



BushNet

News from EMMANUEL INTERNATIONAL

GIVING PRACTICAL HELP - MEETING SPIRITUAL NEED

Issue 2 of 2013

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Introduction

Welcome to Acholiland

Emmanuel International has worked in Northern Uganda for 30 years - 20 years of which were riven by conflict and the terrible atrocities of the Lord's Resistance Army. Throughout this difficult period EI has served and served alongside the Acholi people, first in Patongo and now through the Pader Restoration Resource Centre.

The Centre was established in Pader District in 2007, at a time when the hope for peace was first growing. The Centre has walked alongside the people of Acholiland, first giving emergency relief as they lived in Internally Displaced Persons' Camps, then in rehabilitation as they moved to satellite camps and eventually to their home villages. Now the Centre has entered a new phase, as we shift to development work to assist the people of Pader to stand on their own.

The following articles are all about how we as a Centre are pursuing that vision, through Community Health Empowerment, Pads Training, the Jesus Film and many others.



Getting the Word Out

According to Operation World, Uganda is perhaps one of the most "Christian nations" in the world. Opening and closing prayer are agenda items in parliamentary meetings. Taxis, supermarkets, and hair salons alike have titles like "Jesus cares" and "God's mercy".

And yet, as Tom and Richard discovered when they went to train some Christians in one of the villages where EI works, many self professing Christians have never even heard John 3:16.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

The rest of that training shifted to focus on the core of the gospel. Tom then asked the group, "How many of you would consider you were a Christian before this training?" About 5 people raised their hands. Then he asked, "How many of you would consider yourself a Christian now?" Nearly all of the 20 group members raised their hands.

The problem? People at the village level have little access to the Word of God. There are two reasons for this. For one, few people have an Acholi Bible. Often the church lay leader is the only person in a village with a Bible. And secondly, there are so many people – particularly women, who are unable to read.

"Deeply rooted Christian groups" is the first part of the vision of the Pader Restoration

Vision of Pader Restoration Resource Centre



Psalm 1:3

Deeply rooted Christian groups actively living and sharing faith, knowledge, and skills by the power of JESUS CHRIST to serve their whole community so that they can **STAND** on their own.

Resource Centre. This statement brings to mind the picture of the tree from Psalm 1, drinking deeply from the water of God's Word. Bible study groups provide a solution for people who can't read or don't have access to a Bible to be able to gather and "drink deeply" together.

This is the vision behind the Jesus Film Project. God impressed on us the need to create a lasting structure within the community whereby Christians – old and new – could be nourished in their faith.



Mike and Tom putting up the screen to show the Jesus film

The goal? Deeply rooted Christian groups actively living and sharing their faith...

The method? Training Christians in the community how to follow-up with new believers after the Jesus Film and giving Bibles and training to groups in how to have discussion-based weekly Bible studies.

The results? So far, 3 communities with over 160 new Christians, group members reaching out to their neighbours with the gospel, and 3 Bible study groups meeting once a week to study God's Word!

Deep roots take a lifetime to grow, and yet every tree starts from a single seed and a little bit of water.



Ongoing Projects

HIV Peace Project

We train 30 peer educators from 10 different communities to teach topics in their home villages such as HIV prevention, reduction of stigma and HIV-related domestic violence, grief counselling, home-based care for the bed ridden, and how to make a will.

Agricultural Demonstration Project

We have trained 5 communities (150 households) this year in improved methods for growing vegetables for home consumption, combined with teaching on the Parable of the Sower.

Citrus Tree Nursery Pilot

We are helping 1 community to learn how to raise up orange trees from seed in a tree nursery, this will yield about 50 trees per household, which will increase household income and access to essential vitamins.



Tending the citrus seedlings



ALPHA

Building the Next Generation of Christian Leaders

Pader Town Church had a vision – to take the Alpha Course into 2 of the Pader schools. There was just one major problem. How would they get enough small group leaders to lead around 200 students?

Alpha Uganda suggested to train students in small group leadership and team them each with a church volunteer. And so in February 2012, Pader Town Church organized a leadership training for selected students of Pader Girls Secondary School and ALARM Technical Institute, before launching the course.

Mike and Marianne didn't realize how much the experience of leading meant to the students until the celebration ceremony at the end of the course.

One student named Bosco stood up and described with joy how he, as the Student Spiritual and Ethics Leader at ALARM, had not known where to start with leading a group or training other leaders before he joined Alpha. "Alpha taught me how to throw back the question to the group. I don't need to know all the answers." In addition, he saw the benefit that small group discussions

was having on his fellow students, and incorporated discussion time after the Sunday morning services for the school.

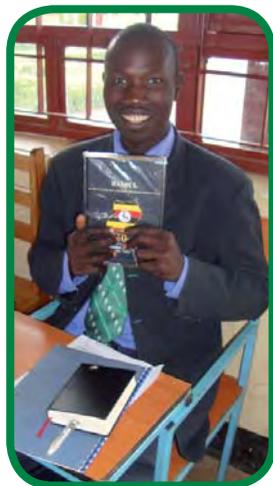
He also shared his passion to rally together other like-minded students to reach out to a village near to school and share the gospel with them through Alpha.



Alpha Celebration

Another student named Nelson was the Alpha helper in Mike's group during the course. Near the end of the course, Mike asked him if he'd lead a group discussion, which he did very well. During the celebration, Nelson stood up and testified, saying "Before Alpha, I would never be here in front of you speaking. But now look!"

Let us all be encouraged to pray for Pader's young leaders, that they may be built up and shaped by God's grace, that God would use them to help restore what was lost in years of insecurity.



Bosco



Alpha Planning Team



CHE

A Model for Wholistic Development through the Church that Works

Sometimes people ask us, “*What is CHE?*” and the answer is, “*Well, it’s hard to explain.*” Can we explain it in this short article? Not totally. But maybe we can share how the Community Health Empowerment (CHE) ministry is helping churches to fulfill the Great Commandment (Matt 22:36-40) alongside the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20).

Here in the Diocese of Kitgum in Northern Uganda, CHE operates within the Anglican Church structure, to train mature Christian volunteers that will dedicate at least 1 day of their week on an ongoing basis to train local committees in overseeing the work of CHE in their community, and to train home educators to go from door to door for every home in the community teaching a spiritual and a physical health topic.

Integration of physical and spiritual are key to the CHE ministry. True transformation doesn’t happen without Jesus Christ. For example, a community may be completely sold on the idea of handwashing, with every family building and using a handwash station. But will those families escape the cycle of poverty if at the same time they are acting in violence due to land disputes and holding grudges towards their neighbours?



Tippy Tap



A beautiful example of this integration of physical and spiritual that comes to mind is that of the personal ministry of one of the CHE Trainers called Justin. Justin is a Sunday School teacher in a tiny village church. Following the CHE Training, Justin decided he could start teaching about sanitation in his Sunday School. He also started teaching them agricultural techniques by organizing them into farming groups and going out with them on the land. Finally, he trained them in how to study the Bible, and at last report, the children were meeting weekly to share and grow in God’s Word.



Justin with Sunday School kids

CHE is a model of ministry – but more than that, it is a change in mentality. CHE teaches churches how not to neglect the most important gift it has to give the world – the gospel – while showing them how to love their neighbour as they love themselves. It helps the Church take its rightful place as the leader in community transformation.

Please pray for the Christian men and women who have dedicated themselves to the service of their communities in the CHE ministry.

Pads Ministry

The situation for girl's education here is seriously bad, with a very high drop out rate. One of the many factors, but an early and important one, is an inability to manage their periods and missing 4 or 5 days a month from school. So Milly and Tom (sometimes Doris too) visit the primary schools teaching about periods, encouraging and instructing. We always talk from Psalm 139:13-16 about how they are wonderfully and uniquely made by God, important to Him. Apart from information, we also provide (per girl): two washable pads (which they hand sew themselves), a needle, cotton and 2 pairs of underpants. We really want to provide 4 pads but that will have to come later.



Millie and Tom talk from Psalm 139 while the girls sew pads

We go to a school, being equipped for 60 girls, and try to be strict about limiting the numbers or we run out of materials. In that class of 60, typically 40 will have started their periods but only around 9 are wearing underpants. They manage their periods by staying home. Unless they are unusually bright and determined, they fall behind, are seen as dim by their teachers and parents, and when it comes to which children should get their school fees paid... do the parents choose the boy or the girl?

You may ask why girls don't get given disposable pads? Or underwear? They are available and very cheap (to us). The reason is that most people are on a very low income and exist mainly outside the cash economy. Asking their father for money for pads is just not something a girl can do. And children simply do not have money of their own. Also, the pace of social change is such that parents just can't track it. In their day, girls did not go to school.

We are doing what we can and the schools and the girls seem to like it. Seeing a reduction in the drop out rate would be great but is really hard to measure. Especially since we are dealing with the girls in the year before they change schools.

So far this year, after a slow start, we have reached five schools with seven visits, taught a total of 409 girls, distributing materials to each one.



Tom's interests

Deaf friends

I have spent quite a lot of time with deaf people here and now have a working use of Uganda Sign Language (USL). I interpret for the deaf in the Sunday morning English service and we have breakfast together afterwards. Apart from anything else this



Some of the deaf friends having breakfast

has raised the profile of the Deaf community to the church. I have, through this, become interested in Deaf Education (for children and teachers) and the lives of ordinary, often isolated deaf in the town and outlying villages. The Sunday morning group has just started watching a USL video series of 32 chronological Bible Stories. For most it is the first time they are comprehending the Bible.

Farming on the compound

The 1.3 acre lower compound is what I look out on from my back door. It had been reverting to bush for some years and has been unused since the cows went last year. I decided that this was useful land and action was required. So the bush was cleared, the 60 odd tree stumps were dug out, a tractor was brought in to plough and the ground was then hand dug, ready for planting. The ground is known to be very marshy when the rains come so we selected 'upland' rice which grows in wet or dry and a sunflower variety that is resistant to water-logging. A team of friends came and helped plant, in lines and, as the picture shows, we are getting a good crop of both rice and sunflower. There are plans for cabbages before the year is out. It is the first year and we will do well to break even! See Tom's blog at tomedominpader.blogspot.com for more details and updates.



On Saturday 6 July, the weather was perfect! Lots of sunshine and warm weather. Ideal for our annual Garden Party! David and Jenny's garden was beautiful (as always).

The EIUK family gathered together and it was lovely to see everyone catching up on what has been happening with each other in the past 6 months, since the conference.

We heard from Alan and Cheryl Parrett who have returned home to the UK from Uganda, after serving for 9 years with EI, the last 2 years as our Country Representatives. Judy Atkins brought greetings from the team in Malawi and shared about the mission that she and Andy are involved with now (they are with Navigators). Peter and Frances Wingfield brought greetings from Andrew and Miriam and the rest of the Tanzanian team.

A great time of sharing and fellowship!



Cheryl and Alan Parrett

Sue did it!



What?

On Sunday 11 August, Sue Fallon (General Manager, EIUK) did a very brave thing... a tandem skydive! The skies were clear and the views were beautiful. The plane was fully functioning, but still she jumped out!

Why?

EIUK would like you to consider hosting a fundraising event, or do something dramatic like skydiving or climbing a mountain! Sue did the extreme event so that there is no pressure on others to do something mad, but perhaps you would manage a more achievable event. If you would like more information about fundraising ideas, please contact the office on 01243 537040 or info@eiuk.org.uk.



Who for?

Sue visited Northern Uganda last year and visited the EI projects there, meeting some of the recipients and workers. They are doing amazing things with a relatively small amount of money. We covered some of those projects in this issue of BushNet.



Thank you

Sue says "Thank you for sponsoring me. Your support is much appreciated by EI and the many folks in Northern Uganda that will be impacted by your gift."



How to sponsor Sue

To date, Sue has raised just over £1800 for this worthy cause. You can still sponsor her. If you wish, you can send a cheque to EI or if you prefer to do a bank transfer, the account number is 16187288 sort code 600524 (please put skydive in the reference).