

Stephen and Angelina Cowan

Location: **Tuum, KENYA**

Mission: **Church-based community development and outreach**

SEPTEMBER 2023



From Ireland, Angelina writes:

As I glance over the July/August bulletin it is hard to believe only 2 months have lapsed since it was written. My mum had a massive stroke mid-July and sadly passed away mid-August. I am so grateful to have been able to spend those weeks with mum and with family. She visited us many times in Kenya and was a committed support to God's ongoing work there.

From Tuum, Stephen writes:

As the annual July/August activities conclude, we reflect on youth camps which have had record numbers and attentive participants. This year's theme was FOG – the Fear of God – which was developed using the story of Goliath and David. As always, the challenge is to apply the message in such a way that the young people see beyond the often-disparaging narrative presented by various aid intervention organisations and to see life through Christ in all its fullness and to grasp the potential for change. As always, we pray for long term impact through discipling.

The period of longed for rain, which came earlier in the year, was shorter than hoped for, resulting in less vegetation growth than expected. In some protected areas (protected from overgrazing by livestock) the grass has managed to seed. The seed will then be sown out to further enhance ground cover and to reduce the area of bare ground.

The protection of some areas has been made easier to control as many animals died during the drought resulting in fewer mouths to feed! Many pastoralists see the connection, but culture continues to encourage large herds as a sign of wealth and sadly, cultural identity takes priority over family and social responsibility.

Some of the girls who stay in the dormitory accommodation in Seren recently returned from an iServe discipleship course. Upon their return they can put some of their newly acquired leader and teaching skills into practice as they 'volunteer' within the small community of girls. The SAA gives a small 'volunteering' allowance, some of which the girls are encouraged to save, to help fund future education opportunities. This encourages the girls to take responsibility for their own futures rather than constantly relying on aid agency handouts.

Schools re-commence in September and exams are scheduled for November. Over 2 million students will sit for these, reflecting the youthfulness of the population.



Prayer Points:

- Pray that young believers would see the value of Christian community as a way of encouraging their new identity in Christ.
- Pray that the expected el Nino rains will be harnessed for good and that vegetation cover will reinstate on barren soil.
- Continue to pray for iTeach as a tool for encouraging more adults to learn to read at their own pace.
- Give thanks for the care, love and support we have received from everyone during the past few weeks.