so thankful to all our supporters who leave a gift to MAF in their Will, bringing help, hope and healing to future generations.**

**If you are interested in leaving a legacy to MAF, please phone Miriam Wheeler on [01303 852819](tel:01303852819) or email [miriam.wheeler@maf-uk.org](mailto:miriam.wheeler@maf-uk.org)**



*Where there's a Will  
there's a plane*

**'Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you,  
because I am humble and gentle at heart,  
and you will find rest for your souls.'**

Matthew 11:29 (NLT)

