

WHOLE THROUGH BROKENNESS

STRENGTHENING THE STAKES

Interserve Singapore's Stewardship Report 2019



Andy

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WHO WE ARE

VISION

Lives & communities transformed through encounter with Jesus Christ.

MISSION

Interserve is a community of ordinary Christians putting faith into action. We live and work among the most marginalised peoples of Asia, to its furthest ends, and beyond, both in their home countries and among diaspora in Singapore.

Motivated by Christ's heart of compassion, and in partnership with His church, we share God's truth and love, our skills and experience to change tomorrow by what we do today.

OUR APPROACH

DISCIPLESHIP

Wholistic
Ministry

Least
Represented

Working
with the
Church

OUR PRIORITIES IN THIS SEASON

HARD
PLACES

REFUGEES &
INTERNALLY
DISPLACED
PEOPLE

BELOVEDS
OF THE
NEAR FAITH,
LOCALLY

STRENGTHEN, BY WEAKENING

Friends of Interserve know that for this past year, our energies have been less on mobilization and more on strengthening our capacity to equip, send and care for hard place servants. We have been deeply encouraged by different individuals and churches who have identified our foci of the hard places, refugees and Beloved work. It has been a joy coming alongside churches and individuals with similar convictions in world missions.

Some have heard me share some time ago that in the midst of my daily activities, I felt the LORD “download” clearly to me these words “My church... too powerful to be useful”. I was jolted by that revelation. The Lord was sharing His heart with me. He was grieving... over the strength and power of His body of believers in Singapore. I understood that He was referring to our strength in finances, talents, strategic thinking, administration, etc., and He was saying – we are too powerful to be useful. It grieved my heart deeply and set me off on a journey of what Bijoy Koshy, Interserve’s International Director, terms

“a journey to powerlessness”.

I marvel at the extent to which our holy, perfect God allows Himself to be misunderstood as being powerless – “powerless” to end evil and suffering, “powerless” to bring justice right now. He has decided to bring forth complete justice, righteousness and peace only at the very end. He has chosen to be an interdependent triune God and to be interdependent with us frail, fallen and unfaithful human beings. For Interserve, this means that we continue to choose to be interdependent on the larger body of Christ, here and overseas. While we seek to influence, we also allow the individuals and churches that we serve to shape and disciple us, including those in the hard places. At the same time, we recognize that the kingdom is already happening right here and now. Like the tiny mustard seed that grows so inconspicuously till it becomes a huge tree providing shelter.

I marvel too at the extent to which our holy God makes Himself emotionally vulnerable to sinful, fallen creation. He pours His heart out in great lamentations, opening Himself up to being further wounded should we choose to make light of His lamentations. For Interserve, this means we continue to learn to carry and hold the pain and heartbeat of our suffering but victorious brothers and sisters, and that of our own. We boast about our weaknesses (our small and flexible set-up, our humble budget, etc) so that Christ alone may be glorified.

Strengthening the stakes of our expanding tent of influence isn’t about becoming more organizational and bureaucratic (though we are actively streamlining processes and making our preparation process more robust). It is about living out our values of oneness, dependence on God, integrity, partnership and servanthood - all in community, in a wholistic way. We assess and celebrate fruitfulness vis-à-vis values and faithfulness.

May the stories captured in this Annual Stewardship Report disciple your hearts as they do mine. Pray with us. Walk with us. From the inside out. In the day to day.

Grateful,
Christy Lim
National Director
Leading with a Limp

THE PARTNER PREPARATION PROCESS

BY CHIEW LIAN, PERSONNEL DIRECTOR, INTERSERVE SG

“Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back,
lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes...”
Isaiah 54:2

This was the verse given to Interserve in early 2019 during one of our team meetings. It resonated very strongly with me. Though the tents of Interserve Singapore were being enlarged by God, I was burdened by the fact that our preparation, application and member care processes still needed much deepening. **Despite my apprehension, the verse affirmed what was on my heart and gave me a strong mandate to focus on strengthening the personnel work.**

This year, there were 21 enquirers, 15 Learning Trail participants, 18 Interserve Mentoring Journey (IMJ) participants and 9 On Trackers and Partners. We are in the process of preparing 1 family and 4 singles to be sent out in the coming year. God has indeed stretched our tent beyond what we could have expected.’ Consultation and help were sought from the Interserve Malaysia and Australia National Offices as well as a couple of mission agencies in Singapore.

The stakes in the following areas were strengthened:

A. Application Process

1. Clarifying of application criteria for the different placement categories.
2. Clarifying of responsibilities and expectations of the National Office, Country Team and partners in the different placement categories.
3. Reference forms were reviewed and improved.
4. Greater compliance to Interserve International’s administrative requirements.

B. Preparation Process - Interserve Mentoring Journey

1. 6 core areas were identified:
 - 1.1 Discovery of Self
 - 1.2 Building Communities of Support
 - 1.3 Professional and Ministry Equipping
 - 1.4 Theological Equipping
 - 1.5 Missiological Equipping
 - 1.6 Interserve Ethos and Values
2. Each area has a set of homework to be done by the mentee.
The content and materials are, and will continue to be a work in progress.

C. Member care

1. Pre-field, on-field and post-field member care processes
2. Regular follow-up with partners in the field via review forms and video calls
3. Re-entry process and follow-up with partners who have reached the end of their placement

The strengthening of the stakes of the personnel work will continue in the coming year. God has enlarged our tents in sending serious enquirers and I am looking forward to Him enlarging the tent of the personnel team by sending us workers who are willing to support the goers in administration, preparation and member care.

Chiew Lian is Interserve Singapore’s Personnel Director with a calling and deep commitment to deepen our process of assessing, preparing, sending and caring for God’s global servants.

THE LEARNING TRAIL: JOURNEYING INTO THE NATIONS IN COMMUNITY

Reflections of Learning Trailers

*Learning Trail is a 4-month learning journey with others in community
exploring serving in the nations*



BY NG CHEN WEE & KOH HUI YAN, LEARNING TRAIL PARTICIPANTS

Learning Trail (LT) was a **practical course that touched on some foundational and practical issues** like teamwork, sustaining for the long haul, money and hardship. I enjoyed the fortnightly group discussion and networking among the like-minded believers. The opportunities to hear from those who are currently serving in the field was great also.

- **Chen Wee** enjoys learning and interacting with people (Jan-May 2019 participant)

Learning Trail was my first course in Missions. Through the 5-month program I learnt quite a lot about the mission call God has given to us. I gained knowledge and insight into many related matters and issues that are not so commonly discussed in church. For instance, financial planning for mission work and preparing for the long haul. I personally love the topic on the history of Christian mission. **Prior to LT, I had always thought that mission started only after Jesus' ministry.** But in one of the lessons, learnt that mission is also found in

the Old Testament. Two examples are Genesis 12 when God called Abraham to leave for another country, and in Jonah, where Jonah was called by God to go to Nineveh.

One of the key takeaways from that lesson was: Missions is a journey of Discovery, Conviction, Love and the Revelation of who God is. And whatever form mission work takes, it is ultimately about the Glory of our Triune God.

Lastly, I am thankful for the different individuals I met in this program and the sharing of their experiences in the field. People who are seeking to be a part of the Great Commission will benefit from Learning Trail as it provides a good foundation in the understanding of missions.

- **Hui Yan** wants to be remembered as the girl who took a risk for God (Jan-May 2019 participant)

SPICE TEAM REPORT: A GROWING PROBLEM

*SPICE (Strategic Pathways Intercultural Community Engagement)
Previously known as Friendship First*

The nations have come to our shores. It is time we pay attention, locally. In recognition of the need to turn course into community, we renamed the Friendship First team to SPICE.

Growth is a problem to be resolved by faith. We began the year believing in the unbroken net. We called in our faith partners and they came!

Friendship First (FF)

We ran four FF courses at four different locations. At Dunearn 360 in February we had 20 participants. At Marine Parade COS, 14 came. Following that, we had 21 who turned up at All Saints Church. The last course was a surprise call from Bukit Panjang Methodist Church. A gathering of 11 closed the net for FF courses this year - a total of 66 served by a team of staff and volunteers consisting Matt, Tami, Esther, Joey, Joanne, Vincent, and a host of other volunteers like Mary, Sarah, Rachel and Jackson, just to name a few.

The courses had some interesting surprise catches. We usually visited a couple of worship places of the Beloved community. Their heritage area is growing as an attractive site where we can gain first hands-on experience of contact with them. But this year we had the opportunity to visit a second site at Joo Chiat twice. First, we had an introduction and met the leader of the community.

Then we were invited to return during the yearly feast and shared in their celebration. This was a first for us. Amazingly, at our course run in Bedok, again our brother Vincent introduced a friend of one of the worship places.

We had a lovely introduction and experience being guided by one of their leaders. This was also unforgettable.

Joining the Family: A new course being trial run

The Beloved is a community we have embraced but our cultural differences are not small. Many of our assemblies are built upon standard practices introduced long ago. **We have to try and relearn what it means to embrace and grow with our newly beloved.** The numbers may be small but the challenges are varied and many. A small number of beloved and our FF team shared in this run to review the materials. The responses were varied and we may have to do a few more runs to ensure that it will be truly helpful.

Other work

Apart from the FF course our staff are challenged by various requests. From Batam the Indonesian challenge is near and familiar. Our new staff Esther is part of the Indonesian Domestic Workers (IDW) network. We have added Shin Yong, a leader in local migrant work, to enlarge our engagement. Vincent who is also a board member continues to anchor a deep participation with his social connections and more recently ministry amongst the inmates of Changi. Our net is stretched but not broken.

A growing problem demands faith solutions.

Selah. The invitation to participate in a growing problem is a positive promise we embrace.

MONTHLY PRAYER MEETINGS



Monthly prayer meetings that Interserve hosts serve to provide a platform for people preparing to enter the field of service or who are already serving. Through them, they **advocate prayer for the people groups that they are called to serve**. Listening to stories shared by workers brings the unreached people groups to life for us and stirs our hearts to pray. The prayer meeting also serves as a **good meeting point for like-minded people to fuel their passion for prayer and to sustain the zeal of those heading out**.

Date	Prayer Focus	Prayer Leader(s)
February	India's Millions	Ee Kian
March	Migrants from Bangladesh: A Community to Engage	Shin Yong
April	Pakistan: Fusion of Many Customs and One Faith	Benjamin
May	Behind the Veil: Asian Diaspora of Singapura	Li Ting and Esther
July	Kazakhstan: God's Restoration of Honour and Redemption of Peoples Through the Central Asian Gateway	Angel and Brad
August	Israel-Palestine	Eugene and Ellie
September	Turkmenistan and the Turkmen Diaspora	Apollos
October	On the Move: Where is Home, truly? Remembering Refugees around the World	Judah and Zoeleen
November	Asia: Where Faith is Costly (Persecuted Church)	Magdalene and Rachel
December	Syrian Diaspora in Lebanon	Serene and Germaine

Hear the testimonies of those who led prayer:

WHERE IS HOME, TRULY

BY JUDAH & ZOELEEN, VOLUNTEER PRAYER LEADERS

In November, we were given the opportunity to rally prayer for the refugee cause. It was the first time we had had the opportunity to do something tangible and to share about

what God has deposited in our hearts. Being raw and inexperienced, having to lead prayer prompted us to research.

Through the process, we found out much more about the world refugee situation, which further confirmed our conviction to work with and serve refugees. The prayer meeting was a huge source of encouragement as we witnessed God bringing people from all walks of life. It reminded us of His sovereign grace and expansive love for all. The community that had gathered was part of God's intricate plan to connect, inspire and mobilise the Body of Christ for His work in the nations.

Judah & Zoeleen are a young couple who share a deep conviction about serving the Lord through missions. They desire to walk among the refugees the way Jesus would and bring His love to them.

**Judah & Zoeleen invited their church pastor to this meeting. After the meeting, the pastor was so inspired that he invited them to use the same set of slides to lead prayer at their church prayer meeting.*



IN THE WAITING

BY A, VOLUNTEER PRAYER LEADER

When I was asked to lead prayer for Turkmenistan, I thought to myself, "I've never been there... How am I going to give an accurate reflection of what is going on there? Sure, I have done research online, but is that enough?" I asked God if I was enough, and He assured me that a willing heart is all He needs, which was extremely comforting. I became really excited to share.

It was almost exactly one year since God had put this nation into my heart. When I led prayer for the land, all the fire and desire to go there and to do life with Turkmen came back. It felt like God telling me that I was one step closer to my "promised land".

As I shared about their struggles, I felt sympathy for them and asked God not to leave them on their own. I remember telling God that He could use me however He wanted, only send me to them, for my heart longed to share life with them.

Turkmenistan is definitely a hard place. It is a country that many have not even heard of. **Being able to share what I knew brought great joy because I knew that more people would see their struggles and intercede for them.** Sincere, heartfelt prayer from righteous men moves more than just His hand... It will move His presence, just like it did with the Israelites in the wilderness. When His presence is that visible and powerful, what can hinder a revival in Turkmenistan?

The opportunity to lead prayer has been a good experience. The hard places will cease to be “hard” when we pray them to softness. It will be a while before I go to my promised land, but until then, I’ll be praying, sharing, and asking God to move - even before I’ve reached the destination. Maranatha.

A is a student in Singapore Management University who has caught God’s heart for the Turkmen. He is a passionate pursuer of the presence of God and loves Jesus. He also loves reading, football and chilling.

COME, AND YOU WILL SEE

Reflection on Egypt-Kurdistan Vision Trip

Vision trips are a feature of Interserve. Unlike direct service trips, they seek to slow trippers down to absorb, engage and reflect. The work continues mainly after the trip.

BY JESLYN, INTERSERVE VISION TRIPPER

“Come, and you will see.”

This was Jesus’ response to John’s disciples who, having found Him, had asked, “Teacher, where are you staying?” They were willing to follow the Messiah wherever He was going. As I sat reading that passage during a silent retreat in September 2018, I felt the Teacher speak the same intimate invitation into my heart.

From that day on, He began to reveal His heart for refugees to me.

After visiting a refugee ministry in Malaysia that Interserve Singapore is partnering with, I met up with Christy, a friend and the Director of Interserve Singapore in December of that same year. Unbeknownst to me, she was leading a vision trip (VT) to the Middle East soon. Hearing about how the Lord had been speaking to me, she invited me to come aboard.

April 2019

Together with a team of 8 Singaporeans, I found myself setting foot in the Middle East for the very first time.

Week 1: Egypt

What impacted me most in this first leg of the VT could be summed up by quoting an Egyptian pastor who met with our team:

“When you look at the Middle East from a distance, you see a beast since that is usually what is shown on media. But when you come closer, you will see a man. And when you come even closer, you see a brother.”

We travelled from Cairo into Upper Egypt and had the privilege to visit and speak at 2 Wesleyan churches there. What I found most precious was that we could travel alongside a group of Egyptian brothers and sisters. As we travelled together, the Lord often led us into spontaneous prayer and ministry for one another, including releasing one another into the calling of God for our lives.

God was calling the Egyptian brothers and sisters to reach out to other parts of Egypt and even the countries around them. **I was struck by how much this ancient land and in fact the Middle East has such a place in God's redemptive plan.**

Week 2: Iraqi Kurdistan

It honestly sounded crazy when I first heard that we were going into war-torn Iraq. But, setting foot into Kurdistan, we were greeted not only by the awesome colours of the sunset against the incredible backdrop of mountains, but also a sense of how safe the place was.

In Kurdistan, we visited the long-term workers serving refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). Visiting the refugee camps, I was struck by the massiveness of the needs of the IDPs. The tents stretched on and on, each one housing ten or more people. Yet, at the same time, what I also saw was the massive opportunity. Where previously people had been shut out from ever hearing the good news, now they had access to, and were hungry for the hope that Jesus alone can bring.

What impacted me from the stories of the long-term workers was the cost of following Jesus that they had chosen and were continuing to choose to bear. It made me ask myself: "Am I willing to lay it down like John's disciples and these brothers and sisters and go where the Messiah is staying?" Again, I heard the words of the Teacher - "Come, and you will see."

Jeslyn is preparing herself to fulfil God's calling for her. She loves beholding God's beauty and partnering Him to restore that one life at a time.



Post-EK trip sharing at Smyrna AOG



Enjoying tea, dates and conversation during the post-EK trip sharing

GREECE: A REVIVAL OF GOD'S LOVE AND PROVIDENCE

Reflection on Greece Vision Trip

BY CHLOE, INTERSERVE VISION TRIPPER

The Greece Vision Trip was infused with deep spiritual meaning and experiences. It satisfied my sense of adventure and my curiosity about refugee work. We had the opportunity to interact with the people working on the ground as we went right to the “epicenter” of the crisis when we visited Moria Camp on Lesbos. There, I witnessed how the refugees’ lives reflect the intricate twining of desperation and hope.

Our team leader Lim Nan explained that countries like Syria and Afghanistan are hard places for the gospel to reach. In the face of the “greatest humanitarian crisis of our time”, we wonder why God would allow such catastrophes to happen. Through the trip, I was reminded that God is sovereign.

Perhaps it was his plan to displace them to Europe where the gospel could finally reach them in much greater numbers. Locals who have been involved in the relief efforts like “E” from “O Church” in Greece believe that we are bearing witness to a grand revival in Europe. Thousands of Christians have banded together to show the love of Christ to the displaced peoples.

We may wonder what we ordinary people here in Singapore can do. We live so far away from what is happening, and it is easy to pretend it does not exist. **I used to think mission work meant that I had to give large amounts of money or go overseas to serve in the field, but I**

have gained a new perspective. I had the pleasure of meeting “S”, the wife of a chaplain at EuroRelief who taught me that **simple actions can go a long way.** She explained how volunteers gather for Bible study every week as a form of debrief. The study and sharing are a strong encouragement to each member of the team, reminding them that the Lord commands us to go out in love and reap the peoples for His kingdom (Matt 9:35-38).

This trip showed me how blessed we are as a nation. We should not waste our privilege by turning a blind eye to the injustices around us. Missions is not limited to reaching across vast oceans but begins with the smallest act of loving our neighbor. Having given our best, in loving, giving and praying, we entrust the planted seed of the gospel to our Heavenly Father. Just like in the parable of the growing seed (Mark 4:26-34), progress may be slow but God will surely bring it to fruition in His perfect timing.

I want to thank Interserve, Lim Nan and my teammates for the enriching experience. May we never stop thinking about and praying for the revival in Europe. In the words of Paul, may we be confident of this - that He who began a good work in us will carry it on to completion (Phil 1:6).

Chloe is an intrepid explorer of the world who cares deeply for creation and the people who inhabit it



LOVING THE MARGINALISED THROUGH PREPARING SHORT TRIPPERS

Interserve's Orientation Partnership with ElShaddai Centre Berhad

BY LIM BEE ENG & WAN YI, INTERSERVE VOLUNTEERS

ElShaddai Centre Berhad (ECB) is an NGO that engages with refugees from many countries which embrace a major faith. After a first vision trip amongst leaders of Interserve a few years ago, a partnership with ECB was quickly established. That began the start of a steady stream of Singaporeans committing to the work there. Struggling to cope with the influx of Singaporean volunteers, ECB engaged Interserve's help to conduct a pre-trip orientation for their short-term volunteers.

The ECB Orientation lasts about 3 hours and aims to prepare trippers going to ECB with the head, heart and hands components of the trip.

Prior to the orientation, articles are shared with trippers to help them to understand the following: Missions exists because worship does not; God in His sovereignty has allowed world events to scatter the nations; Organic churches reproduce after its culture; Those of the major faith who come to faith retain their identity and culture; Friendship is the first step towards reaching those of the other faith.

During the orientation, trippers discuss questions based on the articles. Following that, there is a sharing on the work of ECB. There is also a segment on Dos & Don'ts while on the trip. The team tries to help trippers adopt the mind-set that since diaspora missions is new to most people, it would be helpful for them to see their maiden trip as being a vision trip – just to see and sense what God is doing there and, when they return, to consider how He wants them to respond in the long-term.

Lim Bee Eng, facilitator at the ECB orientation, is a veteran Interserve volunteer – like a bi-vocational staff!

I attended the ECB orientation by Interserve before my first mission trip to El Shaddai Centre in Klang, Malaysia. I am thankful for the reading materials and discussion during the orientation because they helped me to understand God's heart for missions and taught me how we may be Christ's witnesses to the Beloved people. It helped me to understand the importance of cultivating meaningful relationships with people of different cultural and religious backgrounds.

Something that impacted me was the concept of “integral mission”, in which the gospel is implanted into pre-existing communities as opposed to planting churches within those communities. It is through the transformed individuals, rooted in their circles of family and friends, that the gospel could spread like yeast within the community, not breaking apart the bonds that were originally in place.



The readings and orientation reminded me what missions is about. Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church – worship is. Worship serves as the fuel of missions. Glorifying God and bringing more people to worship Him is at the centre of missions.

The orientation also changed my understanding of what a “church” is. It is not merely an institution, but is about having the presence of Jesus among His people who have been called out as a spiritual family to pursue His mission. We are called not to set up religious organisations but to plant the powerful presence of Christ in the hearts of men.

During the briefing, simple dos and don'ts were also shared with us so that we would know how to speak and act sensitively towards our cousins in the faith.

Overall, the orientation was helpful in preparing me for serving at ECB in many ways, both spiritually and practically.

Wan Yi was a participant of the ECB Orientation. She is a fourth-year medical student in NTU. She worships at Charis Methodist Church.

THE ‘MARRIAGE’ BETWEEN INTERSERVE & EL SHADDAI CENTRE BERHAD

BY OI LENG, PARTNER OF INTERSERVE MALAYSIA

The journey between Interserve Singapore and ElShaddai Centre Berhad (ECB) Malaysia started in 2016 when Christy brought a team of people for a vision trip to Klang.

With her dynamic mobilizing efforts, a second team came soon after and Christine was one of the trippers. It was God's perfect timing as Christine had just left her teaching job and was waiting on the Lord for her next move. She became the pioneering principal of ElShaddai E-Learning Centre (secondary school) in January 2017. She helped to establish the school and minister to the students. She also mobilized other Singaporeans to join her and that resulted in Jolene and Jean.

Jean, who had been serving as a volunteer at Interserve Singapore decided to formalise her relationship with Interserve and became an Interserve On Tracker. She took on the leadership of the school in Jan 2018. In Mar 2019, she helped to pioneer the Ampang Hazara Centre in partnership with an Afghan lady.

Sabrina came soon after Christine did. She helped the ElShaddai preschool, training teachers and developing curriculum. She came regularly and consistently and became accepted by the teachers as part of the ElShaddai family.

Samantha came in March 2018 and, after Jolene, became the teacher of the late teens' literacy class. Subsequently, many Interserve friends such as Suen, Jennifer, Chessa, Wendy, Margaret and Chen came. Suen, Jennifer, Sabrina and Wendy all decided to become

Interserve On Track Consultants, receiving care and accountability that way. All of them contributed significantly to the growth of ElShaddai in big and small ways, over longer or shorter periods. **Though many of them were holding full time jobs, they committed their time and made an impact in the school, madrasah and refugee communities. Many of them are also actively mobilising their friends and churches in Singapore for the work.**

ECB truly appreciates this partnership with Interserve Singapore. Our heartfelt thanks especially to Christy, Chiew Lian, Bee Eng and others in the team for praying, mobilizing, preparing and sending people to ElShaddai. Much of what the team has done is not expressible with words here but the Lord knows and will surely reward you in time.

Personally, as a Malaysian Interserve Partner, working with Interserve Singapore's leadership and On Trackers has been a great joy and privilege.

***Oi Leng** is a key leader in ECB, the Coordinator for Healthcare & Education for ECB, who later became an Interserve Malaysia Partner*

LOVING THE MARGINALISED THROUGH LEARNING FROM OUR BENGALI BROTHERS

BY JOSHUA, INTERSERVE VOLUNTEER



Baskar* cocks his head back and laughs heartily. A Bangladeshi man using the computer nearby looks at our noisy group and smiles sheepishly. We peer back at our notes wondering which Bengali word we had just misused. This was a common scene at our Bengali language class held at the Tai Seng activity centre.

This was however, not your typical language class. When Interserve first conceived the idea of Bengali language classes, it was to be an intentional space for Singaporeans to know and love our Bangladeshi neighbours in Singapore through learning their language and culture. Baskar* and Mohan*, general workers in Singapore since 2011, were our Bengali language teachers (and friends).

During the lessons over the month, they patiently walked us through Bengali words for common household items and gamely acted out market scenes in their mother tongue. The latter activity improved and tested our ability to listen to and understand Bengali phrases, instead of just trying to pronounce the words through memorisation.

This approach to learning from and loving our Bangladeshi neighbours was meant to be different. Currently, in most of our interactions with migrant workers, we usually find ourselves assisting them (because we know the Singapore healthcare/manpower systems better), or teaching them a skill (English and computer classes are quite common).

While loving our migrant friends through helping them with our skills is great, we usually hold on to a position of control or power over them.

In these Bengali classes, we had to relinquish control and adopt a posture of humility. This allowed our Bangladeshi friends the dignity (and fun!) of leading and teaching us as they revealed more and more of who they are and where they come from – through their heart language.

While learning from Baskar and Mohan, we usually felt inadequate. This was because the more we learned, the more we realised how little we knew about this wonderful people group. We also got to know other Bengali workers, as the Tai Seng activity centre is a space for

migrant workers who live in the nearby dormitories to hang out.

Occasionally, Bangladeshi men who just happened to use the computer in the activity centre would join our class and give their take on how a Bengali sentence should be phrased!

Even though our few Bengali classes for this year are over, the journey to adopt a position of humility and vulnerability in our relationships with our migrant neighbours continues. We seek to daily imitate our Lord Jesus Christ who came not to be served but to serve others (Matthew 20:25-28).

***Joshua** is a child of the One true King and worships at Bethesda Katong church*

*Names have been changed to protect their identity

WINTER WEAR DONATION DRIVE FOR REFUGEES (10-11 DECEMBER 2019)

Winter Wear Donation Drive Dec 2019

Refugees in Lesvos, Greece received:

- 1 DHL box of babies' clothes (0-6 months)
- 4 DHL boxes of men's winter clothing

via  and 

Others:

- Migrant workers:** Men's clothes and shoes
- People in need in various countries such as Philippines, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, India etc.:** Women's & children's clothes, shoes and winter clothing

21 volunteers gave their time, energy and finances to make this possible

Out of the Greece Vision Trip, one of the trippers, Soo Eng, could not forget the hardships and suffering of the refugees on Lesvos island. Together with InterServe, she started a donation drive for winter wear. Although the runway for the collection was short and we had to rely on the goodwill of Meng Wei, a Christian staff of DHL, and his colleagues to tap on their staff discount for freighting, the donations flooded in beyond our expectations. **It felt to us like the five loaves and two fishes that we offered to the Lord being multiplied and producing crumbs that spilled over to blessing migrants and the overseas work of some Singapore churches.** Praise and glory to God!

UNCONFERENCE!

Reflection on the FOMOS Annual All-Staff Gathering: Hidden Treasures

BY PASTOR MATTHEW TEO, HEAD OF COMMUNITY DISCIPLESHIP, INTERSERVE SG

The committee of the FOMOS (Fellowship of Missional Organisations of Singapore) All-Staff Gathering 2019, headed by Christy and including representatives from Cru, OM, OMF and YWAM, did a splendid flip at the Gathering at COOS on 24 September.

The ethos of the gathering was to go back to basics, so all the organisations and their paraphernalia were stripped away. Everyone sat on the floor except for some old and "disabled". I mean if you can't sit on your bottom except with the four-legged contraption I guess... You have to be assisted! I know because I was one of them.

The leading persons on the stage were real comics. They had to apologise and explain to us what is supposed to come naturally. We had to sit on the floor. We have to sing using our voices, just those that came with the Maker's prescription. No other aid needed.

Not enough... We were told we have to sing and dance in some ancient ways... Go back to Africa or something! Okay lah! We are going to be tribal. So, the leaders did their jig and we had to sing and dance according to their beat. Funny, right!

Now, if you were not there that day - whatever I said above will not make any sense. Nonsense right!

It was the first gospel unconference that I attended! It was one meeting I could unload and didn't go home with more heavy burdens... I was glad I was yoked with fellow labourers and I could tell our loads were certainly a lot lighter that day, especially in the heart.

Thank you for the unconference... Where we unloaded and reloaded in the Spirit!

***Ps Matt** is part of the Interserve staff team and he dislikes attending (typical) conferences.*



Interserve Fellowshiping Across the Region: **UNITY IN DIVERSITY**

Reflection on Interserve East Asia-South Pacific Forum (11-14 September 2019)

BY JOANNA CHIA, OPERATIONS MANAGER, INTERSERVE SG

I was excited and apprehensive to be going for my first out-of-Singapore Interserve event, where I would meet roughly 40 other Interservers from the East Asia and South Pacific region. The group included mainly National Directors, Country Team Leaders and other higher-level managerial staff, but Christy wanted Esther and I to go because she wanted us to be inspired by the larger fellowship.

Though somewhat tiring due to the important things that were being discussed and the fact that I was meeting many new people for the first time, it was also thoroughly enjoyable because of the warmth shown by everyone, even the most senior veterans. Their humility impressed me.

At the same time, it was encouraging and fun to meet and get to know a few Interservers who were around my age, to hear what their experiences thus far had been and how they viewed their part in the work.

The forum felt like a United Nations gathering and was a testament to the unity that Christ gives to His body despite all the cultural differences its members have.

The worship sessions were extremely enjoyable as heartfelt praises were poured out.

Over the four days, we heard updates from different countries and talked about topics such as our international priorities (Enabling for Discipleship, Deepening our Inclusive Community and Building our Organisation for the Future) and growing regional capacity. Though I could not understand all of what was shared, it was extremely helpful in improving my

understanding Interserve's reach and historical background.

One of the repeated themes was that of powerlessness. In his sharing, Interserve Director Bijoy shared about how the gospel needs to come to the world not in the power of human wisdom, but of the Spirit, and during their memorable presentation where the New Zealand (NZ) National Director showed us a beautiful, deeply symbolic cape that had been gifted to Interserve NZ by the indigenous people there, the NZ team shared about the bi-cultural journey (with the indigenous people) that they have been embarking on since sometime back.

We were reminded that in mission, we seek to become acceptable to and accepted by those we are reaching out to, rather than trying to make people into our own image.

One of my main takeaways was the sense that though Interserve SG is small, **we do not lack resources because the larger Interserve body is wealthy in experience and spiritual gifts, and has repeatedly affirmed its support for us via their words and actions.** In turn, may Interserve SG increase in its capacity to support Interserve's work in the other offices in strategic ways, and as He reveals.

Joanna joined Interserve in July 2019 as the Operations Manager. Though new to Interserve, she is learning much from the community and has been greatly encouraged by it.



INTRODUCING THE TEAM BEHIND THE ACTION

Staff of Interserve Singapore



From left to right: Ps Matthew Teo: Local Partner Head of Community Discipleship, Esther Ong: Local Partner Mobiliser (since March 2019), Christy Chew: National Director, Koh Li Ting Tami: Local Partner Mobiliser, Chua Chiew Lian Clara: Personnel Director, Joanna Chia: Operations Manager (since July 2019), Yeap Mei Yee: Finance Manager, Nicole Yeo: Communications Executive (till Dec 2019)



First from right: Chong Liyan: Administrative Executive (till July 2019)

The Board of Interserve Singapore



From left to right: Eric Yap: Board Chairman, Ps Paul Tan: Vice-Chairman, Anne Ho: Secretary, Christy Chew: National Director, Liang Foo Let: Treasurer, Ps Andrew Raman: Board Member, Vincent Law: Board Member

Not Pictured: Tang Shin Yong: Board Member

ON BEING PART OF THE INTERSERVE TEAM

In my past two years as a staff in Interserve, I have been so blessed by the Singapore Interserve family. Though we are a small organization, we seek to create an environment where we show care and support each other both in ministry and personal life. **Being involved in Interserve has opened my eyes to the complexities and needs of the mission field in the hard places.** I learnt the importance of praying for those who are sent out in the field. I also learnt to embrace the beauty of holistic missions where we preach not only with our words but also proclaim the Person of Jesus Christ through the way we live with integrity and love. It has been a great privilege to be part of the Friendship First team to help mobilise the body of Christ to understand our friends from near faith and how to journey with them as Jesus would.

– **Tami**, Local Partner Mobiliser since Oct 2017

Being in Interserve so far has been really awesome. God has taught me a lot through the discipleship of the whole team. It is indeed like a family, and being the youngest, I feel like I learn so much from every single person. Although I am not married, haven't been in the field yet or worked very long, I've experienced and seen a lot through the life stories of people like Sis Christy, Sis Chiew Lian, Felicia and everyone else. I feel really fed and loved by the team.

I have grown a lot in terms of learning to wait and trust on the Lord - in terms of provision and in preparing to be sent out.

I think this ministry has really fanned the flame of missions in terms of wanting to mobilise my community and engaging people whom I journey with to join Interserve events, and to step out of their comfort zone. I'm grateful for being plugged in to God's heart and his ministry through Interserve.

– **Nicole**, Communications Executive from Jan to Dec 2019

One word to describe my experience with Interserve as a new staff (since Mar 2019) is "Movements." **Moving from prescribed structures to evolving processes, from fixed working hours in a single location to flexible working hours in multiple locations, and most of all, from projects to people.** Such movements are challenging my mindsets, enriching my soul, and reminding me to prioritize friendships with the Beloved people around me. I have so much to learn and unlearn about ministry, and I am so grateful for the Interserve staff team that gives me the space and support to grow.

– **Esther**, Local Partner Mobiliser since March 2019

As of December 2019, I have been with the Interserve staff team for roughly 5 months. Though the time has not all been a walk in the park, it has been extremely rewarding. It has been a privilege to be part of a team that is made up of people of different strength areas, personalities and ages, but who all have these characteristics: **called and passionate.**

Being part of the team has also meant that I've gotten to meet many from the Interserve community, who share the above same characteristics as my teammates. Whether they are committed volunteers, fellow learners, financial supporters, prayer warriors or all of the above, their enthusiasm has been inspiring to me.

Of course, one cannot forget our partners who have displayed their courage, faith and obedience in stepping out. Though I have not had the chance to meet many of them yet, I have already been **challenged by the stories** that I've heard from them via email or messages, or as shared by other people.

I have **truly seen and felt God's love** through being part of the team. He has enabled us to work (and play and pray) together despite there being a variety of different personalities and working styles. Having to share from my devotions once every 2 months at our weekly meeting has benefited me as it gives me the chance to crystallise the thoughts that I have during quiet time, which has helped me to hear more from God.

Lastly, it has been a joy to get to know Interservers from around the world as well (starting from when I attended the Regional Forum in September), to **be part of this international body made out of people who are sold out for God and have been so faithful, creative and giving for years and years.** Indeed, though Interserve Singapore is small (at least in numbers), we are definitely not alone as we have such a rich heritage and rich resources as a result of being part of this bigger body.

I am **thankful for the ability to support our partners and the mobilisation of the Singapore Church** for what's on His heart, through being part of the staff team.

– **Joanna**, Operations Manager since July 2019

Partnerships with Friends of Interserve

GOING TOGETHER

BY SOOK TING, INTERSERVE VOLUNTEER

I got to know Interserve in what can only be described as a divine appointment, in 2013 when my church was having a Missions retreat. As part of the retreat programme, my missions pastor Gift Daniel invited a couple who had served with Interserve in Egypt for the 6 years to come and share about their lives and work there - Christy and Lim Nan. That they were a Singaporean Chinese couple was mind-blowing to me. They put a face to missions in a place that I had always thought was for “others” who were geographically nearer, or who were men (yes, stereotypical I know!)

So began a friendship that God has used to open my eyes to the needs of the people in hard places!

Since then, I started attending the monthly prayer meetings that usually feature a country for our intercession. **Regular prayer with a group of like-minded believers has expanded my heart for people I may not know personally but who are made in the image of God, as I am, and who are deeply known and loved by Jesus.** It has also served to strengthen my faith, as I see God working tangibly to answer prayers made in alignment with His will, such as when I read of how more international organisations and leaders are speaking up for Yemen’s catastrophic situation and opening more avenues for aid to enter.

I took a step out of my comfort zone to go on a vision trip to Egypt and Lebanon with Interserve in 2017. It is true what they say – “From afar, the Middle East looks like a beast. When you come nearer, you see a brother”. I am glad I went on the trip to see, hear, smell, taste and experience what God is already doing, and to catch a glimpse of what I can do to partner Him in His work. I am humbled that God has repeatedly affirmed my small part in His Kingdom work – that of mobilising and advocating for the people and hard places.

God provided opportunities for Interserve to speak twice at my church, The Bible Church Singapore. The first was in 2015, when the beheading of 21 Coptic Christians in Libya shocked the world and brought global attention to the persecution of Christians in MENA, and the second was this year, when Christy shared on “Stories from the Field and Implications for the Church”, based on her experience in the field. 32 church members were challenged to be involved, through praying, caring, giving, going and receiving.

Persevere in the good work you are doing, Interserve! God has given you this vision and resources to serve the people in some of the hardest places in the world and bring His light to them. Keep shining for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

Sook Ting enjoys marvelling at God's creation through nature and travelling. She seeks to experience God daily through the little things, and loves to see God at work in our world.



May 2017 – Vision trippers in Byblos, Lebanon



1 Sep 2019 – Sharing at The Bible Church Singapore, “The Singapore-Egypt Link – Stories from the Field and Implications for the Church”

BEING A FRIEND OF INTERSERVE

BY W, VOLUNTEER & FF COURSE FACILITATOR

Being a friend of Interserve for the past few years has been a tremendous privilege for me. There are three things that stand out when I think of what it has meant to me.

Firstly, being a friend means I wholeheartedly share and support the vision and mission of Interserve. **One thing that constantly draws me to Interserve is its focus on hard places and people that are often forgotten and neglected by the wider church.**

Secondly, being a friend also means that I participate and contribute to what God is doing through Interserve to the best of my ability. It has been a joy to be able to partner with Interserve on many occasions.

Being involved with Interserve excites me because it helps me to realise that I can be part of a greater plan that God has for the world.

Finally, being a friend means that I am part of a family of believers who have the same heart. Interserve is more than just an organisation to me – it is a group of committed believers who has supported, encouraged and inspired me in countless ways.

W went out as an On Tracker to Egypt in 2016, interned at Interserve for 6 months in 2017 and continues to serve actively as an FF course facilitator

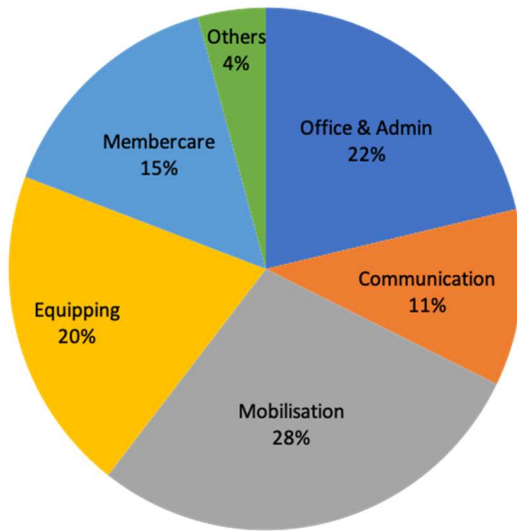


November 2019 – Interserve Volunteer Appreciation Lunch

STEWARDSHIP REPORT

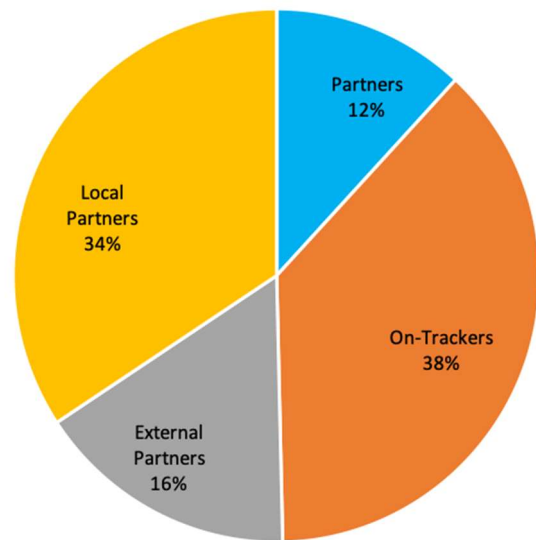
2019 Budget

2019 Budget = \$150K



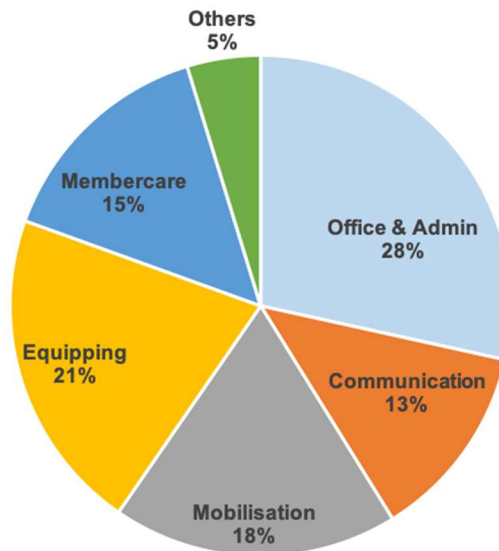
2019 Output

2019 Restricted Funds Expenditure = \$183K



2020 Budget

2020 Budget = \$136K



The 2019 Budget Pie Chart on the left shows what we had budgeted for our office expenses, based mainly on manpower functions. Our Office expenses are mainly in salaries of staff engaged in the work of mobilisation, equipping, membercare and direct engagement in cross-cultural work locally.

The 2019 Output Pie Chart on the right represents our ministry outputs – the amount that is spent on sending and supporting God's cross-cultural workers in hard places. Partners serve 3 years and above. On-Trackers' terms are below 3 years. External partners are those of other nationalities. Local Partners serve the Beloveds in Singapore. The actual output is higher than \$183K as this figure does not include the budgets of partners and on-trackers whose funds were not administered by Interserve.

The 2020 Budget Pie Chart reflects our increased emphasis on Partner development (36% of total budget), which is represented by Membercare and Equiping. Mobilisation will include forging partnerships with churches and like-minded groups.

LOOKING AHEAD

In the coming years, we are expecting a harvest of labourers for the hard places. We will be exploring how technology can serve the cause of missions while not replacing the incarnational approach we are committed to? We will continue to sound the call for our priorities, begin developing a leadership team for Interserve Singapore, build oneness at all levels – within the staff team, between board and staff, with the wider missions organisations fellowship and with the larger Church in Singapore.

Raising excellent senders, including both mobilisers and membercarers, will be a priority. A large majority of the Church in Singapore believe they are called to be senders. How can Interserve come alongside the larger Church to be the kind of senders exemplified in the Word?

WALK WITH US

- **Coaching and caring for** cross cultural workers
- **Prayer:** Receive our regular prayer news and join our prayer meetings
- **Coming closer to Interserve:** Pray with us, eat with us, labour with us



- **Offering your skills:**
- **Offering a space** for Interserve to incubate an **intercultural hub** that moves away from being service oriented towards deepening a dignified community amongst migrants, and more! Scan this QR code to be brought to a link that shares options for how you can serve or learn with us.
- **Ploughing financially (monthly giving by GIRO or a standing order is preferred):**
Your financial gift helps us:
 - Prepare and care for cross cultural workers better
 - Support under-supported workers, locally and overseas
 - Give directly to critical needs frontline

Internet Banking: DBS Bank Account No: 025-011345-4 or scan the PayNow QR code and drop an email with your name and email address or address to notify us of your gift.

UEN No.: S89SS0004B

Cheque: Issue your crossed cheque in favour of 'Interserve Singapore', state purpose of giving and details of giver at back of cheque

Mailing Address: 176 Taman Permata Singapore 575291

Phone: +65 91793633

Email: finance@interserve.org.sg



OUR DEEPENING RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHURCHES & ORGANISATIONS

Bartley Church has been a close friend since 2014 when Ps Matthew Teo joined Interserve as a Local Partner to champion the local Beloved work. We prayed weekly at Bartley's Meeting Point and have been conducting our monthly prayer meetings at Bartley every first Tuesday night of each month since. Bartley has been consistently generous to us by sponsoring Ps Matthew and hosting the prayer meetings, an Annual Thanksgiving and the many talks and workshops we conducted. For the coming year, we are in ongoing conversations with Missions Director Charles Ho as we look forward to enabling Bartley to run their own Friendship First course and eventually also their own Learning Trail.

Our relationship with Zion Bishan Bible-Presbyterian Church started with the previous board vice-chairman introducing us to Ps. Tay Houw Jin, the missions pastor of the church. Zion Bishan then hosted one of our Annual Thanksgiving events. We subsequently helped organize a vision trip to West Asia for some members of the church's missions leadership team. They have since invited an Interserve Partner from West Asia to give a talk that was well-attended. Zion Bishan then availed a church member who's a teacher by profession to become an English language helper for a Korean Interserve Partner serving in West Asia. This year, we started a conversation with Zion Bishan about co-sending a church member to West Asia as a long-term Partner sometime next year. There are continued conversations about mobilizing together for hard places.

Since 2017, Geylang Church of Christ has been generously hosting our weekly team meetings, breakfast talks and various courses and events. The pastor of the church, Ps Paul Tan also joined as the board as vice-chairman. We are ever grateful for the continued favour we enjoy with this church leader who has a great shepherd's heart.

We are grateful to God for every church and organisation we have been able to be part of in some ways.

For Co-sending On Trackers or Partners:

Cornerstone Community Church
Foo Chow Methodist Church
Gospel Light Christian Church
Grace Assembly of God
Grace (S.C.C.) Church
Moulmein Church of Christ
Mustard Seed Community Church
Paya Lebar Methodist Church
St. John's-St. Margaret's Church

For Giving Financially to Interserve or its Staff Members:

Bartley Christian Church
Bethesda Serangoon Church
Evangel Baptist Church
Faith Methodist Church
Geylang Church of Christ
Geylang Evangelical Free Church
Grace Assembly of God
St. John's-St. Margaret's Church
The Bible Church Singapore

For Partnering in Missions Engagement (Talks, Courses and Booths):

All Saints' Church (English)
Ang Mo Kio Presbyterian Church
Bartley Christian Church
Bukit Panjang Methodist Church
Church of Singapore
Perspectives Course Singapore
St James' Church
Zion Bishan Bible-Presbyterian Church

Interserve is one of the founding members of The Fellowship of Missional Organisations of Singapore. As part of FOMOS, we served the churches alongside other FOMOS members in the Love Singapore Summit 2019.

CREDITS

Chief Editors:
Christy and Joanna

Writers:
Christy
Chiew Lian
Hui Yan
Judah and Zoeleen
A
Jeslyn
Chloe
Lim Bee Eng
Wan Yi
Oi Leng
Joshua
Ps Matt
Tami
Nicole
Esther
Joanna
Sook Ting
W

Design:
Nicole and Joanna

Come, be broken bread with us.