



Help make amazing stories possible!

Some people think MAF is all about aeroplanes, pilots and aviation engineers. But from its very beginning, MAF has been first and foremost about people.

One story among hundreds is Jonathan Kopf, who together with his wife and children, arrived in PNG in 1999 to work amongst the Hewa tribe. This tribe has anywhere from 3000 to 6000 people, living in little hamlets, scattered over 60 miles of rugged terrain in the Central Ranges of PNG.

The message of the light

Jonathan recalls: We arrived in a village called Fiawana. At first, the people were very eager to have us there. They said, "We're in the darkness of the jungle, and you have the story of the light. We want to hear that story." So, we learned their language until we were able to start translating the Bible. We also helped in practical ways with store goods, a medical clinic and by trying to start a school. But soon their attention wandered, and they didn't listen so much to the message anymore. They saw the metal-roofed buildings we had built, and they said, "The light has arrived."



Jonathan Kopf

And we said, no, wait a minute, that's not the light!

The light is the story of Jesus. You need to hear this story. But they were so fascinated with the stuff that they didn't listen well to God's story, and it became frustrating. Then enemies from surrounding areas started moving in to take these goods and use the services that we were providing. They were pillaging and abusing our Hewa friends, the people we'd come to know and love. People were killed. Even right in my own yard. In the end we had to walk away from everything we had built.

We were praying with the few believers that God had given us at that time. One of them was a teenager named Yanis. He said, "My grandfather really wants to hear this story. I want to go live in his village to tell him about it. You can come with me."

With that invitation, we hiked with Yanis for two days over two mountain peaks. When we finally arrived the village leaders told us they wanted to hear the story. This time, however, we told them we were there for one reason and that was to teach the important message of the Bible. They said, "Yes, this is what we want to hear. Don't bring store goods. Don't bring anything that would be attractive to enemies." They provided us with huts to live in and sweet potatoes to eat. We were living and working in really rugged conditions.

Yifki—a village that's following Jesus

And so, we started teaching, first how to read and write in their own language and then the story of the Bible. Soon they said, "We are on the Jesus trail! We need you to stay with us because this is all new to us."

But before long, three of their 50 people had died because they were isolated from help. They asked, "Is there any way you can help us build an airstrip?" Airplanes are so important in their lives because there are no roads and no river access. It takes the people four days to hike to the nearest town. Four days! So, if somebody is really sick, how can they get them out?

We started hiking all over the mountains looking for a flat spot where we could build an airstrip. We spent many nights in really rugged conditions and finally located the perfect valley, just long and wide enough to build an airstrip, 600 meters long, 75 meters wide.

We had no money, no way to do this kind of project. But we said, okay, if you guys do a lot of the legwork and get rid of all the 75 to 100-foot trees, I'll see what I can do about finding a tractor. We'll just pray together and see what God does.

It was amazing! When they started digging out these monstrous trees, a ministry called Friends in Action offered us a tractor, a little Kubota. It was small, but it was God's provision. They helped us take that tractor apart. A helicopter brought it in, and we were able to use it to level and create a crown on this airstrip and build an airstrip in a matter of four months.

Thank you, MAF!



Jonathan teaching at Sunday church, and the airstrip that Jonathan Kopf and the local villagers built for MAF. In August 2013, a MAF airplane landed here for the first time.



MAF planes make all the difference.

Without MAF, Jonathan's work amongst the Hewa just couldn't take place. Isn't it exciting to be a part of a ministry that provides the vital link that helps people accomplish what God has called them to do? You can see what a wonderful blessing MAF is to this tribe in so many ways. But we can't do it without you! Will you help make more stories like this all possible?

<Salutation>, your gift will help people like Jonathan get to where God has called them—so they can do what He has asked them to do!

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Mark Fox,
MAF NZ CEO



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