

WTM Q&A

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WORLD TRANSFORMATIONAL MINISTRIES

The Northington Newsletter

A good friend recently sent us a care package (keep them coming by the way!) and included a letter that asked a few questions regarding our life here in Cameroon. I thought I would respond to them by including them in this month’s newsletter for those of you who may also be interested in hearing more about daily life in the African “bush”. Without further ado...

What does Chloe, our 17-month old, do all day? Lately it would appear that she spends all her time talking to the animals that live at or near our home as she has decided to start communicating with animal sounds. She appears to now know the difference when we ask her what the dog, sheep, etc. sound like. Not only will our child be fluent in French, she will also excel linguistically in goat and sheep dialects! Currently Chloe has a new playmate/nanny that is visiting from a neighboring region, so much of her day is spent in her care visiting neighbors, playing outside, and, more importantly, learning how to use the toilet(=

Are you concerned about her health or what she might get into? This question is dangerous territory as I’m sure the grandparents will be reading the response, but the answer is yes. But isn’t every new parent worried about such things? There’s no doubt there are a lot of illnesses here that pose a threat and are never even pondered in the States, like malaria, measles, typhoid and numerous others, but, like anywhere else, proper precautions and good hygiene keep most things at bay. I think some of the new “superbugs” in the developed world worry me more than the ones here that are typically preventable or treatable.

Are you bothered by snakes, bugs and spiders? I wish the answer was “no”, but unfortunately these critters have proven to be a nuisance for us. Cameroon is home to an incredible variety of venomous snakes, so we stick with the local doctors philosophy about snakes: “There is one good kind of snake, a dead one!”

We have encountered cobras and adders from time to time, and our colleagues have battled a mamba or two, but generally if you leave them alone they leave you alone, too. Living in Florida was good preparation for venomous snake encounters, as we also have 4 different varieties back home that we’ve encountered on numerous occasions in the Florida “bush” and even in our yards. As for spiders, well, we had our first tarantula encounter a few months back. It wasn’t full grown, which may explain why it was in the house! But by not full grown, I mean it was still the biggest spider I had ever seen in the wild and certainly in our house. We’ve also had a problem with black and brown widows this term that linger in dark corners, but this is also a Florida flashback for us. I am happy to say, however, that scorpions have not found their way into our home this year as they have in the past. How’s that for optimism?

What kinds of things do you eat? This is always a popular question. We are certainly not starving as Tiffany has become an expert at “doing more with less”, which is also the title of one of the cookbooks she brought along. In addition to the traditional Cameroonian dishes of rice & beans and corn “foufou” (a ball of corn flour eaten with the right hand and mixed with various vegetable sauces), we also have managed to develop a rather extensive menu of items that can be made from local ingredients. The abundance of beef from the Fulbe herdsmen in our area makes a lot of familiar dishes possible, like tacos, beef stroganoff, beef potpie, and spaghetti meat sauce. In terms of vegetables, we can almost always get carrots, onions, potatoes, cabbage and tomatoes (technically a fruit I think). And as for fruits, although seasonal in nature, we enjoy fresh mango, pineapple, bananas, papaya, lemons, and, from time to time, an imported apple!

The Top Three...

Prayer Requests—Keep praying for...

A couple/family to take our place for 1-2 yrs during our next return State-side to continue ministry work

Unity and multiplication of the Fulbe church and success in our microfinance endeavors

Wisdom as we prepare to re-open our “Resource Center” in town to share technology and health

Prayers Answered—Thank the Lord for...

Continued “assimilation” into Cameroonian culture & acceptance of those things we cannot change

Opening of the Fulbe store and restaurant and near completion of the Fulbe youth hostel

Continued support from our partners despite the difficult and uncertain economic times

Ministry Needs:

- Additional sponsors for water projects, including hand dug & drilled wells, gravity flow systems and expansion of existing systems
- “Pick-a-Project” sponsors for items we will have in our Resource Center, like biosand filters, fuel-efficient cook stoves and Kenya Top Bar beehives.

SPECIAL THANKS...to those of you who have continued to remain monthly and project supporters. Everything we do here is a reflection of your generosity and dedication to this ministry amongst Unreached peoples.

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Do you have furniture? The skill level of the local carpenters is one of the professions that most surprised here. Generally speaking, you can have any general type of furniture made from scratch here, including beds, tables, chairs, armoires, cabinets, etc. You can't beat the price, and it's not uncommon to have something made out of mahogany, which is a common wood used for such projects in Cameroon. Although everything might not be perfectly square or flat, it's always beautiful because we know it's hand-made and supporting the local economy.

Is there a market nearby where you can shop for what you need? I have to pause with this question because it's important to realize that life in Africa teaches you a great deal about what you DON'T need. It's amazing what you learn to do without when coming from a culture where 70% of the GDP is accounted for by consumer spending (a statistic we can't seem to escape from hearing even in the news here). With that being said, I have come to believe that, if you look hard enough and know the right people, you can basically find anything you need in Cameroon, although it may require a 14 hour trip to the capitol. In Banyo, things are pretty basic, although it's easy to find a lot of cheap goods from China and Nigeria that are often

spin-offs of a major brand, like my "Nice Ckey" sandals. Simple household goods and electronics are available, even if power isn't! The food market is more like a living, breathing organism that is always changing and full of sights, sounds and odors (many of them not too pleasant). We only live about 1 kilometer, or a 300 cfa (i.e. \$0.75) motorcycle taxi ride to the central market. Certain days are considered "market days" where there is a more abundant selection of goods compared the rest of the week.

What is in the village? It would be a stretch to call Banyo a village after having spent a lot of time in what I would describe as a village setting, but I think many Americans would be comfortable using that term for Banyo. There are actually several thousand people who live in Banyo "proper". We live in what may be more like the "suburbs", just outside of town near the Baptist hospital that has attracted a number of English-speaking workers from the neighboring province. Most homes are of mud block construction with metal "zinc" roofs, as they call them, or grassed thatched roofs.

Sometimes there's a rough cement plaster on the outside and maybe even a rough paint job to add a splash of color. There are no paved roads for about 6 hours in either direction. The water supply consists of the gravity flow system built by the engineer before Chad and a local water utility that pulls water from a river outside of town and transfers it to paying clients. There are a couple of generators in town that provide intermittent and unpredictable power to those who are connected. Our small solar array had proven to be much more reliable. There are some large mosques in town, but our neighborhood has a small Baptist church attended by many of the hospital workers and some of the folks in our quarter. There is a small lycée, or high school, up the road, and a nursery school for the neighborhood children across the road.

What do the children do for fun?

Actually, many of the children have a lot of responsibility at an early age taking care of the farm, siblings or household chores like getting water. But they love to play football (i.e. soccer), push around old tires with sticks and build small toys from whatever is available, like old sardine cans.

A BREAK FROM THE "BUSH"

After 6 months of being in the "Banyo Bush", the family decided it was time for a bit of a retreat to re-energize and re-focus. We headed for the coast early this month to the town of Limbe, founded by the English missionary Alfred Saker in 1858. It is about as close to Florida as we can get here, except the beaches are black from the volcanic rock and not quite as busy as the Florida beaches. One of the



highlights of the trip was a visit to a primate rescue where gorillas, chimpanzees, drills, baboons and other primates have been provided a home after being saved from a life of abuse or animal trade and poaching. We were especially impressed with our friend on the left who is actually supporting himself by only the top of the pole although it appears he is sitting on some sort of support. The strength and beauty of these animals are amazing!

Partners in Missions with Chad & Tiffany & Chloe!



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One-time contributions or monthly "subscriptions" for various gift amounts can be done securely through PayPal on our web page. A receipt is generated electronically for your tax-deductible gift when done in this matter. Visit our home page at www.transformationalministries.com and click on the "Donate" tab at the top.

If you would like to support a specific project or missionary need, please peruse our "Pick a Project" page with descriptions of specific projects, their geographic location, people group and required funding amount.

If you have any problems with submitting your gift online or prefer not to do it this way, gifts can be sent to the following address: **P.O. 9691 Tampa, Florida 33674**

Thank you for partnering with us!

MICRO WHAT?

Microfinance, microloans, microenterprise development—they are all terms used to describe a fairly recent trend in development where employment creation and income generation is accomplished through small-scale enterprises that are typically supported by initial capital and training from outside sources. In some

missions circles, such as ours, we are attempting to integrate this concept with a holistic approach to sharing the Gospel in both word and deed.

The Bible has a great deal to say about economic justice, stewardship, work, human dignity, wholeness and abundance in life and many other principles that often revolve our economic realities. From the beginning, God created us in His image, and His example of work in the Creation story should also be reflected in our lives as a gift from Him as we reflect His image in our daily lives.

We have been watching the “Truth Project” series with our colleagues the last few months, and an interesting point was made that caught my attention. In our culture, we have a tendency to follow the command to



observe the Sabbath, a day of rest, because of our need to “re-energize” after exhausting ourselves during the previous six days. Dr. Tackett points out, however, that work, as it was originally created, was such a wonderful activity and expression of the creativity that



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God has given us that we would continue to work without end if we were not commanded to stop occasionally. Of course we now have terms like “workaholic” to describe this phenomenon, but it rarely is

driven by a love of the gift of work. On the contrary, it often reflects a love of money and the material goods it can provide. This was not the original intent of work when God created His first “employee” in man as steward of the world He had created.

The economic context in which we work in here in Cameroon is much different that in the States. Daily needs are a struggle, and the economy is not driven by consumerism but instead by necessity and survival. Microenterprise in this environment has the potential to both empower the poor and provide the dig-

**“Remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth...”
- Deuteronomy 8:19**



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nity we are all entitled to as beings created in God’s image.

Much of our recent efforts have focused on implementing these principles with our local believers as we seek tangible ways to promote their economic well-being in addition to their spiritual well-being. The product of that effort is the recently opened store and

restaurant pictured above. Thanks to the work of our colleagues and contributions from others, these men and their families now have an economic foundation alongside the spiritual foundation that has already been laid. Of course many obstacles lie ahead, like learning basic business principles such as accounting, saving, inventory, etc., but things are off to a great start!

We hope to continue this model in town where we are working on the development

of a small “resource center” that will provide access to appropriate technologies and training that will stimulate job opportunities for community members while opening up doors to building relationships and sharing our lives and faith with those in our community. Please pray for wisdom in implementing this idea and boldness as we seek ways to share the Good News in real, tangible ways in a place where needs seem endless and means are limited.

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*Reaching the Unreached one need
at a time...*

Our Mission

Our mission is to provide for the material, spiritual, and social needs of those who need it most through sustainable, transformational development. The Gospel is the source of lasting transformation and offers a plan for a holistic and integrated approach to community development and world change.



We're on the web!

<http://www.transformationalministries.com>

CROSS-CULTURAL CORNER—Raising a Child in Africa

Some of the answers I gave earlier in the newsletter provide a little insight into raising a child in Cameroon, but I thought I'd expand upon that a bit to point out some of the more interesting or peculiar aspects of parenthood here.

One of the things that astonishes our Cameroonian friends that never really occurred to us was the fact that we expect our children to sleep in their own rooms and beds at a very early age whereas they allow their children to sleep in the same bed for many years. I never really thought about why this is until questions about it. Perhaps it is our desire for privacy, even in our own families, or our sense of independence that we tend to instill at a very early age. Tiffany and I now find ourselves doing a little of both as Chloe often finds her way into our bed in the middle of the night despite having her own room and baby bed.

One of the very positive aspects of raising a child here is the lack of fear for their safety when it comes to the possibility of child abduction, etc. Those ideas are essentially unheard of here and come as an incredible shock when such a thing does happen on rare

occasions. We remember the sense of bewilderment expressed by our community when they learned of the kidnapping of a child in 2008 in one of the more developed and larger cities in Cameroon. Such a thing doesn't happen here in Banyo, where community members look after each other's children.

Of course exposure to various languages can be nothing but a "plus" for her development. It is not uncommon here for people to be fluent in 3 or more languages, and often these are people who may not even know how to read or write. The importance of language and communication take on new meaning in an environment where it can be difficult to speak with someone because



you don't share a common language. We hope that Chloe's encounter with these different sounds and dialects will prove to be a valuable tool in her future in a global community.

Perhaps the thing that we treasure the most about this lifestyle is the way in which we are able to spend so much time together as a family. In a way, there is no division between our "work life" and "personal life". Everything here is blended together, which creates a unique family environment. Living in African community is a healthy way to learn about family and Christian values, like loving your neighbor and being part of a larger community. It will be exciting and interesting to see how these early years shape her into a young woman one day.

