



Daring to be a Voice and Beacon of Hope for Africa April 2010 Update

www.pilgrimafrica.org

Pilgrim was founded as an indigenous Christian response to the plight of more than 1.5 million refugees living in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps in the war torn regions of Northern Uganda. Pilgrim's work reaches more than 500,000 households through a broad spectrum of community programs in north and eastern Uganda. Pilgrim has approximately 100 full-time employees and 200 volunteers spread across offices in Kampala and Soroti, Uganda, Lusaka, Zambia, Harare, Zimbabwe and South Africa and its Seattle headquarters. The Agathos Foundation has entrusted Pilgrim to run its African operations.

Beacon of Hope College

Daily life continues. Chalk is being used up as lessons are taught, teachers are preparing final exams (the first term finishes at the end of April), breakfast, lunch and supper are being prepared daily, and a few students are treated for malaria.

Joys

- As orphans from refugee camps, the school's top boy and girl students are exactly the kind that BOH has been targeting since inception. The boy is also ranked highest in the entire region, and five graduates from the last class received government scholarships to attend university.
- The school's soccer team went to the quarter finals in the Soroti area eight-day soccer competition. The Church of the Redeemer team was soundly defeated by these same students during last year's visit.
- Dorothy, one of the founders of the predecessor organization to Pilgrim, is just back from her first visit since the Redeemer team was there. She said the improvements made by the Redeemer team were palpable, and that the whole feeling and sense at the school was just lighter and more positive.
- New energy efficient cook stoves are being installed - they use much less wood, which is in short supply, and will be much better for the environment.

The School's Old "Stoves"



The New Stoves



Challenges

- For 8 days there was low voltage or no electricity so the school depended on the generator for stable electricity for the photocopier and computer.
- After a wind and rain storm, the walls of the pit latrine (outhouse) at the school collapsed and will need to be rebuilt. Quick action resulted in a temporary fix through reopening an old latrine.

Worship

- Daily lunch hour worship continues, encouraging students. The Scripture Union's 100-150 students have lots of fervor, meeting 10 minutes daily and longer several times a week.
- The new chaplain is a winner, very likable and involved and motivating.
- The second Prayer and Fasting Day for the term had the theme "Enemies of the Cross". The teachings were wonderful and worship was full of passion, with 90 students in a single classroom singing with everything they had.

Agriculture & Environment

- The BioSan water filter programs are doing very well. Pilgrim's training programs have attracted much attention. Success in these partnerships with the local villages enables Pilgrim to qualify for consideration of higher levels of funding from international agencies.
- The BioSan program also has appealed to churches, which are eager to pursue this as part of their evangelism.
- Officials from Makerere University in Kampala were very impressed when they visited two of the Multi-Function Platform machine sites to see the strides those farmer cooperatives had made in implementing the MFPs. In addition to processing their own products, by their own empowerment those cooperatives are now earning money by processing neighbors' crops.

Water after and before the BioSan Filter



Students at Beacon of Hope husking corn grown on the School's farm



Lord's Resistance Army

- Many of us were saddened to hear that the LRA killed at least 321 civilians and abducted 250 others, including at least 80 children, during a previously unreported four-day rampage in northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo in December 2009.
- Calvin Echodu began Pilgrim after witnessing the plight of those affected by the LRA when it was in NE Uganda. Much of the region's population were relocated to IDP camps for safety reasons, then neglected and forgotten, with no access to food, medical care, counseling, jobs or any reminder of God's compassion for them.

Prayer Requests

- That the grant requests and the Letters of Inquiry submitted by the Seattle office to foundations be given favor; that God would move the grant administrators at these funders to award grant monies, not only to fund programs, but to help Pilgrim establish a grant reception track record. About 10 grant proposals have also been submitted to various in-country funders.
- That grants for work in Uganda from the Christian group Trinity Wall Street Foundation will materialize.
- Praise for the progress at the school.