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RESOURCE EXCHANGE INTERNATIONAL



Adam (right) , next to him is Tim Moore (REI Director of Short-Term Teams), Jake Fettig (REI Indonesia Country Leader) and Kennon Matthews (left, REI Short-Term Team Volunteer)

The Importance of Collaboration: Trust, Mutual Support and Professional Competency

The recent visit of the REI professional team provided a valuable experience for those of us here in Indonesia. Beyond supporting project activities and strengthening local capacity, their presence demonstrated the importance of collaboration built on professionalism, openness, mutual respect and a genuine willingness to learn from one another. While accompanying and helping manage the needs of the professional team, I noted that their purpose here was not only about carrying out tasks on a work agenda but also about building good relationships with local colleagues . . .

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"Beyond the invitations into classrooms, hospitals, businesses or government offices, trust truly begins when they invite us into their homes."

The Table Is Always Set - Where Trust Begins

(Wendy and her husband Tim served for 14 years as cross-cultural workers in Kazakhstan)

The first thing I remember wasn't the food. It was the table. Every inch of it covered with plates, bowls, bread, fruit, tea, salads, sweets – far more than any family could reasonably eat.

I would learn there was a reason for that. In Kazakhstan, hospitality isn't entertainment. It's identity.

"The table is always set and ready for a guest," the Kazakh proverb says. And that is who we are when we arrive in a new country with a vision to help. We are guests. And we have a lot to learn . . .

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A Word from the President

REI staff and volunteers are rightly proud. They are experts in the subject areas in which they train locals. But they have also learned that the most successful training is done in the context of relationship, and that relationship, especially in a foreign setting, must be built on humility on the part of the foreigner.



This month's first article was written by one of our local Indonesian partners, and details what he appreciated about the attitude of the first team of volunteer professionals REI recently sent to his country. Adam describes how the team tried to understand the local context, how they were willing to listen to those they were training, and how they adjusted their content accordingly. In a word, they were humble.

The month's second article describes what one of our staff learned

country, but for a foreigner (who doesn't know the local rules of social etiquette), how both receiving and extending hospitality requires, well, humility.

Your humble (hopefully) servant,



K. Douglas Erdmann
President & CEO



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