Tuesday we had the chance to attend one of ROTOM’s senior fellowships. These fellowships are really at the heart of what ROTOM does. Twice a month, all the grandmas and grandpas get together in a small church near where they live. I believe there are 27 fellowships around Uganda. In these fellowships, the grandmas and grandpas sing, dance, learn about Jesus, and are given a big (and I mean BIG) nutritious meal.

It was amazing when we first walked into the little church. The Jajas were all singing to us and dancing. They were so excited to see us. Every one of them wanted to shake our hands or hug us. They tied scarves around our waists and wanted us to shake our hips like they do. It was so much fun! I have never seen that much joy and energy out of a group of elderly women before! Amazing!

Jerry and Susan both shared a message of hope with the group. At the end of the session, one man asked Jesus into his heart. He spoke Swahili, so we had to find someone in the crowd that could interpret for us.

What hit me after we got home was that this story and the message was not translated into Swahili. This man was so moved by the presence of God that he knew he wanted more of it. God is just THAT BIG!

We then served everyone a HUGE plate of food. They were just loving it. It was so funny to see how many of leftovers. They knew what to expect. The women were swapping plates, taking what they wanted from their friends, and sharing what they didn’t want with others. This reminded me so much of eating dinners with my friends.

After the fellowship, we went outside where there was a schoolyard full of children. The ROTOM staff told us that ROTOM also sponsors many of those grandchildren to go to that school. We sang and played with them— it was so much fun.

That evening, ROTOM staff held a BBQ for us. We had a great time with all of them, what a FUN group of people. We played games (including musical chairs), danced, and ate a delicious meal. Tuesday was our last day of ministry for the whole trip and we all agreed that this was just the most wonderful way to end it all. We said good-bye to all the staff of ROTOM and headed back to the hotel to pack up for our Safari!
The long road to ROTOM Mukono

We were visiting friends in Nairobi, Kenya and asked the locals if it was safe and suitable for us to take a bus to Kampala. They all said yes and a bus company was recommended. The transport fare was Kshs 1700 (about 22 Cdn), a low price, and we thought it would be easier to be met in Mukono, Uganda by ROTOM staff just before 6 a.m. the next day.

In Nairobi, we arrived at the bus office on a very congested street downtown and boarded. The motto on the bus was “In God We Trust” – a good omen we thought. Our luggage was stored at the back of the bus and was quickly buried by more bags, people and other stuff. In advance, we requested the conductor to let us off in Mukono. The bus left on time at 2 p.m., the seats were full but not overcrowded, the scenery was superb and there was a lovely sunset.

We had been warned not to drink much because stops were few. We obeyed. After about 5 hours of driving without any real stops the bus suddenly stopped with no notice and everyone jumped up. The men were off first and headed over to the side while a few women followed including us but there was not a bush in sight. Oh well…

At Busia, the Uganda-Kenya border crossing, we were very confused. It was dark and dangerous underfoot. The visa form was unreadable in the weak light but people were helpful. The bus was searched inside and out by guards and after an hour we boarded again reminding the conductor about Mukono. It was 11:30 pm.

We both slept a bit and before long we pulled into a brightly lit station and the driver parked the bus. It was 2:30 a.m. and yes, we were in Kampala. The conductor had forgotten about us and we were now several kilometers past Mukono. We had neither Ugandan money nor a phone but we were assured of a ride back to Mukono - at 6 a.m. So we joined the others sleeping on the bus. Shortly after, the conductor came to move us and our luggage to another bus where we were alone. At about 5:30, the driver came on and began praying in English. He prayed for the journey and nearly everyone on the planet. When he was done I said “Amen” and that surprised him because he didn’t realize we were on the bus!

The new conductor called Erican, the ROTOM staff whom we expected to meet us, just as we were leaving the station at 6 a.m. and this time we DID get dropped off in Mukono. One boda-boda and a few taxis offered us a ride but we soon saw the ROTOM vehicle and Erican’s smile. We had arrived at last and our month as volunteers had begun. Many adventures and learnings lay ahead of us.

Rotom contacts

Norine Baron and Christine, two friends from Grandmothers’ Support Group with Stephen Lewis Foundation in Canada came to see Africa. They spent a long while in Kenya and finally made the trip to ROTOM in Mukono, Uganda. It is quite a trip from Nairobi Kenya to Mukono Uganda especially by bus.

Rotom wishes you a Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!!

Sponsor A Senior!

For only UGX 60,000, USD 30, and EURO 25 OR CDN 30 a month, you can sponsor a senior in Uganda to:

- Hear a clear presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Participate in regular Christian support fellowship.
- Receive bi-weekly home visits from volunteer counsellors.
- Receive free regular medical screening and treatment.
- Receive support to enable improvement in income and food security.
- Access safe and healthy water and housing.

Every year, as a sponsor, you will receive a photo, update report and two letters from the senior you sponsor.

EZY Stove: A healthier and easier lifestyle donation for your senior.

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