

Chapter 3

Raising the Next Generation of Workers

by Hans and Ruth Fung

Parents of students at Black Forest Academy in Germany are now serving in over fifty countries to share the good news of the Gospel and build the Kingdom of God. The reason this academy exists is so a whole tribe in a small African village can hear of the saving grace of God and follow Him, and so more than 2,000 Chinese labourers in Israel can become committed Christ followers who return to their home country to lead house churches which have been growing by the thousands.

Churches have been planted in Kosovo, Kazakhstan, Egypt, China, Mongolia, and Russia. Gospel concerts were packed with young people in Germany, local Christians were trained by missionaries to lead the Church in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Central Asia, and national Christian schools were planted in Africa, Central Asia, and all over the world. In addition, medical and social services were given to people in places like Afghanistan, Iraq, and many Central Asian countries.

God's power was greater than what we could ever imagine. A small school which began more than 60 years ago did not even think of or dream of reaching people around the world... let alone impacting many nations for Christ. But God's power is truly awesome! When we trust, His power is more significant than

our problem! When we believe His power is for us, He uses us! When we believe He can give us the friend we need, He leads! When we face those lonely moments, He fills our hearts with peace! When we lack the money we need, He provides over and beyond what we expect.

My name is Hans Kwok-Lun Fung, and my wife, Ruth, and I have been privileged to be a part of God's plan



to build up missionary kids in education and their walk with God.

I was born in Hong Kong in 1957 under the British Administration. My parents were from China and moved to Hong Kong before World War II. They were married after they met at my father's shoe factory. My father passed away in July 2013, and my mother lives in Hong Kong.

Growing up with six boys in my parents' house was adventurous and dangerous. But, by the grace of God, we all survived, and we each have our own families living in four different countries. My older brother is a cardiologist in Los Angeles, California, and my younger brother is a retired computer programmer in San Jose. Two of my younger brothers moved back from America to Hong Kong almost 20 years ago. My youngest brother is currently working in Singapore.

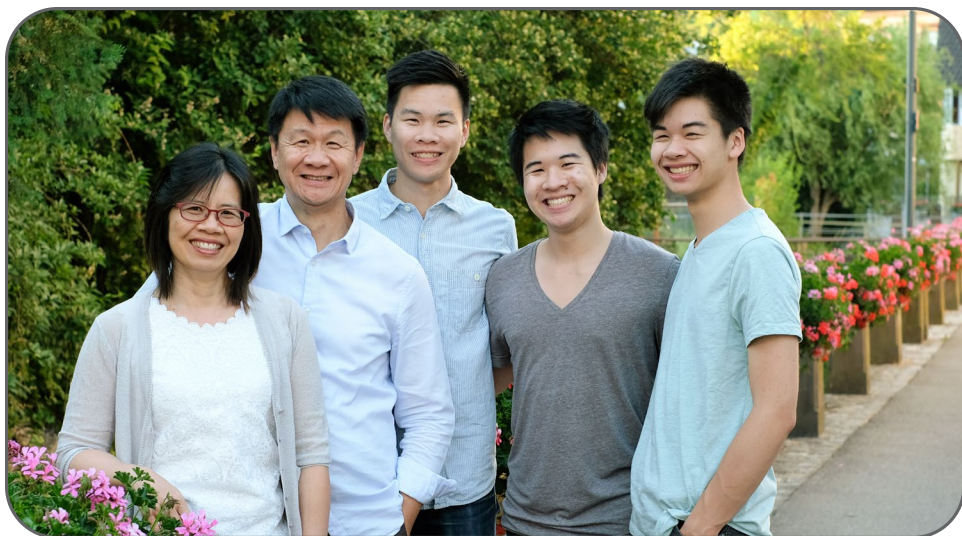
I went to a Christian school in Hong Kong and got to know Jesus through an evangelistic meeting when I was in grade 9. I came to Canada as an international student in 1975 and completed my high school and university in Regina, Saskatchewan. I was actively involved in Regina Chinese Alliance Church, leading the children's choir, Sunday school and driving the bus to transport international students to church and other ministries.

I felt God's call to full-time ministry at a Joint Missions Conference in 1982. My degree in education confirmed my love for working with students. After teaching for a year, followed by a year of grad studies, I prepared myself for ministry by enrolling at Canadian Theological Seminary. It was here that I met my wife, Ruth, and we married after graduating in 1986.

Ruth was born in Calgary, Alberta, in the early 1960s. Ruth and I have been educators for over 35 years and have lived in three countries besides Canada and the United States.



After we spent more than two years in San Diego for our Master of Arts in Education and teaching in a public and private school, we returned to Canada to serve at Edmonton Chinese Alliance Church for almost three years before heading overseas. Then we spent the first five years in Penang,



Hans and Ruth with their sons Ben, Evan, and Matthew, 2017

Malaysia, as teachers and principal at Dalat International School. Then, for the following sixteen years, we were in Kandern, Germany, also working as teachers and principals at Black Forest Academy.

We love young people and count it a great privilege to be involved in international transformational education around the world. Since 2014, we have lived in Almaty, Kazakhstan, heading up Tien Shan International School as director/head of school and Ruth as a teacher and academic dean overseeing all high school, middle school, and elementary school principals.

I had the privilege of completing the Doctor of Education Degree with Northcentral University (name changed to National University recently) in 2017 to continue the ministry of serving missionary and third culture kids.

We have three sons, and they are in different stages of their lives. Our oldest son is working as a pilot after graduating from LeTourneau University in Texas. Our second son is working in Calgary for Revenue Canada. Our youngest son teaches math at an international school in Hong Kong.

Introduction

After twelve years of waiting, seeking, training, teaching, serving, and submitting to the ‘mission’ authority, we were finally accepted as full-time overseas workers with the title of associate missionaries. Those setbacks, discouragements, and disappointments tested and tried us. I may disagree with the old recruitment

process; however, there were certain values and elements to bring out the true character of being willing to go and ready to serve regardless of circumstances and environment at that time and beyond. I had to recognize that the tough process was a true test of commitment.

In 1993, we finally embarked on a journey to “go where He wants us to go; do what He wants us to do.” We are now finishing up 30 years of serving overseas at the time of writing.

First Field: Dalat International School, 1993-1998

On August 1, 1993, Ruth and I, along with 10-month-old Benjamin, headed to Penang, Malaysia, to serve as missionary kid (MK) teachers at Dalat International School. It has been a ‘home away



Dalat International School, Malaysia

from home’ to many missionary children since the 1920s and grew into an international school with a diverse population. When we arrived, Hans served as the athletic director and health and physical education teacher; Ruth was the 4th-grade teacher.

The twelve-year journey from when we wanted to go overseas to finally arriving on the field was evidence of God’s grace and mercy. With two years of seminary, two years of graduate school, six years of church ministry, and two more years of teaching experience, we had the perfect preparation to enter the mission field. During those years of waiting and serving, we were blessed to develop prayer and support networks vital for our ministry to MKs/TCKs (Third Culture Kids). We could have only lasted for so long without the prayer support from home.

We were humbled and privileged to be able to serve these children. Our first-year experience as missionary children educators set the foundation for our lifelong ministry to MKs/TCKs. Faith and commitment in a difficult environment outside our comfort zone was a response to God’s call, which took courage and faith. We did not know what was ahead, but we trusted His guidance and provision to meet our needs at the time.

We were encouraged by many stories of success when we witnessed changed lives. Students were developed and called to be in teaching ministries. One of our

students came from a business family without knowledge of the salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ. After four years of high school at Dalat, she developed a strong conviction to follow Jesus and became a high school teacher. She committed herself to reaching the next generation through education ministry. She returned to her home country, taught in a Christian school, and led students to Christ for over ten years. What a privilege to serve our Lord through transformational education ministry as students impact their world for Christ.

The five years of serving as the athletic director and principal for Hans and elementary school teacher and high school French teacher for Ruth were a considerable privilege and provided growing experience as MK caregivers. They were full of joy and love, and challenges.

By God's gracious gift, we welcomed our second son to our family during this time.

Second Field: Black Forest Academy, 1998-2014



Black Forest Academy, Germany

As we continued to be willing to go where He wanted us to go and to do what He wanted us to do, God led us to Black Forest Academy in Germany. The Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA) had decided to pass on the ownership of Dalat School to the parents as a private international school in Penang, Malaysia. Therefore,

our leaders began the redeployment of Canadian personnel from Dalat School. Through many hours of consultations and prayers, they recommended that we join the C&MA team in Germany due to the high number of Canadian Alliance missionary children attending Black Forest Academy (BFA) at the time. More personnel were needed to care for them as educators and administrators. Hans was needed as the computer teacher and Ruth as the French teacher when we arrived.

God had a different plan as Hans moved into administration in the second year. Again, he took on the all-school principal position to prepare BFA to reach the highest enrollment in its history. During our first seven years of serving at BFA, the school developed into elementary, middle, and high school programs where each division had its own principal to look after its own growth and development.

After more than sixteen years serving in Germany at the boarding school

as head principal, academic dean, teacher, and elementary and middle school principal, we witnessed many MKs surrender their lives to the Lord and commit to serving Him wherever God leads. Two of the many students got married after university and responded to God's call to Africa. For more than ten years now, they have been in Togo, serving the people there with a hospital, training, evangelism, discipleship, and raising their own family to be servants of our Lord.

Another exciting phenomenon was being able to share human and financial resources with other smaller schools around the world. I (Hans) had the privilege of serving as a consultant to many small schools across the globe, from Vietnam, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, and Switzerland, to build schools and strengthen their academic program. In addition, I was able to refer teachers and administrators to these schools. My passion was the intentional development of school leaders and encouraging them to respond to God's call to serve in remote and challenging countries as school administrators.

I had the privilege of establishing partnerships with different organizations to use transformational education services to bring the next generation of students and the current generation of teachers to Christ. What a joy and privilege to be part of this amazing journey with so many colleagues and like-minded educators to reach the world for Christ.



Tien Shan International School, Central Asia

Third Field: Central Asia, 2014

After sixteen years in Germany, we had come to enjoy BFA's lifestyle, beautiful scenery, and familiarity. We wanted to remain at BFA, but only if God called us to stay, not because it was comfortable and convenient. Our regional developers shared their vision of strengthening the MK/TCK school in Central Asia to receive the wave of international workers (IWs) from

different countries who had landed in the city of Almaty at the end of 2012.

Leaving a vital and vibrant ministry in Germany and moving to an unstable region sounded illogical but was a true test of our faith in His calling. Were we still willing to go where He wanted us to go and do what He wanted us to do? After a few months of praying and seeking God's guidance, we were prepared to enter another chapter of our MK/TCK ministry in Kazakhstan. On August 1, 2014, we



Ruth teaching at Tien Shan

arrived with our youngest son embarking on a journey out of our expectations and human understanding.

The privilege of serving and partnering with (IW) families from more than eleven countries in Asia, Europe, North America, and Australia

is indescribable. Witnessing the work of the parents who are regional workers (workers from other Central Asian countries who speak Russian) reaching the people of Kazakhstan was like having front-row seats in a theatre.

We have supported and partnered with the parents of students who are regional and international workers who reach out to the poor, underprivileged, unreached, minority, and marginalized. The excitement of seeing people from various unreached people groups in Kazakhstan come to know the Lord was beyond words. We have witnessed the outworking of the Great Commission, the discipling and training of local believers as workers.

Meeting the needs of regional workers' and IWs' children with quality and transformational education falls into the hands of MK/TCK schools. We are challenged to train the next generation with exceptional skills, knowledge, abilities, and gifts to reach the world for Christ. It was a blessing to help the school meet international standards with recognition by three top accreditation agencies. We have created a program to meet and exceed the educational standards for North American, European, Asian, and Australian universities. All of this has given us a glimpse of the true international community that will be present when we get to Heaven.

Not only do we serve the IWs and their children from a strict neighbouring country, but we can serve so many adult MKs/TCKs in Tien Shan and, most of all, our former students from Germany.

It has been my prayer for over 30 years that God will raise the next MK/TCK generation to lead and serve schools like Tien Shan worldwide. God has answered my prayer many times throughout the last 30 years. In the past 20 years, a few MK/TCK schools have been led by their own alumni or adult MK/TCK from other parts of the world, like Dalat, BFA, etc. Many teachers in these schools were also MKs/TCKs themselves. The experience of these MKs/TCKs has brought greater



insight and more effective operations to the schools. What a joy and comfort to see those who went through the path to be able to be ministers to the next generation of MKs/TCKs with understanding, love, and care.

Serving IW families and their children from unreached countries is beyond our expectations. As many IWs serve in the least-reached or unreached nations, nothing is more encouraging than seeing these unreached countries send their own IWs to share the good news.

We served one worker family after the father passed away while serving the Lord in another country. The school has also had an unexpected opportunity of reaching people from war-torn countries by receiving refugees and displaced families. In the last eighteen months, our ministry has been extended to reach a few of these families from Afghanistan, Ukraine, Russia, and some of the poor neighbouring countries. The overwhelming response from the community and supporting churches to raise funds for scholarships for these families has been a testimony of the love of Christ for the community and the world.

Another amazing experience of serving here was seeing Jehovah Jireh, the Provider, at work. When we began, the school was over \$750,000 in debt. Since then, it has averaged a \$250,000 yearly surplus for the last seven years. We have also established a substantial scholarship program to assist families who cannot afford to send their children to the school. We now have a stipend program to



Hans and Ruth Fung

support the faculty and staff who need help to raise sufficient financial support from their home or sending countries. All of these are due to the power of prayer and sharing God's provision with the community from the tithe of the earning from the sale of the old property. Since then, God has been providing over and beyond our needs financially each year, regardless of the number of our enrollment. No accreditation agency will

recognize the reason for our healthy financial situation, but this would clearly explain how we got to where we are.

As we continue on the journey to raise the next generation of workers for His kingdom, recruiting the new generation and young professional workers has become a front-and-centre task for The Alliance Canada. We were honoured to be part of this amazing process.

Conclusion

A study by Dr. Leslie Andrews from Nyack College twenty years ago reported that thirty percent of graduates from schools like Tien Shan, BFA, Dalat, etc., were involved in full-time ministry for His Kingdom. Today, our unofficial estimation of a thirty percent return is still the fact and norm; thirty percent of MKs/TCKs will serve God in some full-time capacity.

This amazing return motivated us, and may this continue to be effective. We testify to God's faithfulness, presence, power, protection, and provision over our 30-year journey. May He continue to glorify Himself as we make Him known wherever He calls us to go and whatever He asks us to do.

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