

## Stephen and Angelina Cowan

Location: **Tuum, KENYA**

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



A month ago, as we travelled south from Tuum to collect Annissa for the Easter holiday, the Kenyan government announced an immediate lockdown in the country's five most Covid-19 infected counties, one of which being the county Annissa's school is located in. We changed plans and thankfully Annissa was able to meet us via taxi before the midnight closure of county borders. With Annissa safely on board, we turned round and headed back to Tuum.

The planned youth camps also required modification as the Nairobi team, who were due to travel to run the programme, were unable to travel north. As large gatherings were being discouraged, instead of the children and young people from the surrounding villages gathering in Tuum, Tuum's own emerging leaders filled the land rovers, and with excitement and enthusiasm they headed out to the surrounding villages. By all reports, the young leaders stepped up to their responsibilities and worked well together to ensure that the programme was a success.

A brief sprinkling of rain does little for grass growth and we have had to transport hay from beyond Maralal. Many people have been willing to purchase what is necessary to keep their cattle alive and the 240 bales diminish quickly by the day.

The garage has been in over-drive as the staff complete the finishing touches to various vehicles which have been in for modification and repair. This is a useful source of revenue for the Samburu Awareness and Action (SAA) programme, as well as providing life skills and training for the young mechanics.

Tuum is growing rapidly. In the early 1990s, the piece of land allocated to the SAA programme by the village elders was 100m from the village. Now it is surrounded on all sides by homesteads and newly fenced-off plots. Land ownership is often contentious as the pastoralists' belief that the land is theirs by right is not shared by government and other interested parties. Proper legal representation is necessary, although the process of protecting generational interests can be long and protracted.



*Photo: Tuum camp participants*

### Prayer points

- Pray that wisdom would prevail as professional advice is sought and as these issues are considered and addressed.
- Give thanks for the 'camps' and for the enthusiasm and commitment of all involved.
- Pray that the medical authorities throughout Kenya would use their limited resources wisely as they continue to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic.