

Dear Friends and Family,

I am saddened when I hear the news of the events that are ongoing in the USA. It is hard to hear about our country hating each other and destroying itself from within. I hope that in the days to come that things will settle down some. I will continue to pray for our country.

In Myanmar the Covid 19 pandemic is beginning to worsen. There is very little medical care in this country so they are trying to just lockdown all the places with known infections. In reality, this probably won't work. Anyways, being one of the few remaining foreigners in this country, heads turn and those who don't know me have a sense of panic when they see me. To date it has not been much of a problem, but traveling around the country requires lots of paperwork now certifying that I am not a new foreigner and that I live in the middle of the jungle where Covid hasn't hit yet.



*June 6, 2020 Airstrip Condition*

We have continued the work on the airstrip and we are hopeful of a March 2021 completion! To date we have had approximately 7.5 feet of rain this rainy season (roughly 2 feet per month). During that time I am very happy with how our airstrip has handled the rains. Around Chin State large landslides are frequent, do the steepness of mountains, heavy rains, and soil structure. However, we experienced only very minor effects.



*Typical landslide along the roads of Chin State*

Recently I have had the opportunity to meet with the acting Vice President to discuss the works at the airstrip as well as to discuss about how rural aviation can be a real benefit for remote communities. I also had the opportunity to meet with one of the front runners for Chin State Chief Minister to discuss about the current and future airstrip works in Chin State. We also discussed the possibility of an Erie Canal kind of project that would connect 20 plus remote villages to year round boat supply routes. He is very interested in both of these ideas. He is the acting Minister of Infrastructure. We already have a good relationship and he was kind enough to invite me to his home when I was visiting the Chin State capital city Hakha.



*Roads on the return to Lailenpi (mud depth 1-3ft typical)*

Some of the most exciting updates I have are in regards to the works of a community led initiative to revegetate the airstrip. I had mentioned the idea of giving the budgeted money for the airstrip revegetation to the community for their use if they developed a solid plan of how to do the works. I am very pleased to say that they have formed a committee called the Airstrip Environmental Protection Committee (AEPC), which has representatives of every organization and demographic in Lailenpi. The committee contains farm technical experts and also benefactors. They developed a plan that meets three criteria: airstrip erosion protection, beauty, and community benefit (crops).

To date the team have planted 13,000 Arabica Coffee Trees, 2,000 plus Macadamia Trees, 10,000 erosion control grasses, thousands of various varieties of flowers, Hundreds of Avocado Trees, Pine Trees, Strawberry Plants, Orange Trees, Jack Fruit Trees and Lemon Trees.



Planting erosion control grasses (above) and bushes (below)



*Flower Planting*



*Youth from Lailenpi planting 3,000 coffee trees (several different groups participated over a few weeks, in total 13,000 coffee trees were planted by women group, youth group, town elders, and different town sectors)*



Jack fruit trees (deep strong roots, beginning to grow)



Macadamia Tree (cash crop along forest boundary)

The AEPC’s goal has since expanded from the 112 acres of airstrip land to nearly 300 acres of surrounding land. The goal is to turn this area into community land (not permitted to log, build homes, etc). The area will be opened up for forest permaculture (forest farming), where very useful and healthy native forest plants, mushrooms, and byproducts can be encouraged to grow via careful forest management.



# MYANMAR'S SPECIALTY COFFEE

## MAKES IT TO THE TOP SHELF

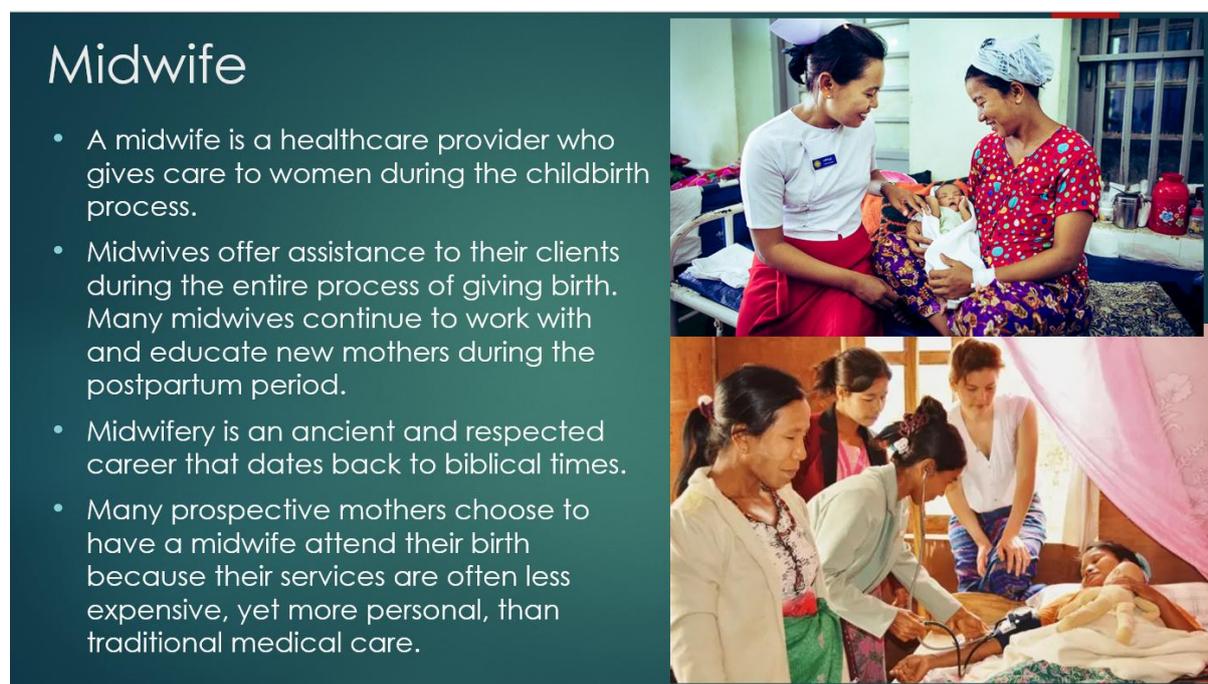
USAID'S VALUE CHAINS FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT



Myanmar has had a lot of success with coffee growing in other states. The picture above is from an article discussing how coffee taste and quality is maintained. I was able to reach out to USAID who has a program called farmers to farmers and they are happy to come visit Lailenpi to help our team figure out the best way to preprocess all the coffee before shipping to the market and also how to maintain quality despite numerous farmers and vast land areas. The current initiative is expecting a coffee yield of 13 tons of coffee per year starting in 2023 but increasing to 30 tons by 2025.

I am so proud of this team and am happy to have had a little part in their efforts. The committee will be traveling to the government to apply for permission for this land. This procedure is often complicated and requires numerous “donations” to the parties involved. Please pray that this process would be streamlined and that costly “gifts” will not be necessary as it is a community welfare project and not private personal gain project.

I have also begun presenting to high school students about various career opportunities. In Myanmar there are currently no guidance counselors. Student who pass high school have never had any instruction on what opportunities exist. Most students pass high school and then go to university where the university selects a degree path for them. Most of the time their degree path is based on how well they scored on the nations version of the ACT/SAT Test. Since student never really had any interest in what they want to become they simply accept the degree path that was selected for them. It is my hope that over time we can change this process. I believe that if students have a passion for what they would like to become, they will study better in high school and then fight or be persuasive with the universities to get the programs they desire. The current presentation is only 34 careers which has been a great start. I am not a guidance counselor and have very limited time to put into this work, but every time I have been privileged with the opportunity to present the glow in the students’ eyes is unmistakable.



## Midwife

- A midwife is a healthcare provider who gives care to women during the childbirth process.
- Midwives offer assistance to their clients during the entire process of giving birth. Many midwives continue to work with and educate new mothers during the postpartum period.
- Midwifery is an ancient and respected career that dates back to biblical times.
- Many prospective mothers choose to have a midwife attend their birth because their services are often less expensive, yet more personal, than traditional medical care.

*Example slide from my presentation*

I am continuing to pursue long-term work here in Myanmar. Myanmar is a nice country, but much of its infrastructure is below average. I would like to see Myanmar grow and repair itself by learning and enforcing good engineering practices. I have begun to see the impact of what a long-term commitment in Myanmar could look like and how through engineering communities can be transformed and men and women can grow both in knowledge and in understanding of how we can Love God and be His servant even if not a pastor or some so called church related position.



*Tisi River Survey Team*

I had mentioned the Erie Canal kind of project in the previous updates. I had asked for prayer as this area has had high military/local militia armed conflict in the recent months as well as is known for demonic spirits that haunt people driving them insane. Despite the past history and concern expressed by many, a team of us traveled along the river to conduct an initial survey of the river. We all knew of the past history, but we all felt at peace about going on this trip. Over a span of 5 days we traveled along the river documenting the depth, width and challenges. We also captured drone imagery and video of the site. We put together a project proposal and have since passed it on to the Vice President, who seemed interested in the potential. This is the project I also shared about above. We are not sure if this is the end or only the beginning for this project, but we are open to being a part of whatever comes of this project.



*Tisi River (rather remote)*

I was also asked to visit several sites for initial airstrip investigations. One of the sites is in an area called Paletwa which is deep into the armed conflict territory. I'd be happy to visit if the Lord opens the door to travel (all agencies and organizations agree that it is ok). We, MAF have been working closely with the Myanmar Civil Aviation Department and have helped in the development of a new rural aviation department called the RAD (Rural Airstrip Development). The government has asked MAF to be a liaison/partner in this department. Works will include frequent site survey visits for future airstrip construction or revitalization works. At this time these duties will be fulfilled by me.

All that to say the Lord has opened up the door for many works here in Myanmar. I am never idle which is a blessing. I came here to be a part of the one Lailenpi Airstrip, but have since been a part in many other works.

I would appreciate prayers for:

1. Myanmar elections (November 2020): The country still has lots of hurt and fear of the past military rule. They are a new democracy and now have 90 plus political parties. The country is one name (Myanmar) but over 150 people groups. Most people groups desire their own authoritative rule and desire to preserve their languages and other culture which is good, but also making unity very difficult.
2. My time in Myanmar: I am way underqualified for the position I am in. I struggled to read in my early years and have always been terrible in English (so bad that I had to take English classes designed for English as second language classes in boot camp before I could move onto my real MOS (job). That said I am now in a foreign country with a new language that looks like this လာဆတ်ဝတ်ဝတ်ဝတ်. It seems that I get frequent opportunities to meet with the nation's leaders. I desire to speak respectfully but the language is tonal and I am monotone. I am not a guidance counselor but I get to work with the youth. The list of things that make me underqualified continues on and on, but I am not discouraged but instead take courage and feel honored to be blessed with these opportunities. Although meeting VIP's is not something I enjoy, it has become a part of my job. It is awkward and uncomfortable but after every visit I feel happy and am thankful for the opportunity I had. The Lord is Good and I trust that He will use me as He desires, if I allow Him to. Again, I don't know what my time here in Myanmar has for me, but I am grateful that I have learned my greatest asset is not anything I possess but, instead what I have been given through Him who gives me Strength.

As always please feel free to contact me via email or WhatsApp!

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Love,

Terry