

YOUTHWORX EAST AFRICA PRAYER UPDATE AND NEWS.

Last month our news letter read like a crisis report. I am pleased to start this month with the confidence of YEA being back on track in many ways and definitely re-focused. We all really appreciate your commitment to stand by us and pray for us through what has been a difficult period.

As well as a general up date, I want this month to focus on the work we do with young people up country in the rural parts of East Africa. Much of our work takes place in this environment and we want you as partners to understand the unique character of the places and people we interact with.

First though I would like to share with you a couple of verses that have been constantly on my mind the past few weeks. Philippians 1: 3 to 6. Our work is not over yet. His plans continue. Circumstances, setbacks and feelings are not the issue. He will complete the good work. And it is an internal work not an external one. As we seek to impact and see the transformation of young people in East Africa the real miracle is the one He is working inside each of us. This word is for all of us. Whether we are here in Uganda or in Europe we can be confident that His work in and through us will be faithfully and joyfully completed. It is a wonderful privilege to be in this "Partnership in the Gospel".



We often make reference to 'going upcountry' in our reports and programmes. It is when you leave Kampala behind that you begin to experience Africa in a big way.

Dirt roads, simple huts and an agrarian way of life epitomises many of the areas where we offer training and participate in camps and conferences. To be a young person deep in the village in East Africa means from an early age a life of digging, fetching water, caring for livestock and very limited access or influence from the outside world. Many youth, especially the girls, drop out of school after primary education.

The church is struggling. Usually very poor, with pastors who have received limited training if any. A rural youth worker will most likely be a school drop out and peasant farmer.

However lack of opportunity and schooling does not equate to lack of intelligence, resourcefulness or faith. The rural youth want to catch up, eagerly desire input and training and have huge energy.

YEA has partners in Hoima, Masindi, Masaka, Bushenyi, Ntungamo and Mukono districts of Uganda, all of which are predominantly rural. We offer simple, practical youth ministry training geared towards the culture and lifestyle of these communities. Also we are developing training in entrepreneurship to try to find a way of helping these youth out of poverty; an important aspect of discipleship in areas like this.



Please take time to pray this month for the many young lives that we seek to impact deep in rural East Africa and for the patience and energy we need to achieve this work in often very difficult conditions. We are also identifying key young people with leadership potential in the up country districts we work in and training them specifically to be able to multiply the work of discipleship in these local churches.

So the specific points....

- The schools work is developing well in Masaka in partnership with the Baptist Union churches in that area.
- By the time you read this Collin and 2 of our up country volunteers will be in Kabale in South West Uganda to participate in a youth conference there run by Church of Uganda. This will be a completely new area for us to work and we pray that it will be fruitful.
- The election in Burundi seems to have ended peacefully and we are going ahead with planning for VOW choir to travel there in mid August. It is a great answer to prayer that we can report this.
- Ian is back from Kenya and we have been invited to take VOW for a worship event in Eldoret (Western Kenya) and to offer youth worker training there in the future. He also spent a night in Turi and met with the chaplain of St Andrews school where some of the KIC youth are students.
- While in Kenya, Ian also attended Edgars introduction for marriage. This event went very well. Please pray for Edgar and Winnie as they plan towards the wedding in December this year.
- The partnership with Kampala International Church has now started. We are beginning to plan a programme for next term when the students come back from their summer break.
- Prosper has now completed the work in South Africa and is due back home in August. Before then he will be visiting our partners in Zimbabwe to see how the work there can be developed.
- Collin will be going to Nairobi (Kenya) in mid August to be part of a city wide youth weekend organised by NAYNET. This will include a joint all day youth service on Sunday 15th August organised by all the churches in Nairobi. It will be the first time they have come together in unity like this.

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. **Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith**, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.”

Hebrews 12: 1 to 3.

What is our focus in YEA? It may appear to be all about youth ministry and discipleship. But our real focus, our purpose and our driving force is Jesus. If this relationship can spill over into the lives of the young people we meet then they will discover the joy of transformation and true freedom. Please pray that we may be infectious.

God bless you all and I look forward to writing again next month.

Ian .



Sunset over the Ssese Islands, Lake Victoria , Uganda.