



Steeves Summary: Tsunami, Generosity, and Perspective

January 2005

"If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth." 1 John 3:17-18

Following the terrible tsunami which hit the Indian Ocean on December 26, there has been an outpouring of donations from around the world. People have been touched by the pictures of devastation. The wave even reached Africa. Over 200 people were killed in Somalia, but only one person is known to have died in Kenya. The shallower water around the Seychelle islands diverted the highest waves to the north of Kenya. News of the waves in Asia and the Seychelles prompted the Kenya government and hotel operators to clear the beaches before the waves hit, ten hours after the initial earthquake.

Amid the sadness and horror of this disaster, it is a real encouragement to see people giving so generously following and event half way around the world. One of our goals is to broaden people's awareness of the needs in Africa. Even though this event will be relegated to sideline stories in the next few months, the needs of the world will continue.

150,000 people will die in Kenya of AIDS this year. There are over 100,000 children living with AIDS in Kenya. There are over half a million orphans who have lost one or both parents to AIDS. In Darfur province of Sudan, 70,000 people have been killed in the ongoing violence and hundreds of thousands have been left homeless.

Statistics don't convey the same meaning as meeting one orphan who has lost his parents. Those of us in Canada are incredibly fortunate to have a social system which will look after the sick and the orphans. In much of Africa, there is nothing. Extended families, neighbors, and perhaps churches, stretch themselves to help out as much as they can, but that still leaves many hungry and cold.

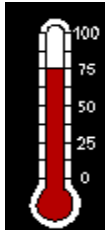
There has been a catch-phrase in Africa for a few years "African problems demand African solutions!" Nobody likes to have solutions imposed on them, and solutions from a radically different culture are less welcome. The needs of Africa are tremendous and there are some things where help is welcome.

- Africa needs leadership training. Christian leaders need to have a depth of understanding of Christ that can be passed on.
- Africa needs technical help. There is a desire by the people to have newer technology and the jobs that go with it, but there is a lack of capital and many knowledge workers have moved to other countries rather than work within the poor infrastructure of home. Unemployment is rife, and jobs that pay a living wage are rare.
- Africa needs tools to help itself. I can easily go into my bank and borrow significant amounts of money. In Africa, a person may be a well trained and brilliant tradesman, but can not get tiny loans to purchase materials to pursue his craft.
- Africa needs education. Governments are stretched to the limit providing basic services. Education is truly a privilege for those who can get it.
- Africa needs vision. Moving towards the future is often confusing and uncertain.
- Africa needs God's love and peace. There are wars and conflicts between clans, religions and countries which were created by colonial powers with no regard to the people groups who were divided.

All of us can help Africa whether we are in Canada or Kenya. Most of all, Africa needs our prayers. As missionaries, our family will get a better sense of the needs of Africa and help out with some of these needs. We will be supporting other missionaries as we learn from and interact with our dorm kids and the local people around Kijabe.

I pray that the response of the developed world to the tsunami disaster will help bring attention to the continuing needs in other parts of the world.

Our Status:



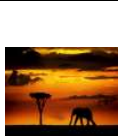
We enjoyed time with family over Christmas and New Years. Winter has come and we are trying to adjust our activities, but we still feel like hibernating at times. Our bookings don't really start for another month, so this is a time of preparation.

Our support is currently at 75%. We are booked to share at a handful of events, and are waiting on a number of other bookings. We are still open to share with other groups as we continue our ministry in Canada. Thank you to all who have supported our ministry and who have prayed for us as we prepare for Kenya.

Blessings,

Michael, Bernadine, Julianne and Evan

You can see our previous newsletters on our [website](http://www.kijabe.org/mission2004) at www.kijabe.org/mission2004.



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