

Twelve hours on the bus. Dull beating behind the temples; sore backside; slight twinge in the lower back. My usual sensations on arrival in Nairobi!!

Hoisting backpack onto my shoulders I jostled through the rush-hour throng to "Hotel Diplomate". My hunch is they don't host many diplomats but the shower is hot (even if it squirts in all directions), the bed is well.....horizontal..... and its within easy walking distance of good eateries, so all my essential creature comforts taken care of.

There are 2 main reasons for being here:

We have begun to develop a network of Youth Workers in Kampala with the aim of fellowship, support, a unified vision and seeing how we can work together. NAYNET was begun with similar aims by friends of ours in Nairobi about 8 years ago and has now developed into an effective city wide network with 1000s of members with a joint strategy to reach the youth of the whole city of Nairobi.

In the course of the few days I was in Kenya I managed to meet with 4 key leaders of NAYNET and have now got a clear picture of how they have brought this from a group of 3 guys up to what it is today. We have been able to candidly see the weaknesses as well as strengths and now have a much clearer road map of how we can take our Kampala network forward. It is also encouraging that within their strategy for the next 5 years they would like to see similar networks set up in cities across Africa. This means that we can anticipate their support, advice and encouragement as we go on.

The key areas where NAYNET have been effective are:

- Fellowship, prayer and support for Youth workers who were previously isolated in their work.
- Being able to speak as one voice in the city on issues concerning the Youth.
- Building a bridge between young people and Church leadership
- Sharing of resources, especially training for youth workers
- Synchronization of calendars so that there is not a clash of youth events and so that all churches can support each other's initiatives.
- Joint activities such as camps, conferences and consultations.

I was also able to meet with the youth leaders of Parklands Baptist Church to discuss how our partnership can develop:

In discussion we noted that in Kenya the greatest need for development of Youth ministry is in the up-country area not the city. We felt that we could best partner with Parklands by working in the border regions (more easily accessed from Kampala than Nairobi) responding to training and mission needs known to Parklands and NAYNET. Youth volunteers from Nairobi would join us in those areas. This will need more discussion but is an exciting way that we can partner together.

We also want to pursue the idea of Parklands sending us Youth Interns from time to time to help us with work in Uganda while giving them useful ministry experience.

A useful trip with the opportunity to meet many old friends and make new ones.

The return trip was by overnight sleeper train to Kisumu then on to Kampala by bus. This was less stressful even if the rail track had many glitches and kinks! I plan to use the services of Rift Valley Railways again.