

Uganda 2010 Mission Report



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Of Special Interest

The Trip in 100 Words

Life in the Villages

LEADIA.org



Tororo rock

The Trip in 100 Words

Thirty people from Alaska and Canada met in Kampala and in partnership with the Uganda Deliverance Church dispersed to five regions, namely Gulu, Soroti, Jinja, Mbarara and Tororo.

My group went to Tororo. With seven people and over a period of ten days, we held five open-air crusades, five children's programs, preached at four different

churches, hosted a four-day pastors and leaders conference, four nights of revival meetings, and brought the gospel to many homes.

We preached, we taught, we prayed, we shared our stories. We ate in homes, sang, danced, laughed and cried together.

We witnessed the sick get

healed, the brokenhearted restored, those tormented by demons set free, the people come to Jesus.

We hiked up a mountain, crossed the Nile, milked a cow, ate with our fingers, learned some Swahili and spoke some Jopadhola.

In this time, many lives intersected and we were forever changed.

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Unashamed of the gospel

When I first heard that we were going to be doing house-to-house evangelism, I was apprehensive. We were not prepared for this. Each one of us was to lead a team of two or three people from the local church to share the gospel house to house. We were going to be the main speakers. They were there to act as guides and interpreters.

The first two days, we visited homes in a village called Rubongi, about 3 kms from the town of Tororo where we were staying.

In the village, most people lived in mud huts. Many people are unemployed and

are home during the day.

On the first day, I stayed close to my gospel script which I rehearsed the night before. Surprisingly, despite my lackluster delivery, fourteen people received Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

At one house, I prayed for an elderly lady who had blurry vision and she was healed. The people around witnessed the miracle that they too brought in their sick to be prayed for and many were healed.

I was just getting comfortable with sharing the gospel in the village when

we changed locations to the town. In town, most people live in shared housing complexes made of brick or cement and partitioned into several units. A typical complex is about the size of a trailer, but it is shared by a few households.

On the first day in town, we passed by a group of six men drinking beer in front of their home at midday. We were unsure whether to stop by when one of them called out "Mzungu!" which means "white person" in Swahili. The rest of the men tuned in eager to see what will happen next.

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Uganda Cultural Notes



Relaxing outdoors

Ugandans do handshakes differently than the rest of the world. It's a three-stage handshake that starts with a typical western handshake holding four fingers in your hand, then slide down to make fist around the other person's thumb, and then back to western handshake.

When shaking the hand of an esteemed individual, people may do a five-stage handshake, repeating steps

2 and 3.

Ugandans also hug differently. Instead of one lingering hug, they do two quick hugs--one left, one right. I got so used to this that back at the hotel one night, while going around for team hugs as was our daily practice, I double hugged my friend to her surprise and almost kissed her!

Even though most Ugandans speak some English, we still had to speak slowly and enunciate for them to understand us better.

Some things are also different in their vernacular. "It is okay" actually means "That's fine." while "It is very okay" means "I'd like that." But when you hear "It is very, very okay," that means they are really over the moon about it!



Typical mud hut

Life in the Villages

Visiting a village was like stepping into a time warp, giving you a glimpse of how people lived before industrialization and modernization. The road to the village is a bumpy and narrow one, lined with people and a few bicycles.

In the village, people live in mud huts build on materials available on hand, such as twigs, branches, mud, and straw. Cow dung is rubbed on the floors and walls to keep pests and insects away.

There is no electricity, no running water. Fetching water is a job delegated to women and children. Children as young as five carry 20L jerrycans to and from the nearest spring, usually a few kilometers away from their homes.

At night, the entire village is dark. Lighting inside the home is provided by paraffin lamps made from recycled tin cans.

I asked the young women what they do at night when

it's dark. Sometimes, they read by the light of the lamps or they hang out. They go to sleep at around 8 or 9pm, but they wake up early to tend to their livestock and their gardens before they go to school or work.

Now it was their turn to ask me questions and the first one was, "Do you dig?"

We had much to learn about each other.



Roof of a mud hut

"I see that you have the spirit of God in you and you have wisdom beyond your years."

Wisdom from the Spirit

I was doing a teaching on confession of sin, encouraging people to confess their sins to one another as taught in James 5:16, saying that if you confess your sins to each other, your friend will not judge you but rather help you get back on track.

Right after service, an elder

of the church asked to speak to me in private. I got so nervous thinking perhaps I had said something out of line. In Ugandan culture, people don't openly talk about their sins.

Once outside, instead, he asked me for some counsel about some private and serious matters. I felt so

unqualified and I hesitated to respond. But he assured me saying, "I see that you have the spirit of God in you and you have wisdom beyond your years."

I was overwhelmed by the compliment. Indeed, *"This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit." (2 Cor. 2:13)*

LEADIA

LEADIA stands for Leadership Development Initiative Africa. It is a grassroots Christian organization whose aim is to transform Africa by empowering communities, leaders and children.

I first heard of LEADIA through one of the church leaders who drove us around everyday. He gave up his job in the capital city of Kampala to volunteer to run the HIV/AIDS program in the village.

LEADIA is Africans for Africa. Its programs are aimed at people in all levels of society, from the leaders to the most vulnerable. Its programs include leadership training, microfinance loans, community agricultural programs, sports activities for the youth, health services, sanitation training, child sponsorship, HIV/AIDS counseling, treatment and prevention.

Recently, they just launched a program for organic

farming of soy beans. Normally, the people just boil the soy beans for food but while I was there, the head pastor asked me to teach him how to make soy milk, so I did! Don't be surprised to find soy milk next time you visit Uganda!

For more information, visit their website at www.leadia.org.



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(Continued from page 1) Unashamed of the Gospel

The big man wearing tattered clothes approached me and said, "Give me some money. Look at my clothes...look at my shoes."

I think my team was concerned for my safety and gestured me to move on but something in me felt compelled to stay. I took a step towards him, looked him in the eye and said, "I don't have money to give you, but I have something better, and that is Jesus Christ."

I couldn't believe the words that were coming out of my mouth! In that moment, I just trusted the Holy Spirit and followed His lead. I shared the gospel of Jesus Christ with them, and surprisingly, the rowdy men listened attentively. When I was done, I asked if they had any questions.

One of the men asked if it

was wrong to drink. The first thing that came to mind was Jesus turning water into wine. So I told them about the story, and added that not only did Jesus turn water to wine, he turned it into the best kind of wine that the guests commented that they had brought out the best wine for last. I finished off by saying that drinking in itself is not wrong, however the bible is clear that drunkenness is a sin.

Then the men started clapping. I thought they were mocking me until one of them spoke up "Mzungu, we like you!"

At the end, when I asked if anyone would like to receive Jesus, all of them said yes!

We were about to leave when the most outspoken man, the same one who asked me for money, asked

me to pray for him specifically. Suddenly, the demeanor of this rough man became like a child. He said he was being tormented by demons and he wants to be delivered from them.

After praying, I told him about his authority as a child of God to cast out demons in Jesus name. He told me that if I come back to Tororo that I should come find him.

House-to-house evangelism was uncomfortable but it was through this experience that I learned the most valuable lesson from this trip that I can now say with conviction,

"I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes. (Romans 1:16)



House-to-house evangelism team: Pastor Amos, Esther and me



Preaching at a revival meeting

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"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor"
(Luke 4:18-19)

Dirty, Pretty Children

I have never seen so many children wandering around without a parent or guardian before. In a country where the median age is 15, I should have not been surprised. The children were numerous, dirty, yet adorable. They wore the same tattered clothes day after day, yet they have the most beautiful smiles.

On the third day of home-to-home evangelism, I saw so many children that I felt the need to address them separately. So after sharing with the adults, I would gather the children to tell them stories about Jesus. Many of the children accepted Jesus into their hearts.

Then in the afternoon, when we had our crusades, to my delight, many of the children came, and they even brought their friends! When they saw me, they just swarmed me. We sang, danced and worshipped together. They were such good dancers. It was an incredible time!



With the children at the crusade

The Last Word

We went there to give what we have, but in the end, we gained so much more.

During this trip, we have experienced God taking us to higher heights, doing things we didn't think we could do. We've experienced the unity and love in the church body, overcoming boundaries of race, culture, and language.

I now have a vested interest to see Africans soar to their potential, to break free from

the shackles of poverty and sickness that have cursed them for generations.

I am deeply humbled by the Ugandans I've met who despite not having much for themselves, continue to give sacrificially and generously, laying down their lives for the kingdom of God.

Many times, they expressed their gratefulness in that we would spend our time and money to go there to be

with them. They said when you go home, give our sincere thanks to your family and friends for releasing you to be with us during this time.

So on behalf of the mission team and our Ugandan brothers, we say thank you for your love and support, and for being part of this journey with us.

Asante sana! (Thank you very much, in Swahili.)

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and videos on the Web!**

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