



The Northington Newsletter

What's Next for Transformational Ministries? What's Next for You?



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

We have officially begun our trek home from after a year on the field in Cameroon. And what a year it's been! We're now ready to start writing the next chapter of our ministry and lives. We hope this chapter will include expansion of our ministry among unreached peoples, implementation of some new ideas we have about ministry work and perhaps a baby....

We're sure there has been some confusion about what our future ministry looks like because we have also been a little confused, so we would like to take this opportunity to clarify what we know at this point. Our term of service with the BGC (now Converge Worldwide) officially ends on January 1, at which time we will continue our ministry with the Christian non-profit World Transformational Ministries. Our desire is to maintain all of our current relationships with the BGC and others as "Kingdom Partners", but we will operate from an administrative standpoint independently. This will allow us greater flexibility

in how we spend our time overseas and donor dollars.

Our intent is to adopt a tentmaking strategy like the apostle Paul where we will work in the U.S. while home to raise money on our own to cover some of our living expenses both in the States and abroad if possible so that donations can be dedicated to specific water, health, appropriate technology and other ministry projects for those who prefer not to provide monthly support but instead would like their gifts dedicated to specific projects. We will be compiling a list of these projects along with estimated costs, people groups, region, etc. on our web page so that ministry partners may select the ones they would like to support.

After a year in Cameroon, we have a very good idea of where the needs are and what it takes to meet them. Our ministry philosophy and mission remains to reach the unreached by providing for the spiritual, materials and social needs of those who need it most by applying the

Gospel practically through sustainable, transformational development. A strong foundation has been built in Cameroon, where we serve with a great team, have formed a Cameroon-recognized Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), started a resource center where the community can come to learn about beneficial technologies and the Gospel and built lasting relationships with local leaders. However, we are also considering the expansion of our ministry geographically to other parts of the world where pastors and individuals have reached out to us through our web page in places like the Philippines, Kenya, Liberia and Pakistan.

We have made a long-term commitment to this calling, but we will continue to need your support to move forward. We ask that you also make a long-term commitment to us in one or more ways, including:

- Picking a specific project to support

- Join our prayer/ministry team
- Become a monthly supporter
- Encourage us through e-mails, letters, phone calls, etc. (we never turn down a meal either!)
- Get directly involved in one of our ministry projects

- Start your own ministry! Remember that we have no less and no more to lose or gain than any of you; we are no different than any of you who work, own homes, have families, etc. The only difference lies in the choices we make; we chose to do what we could with what we've been given with the time we have. You don't need to go to Af-

rica, but you do need to act if you are a Christian and know that we cannot tolerate injustice, poverty and the Gospel being unknown. One thing we can all offer is our obedience to Christ's commands, namely his commands to love one another and make disciples of the nations.

(Matthew 28:18-20)

The Top Three...

Prayer Requests—Pray the Lord will provide...

Safe travels home as we come back to the States	1
A renter for our home in Florida	2
A baby!!!	3

Prayers Answered

Completion of a Community Resource Center	1
A wonderful year of ministry in Cameroon	2
Clarity and direction for the future of our ministry	3

Ministry Needs:

- *Keep an eye out for our "Pick a Project" List on our Donation Page on the web site*



A local boy in our community gets a bath in a "custom" bathtub!

Reverse Culture Shock and Reflections on Coming Back

Our first year in Africa has come to an end, and now we find ourselves in a state of transition as we spend a couple of weeks in France prior to our return to the States. It has only been one day since we left Cameroon, and already I feel as if the experience was surreal. As I sat in the train station in Paris following our arrival from Yaoundé, I felt as if the last year of our lives had been a vivid dream. I thought back to prior travels when I had visited Africa for much shorter periods of time, and I remembered how quickly my cultural mode had changed. I remembered having the same sense of incredible distance from the world I had just left behind. This time, however, it was different. This time something had changed. This time I had come back with a mission, a sense of responsibility to those we left behind and told that we would be back to continue what we had started. This time I felt incomplete.

I thought that perhaps I was experiencing

that phenomenon known as “reverse culture shock”, where the encounter with our own culture after experiencing another for an extended period of time can be similar to the initial shock felt in the foreign culture. I had already gone through these episodes during my return from Africa the first time in 2001 and again in 2005. Although I was still experiencing similar “symptoms”, there was another force at work that was not adequately diagnosed as culture shock. It was as if I had been rewired internally. I was seeing the world with new eyes. I had a fresh perspective on the world and the role I played in it. I also possessed a renewed sense of hope for the possibility of change in the world. This time I returned with a story to tell; my own story that I felt others needed to hear to know that they too had a role to play. I had witnessed a small army of families and individuals who had shared a common vision of a better world – physically, spiritually and socially – and that army was in need

of recruits. Although I had only been in Cameroon, I imagined this united army working across the globe to alleviate poverty, injustice, ignorance, corruption, disease and the multitude of obstacles standing in the way of a better tomorrow. It truly is a war, and it truly is global.

The other symptoms of culture shock are present, of course. In our case, it’s a little unique this time; instead of passing directly from Cameroon to our own culture, we find ourselves in a bit of an intermediary culture here in Europe. It’s probably better for our cultural sanity that we didn’t rush back to the States, where life moves so quickly and we would probably be overwhelmed with extreme changes in our daily living conditions. I have always appreciated the European lifestyle and now see more similarities to the life we had come to know in Africa than I would have expected. (continued Page 4)

Where Are We Now???

No, this picture wasn’t taken in Africa. These are actually two wild boar killed by my “French family” in the Savoie Region of France, where we are spending a few weeks prior to our return to the States. We are doing informal language study by immersion while transitioning back into Western culture. Don’t worry about us being too skinny when we get



back to the U.S. The abundance of cheese and pork (2 things unavailable where we lived) has resulted in unprecedented weight gain for the both of us(= Tiffany has made significant progress in her French after only a week of being here. The ability to speak French fluently is essential to an effective ministry in Cameroon. We will also continue our study of Fulfulde, spoken by the Fulbe.

Partners in Missions with Chad & Tiffany Northington



For our current monthly supporters, please don't forget to transition your monthly gift from the BGC to the Christian non-profit, Transformational Ministries, through our web page. If you are not currently a monthly supporter, please consider joining us.

I have modified our home page to allow for a monthly “subscription” for various gift amounts. It is done securely through PayPal, and a receipt is issued electronically. Visit our home page at www.transformationalministries.com and scroll down to the Donation section with the yellow buttons. Click on your monthly support amount to be taken to the PayPal link. One-time contributions are also welcome. If you would like to support a specific project, please keep watching our web site Donation Page for a list of ministry projects needing your support.

If you have any problems with submitting your gift online, please contact us. We will be happy to help you for partnering with us!

If you prefer not to do it this way, please let us know. Thank you!

Community Resource Center Completed - ASDAT Is Born!

Keeping with our mission to provide for the physical, spiritual and social needs of those who need it most, two resource centers have been opened in Banyo where demonstrations, training and resources in the areas of appropriate technology, agro-forestry, health education, animal husbandry, water supply, microfinancing and the Gospel are made available to the community.

The main center consists of both a building with a media center and demonstrations as well as a separate demonstration area for hands-on examples of some projects in action. Biosand filters, fuel-efficient cook stoves, seedlings, beehives and technical notes are all available at the



A Fulbe woman, who has been attending classes, stands outside the center.

center. Demonstrations are also outside the center which display biogas from cow manure, rainwater catchment, small-scale tree production and solar power.



Our biogas demonstration produces methane to heat tea for visitors.

Transformational Development Demo Area Done

Prior to our departure from Cameroon, we received approval for our NGO, the Association for Sustainable Development and Transformation (ASDAT), which will serve as the entity under which the centers operate.

We really see this as an important aspect of our ministry with great potential to build a framework for our promotion of sustainable, transformational development. The work done at the center and demonstration plot will be combined with a community outreach program where training, resources and the Gospel are taken to the bush where others may not



Tiffany teaches a student using a technical note on the Moringa tree from the Educational Concerns for Hunger Organization (ECHO). Biosand filters constructed from local materials can be seen in the background. We hope to have technical notes in Fulfulde in the future.

"...let us not love with words or tongue but in actions and in truth."

- 1 John 3:18



Our solar power pack will be used to demonstrate alternative energy and charge phones.



Kenya Top Bar (KTB) hives in our bee farm area.

have access to the center.

Computer classes have also been offered and are a probably the most popular activity at the center. We were able to find a Cameroonian instructor prior to leaving and hope to find a full-time Cameroonian director in the future.

We hope to build more centers where similar needs exist throughout Cameroon, and perhaps beyond.



KTB hive demonstration area inside the center, including multi-lingual literature

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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>

Reverse Culture Shock and Reflections of Coming Back (from p. 2)

Their extensive use of public transport also reminds me of our many adventures in “bush taxis” throughout the duration of our stay in Africa. The French and Cameroonians also demonstrate a greater appreciation for the variety of things that are edible than I recall in America.

Then there are the things that are not shared between the African and Western cultures. We had always heard a similar story from expatriates about their reaction to the supermarket upon their return to their home country. The story always included a sense of awe experienced at finding everything they needed in one store and the difficulty in making a decision when confronted by an overwhelming selection of products. The choice of which brand to choose seemed to be too much. We, too, would now have our own supermarket story. We spent the first 30 minutes just walking around looking at things in a state of amazement. I was ashamed of my instinct to buy something because it was available to me. The onslaught of new or improved technology that had developed in only a year was hard to fathom. More compact computers and cameras, blue ray technology (still don't quite fully understand that one), digital price tags in the aisles for the

various products, slimmer TVs and iPods were just some of these. When it finally came time to shop, I realized I had become the most indecisive person in the world. I didn't know which box of rice to buy or what chocolate candy I would savor. A trip to the store that would have taken 10 minutes prior to my exposure to the African market now was taking ten times as long as I fumbled through aisle after aisle. And what about the vendor? There was no one to haggle with over the price, and I surely wasn't happy with any of those that were clearly marked on each item we added to our basket. Maybe, I thought, we could try to convince the young guy at the cash register that they were asking way too much for the meat...

I think the orderliness, cleanliness and newness of everything is what stood out the most for me as we completed our errands in town. Although I remembered my appreciation for such things, it also made me very uncomfortable. The smoothly paved roads and lack of dust caught me off guard. Something didn't seem right. And then there was the luster associated with every car and building that seemed out of place. And why was everyone dressed in such dark clothing? Where did the sun go? Why is it so darn

cold?! And then I reminded myself – culture shock, my friend, culture shock.

Now the time has come to reflect upon our experience and digest the lessons learned as we prepare for the next chapter. I was recently asked if there was a particular story that captured our experience thus far in Cameroon. I think the only way to sum up our experience is to say we can't sum it up. It seems there is so much diversity in this country in the people, the customs, the language, the climate and the landscape. The same has been true of our ministry. In this past year we have stood before kings (traditional ones at least), sat with lepers and slept with refugees. We have witnessed persecution and corruption on a level we have never known, but we have also seen love, perseverance and the Gospel expressed in unfathomable ways. I have written many blogs about cultural assimilation and spiritual encounters, and, as I look them over in search of a story that would capture it all, I can only say that we came to Cameroon in search of the unreached and certainly found them in places we would never have imagined...