



Monrovia, Liberia Mission Update

July 2010

Dear Friends,

One of the challenges to evangelism in Africa is the chronic suffering and needs of many of those living in African cities. Hunger, disease, poverty, poor infrastructure and sanitation, homelessness, crime, unemployment... the struggles which so many in Africa experience, just to make it through the day, leave your heart aching.

We do not preach an “empty” gospel, or a rhetorical message which does not impact every aspect of our daily lives. Jesus Christ showed us through His very life and death that the love of God is gritty, practical and ready to give up everything, even life itself, to address the needs of others. How can we then not sacrifice, even just a little for others who are suffering?

“This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.

And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?

Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.”

1 John 3:16-18

A crucial element of an African Enterprise city wide mission is the “social action” component. Whilst it is not possible to address every physical need in the city, we work with the church to identify needs in the community. This illustrates the word which is preached to every strata in the city during the mission week.

During the November 2009 mission to Monrovia the local churches identified a slum township area called the “Buzzi Quarter” (also known as the Lorma Quarter) which desperately needed assistance. Amazingly, although it is a stone’s throw from the State House, it had fallen into a stinky, unhealthy, dirty state of disrepair.

The community of Buzzi Quarter comprises about 20,000 people, most of whom are former and retired soldiers, and their families. Because of its close proximity to the University of Liberia, many students also live in the community. The majority of the residents live on less than one dollar a day. Up until March this year, only two Government latrines existed within the community, but these had deteriorated to a completely unsanitary condition.

People using these facilities often contracted communicable diseases and illnesses thus increasing infant mortality rates. They were forced to relieve themselves on the nearby beach, or by using plastic bags, which were then disposed of into the uncovered drains which ran between the tiny dwellings.

Because of its location at the bottom of the city, the community was also constantly undergoing flooding from undirected grey and waste water from make shift bath houses.

Together, the local churches and African Enterprise, met with local community leaders and committed to assisting them with the challenges they faced each day. Official meetings commenced early in 2009 during which community, youth and church leaders discussed how best to ensure community ownership of the future developments. Church leaders and congregations led their community in a clean up which was aimed at reversing the prevailing mindset of hopelessness and instilling a sense of dignity.



Over the next few months, health and sanitation training was conducted with community leaders, who then trained others in their neighborhood to increase their awareness of health risks. Evangelistic events were held in the community during this time, and large numbers of residents, young and old, gave their lives to Christ, including the community headman. Finally a ten room latrine building was constructed, and a deputation sent to the State House to ask the local authorities to address the needs of Buzzi Quarter.



On Wednesday, March 31, 2010 the newly constructed latrine building was dedicated and officially opened. Incredibly, the Vice President of Liberia, His Excellency Dr. Joseph Nyumah Boakai, walked through the slum community to the church hall to the site of the dedication. He was surrounded by an entourage of security staff, but took the time to express his utter dismay at the conditions of the community. Also in attendance were AE's Pan African Missions Director, Rev. Songe Chibambo, heads of international and local NGOs, the Secretary General of the Association of Evangelicals of Liberia, Mrs. Victoria Wollie, Chairman of the Christ Mission to Monrovia, Rev. K. Zubah Kollie, Church leaders, students and residents.



The Vice President cut the ribbon to officially open the latrines. They were described by some onlookers as “beautiful” – maybe an unusual description to those of us who do not live in Buzzi, but quite possibly a description of what the latrines represent, the deeply concerned heart of God for his people in Buzzi who no longer felt forgotten.

Please pray for the community of Buzzi Quarter, the churches and the government of Liberia. Please continue to support AE. Together we can uplift the poorest of the poor through word and deed.

Yours in Love, grace and gratitude of Christ,
David Richardson, Executive Director/CEO
African Enterprise Canada