

PART ONE: LOOKING BACK

(Part Two next week)

Thanks to tech problems (okay, and me) this update better begin with “Merry Christmas!!” and “Happy New Year!”. Sorry. Here goes:

DEATHS AND DROUGHT (Depressed yet?)

- Christmas and New Year were merry and happy with both my (Paul’s) Mom and Katie with us – Dad’s absence was palpable but as losses have taught Kenyans: “God is good all the time.”
- 2009 started with loss (Dad died in January) and ended that way with the death of The Sharing Way’s Africa Director, Sam Mutisya, and Dadaab’s Chief, Shukri Abdi Farah.
- Sam ran a great race, loving people and creation with humility and hope. We planted trees at his funeral. Fitting. Pray for his family and for Kenyan Ruth Manyao, TSW’s new Project director for Africa .
- Chief Shukri was younger than me and seemed to be just starting his race. In the 90s we were enemies (I’ll spare you details) but he made some positive changes and we worked together as friends on some community issues.

In October he borrowed and TSW fueled a water tanker and we provided water for 100s of thirsty people in outlying settlements. He was so happy and proud those days – that’s how I’m choosing to remember him as I also choose to remember that the God who helped him is still working with the people left in Dadaab.

- Speaking of last year’s drought... It’s over! (Well, these things are part of long-term weather patterns

so time will tell). But you should know that before the rains fell you (through The Sharing Way, us, and our local Somali partners in North Eastern Kenya) carefully distributed several tons of food (sometimes cooked) and 1000s of litres of water to some very needy and appreciative people in and around Garissa and Dadaab. After the rains fell, 100s of mosquito nets were provided to pregnant mothers and young children.

The real victories of our drought relief efforts, however, were the unity experienced by our diverse team and recipients, the opportunities to give and receive love, the increased exposure and capacity afforded to the community-based organizations, and the reminders that God is still Emmanuel. As Haiti is teaching us, disasters can make us more human.

BUDGETS AND BOOMS (Curious yet?)

- The words “budget” and “boom” haven’t cohabited many times this past year of financial collapse. “Boom” is a bit of a stretch for CBM’s finances and the Carlines’ Team Support but consider this: On November 30 both CBM and the Carlines were looking at 30% shortfalls. On December 31st we were both looking at balanced books. WOW! (Actually, CBM finished in the black not only thanks to sacrificial giving but also budget cuts in the 3rd and 4th quarters.)
- The Sharing Way finished the year with an \$800,000 deficit. We used over \$30,000 of TSW funds in North Eastern Province and recovered very little of it. That’s our fault not yours – we didn’t ask. For years TSW has graciously and faithfully funded ...

- 1) our Christian presence and witness efforts (including providing our local partners with a teacher and social worker)
- 2) Integral mission training for our Somali Ministry Team
- 3) capacity building of local development groups through training, mentoring and administrative assistance
- 4) partnership with groups as they address community needs and move towards more sustainability in education, health and agriculture
- 5) the maintenance and operations of Dadaab Community Services Centre as the groups on the ground there grow in capacity and their knowledge of Christ and his Kingdom ways.

- This year we want to carry our own weight and more if possible. In future updates we'd like to tell you more specifics of projects and people we are walking with and invite you to be more involved.
- TSW's portion of our Somali Ministry NEP Integrated Program budget for 2010 is \$26,000. I think we can surpass that! More importantly I believe the ministry goals that money represents can be achieved. So, more on all that later.

BURDENS AND BOOMS

Our friends and the churches who give to this ministry don't do it out of their excess (though some of you claim otherwise). No, you are truly burden sharing, allowing the spiritual and physical burdens of Somali brothers and sisters here to weigh heavier on you.

Paul told the Galatians that when they shared each other's burdens they were enacting/fulfilling the law of Christ – not just a command but a real law, like gravity – the law of sacrifice and reward. He spells it out: The one who sows to the Spirit (and not his selfish flesh), from the Spirit will reap eternal life. So let us not become weary in well-doing, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

THANK YOU FOR NOT GIVING UP ON THE LONG-TERM MINISTRY HERE.

THANKS FOR NOT GIVING UP ON US OR OUR SOMALI FRIENDS

THANKS FOR ADDING US TO YOUR OWN BURDENS.

MAY YOU ENJOY MORE AND MORE OF GOD'S ETERNAL KIND OF LIFE AND GOOD HARVESTS OF EVERY KIND – BOOMS.

Thanks be to God who leads us in triumphal procession.

Paul and Kelly

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