

Election Fever to “Let’s get the farm planted” Fever

November 4, 2015

A heavy rain beats down on the metal roof as I write. The Mwanza area has not received any significant rainfall since May. It has been our prayer that the short rainy season would start...well...did it ever this past Monday with a morning blast that delivered 3 inches of rain!! The thrill of the rain was soon offset by the consequences... heavy erosion of dirt roads and gardens, washed out roads/bridges, the collapse of homes made from mud bricks and... and death on the roads. Opportunist motorcycle taxis with passengers were attempting to cross roads that were 2 feet deep in hard running water. Our friends with 4x4 Land Cruisers were not taking these chances. Two motorcycles were swept away into deep drainage ditches with the driver and passengers not seen again resulting in multiple deaths.

The rainy season is typically a 3 month event with gentle rains mostly in the evenings and overnight. Accumulation over a week can reach 4 to 6 inches. The locals do not recall a rain as heavy as this past Monday. Some of you may remember that almost a year ago, a December 1st rain came heavy and hard, resulting in the flooding of our home. With improved drainage and gutters around our home this risk has been reduced and we were not inconvenienced this time. Now that the rains have started, the farmers are busy with cultivation of their small 1-2 acre plots. Then, they will buy seed or use last year’s seed and hope for a good harvest. The rush to plant seeds is on.



UCHAGUZI TANZANIA 2015

The elections in Canada have taken place and life goes on. The elections here in Tanzania took on a life we have never seen before. The ruling party Chama Cha Mapunduzi (CCM) has ruled the country since independence in 1964. 4 different presidents ruled over this time period and the current outgoing President Jakaya Kikwete has served his maximum of two 5 year terms. This past election has divided the country, many of the 22 million voters loyal to CCM and many voters (especially the unemployed youth) looking for a change in government. As Tanzania’s second largest city, Mwanza saw several waves of hopeful presidential candidates visiting and hosting rallies in the stadium and outdoor soccer field just ½ km away from where we live. The hype was feverish with candidates promising the voters jobs, free education, improved health care, and access to electricity and an end to corruption. The main road in front of the AICT Makongoro Health Centre was jammed with people waving banners, people chanting support for their leader, loud music and speakers proclaiming the event. Even the patients and their visitors inside the Makongoro Health Centre applauded and shouted their approval of the speeches! Thousands of people went by our small compound’s gate shouting and chanting. Jannetta and I could not even have a conversation in our home due to the heavy bass thumping of the music and the loud noise of the rallies. Jannetta wore ear plugs and I opted to wear ear safety protection that I normally wear when operating a chainsaw. For many days the pre-election activities went on.

Jannetta and I, together with our World Renew colleagues here in Mwanza, had planned to be away from Mwanza during the days leading up to the Sunday, October 25th elections. We drove to Kenya on October 20th and enjoyed 10 days of quiet. We took some vacation time and also spent 4 days with the World Renew Kenya team at their office in Nairobi before returning to Mwanza October 31st.

Oh yes... the results of the Tanzania election. CCM was returned as the ruling party with 58% of the vote and 152 out of 264 parliamentary seats to make up a majority government. The election results from The Island of Zanzibar, which is part of the Republic of Tanzania just off the east coast from the mainland, was not included as the National Electoral Commission annulled the results citing the rigging of votes and confusion over missing names and the discovery of fake ballot papers. The current leaders will remain in leadership in Zanzibar until a new date is set for elections only for the island residents.

Election Day October 25th was reported to be generally quiet and peaceful, assisted by a heavy police presence in all the large cities. All the voting was done using a paper ballot system which is then deposited into box's in the various communities around the country. Voters must have pre-registered months ago and their names must be on a public list. Once you have voted, you then had to dip your pinky finger in ink that indicates that you had voted.



The counting, overseen by the National Electoral Commission (NEC) was conducted over 4 days, using candles and lights at night in the rural communities where there is no electricity. Once counted by the NEC, all the community candidates have to physically sign off approving the count result. Then the results go from the ward, then to the district, then to the government for further recounting. Businesses were closed for several days following the election as everyone awaited the outcome of the election. The results were announced on Thursday October 29th and the country has remained peaceful. The new CCM president John Pombe Magufuli, is a long time CCM Cabinet Minister and well experienced in government and has represented CCM as an elected official since 1995. He will be sworn into office November 5th which has just been declared a national holiday.



CCM rally with their colorful green and yellow banners. (John Deere colors !!!)

Now for some personal news. We are well and healthy and look forward to each day as it comes.

The Makongoro Health Centre is a busy day clinic and the hospital ward is close to capacity. Jannetta's work is steady and mainly administrative. The staff shortage due to the passing away of the matron earlier this year is noticeable. There has been no replacement. However the Health Centre seems to manage. The beginning of the rainy season brings with it an increase in patients suffering from malaria as well as respiratory issues. In our next newsletter we will share some pictures of the new hospital and day clinic currently under construction about 200 feet away from the current facility.

The farmers are waiting to see who will plant first. I will explain this in our next newsletter as well as show some pictures of enjoying our own personal vegetable garden right outside our back door.

Growing fresh vegies In November! What a treat!

Reasons for Thanksgiving:

- **Thankful for a peaceful election outcome.**
- **Thankful for safety and the protection of World Renew staff and colleagues during the election process and for the opportunity to have some time for rest and reflection during our 10 day stay in Kenya.**
- **Thankful for the rains that have come to the Mwanza region.**
- **Thankful for opportunities for Jannetta to serve alongside the doctors, nurses and staff at the AICT Makongoro Health Centre.**
- **Thankful for the challenging and the rewarding process of being interwoven with another culture. It is all about building relationships. Jannetta is continuing to take Kiswahili language lessons and is becoming more confident when speaking the language. Phil is learning by self-study and mentoring/correction by Jannetta. It is hoped, in time, that this knowledge will allows us to be more effective in cross-cultural ministry, allowing us to connect with the people in communities we serve as we share the message of Christ in their heart language.**

Reasons for prayer:

- **That the country will be governed by men and women of integrity.**
- **That the implementation of the 5 year Conservation Agriculture program will go well with the 3 World Renew partners here in the Lake Zone area. Our partners are visiting with farmers and the leadership in the rural villages to assess needs and opportunities and set up objectives and training dates. Training programs are ready to be launched. World Renew will hire two Tanzanian's (Agriculture agronomists) to provide the necessary support. Candidates are being interviewed as we prepare for the rollout of this program.**

Blessings to all.

Phil and Jannetta

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