

No place like Africa

illustrates the dramatic changes in the world brought about by the Holy Spirit. In the late 19th Century less than 1% of the continent's population was Christian. So many missionaries died within two years of arriving that they packed their belongings in coffins, earning Africa the title of "the missionary graveyard."

Today, Africa is the most Christian continent on the earth with more than 600 million people professing faith in Jesus. This sea change testifies of a stunning advancement of the Kingdom of God! These hundreds of millions of believers represent a mighty missionary force to be mobilized for the remaining unreached peoples. This issue focuses on the great things God is doing in Africa -- Global Teams' largest base -- and the opportunities before us.

Forging New Frontiers

"As I was reading the Gospel in church, others saw a kind of fire on my head, burning and growing. I just knew that God was calling me to preach the Gospel."

Francis has been doing just that ever since. And in December, the Africa Leadership Team nominated Francis to be the new Global Teams Africa Director, as Bryson Samboja steps down to focus on his work among the Digo.

In 2003, Global Teams field partners from all over the world gathered in the green hills of Kenya for worship, Bible study and relationship building. Here, Francis encountered a new way to do ministry, a way that worked like yeast in the dough, where people could follow Jesus while remaining in their culture and reaching others. This changed everything.



With new inspiration, Francis returned to Malawi and slowly began building relationships with men from a Muslim people group. One man noticed there was something different about Francis which opened up conversations about Jesus. Over time, his new friend asked more questions and as they turned to the

Injil, the Gospels, to find answers, he became a follower of Christ!

Remaining in his culture, he was able to share about his faith with others from his tribe and seven more from this group came to follow Christ. He meets with them for Bible study and worship in the same way Francis met with him.

continued

FORGING, continued

Stef, another man from this Muslim people group, had a dream where he saw a bright, white light surrounding him.

A voice spoke from the light, confirming Stef's growing conviction that he should follow Jesus. Stef listened and is now following Jesus - and reaching out to others in his group with joy and perseverance. Francis wants to include Stef in outreach to the Nahara, a Muslim people group in Mozambique. The ministry has multiplied many times over and as of today more than 345 field partners have been trained in Malawi.

As Francis and his co-laborers venture further and further out to new Muslim villages, they face constant danger. Spies attend meetings and others eavesdrop on spiritual conversations. Sometimes villagers are forbidden by elders from meeting with GT field partners and at other times they have been beaten, thrown out of villages and in danger of losing their lives.

When Francis first came to faith, God spoke to him through Jeremiah Chapter 1:8-9.

And don't be afraid of the people, for I will be with you and will protect you. I, the Lord, have spoken!" Then the Lord reached out and touched my mouth and said, "Look, I have put my words in your mouth!

So in the midst of these risks, he and other GT field partners trust God for protection as they build relationships and share about Jesus.

Francis' responsibilities have expanded in his new role as the Africa Director. He has already begun field visits to cast vision for work among new unreached people groups, equip leaders and implement new training. During his recent trip to Tanzania, Francis and our country coordinators mobilized church leaders to recruit new pioneers for work in the north. They ended their time together with five new church partners and 34 new field partner candidates!



Francis meets with Tanzanian leaders, Rose and Edgar

While celebrating what God has done, Francis and the GT Africa Lead Team are actively pursuing Gospel breakthroughs in new unreached areas. Some of these new frontiers are highlighted in this issue.

“From now on, I will be a witness and face the consequences,”

proclaimed Elizabeth, the only follower of Christ in her Muslim family. Living next to the mosque, she builds relationships with other women and shares about Jesus.

What gives her this courage?

One day while meditating on God's Word as was her habit, Jesus appeared to her in shining white. As he showed her the nail marks on his hands, she understood his suffering. It was a turning point for her because she realized that even though she would suffer for Jesus,

he was alive and she would meet him one day.

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Frontier Gateways



the **TURKANA** of Ethiopia

This picture was taken during a recent trip to mobilize Kenyan Turkana believers for mission. About 53,000 Turkana live in a small region in southwest Ethiopia with less than 1% Christ followers. Join us in praying boldly for God to open doors as our new Kenyan field partners begin outreach in the region this summer.



Stig Nygaard
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the **NAHARA** of Mozambique

Global Teams Malawi has sent a team into Mozambique to lay the foundation for work among the Nahara, a Muslim unreached people group there. A Muslim Background Believer from Malawi is part of this team and his Muslim background creates a bridge for beginning this new work. Mission fields are becoming mission forces.



Omar on
Unsplash

COASTAL SWAHILI of Tanzania

Global Teams Tanzania has just finished training new field partners to go to the Coastal Swahili, the largest unreached people group in Tanzania. They will be working cross-culturally with this Muslim group of 760,000 to share about Jesus as they become a part of the life of this community.



From Pioneer to Pioneering

The Turkana woman rushed up to the Global Teams' members in tears. "A scorpion stung my son and I don't want him to die," she wailed. Having no medicine with them, the team cleansed the wound with hand sanitizer and prayed for healing in Jesus' name. The next day, the young boy walked into the meeting! As a new believer the woman was ecstatic and invited the team to her home where her unbelieving husband lay ill.

Once again, the team prayed boldly in Jesus' name – their only option in the remote lands of the Turkana. A few days later, the man sent a goat to the team saying, "Let the servants of God enjoy something to eat from my hand." He felt so much better that he invited the team back to his home, where they led him to a saving knowledge of Jesus.

"We were overwhelmed with gratitude by God's provision on this trip," Elizabeth reported. "For example, our vehicle was broken, but God moved on the heart of a government official to give us a vehicle for free! And believers gave food and clothes with such generosity."

The team ministered to the Turkana people, but the main purpose of this trip was to identify Turkana believers for ministry to the bordering unreached Turkana of Ethiopia. God provided a key contact in Pastor Samuel, who leads a church on the border of Ethiopia. He advised, "It is too dangerous to go now as it is raiding season. July will be the peaceful season. We will help you go then!"

Two young Turkana believers, Francis and John are eager to represent Christ to their unreached kinsmen in Ethiopia and have volunteered to be sent. The mission field is becoming the sending field – fulfilling a key goal of GT! Join in praying for and supporting John and Francis by giving online at <http://weblink.donorperfect.com/groundfloor>.



Some of the GT Turkana leaders

Finishing Strong



“To see the heart of Christ in the skin of every culture.” The Global Teams’ vision of Christ living within every culture captured the heart and mind of Bryson Samboja as he thought of reaching the Muslim Digo people of his homeland. After getting some initial training, he joined GT in 2002 and shortly after began work among the unreached along Kenya’s south coast.



Bryson baptizes a new believer

Bryson and his wife, Deborah, traveled throughout five districts sharing their lives with the Digo. But the people were so poor, they felt that they had to do something to ease their suffering. They shared with local believers about the needs of these poor Muslims who gave them six bags of rice to distribute as they shared the Good News. The first baptism among the Digo had 23 new believers from Muslim backgrounds!

As the small congregations grew, Bryson and Deborah dreamed of starting a school and a farm to serve the Muslim communities. After much prayer, they received a gift that allowed them to buy land and to put up one structure: an outhouse which served as their declaration that God would bring an increase. (Read a GT Board member’s blog on that step of faith here: <https://www.xcellimark.com/blog/build-a-toilet-and-they-will-come.aspx>) The Lord blessed their faith and the school has grown to over a hundred and forty children.

Bryson relates, “In the early days, Muslim families were skeptical about the school but when they saw the quality of the education, they started enrolling their children. We gave the children an excellent education and taught them scripture songs. They would sing those at home raising good questions from their parents about God! We had many parent-teacher conferences from those songs!”



Graduation Day

In 2008, Bryson was selected as the Global Teams Africa Director and his influence expanded. During his 12 years of service, Global Teams Africa grew to 12 sending bases in eight different countries with over 400 field partners! God has used Bryson and Deborah to impact the whole continent.

Last year, Bryson handed the reins of leadership to Francis. While many at his age would be contemplating retirement, Bryson has a different dream. “I want to live out my final days in the midst of the Digo, continuing to minister to the people God has sent me to. We want to build a home in a Digo village so that they stop by and stay with us.”

The Ask

Partner with us in honoring Bryson by giving a generous gift toward the cost of building a home among the Digo - helping he and Deborah to continue to run their race. Give online at <http://weblink.donorperfect.com/gtbaseafrica> with “Bryson” in the comment box.



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