



Where Hardship and Hope Meet: A Reflection from Our Executive Director / CEO

Sharon Koh

Rev. Dr. Sharon T. Koh
Executive Director / CEO

Some of the most powerful moments in ministry happen where hardship and hope meet. The opening verses of Isaiah 61 are a remarkable example. Isaiah wrote to people who had experienced loss and devastation and their future seemed uncertain. Yet God delivered a message of good news and hope: “They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.”

This picture of God’s restorative work is at the heart of IM’s mission. Around the world, global servants and ministry partners are helping to rebuild, restore and renew lives and communities in Christ’s name.

The ministry of Anita and Rick Gutierrez offers us a beautiful example. As family physicians serving in South Africa, their work is deeply rooted in education and healing. They train local women and men to become health builders. Health builders address lifestyle-related diseases in their own communities, expanding access to much-needed preventative care. Through innovative videos, health screenings, and practical assessments, they equip people with knowledge and tools that continue making an impact long after a training ends.

Yet their ministry extends beyond physical health. Anita and Rick understand that restoration is holistic. Today, their ministry also includes training health builders in gardening, fruit tree propagation and poultry-raising skills. They foster relationships through Bible studies and community projects. Through this integrated approach, people experience improved nutrition, economic opportunities, and spiritual growth.

This kind of transformation echoes the promises in Isaiah. With the leading of God’s Spirit, Anita and Rick are rebuilding capacity in local communities, restoring access to healthy foods and renewing lives through practical and spiritual care.

Throughout these resources, you’ll encounter stories and biblical reflections that remind us that God’s mission is not abstract. God is at work through global servants and IM partners as they educate, heal and restore lives in the communities they serve.

And it is your prayers, financial support and encouragement that make it possible for global servants like the Gutierrezes to remain faithfully present with the people they serve. Thank you for being part of this work!

This World Mission Offering, I invite you to celebrate what God is doing around the world by giving generously and join us in God’s mission to rebuild, restore and renew.



They will **rebuild** the ancient ruins and **restore** the places long devastated; they will **renew** the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.

ISAIAH 61:4