

During October and November 2000, Peter Hammond led a series of missions to Sudan. This involved 11 different team members, 9 flights and 2 vehicles driving overland to Sudan. During these 2 months the Frontline teams conducted over 250 meetings – including 5 training courses for teachers, pastors and chaplains and 21 film showings. They also delivered and distributed 4 000 Bibles, 1 500 Hymn books and 2 000 other Christian books. This is what he reports:

Coming into Sudan at the tail end of the rainy season complicated our movements. The rivers were high and with almost all the bridges down, we often had to leave our vehicles on one side of a river and proceed on foot, carrying our film evangelism equipment and the Bibles for distribution.

Vehicle Wrecked

When one of our vehicles crashed – on a very muddy and treacherous stretch of road – it presented new challenges for us to overcome. We had lost half of our transport just before our team was to double in size with the arrival of a team of Evangelism Explosion trainers from Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church (Don, Dony and Elise).

It was only by God's grace that Hansie, John and Jeffrey, who were in our truck at the time of the accident, were not seriously injured – as the truck was a write off. Nevertheless, with some ingenuity and juggling with limited resources, we managed to complete all the planned leadership training courses.

On occasions we had to drive through the bush, or over the muddy roads, with team members hanging on to the outside of the one remaining Fellowship vehicle! But we managed to fulfil all our commitments and made every church service and film outreach on time. And when we saw how many pastors and chaplains had walked - up to 90 km – just to attend the courses we knew that it was all worth it. What a privilege to minister to such enthusiastic and eager people!

Communication Complications

Catering for the participants of our Evangelism courses also required trips to neighbouring Uganda to fetch sufficient supplies. It was on one of these trips that our truck was wrecked. The inevitable complications of travel and communication in such a vast land as Sudan and the ever present danger of aerial bombardments makes it more urgent than ever that Frontline Fellowship acquire short wave radio communications for each team. And more 4 wheel drive vehicles especially equipped with the tougher suspension, winch and snorkel needed for the many river crossings in Sudan.

However, because of persistent lack of funds, we often had to take unnecessary risks, even walking distances in the dark simply because of lack of short wave radio communications. As a faith mission we do not want to engage in the kind of high pressure fund raising that seems so common these days. It is somewhat discouraging when we see other groups using our photographs, video footage, stories and reports for their slick marketing. Especially when we never see those groups actually on the ground doing what they claim.

Mosquitoes and Malaria

At one point I came down with malaria. As I was covered from head to toe with scores of insect bites including from spiders, bed bugs, fleas and mosquitoes it was no surprise when the fever, headache, muscle ache, etc. hit me. Thankfully with quinine I was able to counter the effects in just a few days. I was reminded of the fact that many hundreds of missionaries in the 1800's died young – of malaria. Praise God for modern medicines like quinine that extend our life-span – and our ministries!

And by God's grace I didn't miss any ministry commitments during that time. The insect bites, however, continued way beyond the last symptoms of malaria. I used up 3 tubes of anthisan and cortisone cream trying to treat the bites and stop the excruciating itching. At one point I went to a local medical officer for more cream. *"How long have you had this skin disease?"* he asked me.

"This isn't a skin disease,"

I protested.

"It's from insect bites!"

But he didn't seem convinced.

"I've never seen insect bites that bad,"

he said. With my fair complexion I'm a sunburn waiting to happen and the insects seem to love me. As one Mozambican joked to me some years ago:

"To the mosquitos we are food – but you are pudding!"

Saving Lives

My aches and pains increased after the bombing – with two cracked ribs. Every time I move it is a painful reminder of God's protection that Sunday morning. My minor medical problems on this trip helped me to sympathise even more with the desperate daily plight of our friends in Sudan.

When we began our ministry in Southern Sudan there were no hospitals in the whole region. Now by God's grace the original hospital of Dr. Fraser has been restored and is saving lives. Over 100 000 patients have been treated at the hospital in Lui over the last 3 years. Back in 1998 Frontline Fellowship delivered a 4 wheel drive ambulance to the hospital – to save lives by rushing patients from inaccessible areas to professional medical care. Now, unfortunately the vehicle is inoperable and beyond further repair. As a result people are dying – unnecessarily.

One wounded man was carried for 2 days from Diko to Lui – but he died before reaching the hospital. A pregnant woman in labour, with complications, was carried for 3 days from Minga to Lui – but she died before reaching the hospital. And these are only 2 of many examples. We need to provide another 4 wheel drive ambulance.

Christian Liberty High School

While Robert and I were busy with leadership training courses and church services, John, Hansie, Emile, Stephan and Iris were engaged in repairing and restoring the badly damaged buildings at our mission base. And in renovating the buildings for the Christian Liberty High School. The launch of the school earlier in the year had been delayed when the government of Sudan Air Force bombed the community seven times. Now we have 3 carpenters, 2 builders and a painter employed full time in the repairs and renovation. In order to provide sufficient wood for all the doors, frames, desks, shelves, bunk beds and other furniture needed we had to arrange for 5 tonnes of wooden planks to be trucked in from neighbouring Uganda.

I conducted a selection and training course for the teachers and then entrance exams were set for those students who wanted to enrol in the Christian Liberty High School. Soon the teachers and students were involved in clearing the bush and cleaning the buildings in preparation for the launch of the High School.

Equipping Primary Schools

Since 1997, Frontline Fellowship has been involved in training primary school teachers. These teachers have established over 120 primary schools with over 18 000 students. They are requesting us to provide their schools with sufficient Bibles in English and Moru. We are also trusting the Lord for the means to provide them with sufficient Christian text books. If you want to help us disciple the next generation in Southern Sudan please let us know.

"Make disciples of all the nations . . . teaching them . . ." Matthew 28:19-20