

# NTM News

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## Punans face opportunities, obstacles

**TANJUNG LOKANG, Indonesia (Feb. 21, 2003):** Two teams of Punan believers have returned with good news and bad news from eastern and central Kalimantan, where they went in search of ministry opportunities.

"The Punans have relatives in both these areas and are concerned that they know about 'the true life in Christ,'" wrote NTM missionary David Searcy, who ministers to the Punans.

On their way to eastern Kalimantan, Bane, Salung, Dulin and Tomi encountered fishermen who were able to give them a ride in their boats, cutting the travel time for the men.

"The greatest response was seen at [the village of] Naha Tivap," David wrote. "The people there were pleading to be taught, and Bane would really like to go back before Easter to visit again."

However, Naha Tivap is a three-day hike for the Punans from Tanjung Lokang village -- that's a seven-day hike for Westerners, David noted -- and the people of Naha Tivap speak a different dialect of Punan. Pray that these hurdles can be overcome, so the Punan Christians can take the Gospel to the people of Naha Tivap.

Meanwhile, Agus, Simun and Tinus hiked and rafted for seven days to reach several villages in central Kalimantan.

The most promising visit they made was to a village called Nanga Torunui. "The folks ... would like to have a teacher come and live with them," David wrote.

The people of Nanga Torunui live much the way the Punans of Tanjung Lokang lived 25 years ago when David and his wife, Teresa, began working among them. They are semi-nomadic hunter-gatherers.

The distance means that any Punans who minister there would have to return to such a lifestyle, "foregoing the many 'modern' conveniences and foods they now take for granted," David wrote.

Pray for the Punan Church and the individuals involved as they make decisions on these outreaches.

"There are many factors to consider," David wrote. "The biggest factor will be the people to go. Then, is the church ready to support them financially?"

