



Stephen and Angelina Cowan

Location: **Tuum, KENYA**

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



A small transaction, but tucked behind it was a massive mindset change. One of the elders, long associated with the SAA programme, arrived from his village an hour away. He had with him a carrier bag packed with kale that he had grown in his manyatta garden. Over the course of the day he sold bunches to various customers. With the money he bought 2 bales of hay, loaded them onto his shoulders, walked home and fed them to his few remaining cattle. It is a rare phenomenon here when a pastoralist works to ensure the quality of his animals rather than the quantity, and especially when achieving this through agricultural means.

Recently Stephen received a text message from a member of staff thanking him for the opportunity to attend a First Aid training seminar. It read, "Thank you so much for giving me an opportunity to attend the St. John Ambulance First Aid training in Maralal. I learnt a lot on ways of helping a casualty before a nurse arrived. Today I was not handed an unnecessary allowance but was given adequate food and I received much knowledge". Seminars are often regarded as of little value save for the financial allowance given to attend and the free lunch. Yet here was a man who saw beyond the 'incentives' and appreciated its true value. The understanding acquired through his attendance clearly extended beyond the First Aid syllabus!

A youth camp participant from a Turkana village was attacked at the SAA compound gates by some young Samburu adults from Tuum.

The beating could have been casually overlooked, an incident dealt with locally by a bribe and with little consequence, but the community's willingness to allow government justice to deal with the assailants was both surprising and encouraging. As much effort is expended in bringing together and encouraging the youth from both people groups to respect each other and each other's culture, it would be tragic if the actions of a few were allowed to negatively impact this ongoing process.

Despite the above incident the junior youth camp, at which 300 children were in attendance, finished well. It was organised and run by the growing community of Christian young people in Tuum. They divided into teams with responsibility for cooking, cleaning, collecting firewood, supervising during teaching times, taking games sessions, organising tea-breaks and managing bedtime for the camp participants! The Bible studies were prepared and taught by 'emerging leaders' from among the young people, many of whom have attended discipleship training courses. With the juniors having dispersed, many being transported safely home by bus and landrover, the senior camp has now begun with the Bible teaching being conducted by a small team who have travelled from Nairobi.

God's Spirit alone brings transformational change to the soul, the mind and the body. As He moves in His time and in His way in this community, we witness small but significant examples of those differences being put into practice.

Prayer Points

- Give thanks for rainfall in the wider area, a timely illustration of the truth of the topic being taught at senior camp – 'God's Word, like rain, does not return without doing its life changing work'
- Pray there will be many more incidences of hearts and lifestyles changed by the Holy Spirit