



Operation World

when we pray, God works
march 2006

I BLESS THE RAINS DOWN IN AFRICA

Much of East Africa is poised or in the midst of drought conditions right now – people are facing starvation. Kenya is in the throes of an anti-corruption campaign mounted by a government that has long been stained by corruption. Despite a whopping 36% of the population being evangelical Christians, Kenya's problems are many. It was into this context that 500+ church and mission leaders converged on Nairobi for the MANI consultation (Mobilizing African National Initiatives). It was amazing (as an international invitee) to see what is happening in the African church these days. One other amazing experience was to greet the arrival of the rainy season with some almighty downpours! These rains brought desperately needed moisture to a parched land. But they will not be enough to save and the forecast is dry for the region. Pray with us for God to bring rain and preserve lives.

FULL SPEED AHEAD

As I mentioned, it was wonderful to see and hear the strength of the African church - not just the exuberant worship, the powerful prayer and the infectious joy, but also the vision and forward thinking evident throughout! While missions becomes a harder and harder sell in the West, and while the church in the West is largely stagnant and suffering a crisis of confidence, Africans are fearlessly preaching the Gospel, planting churches and sending out more and more missionaries. I heard stirring presentations on the strategic importance of apostolic discipleship, on church planting movements in Sierra Leone, on the challenge of Islam in Africa, on the networks seeking to reach every unreached group in Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Cote d'Ivoire, on the vision to mobilize 50,000 Nigerian missionaries by the year 2020. And many more besides! It was a blessed and encouraging time. It was also a very valuable time in terms of Operation World; I gathered lots of good information and made a many great contacts who will surely be able to make valuable contributions to the research for the next OW.

WANTED: ONE KNEE

I saw the surgeon the week before I went to Kenya. It wasn't much of an experience; he basically told me "OK, start working slowly back into exercise and sports and see how far you can go before something



happens!" Which was not really much help. Things were feeling better. But this past Sunday, I somehow tweaked it (in an inauspicious manner) and it has been sore since then – a bit swollen but the pain/'unrightness' is at least in a different location than in the past. At this stage, I'm

not sure what to think, believe or attempt when it comes to this old knee. I just want to be even able to start exercising again, never mind competitive sports; but I've not reached the point of despair just yet!

TEAM TALK

This month sees David Bock join the OW team for a month from Winnipeg (60% of the OW is now Canadian!). We also had a great week with Michael and Dawna Jaffarian as visitors. Michael, an experienced missions researcher, is planning to work 5 days a month for OW from his base in the USA. We were able to enjoy some great fellowship and look at ways that Michael can meaningfully contribute to the project. Dr. Todd Johnson of the World Christian Encyclopedia will also be spending a couple of days here; I anticipate a lot of "shop talk" even if there is no formal agenda! I suspect we'll talk music a lot as well as we share a passion for world music.

EURO JETSETTING

Next week I will travel to Germany for the international WEC conference which happens every 4 years. I will be co-presenting with Patrick Johnstone on the first night global trends and challenges facing us as a mission. This time will also be valuable for networking and building relationships with our leaders and workers on the field. A few short days after that, I'm in Barcelona for the meetings of *emrg*, the European Missions Research Group. This wonderful gang of folks are meeting together to compare notes, share stories and look at how we can use information and research to both mobilize the church and uncover an accurate spiritual assessment of the situation and needs in Europe. Please pray for these times to be fruitful in terms of building up a network of good contacts for OW and for sharing and gathering information.

In Christ and for the Harvest,
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