



September News Bulletin



Journey Through Kenya

Over 26 years ago, we established a research department at World Mission Centre to find out where the unreached people groups of Southern Africa were located. We researched all the countries in Southern Africa, including those that crossed the equator. At the end of our research, we published a book called "The 100 Least Reached People Groups of Southern Africa: It Can Be Done" in 1997. We dreamed of a day when a church would be established in every one of the unreached groups.

At the Global Consultation on World Evangelization in 1997 (GCOWE '97), we gave a copy of this book to each of the 400 local South African church pastors who attended. We asked them to commit to forming groups of churches - called HUBS - and together work to reach an unreached people group in a given country.

The Harvest Church in Port Elizabeth, South Africa took on the challenge to gather a group of South African churches and reach one of the unreached tribe in Kenya. So many wonderful things have happened in the ensuing years that we eventually felt it was time to go on an extended trip to document some of the stories. We wanted to tell the stories of heroic men and women who have witnessed to many people, planted churches, and used Live School to train believers in reaching more unreached tribes with the good news.

Just a few weeks ago, we completed an epic journey of 18 days, recording the story of how unreached/least reached people groups in Kenya were reached through the efforts of a group of churches, led by Harvest Church, and World Mission Centre's Project Focus. We wanted to witness first-hand the impact that the gospel had made in these areas and how Live School had been used in that process.



The Team

Nothing could have prepared me for what we saw. People from many of these once unreached people groups are hearing and accepting the gospel, churches are being planted, communities empowered, and Live Schools are being established to train members of these tribes to reach out to their own and surrounding peoples. All I can say is: TO GOD BE THE GLORY! It is an amazing story.

Early in August seven of us met in Nairobi to start the “Kenya: Tell the Story” trip. Myself, the video crew, led by William, who came from the USA, Paul Achilles, the World Mission team leader for East Africa and Pastor John Scholtz, former senior pastor of Harvest Church in Port Elizabeth, and Alfons Wessels, who worked tirelessly with his wife Adri for 13 years in some of the most remote parts of Kenya formed the team.

We first headed north toward the Ethiopian border. Along the way, in Isiolo, we met with a whole group of missionaries who were trained in a Live School run by our longtime partners, Livingstone Mission. To my surprise we found that a fourth generation of Live School is now being trained there. Among those trained, one couple has planted a church within the Samburu people, and they are now training and discipling the new believers using Live School. They are about to start a second school in a church they planted about 30km to the west.



Live School missionaries

From here, we drove further north to Loglogo where we met a Live School graduate who planted a church in an arid part of Kenya. Real desert! He had connected with a partner organization that helped to drill for water that eventually transformed the desert community. His ministry supplies water to the local school and started a vegetable garden project where 36 families are allowed to plant their veggies.

The families are able to sell the produce they do not eat. They have also formed a partnership with an organization and started a pre-school that has over 200 children attending.

One of their biggest projects is planting Moringa trees. The leaves of these trees are cooked in the same way as spinach, and it tastes good! Moringa is known to have incredible value in combatting malnutrition. The local clinic reported that the village children who were once the most malnourished are now among the healthiest in the area because their diet has included these leaves.

We then journeyed into the harsh and mostly dry hinterland of beautiful Kenya where nomadic people live. Their greatest assets are their livestock. It's said that they value their livestock more than their health and family. Here we met with some amazing women and men who are reaching out to some of the most difficult to reach people in the country.

One of the local pastors is now running his second Live School intake. There is a total of 35 students between those who have graduated and those currently in the training. All of these students were sent to five outreach points in the north for the whole month of August. To date, they have planted 11 churches in those areas. Their missional efforts also spilled over the border into Ethiopia.



Hinterland of Kenya

Driving back down south from the Ethiopian border, through the Chalbi Desert, was not without incident, but our able men sorted it out quickly. This part of our journey took us through parts of the country where the Rendille, Turkana, Samburu, Gabra, Borana, Gare and Burji tribes live.

We eventually turned eastward toward Garrisa, Garsen and onto the Indian Ocean coastline.

It was absolutely amazing to meet with Live School graduates and students along this road who are planting churches and transforming their communities around them.

Among the many incredible experiences, I had the immense privilege of meeting up with a veteran missionary from Tanzania whom we trained back in 2000 as part of Project Focus (reaching the 100 least reached people groups of southern Africa).

After his training at a Project Focus School in Tanzania, we sent him on a six-month short-term mission trip to an unreached tribe in Northern Kenya. He never moved back home, but instead brought his wife and children to minister with him among the tribe. He is an amazing example of a faithful servant of the Lord. We witnessed first-hand how even the people he works among who follow a different religion still love and respect him. I suppose only eternity will tell the full story of how men like him have impacted the Kingdom.



Missionary trained through Project Focus.

On the third leg of our trip, we had the privilege of graduating eight Live School students in a rural part of Kenya where persecution of Christians is still a reality today. Seven of the graduates are pastors of churches, and they told us how Live School changed their lives and invigorated their churches. Thank you, Lord!

After the graduation, we drove along a dangerous road where El Shabab terrorist activity is often reported. We thank the Lord for His protection and for the many who were standing with us in prayer and intercession. A few hours later we have arrived at the Indian Ocean coastline. Here we would start the fourth and last leg of our journey.

Visiting these brave people along the coast who are spreading the gospel in hostile areas has almost reduced me to tears. They need our prayers and encouragement every day.



Graduation in rural Kenya

I spent the last two days in Kenya with our East Africa regional team leader, Paul Achilles, and his team at his home in Nairobi. They are an amazing, mature group of women and men, sold out to the purposes of God.

(Unique in the photo below: these five guys come from different countries, namely, Eastern DRC Congo, Kenya, Ethiopia, Burundi and South Africa. Amazing to how the Lord has brought four of them together to roll-out Live School in the region.



After witnessing all of this, I can say: “The 100 least reached people groups of southern Africa – they are being reached!”

Thank you, Jesus, for you are certainly doing this.

Thank you to everyone who journeyed with and prayed for us for the last three weeks. It was wonderful to finally return home to my sweetie, Lydia.

Many blessings,
Willie

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"I hear the sound of an abundance of rain..."

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