

# SPECIAL EDITION! Where we've been and where we could go...



Please check out our website at:  
<http://www.transformationalministries.com>



As our second term in Cameroon comes to end after another two years overseas, that time has arrived to start reflecting upon past events and looking forward to the possibilities of the future. We wanted to dedicate this newsletter to explaining our ministry activities up to this point, our ministry model, and the potential opportunities that exist to continue, expand and share this ministry of reaching the Unreached in Africa. This newsletter is as much for us as it is for you as we explore how God has been working in our own lives through this past seven years since we began the journey to the mission field in 2005.

As you read through this special edition, I would ask that you pray that we would have clear direction forward and choose the right path, and that you would consider your own involvement in the work that is being done here. We are not the first to tread this path, and we know we won't be the last. The things that God has accomplished here are the result of an immense network of workers, supporters, partners, prayer and faith that is difficult to fathom when taken as a whole. We all have a part to play in the advancement of God's Kingdom in this world. Each one of us has something He has put in our hearts that is unique in it's role of accomplishing that task. For us, it is the use of technology and health to provide for the spectrum of human needs as a reflection of His glory and love. Maybe in reading through the ways it has played out in our lives in this setting you will catch a glimpse of what is in your own heart. Perhaps, even, you will see your part as an extension of what has already begun here.

I want to begin with a brief organizational history and explanation of our current ministry model to provide some clarification, as this is often an area that is sometimes a bit unclear for some our partners and those encountering our ministry and organization for the first time. We arrived in Cameroon in 2007 as missionaries with the Baptist General Conference (now Converge Worldwide) as "short-termers", which at the time meant our commitment to be on the field was less than 3 years for that term. We had been recruited by an engineer who had served over a decade in Cameroon and had expressed the need for an engineer and nurse in Banyo. While seeking the necessary support with the BGC, we also formed the non-profit World Transformational Ministries as we considered the possibility that perhaps we would have to pursue another path to Africa as we struggled to fulfill all the financial pre-requisites to reach the field and saw other ways to go

about reaching our destination. By the end of 2007, however, we were cleared to leave and set out for Cameroon.

Over the course of our time overseas, it became clear to us that the administrative model we were working under would not suit our family and our desire to have a long-term commitment to ministry work abroad. Our ideas about budget, term length, Christian business and "tent making" strategies didn't seem to fit with any of the organizations we had come into contact with during our first term, and it appeared that the best path forward was creation of something new and tailored to our families needs and the desire God had put on our hearts. Consequently, we began more formal development of WTM and pursued federally-recognized 501 (c)(3) status and long-term partnerships.

Our return to Cameroon in 2010 as a fledgling organization did not bring much change in regards to ministry activities, but it did require more "foundation building" in the sense we lacked the infrastructure and resources to support an organization. This meant in part construction of a home and procurement of transportation, which was accomplished by the beginning of 2011. Since we already had history of ministry with the existing organizations and national partners in the area, we picked up much where we had left off, but with a more focused effort in our local community rather than other regions of Cameroon. Our first-term had been a whirlwind tour from west to east Cameroon involving installation of water wells, "bush" health clinics and exploration of the various appropriate technologies we had encountered during our preparations for the field. Our return to Cameroon took on a more "settled" feel and also involved the addition of our first child, which created a much different ministry "environment".

You may recall if you have been following us that an unexpected turn of events took us down a road we had not anticipated. The death of a colleague with our partner organization, World Team, created a void in the Fulbe ministry and church planting/discipling efforts in our community. Despite our lack of training in this area and language barriers, we became the most

## The Top Three...

### Prayer Requests—Keep praying for...

Clarity, direction and discernment regarding all the things presented in this special edition newsletter

A smooth transition back into life in America, procurement of work to support our family and a good living situation

Perseverance in running the race God has put us in here

### Prayers Answered—Thank the Lord for...

The opportunity He gave us to come back to Cameroon again from 2010 to 2012 and serve again

Growing and maturing us through the various ministry challenges we have faced and endured this term

All of our friends, family and partners that continue to be our greatest encouragement

### Ministry Needs:

You'll get the idea as you read through this not-so-average newsletter. Tell us how you want to help, and I'm sure we can find the need ...

**SPECIAL THANKS...**to Mrs. Elizabeth Huston, our volunteer administrative support State-side with 3 Strand Cord ([www.3strandcord.org](http://www.3strandcord.org)) who has been absolutely vital to the functioning of this organization and continuation of this ministry. Please check out their web site to learn more about their work.

likely candidates to fill in while the full-time missionaries in this ministry were on home assignment. Although it seemed like a significant stretch from what we had originally anticipated our ministry to be, we soon realized that it was the right time for us to be involved in the Fulbe ministry for several reasons. The first reason was that there were numerous new projects underway that were a good fit for our background and skill set, such as completion of the Fulbe youth hostel construction, start up of a small microfinance project and assistance with the installation of a FM radio tower to support a Fulbe Christian radio station. All of this while attempting to continue our efforts in other areas, like water, health and technology.

Our new role as surrogate World Team church planters also brought with it a unique set of people challenges and church struggles that made the ministry particularly difficult for an engineer and a nurse with no background in these particular areas as well as emotionally and spiritually draining. Yet at the same time it offered the opportunity to bring some change into the ministry that we hope and pray did more good than harm. With the return of our colleagues early this year, we began the transition out of that role and into things we were more familiar with, such as water work and public health

education in partnership with other organizations and the national church.

With only a little time remaining, we tried to rekindle an earlier vision of a "Learning and Resource Center" where we could bring technology and health training to the community. Unfortunately we struggled to find interested students and relocated twice in an effort to find the right setting for the idea. The arrival of our mud rotary drill rig opened up new possibilities for water work, but limited resources stopped our drilling activities after the installation of two boreholes. Tiffany began her transition from full-time mom to part-time as she became more involved in community vaccination campaigns, volunteer hospital work and free health clinics while daddy daycare became a more common occurrence.

Now with our departure on the horizon and a slow phasing out of our ministry roles here, we find ourselves at a crossroads regarding the future of our ministry in Cameroon and the shape our lives will take upon our return to the U.S. One of the major differences in how we do things and how most other mis-

sionaries go about "home assignment" or "furlough" is that we work in our professions while State-side to support ourselves rather than living on partner support. The donations and gifts we receive while State-side are pooled in a ministry account for our return overseas. This accomplishes two important things. First, it allows us to operate on a much lower budget than is typical of modern-day missions. Secondly, it allows us to work in professions that we consider God-glorifying and a ministry in themselves. In our case, our activities in the U.S. compliment our activities overseas and open up unique opportunities to share about our faith while we live it out in two very different settings.

Of course this also complicates our lives in some ways as we struggle to transition back and forth, find work and lodging upon our return and balance the demands of a "9 to 5" job with continuation of our ministry activities (support raising, presentations, etc.) and raising a family. However, we have found after two "rounds" that this is what works best for us, and we believe it will become easier (transition-wise, at least).

That covers the "where we've been" portion, so now let's move on to the "where we could go" part of the newsletter...

## Before we go any further...

*As a reminder, I just want to throw our mission statement out there as this issue reflects upon ways to reach the Unreached...*

**Our mission is to provide for the material, spiritual, and social needs of those who need it most through sustainable, transformational development.**

## Partners in Missions with Chad & Tiffany & Chloe!



We are in need of both monthly supporters as well as project-related gifts.

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](http://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!

This next section is not to be a definitive summary of what we could or should do in Cameroon, but it will give a broad overview of the various ministry activities we have been involved in and those which we could potentially be a part of moving forward. Through continued prayer on our part and yours, partner feedback and discernment from above, we hope to sort through all the possibilities.

The first question that needs to be answered and that is often asked is, "Why do you do it?". I don't have a lot of long-winded theological or philosophical responses to this question, but I can give you a few simple answers that I think sum up why we found ourselves in the African bush, and, why I believe we all need to be asking, "What should I be doing?".

I would have to say that the first most compelling reason for our presence in Africa is burden; a burden God has placed on our hearts as we consider His word and the state of the world and realize we cannot claim to be followers of Christ without feeling burdened to do something about the fallen state of the world. We have been given a part in picking up this fallen world, and,



for us, that came in the form of using our God-given skills and passion in a place where we believe they can have the most impact—Africa. It is a place where we see the spiritual, physical and social needs of mankind to be the greatest. People are dying, physically and spiritually, and they don't have to be.

Second, there is a sense of accountability for this life we have been given. Not only is this life a gift not to be squandered, but our words and actions now will impact the eternal life that is to come (Rev 20:11-15). We are accountable to God and to one another for our time here as members of the body of Christ (Rom 12:4-8).

Thirdly, we were commanded to go. It was not presented as an option or request, but as a command (Matthew 28:18-20). A command infers either obedience or disobedience, and our desire is to be obedient to our Creator and Savior.

And finally, speaking of commands, we are told that the two greatest commands are to love our God and to love our neighbor (Matthew 22:37-40). I am certain the rest of our lives will be spent just trying to get these two right. So, in a word, we do what we do out of love...

## Fulbe Ministry in Partnership with World Team

There is no doubt that the thrust of our ministry efforts in Cameroon have been focused on the Fulani, or Fulbe, people group, and for good reason. With nearly 20 million members of this people group spread across West Africa and the challenge it would be to count even a thousand believers amongst these millions, there is an obvious inclination to put this group in the category of Unreached by our definition. Add to that the immense physical needs felt by this particular people that can be contributed to a number of factors, and you have overwhelming need in both the spiritual and physical realms.

internally displaced persons as conflict has ravaged their countries. You find much of this in eastern Cameroon as there has been a steady influx of Fulbe from neighboring CAR. Another major factor contributing to the immense needs felt by the Fulbe is a shift from a nomadic lifestyle to a more settled, agrarian approach to life as it has become more and more difficult to pursue their traditional ways.

Our partnership with our World Team colleagues here in Banyo has opened numerous doors to ministry opportunities, many of which will be explained in more detail. We continue to see this as the focus of our energy, resources and efforts.

Many Fulbe have become refugees and

**"Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue, but with actions and in truth." 1 John 3:18**



Of course this is where Chad's "ministry heartbeat" lies, but it takes a tremendous amount of resources to have a large water ministry program. Much energy and money (thanks to many partners) was spent in 2011 procuring a portable mud rotary drill rig (pictured to the left) which allowed us to install two wells in our local community. Our desire is to have a strategic effort to install wells in locations that will potentially yield the most "spiritual fruit" while addressing some very real needs for potable water. The amount of water-related illness is immense, sad and

preventable. With clean drinking water, we can also bring spiritual water through partnership with our colleagues and national co-workers. This is one of the greatest opportunities we have to build bridges to Unreached villages and communities.

The average cost to drill a well to 100' and installed with all the necessary materials and pump is approximately \$5,000-\$5,500 depending on the location of the site and transport needs of the men and equipment. These projects are a great opportunity for churches and large groups to come up with creative fund raising ideas.

## “Bush” Clinics and Public Health Education



There is no doubt that one of the best ways to enter new communities and compounds is through health clinics and vaccination campaigns. Tiffany has had the opportunity to partner with both the local hospital and well as government-sponsored programs to visit homes, compounds and villages in our immediate vicinity. The care provided during these visits vary from polio and measles vaccinations to screening for high blood pressure to health education in the areas of hygiene, sanitation and nutrition. Each visit provides an opportunity to build relationships for the sharing of our lives, faith and hope that both the physical and spiritual state of our friends can be improved.

As Tiffany stated in her last newsletter, we have learned that we often cannot expect the people to come to us, and it is only by going to the people that we will reach them as they go about their daily routines of farming, preparing food, carrying water, etc. The value of education is easy to take for granted as well until you find yourself in an environment where a good education is difficult to obtain and the most basic concepts have not yet been learned for many adults let alone the many children they are often rais-

ing. There are cultural barriers and obstacles that must also be overcome in the struggle to educate about the most fundamental issues of public health. The clinging to belief in ineffective traditional medicines, sorcery and spirits also hinders progress towards improved health. The task of educating the uneducated can seem daunting and certainly frustrating at times, but it is also where the most impact can be made and the most difference in the quality of life can be observed.

Tiffany hopes to continue this method of outreach in its various forms through continued partnerships with organizations and hospitals here as well as through the support of partners State-side who share her desire to bring physical and spiritual healing to the masses. You can assist her in this mission by helping to fund the purchase of various medicines, vaccinations and test kits (e.g. HIV and blood sugar) that are necessary for these visits and not always provided through our national partners.

## Learning and Resource Centers

Ever since our two-week stay at the Educational Concerns for Hunger Organization (ECHO) in Ft. Lauderdale back in 2007, the desire to consolidate various appropriate technologies and health trainings into a single location for instruction and demonstration has been at the forefront of our ideas on improving the quality of people’s lives in practical, hands-on and appropriate ways. From that idea was born the Resource Center, a boutique-size learning center where teachings were accompanied by the availability of the very things we were teaching on.

After three attempts to launch the Center, however, we have found our existing model is not working as we would like. It

appears that the Center must get much larger, more formalized/structured and provide some sort of certification, or we must simplify and go out into the community and visit families one by one. Both ideas seem very challenging and will require a larger investment of our time, energy and resources if we were to pursue either approach. We also firmly believe this is one of the ways we can have the biggest impact in our community at large. The formation of our NGO, the Association for Sustainable Development and Transformation (ASDAT), gives us a platform to work from and a legitimate identity that would allow us to start a formal training center.



Chad had envisioned the formation of a Fulbe co-op during our return that would help support the local Fulbe church and its members through the production of honey, chickens/eggs, various vegetable crops, fruit trees and a nursery. Unfortunately the idea didn’t take very well with the current families nor have many of the projects that would support the co-op been extremely fruitful (pun intended). However, a slow steady push towards finding ways to improve output in various areas and gradual expansion of our hives, trees and animal husbandry techniques has

better positioned us for another go at the cooperative idea in the future. We hope the trees and beehives will be maintained in our absence so that we can take another shot upon our return. We also pray there will be a few interested individuals that will take the reigns and reach the full potential of this idea. It may be that we look beyond the Fulbe church into other members of our local community to embrace the idea and provide the sweat equity to maintain this project at a higher level. Until then, we will continue to try and lead by example by introducing appropriate technologies and methods one tree or beehive at a time until maybe one day others catch on.

# Fulbe Youth Hostel



The extent of our involvement at the new Fulbe Youth Hostel has been assistance with construction management in 2011 and the installation of a drilled well earlier this year that is still awaiting a pump sponsor (\$850 for a manual pump). The idea behind the youth hostel is that Fulbe children in the bush who are normally unable to attend school because of the distance can live here while being brought up in an environment where a Christian worldview is lived out daily in hope that they will find more than just a good education while staying in the hostel.

The youth hostel is still in its early stages, and what we hope will be permanent hostel parents have just arrived. As this Fulbe couple learns how to manage the hostel and grow the attendance, there are numerous opportunities to partner with the hostel from education in life skills for the children to seeking ways to make the project more self-supportive to completion of the well we installed. It is difficult to say what the future will bring with the hostel, but the potential for this outreach project is enormous.

## Training/Equipping of National Co-Workers

As our national co-workers are equipped spiritually to go out into communities and villages, it is becoming more and more apparent that they must also be equipped with practical skills and resources that will help to not only support their own families in these environments but also bring knowledge and assistance to the communities in which they are trying to reach. To bring the Gospel message in word only and neglect the "deed" aspect the Good News can not just be a hindrance to building bridges to Unreached communities; it can be the difference between rejection or acceptance of the message.

As such, we have continued to seek

ways in which to partner with nationals who are being equipped as evangelists and missionaries in their own country and desire training in technology and health. We have provided limited and informal training to some members of International Teams this past year, and we continue to provide occasional trainings to our Fulbe co-workers. The picture to the right was taken during the annual Fulbe conference, which is one example of a good platform for providing training to co-workers that are ministering across a broad geographic region. We also would like to integrate our health & technology training with discipleship training that is already a part of the program here through our partners.



After an 8-year long struggle to obtain the necessary paperwork for this project, our colleague with Converge Worldwide finally received the necessary papers to begin this important ministry tool. Now the Gospel can enter people's homes all over the region without someone physically stepping foot into their compounds.

WTM has only played a small role in assisting with launching the station through some engineering support with the antenna anchor installation. The opportunity exists, however, for extensive community development

training through this medium as part of the programming that has already been incorporated into the broadcasting. As the Fulbe staff and their advisors continue to develop and refine the programming, perhaps there will be a place for WTM training on the air waves. The work is in its infancy, so we'll see what direction things take over the next couple of years. So far, the station has remained "indigenous" in its guests and languages, and perhaps that is the best model for them to follow. Pray for wisdom for the staff as they seek to speak to the minds and hearts of many people who would remain unreached otherwise in this underdeveloped region.

# Wells & Wellness Tour



Essentially the tour would consist of Tiffany taking her health teachings and equipment while Chad took his drill rig and appropriate technologies into the community to do some “door-to-door” (or at least compound to compound) training to improve the quality of lives, build meaningful relationships and hopefully find an opportunity to communicate just why we even bother doing such things. The work could be done in partnership with our national and international colleagues who could assist with interpreting and teaching. Ideally we would like to leave a “sample” of each technology and training we do behind for the community (e.g. a biosand filter, mosquito net, etc.). In the case of well installation, due to the tremendous resources that would be required to install a well in each neighborhood, we would need to be “strategic” in selecting a few locations in the community for a limited number of wells.

An idea that has been on Chad’s heart for sometime is a tour of the community in what has been dubbed “The Well & Wellness Tour”. The tour would be an intensive community outreach project to open doors and build new bridges to areas in our local community that would otherwise not come into contact with us, and, more importantly, the Gospel message.

This tour would be best coordinated through our “Pick-a-Project Campaign”, which is something we already created to allow Partners to support tangible needs in the areas of technology and health. With approximately 30 “neighborhoods” in Banyo, we would set a goal of at least 30 of each item to carry out the entire tour. Trainings would include nutrition, hygiene, malaria prevention, HIV/AIDS prevention, blood pressure screening, bee-keeping, fuel-efficient cook stoves, biosand filters and water treatment, to name a few of the possibilities. Check out our “Pick-a-Project” page on the web site to get an overview of some of the ideas and items that need supporters to make this idea a reality.

## Technology & Health Training Center

To build or not to build—that is the question. As mentioned under our description of Learning and Resource Centers, we have learned the hard way that attracting serious students from the community is no easy task. Likewise, it has been difficult to find initiative and interest from many of our national colleagues. Knowledge is a precious commodity in Africa, but even when it is freely offered, we have found that there are still not many takers.

Consequently, we find ourselves asking whether we “go big” and open a formal training center through our NGO where students would receive a sort of certification in areas of study to include appro-

appropriate technology, community health, water supply/treatment or more focused studies through hands-on programs in skills such as well installation, biogas system construction etc.

The center pictured to the right was the building that we originally started in but now serves as the radio house (its original intent—we were temporary tenants). Something similar to this would be required and a much greater commitment of WTM and its partners time, energy and resources. We would have to divide classes and curriculum into different levels based on education level, experience, etc. Simply put, it would be a major undertaking, but perhaps one worth taking.



## Mobilization

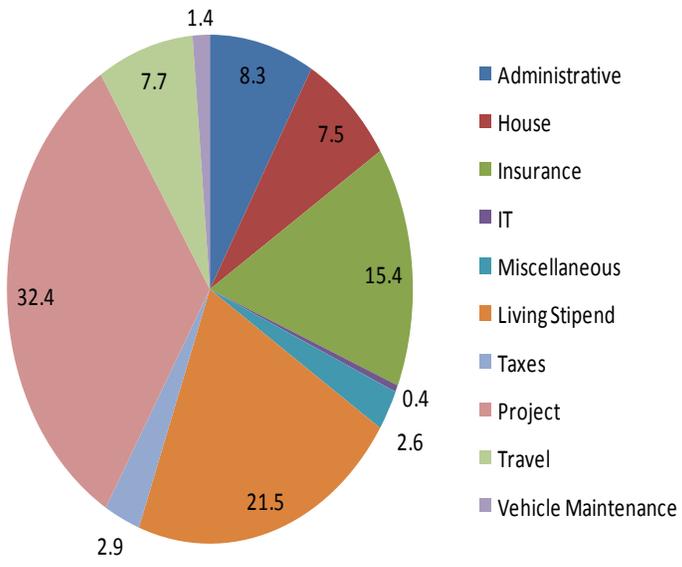


We just spent the last 4 pages outlining all the opportunities that exist just in the confines of our little community and “felt needs” ministry. We could devote ourselves solely to just one of these activities and still not have enough time, energy or resources to do it at the level we would like. Maybe you see where I’m going with this—we need you! Not just in a “send your financial gifts” sense, but in a send yourself sense. John Piper put it well when he said your either sending, going or disobeying. Although sending is important, some of us are

meant to be going. The fact of the matter is that WTM has all the administrative and functional framework to expand and grow its members and ministry arm beginning right here in Banyo. We also need to consider the possibility that our time and experience in Banyo has been preparing us for something else—mobilization. We feel we are now in a position to help equip, train and install new workers in Cameroon. If something in this newsletter struck at the core of your being, maybe it was the Supreme Being, our Creator and God, who is calling you to missions. As our friend Uncle Sam on the right famously says, “WE WANT YOU!”



# 2011 Expenses and Donations



To ensure accountability and transparency to our partners, we wanted to provide a breakdown of our 2011 expenses, donations and budget. Prior to our departure, we had anticipated that our total on-field budget would be \$29,280 for the year. By God’s grace and your generosity, we raised \$30,092.67 in 2011 and incurred \$26,812.29 in expenses. The balance of our ministry account was used in getting our drill rig out of customs in Doula earlier this year.

The chart to the left gives a breakdown of where these ministry monies were spent by percentage. Approximately one-third of our expenses are in the realm of ministry projects. Health/medical evacuation insurance and our living allowance make up approximately another third of our expenses. Our house expenditures were higher than they are expected to be in the future due to construction now being complete. We’ve managed to keep our administrative costs down thanks to volunteer support in the U.S., management of most of our admin duties online and the small size of our organization. The remaining costs of travel/vehicle maintenance, taxes and miscellaneous costs complete the 2011 expenses. Essentially we have lived month-to-month, but always within the means God has provided. As we transition back, we ask that our Partners continue to give so that these resources can be “pooled” for the future while we work to support ourselves State-side to allow us to continue to keep our operating costs to a minimum.

## Other ways you can get involved...

Perhaps you want to be a WTM partner, or already are, and are looking for some unique ways to get involved besides being a monthly and/or prayer partner (although we can always use more of you for both), then here are a few ideas:

- Ministry Motorcycle:** Although we have a vehicle now, it is not practical for short visits and trips around Banyo. The cost is estimated at \$900.
- Solar panels and batteries:** We’d like to continue expanding our existing system to accommodate more of our electrical needs via solar. Even if we don’t expand, we will still need from 2-4 batteries in the future. Flexible panels can be purchased for about \$300 each, and batteries are about \$120 each.
- Airline tickets or miles:** This is a major expense for us that could be lessened or eliminated via the donation of air miles or purchase of tickets outright. With the addition of our new family member, this cost went up 50%.
- Care packages:** These have been an incredible blessing this term as many of you have responded to this request already by sending some comforts from home.
- Internet equipment:** Communication is one of our greatest challenges here. Although internet service has grown leaps and bounds with the arrival of USB internet keys, it’s still about dial-up speed and intermittent. We would love to have a satellite system installed at our home so we could Skype, update our web page with more info and more frequently, send/receive e-mails more often and easily, etc. We still need to look into this option to understand the costs and equipment involved.
- Spread the news!** Share our story and ministry with others by word-of-mouth or telling them about our book, *Reflections from Africa*.

## COMMUNICATIONS



Speaking of communications, this is an area that we would like to improve in as well as see more of from all of you. I often tell people we wish all of our friends and family members put together regular newsletters like us to help us feel connected to life outside of Africa. But alas, we know that’s not something most of you want to be doing. However, a short e-mail on a regular basis (or a really long one from time-to-time) is more appreciated than you know. And if you’re feeling especially creative and maybe a little old-fashioned, you can actually send a hand-written (or typed if you prefer) letter via the U.S. postal service. Sure it takes weeks to months to arrive, but you should see how excited we get when we receive a letter in the mail. You see, one of

the advantages of living in Africa is you tend not to get much junk mail, so going to the post office is always full of joyful anticipation, but can be a terrible disappointment if nothing is waiting for you. We would also love to receive more pictures, sermons on DVD or other electronic media, books, etc.

We would also like to hear from you regarding ways we could better communicate our experience and ministry to you. Sometimes we feel “out-of-touch” with folks and churches that are partnered with us. We are always open to new ideas that will help connect all of us, including our national co-workers who are just venturing into the world of the internet, e-mail, Facebook, etc. Maybe you could have an e-mail “pen pal” via one of our co-workers, for example. Be creative...

## TRANSFORMATIONAL MINISTRIES

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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>

## Thoughts on Ministry from our World Team Colleague—The Messy Middle

Traveling thousand's of KM's on the ground, hearing stories, seeing faces and places, can be a numbing experience in different ways. For example, the bottom line, there are a lot of people out there who still need to be reached with the Good News of Jesus Christ in Cameroon. Yet there are a lot of different ministry philosophies and/or strategies out there to either encourage or discourage you. Like, ok, **how** are these people going to be reached? **With who**, ex-pat missionaries or national workers? **When will we even know** when our work as missionaries is "finished"? According to who? Such was some of the discussion and questions asked last Friday at a meeting with our Fulbe co-workers, including a couple of visiting national missionaries from Nigeria. Here is a summary of Bob's thoughts/reflections:

Among people planning and/or strategizing "ministry-wise" or "missiologically", I've heard talk that this or that people group is "reached" because of the perceived Christian influence around them, supposedly proved by the fact there are churches built or small groups of believers among them. Yet, I'm wondering, doesn't it matter that there really isn't anybody from that people group meeting in that church building? (or any people in one church building that was built!) Or, in another case, because it's reported there is a small group of Muslim believers (secret at this point) meeting off and on in someone's home, we're told this area is reached, let the Holy Spirit do His work. Yet, I'm wondering, even if there was evidence of a "church" (which, in my opinion, is the known and functioning/gifted body of Christ) - which is yet to

be seen - doesn't it matter that just a few KM's off the road from this "reached" area there are a string of villages who know nothing of this secret work or the true Gospel? Or, again, on a larger scale, there's this bigger people group, numbering in the millions who technically would not among the least unreached because assuming you could actually count them/find the believers you would find several hundred or even a thousand. Out of millions. Such is what I find to be the academic "numbness" of the whole reached/unreached dialogue. Which leads me to my last (at last!) and most specific reflection...

Honestly, sometimes (especially when I'm tired or discouraged), I would like to think/say, no, I WISH/PRAY I could say, "Well, there's some believers now, even a small fellowship meeting here/there... Yep, good enough, leave the rest to the Holy Spirit and the believers, I'm out of here." But then I take a trip like this and mess all my nice exit strategy thinking up. Not that I'm doubting the Holy Spirit's ability - as in I'm kind of banking on the fact he's involved in the process from start to finish and can take me out when he wants to - but I'm thinking He'll want me (us) to remember a few things:

(1) **The need for mobilization** of more workers, national and ex-pat (Matt 9.38). I believe there truly is a plentiful harvest to be had, but hey, where the workers?? As for me, if I could do nothing much more than help some new missionaries or a team get settled into a needy ministry area, this alone will keep me here for the present time. (2) **The mission** (Matt 28.19-20). We disciples are called, no, commanded to go out and make disciples of other peoples, teaching

them/helping them to understand what the Lord Jesus expects of them. Including, I believe, the necessity of worshipping communities of believers. So if I can do nothing more than be a teacher/mentor to these Fulbe believers I work with everyday so they can go out and reach/disciple others, this alone will keep me more than busy. And back to the bottom line, (3) **The messy middle**, that one, those tens, hundreds, thousands, millions that the Lord does not want to perish (2 Peter 3.9). That is, on the one hand (the left) there's that small number of people who could care less about religion, be it Islam or whatever. They've hardened their hearts for whatever reason. And on the other hand (the right), there's that small number of believers, scattered and struggling, who statistically have perhaps bumped their people group out of one of the more 'glamorous' categories - least reached or unreached, whatever. Yet in the messy middle (stretch those arms wide!) lies xxxxx (?) numbers of people who haven't heard or will not hear for some (long?) time of the true Gospel.

Like the one guy my age I just met (and need to go out and reach out to!) who lives just 35 Km's up our lousy road and who has 11 living kids, lost 10 more besides (!!) before they reached 4 years old. A strong reminder of the life and death urgency of our work... Like that small group of Fulbe shepherds we showed the Jesus film to some 8 years ago - and finally just meeting one of them again a few days ago. A strong reminder of the time that quickly passes while in the messy middle... Like the hundreds of Fulbe compounds and villages we saw as the KM's clicked by, let alone the thousands in the cities and... well you get the picture. It's messy.

- Bob Lokker, World Team Church Planter