

Kyle's Impact Ndola 2008 Blog

Northrise University

Day One

Greetings from Ndola, Zambia – we made it!

We thank God for safe flights and delivering us into this amazing continent of Africa.

We were greeted at the airport by Moffat & Doreen's smiling faces. After two long flights we found ourselves traveling the road from Lusaka to Ndola via bus. Everywhere Zambians were out and about as they were starting their day. Along the way we saw several groups of small children at the side of the road smiling and waving. Mostly we watched as the land stretched out before us.

We pulled into Ndola – unloaded our gear and went across the street to Northrise University. There we gathered together for prayer, fellowship and sustenance. It was great meeting some of the students, each other and discussing what ministry teams we'd be working with.

Most everyone was pretty beat. So, off we went to bed for a good night's sleep...asking God to refresh us in the morning as we set out anew to serve Him, Northrise University and the people of Ndola.

What an awesome God we serve!

... stay tuned, more to follow

Day Two

After a good night's sleep for most and a bite to eat, everyone met at Northrise for devotion time and communion. We were blessed to be led by the Northrise choir. Their soaring voices lifted us up in worship. Together we sang Refiner's Fire and Peace Like a River and more. Before we celebrated communion, Pastor Moffat taught about unity of the body, selfishness and reverence for God. The choir closed with a song called Nayamona Amaka Yenu (I have seen your power and I thank you.) The song set the tone for the day.

Most teams met to go over the plans for the week. The VBS/Children's Ministry unpacked soccer balls, jump ropes, play ground balls and arts & crafts.

The media team met with Northrise students and gave an impromptu workshop in photography. The students on the team will also be participating in this daily blog (come back tomorrow for another update.) The team will be shooting a new video for Northrise and the students will be working alongside them creating a video of their own.

So, together side-by-side ... Impact Ndola 2008 is off to a great start!

Give thanks to the Lord for He is good,
His love endures forever. Psalm 118:1-2

Day Three

We started our day with Pastor Maxie Burch leading our devotion time. He spoke of "trusting God while he's changing our minds." He spoke of leadership, character and transformation. We were left to start our day with the thought ... "Christianity is a translated faith with no privileged culture, no privileged people."

While we were having devotions, Moffat met with Anthony Katongo, the mayor of Ndola. The mayor acknowledged and commended Moffat and Northrise for the work that they are doing for the community through education and outreach to the city of Ndola.

The entire group boarded three buses to tour three ministry sites. First we visited MacKenzie school. We were greeted at the school by the younger children who were outside eating lunch. Some would come up to you and grab your hand to walk alongside you. The children in the classrooms sang songs welcoming us. Afterwards we walked through the village. It is difficult to put into words what we saw. Many children did not even have shoes. Their legs were coated with dirt. Children were playing in groups of 4 or 5. We saw several 6-7 year olds carrying a baby under 1 year in a sling on their backs. If anyone was lagging behind, another would go to gently grab him by the hand to move him with the group. These children definitely had each others back. The children not attending school, were free to roam and play about the village. It struck me as something almost unheard of in the States, without parental supervision.

The women we saw were caring for the children, preparing food or sitting together in groups. The men were scarce at that time of day. We did see one building a house with bricks, another building a door for his home, and one who was proud to show us he had a well to draw water from. We also saw another group of men at the tavern. So goes village life.

In Mapalo we met with Emil who is a 2007 Northrise graduate and is the director of the school. We visited with the students in their classrooms. Many children outside who are unable to attend school joined the Northrise students and our Impact Ndola 2008 group for an impromptu dance.

We came back for a quick lunch and then headed out to Arthur Davison Children's Hospital. We visited the contagious wards where so many children had TB, measles and malaria. There were many little ones who were lying on torn mattresses with dirty blankets. The situation was the same in the other wards.

Though this a general hospital – it also has a High Cost ward where the few people who can afford to pay can do so and receive more hands on care. The good news is, is that in the midst of all of this, the doctors and the nurses were amazing. They were so caring, professional and attentive to the children's needs. Although the resources are limited, the staff skillfully uses what equipment they do have and does an incredible job with what they have to work with. If only they had the funds to handle all of the cases.

After seeing so many helpless children ... most in the group walked away in silence, if not in tears.

After the hospital we headed out to "the land" at Northrise Farms. Moffat had originally asked the government for 30 acres – and what did the government decide to do? They gave Northrise 640 acres of land for development! God is good!

Before we walked the land, there was a tree planting ceremony for Peter Reimer. A very dear friend of Northrise. He was on Northrise's Agricultural Committee and one of the leaders for Seeds of Hope. The

entire group gathered together for a song and offered up a prayer. Moffat dedicated 4 almond trees in Peter's honor. Peter was an almond farmer from Bakersfield, California

The work at the farm is coming along. We saw all of the 3500 banana trees that were planted. The first crop is expected to be harvested midyear 2009.

We did a walkthrough of the student dormitories and the farm manager's house. The Northrise students who were along – we're already picking out their rooms!

God is doing amazing things here at Northrise. As Moffat always says "God will provide." He does and he will!

Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and lean not unto your own understanding;
in all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make your paths straight (Psalm 3:5-6)

Day Four

We started our day with Pastor Maxie Burch leading our devotion time. He spoke of "Confessions of a Worrier." Most of life is about waiting – but the key is what is God doing while we're waiting? He's in the process of transforming us for the moment that he asks us to serve. Prayer is pausing to reorient yourself and connect prayer & work together. After you've prayed now is the time to work and to trust that whatever we do with our work has been covered in prayer. Ref: Luke 18:8

Today the media team made a brief trip to MacKenzie school. The children were hard at work making nametags. When we were ready to leave, one child came up to me and took my hand purposefully and led me over to an older boy who was about 9 years old. The little boy about 6 years old pointed to what the older boy had in his hand. He was holding what looked like 3 children's bible storybooks. The young boy obviously wanted one of them very much. So I asked the older boy if he would share with the younger boy. He said he did not want to give up the books and held them tight to his chest. I said that since he spoke English and could read, it would be good if he would read the stories to the younger boy who did not, and teach him about Jesus. He immediately opened the book and started reading to the boy. I think that perhaps he did that straightaway, out of fear that he might have to part with one of the books! I laughed and said that he didn't necessarily have to do it right at that moment, but secured a promise from him that he would read the stories to the boy. Fast forward to tonight. I went downstairs to ask someone in Children's Ministry what they handed out to the children today. I ran into Dana who is leading the children in worship. When I asked her what it was that they handed out, she informed me that they were bible stories, songs and coloring pages. She also told me that the 9 year old's name is Chris and that he very much wanted to learn the songs and read the stories. Because of his desire, she gave him specifically the little pamphlets that accompany her CD's. How sweet that one had such a desire and the younger boy matched it with a desire of his own for knowledge. God will use the older to teach the younger. Yes, God is surely working in Ndola. Please pray for Chris and the little boy whose name I know not. Pray that they might grow together in the Lord.

Jaclyn Drake – Children's Hospital

We're working at the hospital with Joyce, the head nurse. She's taking us around surgeries, medicine distribution and checking vitals. We washed beds today and what that is, is taking a wet rag dipped in bleach and washing down the bed. When they say make the bed, they literally mean change the bed, don't change the sheets. Today in the surgical ward a 14 year old came in for a redressing after

breaking her leg 6 months ago. The leg was severely infected and they had to drain the leg and she was in great pain and was given no pain meds.

Although I feel heartbroken for what I'm seeing, I feel that maybe God is using the children to affect me in ways that I don't yet know. I feel spoiled and maybe take what I have back home for granted after seeing what they experience and go through every day. In any event, I'm glad to be here to support the team in anyway that I can.

"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." Mark 10:14

Day Five

Today Pastor Alan Meenan led our devotions and taught on the Great Commission. First, that all authority is Christ's. Second, that you go out in His name. Third, that He is with you always. Ref: Matthew 28:18-20

Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples. Psalm 96:3

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Today we went over to drop in on the Women's Conference. When we arrived I was drawn to the meeting room by the sounds of the local women worshipping. I knew not the words but was lifted up by the Spirit of them. I saw several women with little children slung on the backs. I wondered if the women had so wanted to attend the conference that brought their very young babies, rather than miss it altogether.

Once the small groups were formed, it seemed as if they really made an extraordinary effort to communicate and be understood. To understand the things that are universal to women with no regard to nationality or tongue. As I walked about the room, I smiled to myself as I heard Bemba here, English there. Today there was a coming together, a sharing of hearts and thoughts, sister-to-sister, side by side.

Pastor Maxie Burch – Pastor's Conference

The same men have returned from yesterday with many additional men signing up today. This conference is giving these men a first time opportunity to interact with each other. Nothing will mess up your theology or politics more than meeting someone on the other side that you like. I hope that this is the beginning of friendships that will result in focus and effective ministry that begins to address the social problems that are plaguing the people Ndola.

Day Six

We started the day with Dr. Elaine Vaden leading our devotion time. She spoke about it being ordinary lives lived for God's glory that have the greatest impact on culture. That we should live out our ordinary life, not in the church, but in our day-to-day life. Ref. Romans 12

Today I spent some time at the Pastor's Conference. I was excited to see that there were about 8 women pastors in attendance. Yes, God is an equal opportunity employer! I met several of the local pastors who had such a desire to really study and learn tools that would help their understanding of the Word. They were eager to better equip themselves so that they might be better ministers to their people. So many spoke of their appreciation of Northrise for organizing the conference. Many of the men wanted to tell me of their churches, their families but mostly about the numerous orphans that

each church cared for within their local communities. Families expanded from 4 to 6 to 8 to 10, due to parents dying of HIV/AIDS and leaving the families left behind to care for the children. Brothers, sisters, grandmothers, uncles, aunts and neighbors who can barely survive are called upon to step in to fill the gap to care for these children. The burden is enormous. Yet they move forward trusting in the Lord to meet the needs of Zambia.

Jennafer Jones – Children’s Ministry

I work at MacKenzie School with the 2 year olds to 4th graders. But some of the 4th graders could be as old as 12. This week we’ve had up to 180 kids in the classroom. We handed out 650 T-shirts at MacKenzie and the kids had to color them in with fabric markers. They were so excited to receive a shirt. The younger ones had to have their hands held to help them color. The older ones took pride in their coloring and writing their names on their shirts.

Today I was standing with my hands behind my back, waiting for the bus to pick us up. I felt a little child come up to me from behind and take my hand. When I looked around, the little girl was standing next to me holding my hand, smiling at me.

The whole thing breaks your heart. So many kids without family, without shoes and completely dirty. But when I see their smiles they teach me that love doesn’t have to be complicated, love is simple. I am glad to be part of the team. It has enriched my life that I can help show these kids that people do care and that no matter what Jesus loves them.

Day Seven

This morning before devotions, Moffat gave a word of encouragement to the students. The President of Zambia is President Levy Patrick Mwanawasa (mwah-nah-WAH-sah). He suffered a stroke 2 days ago and was flown to Paris. President Mwanawasa is from Ndola and the people of Ndola love this man. In 2005, he acknowledged his faith in Jesus Christ and was baptized in a public service. He has been very instrumental in stamping out corruption in Zambia. Regarding President Mwanawasa’s condition, Moffat told the students to not be afraid, that God is in control and will not leave them fatherless.

Pastor Victor Chibangula led us in devotions today. He is also a part-time instructor here at Northrise teaching Biblical languages. Victor spoke about so many people needing help and a touch of the Lord. He said that whatever we have done in Ndola, however small, is not in vain and will be used for God’s glory. He spoke of how partnerships progress the Gospel and how he would like to reduce the number of people speaking Bemba in hell! Partnering together makes it easier to get the work done and that we should trust God to use us.

The media team went to the children’s hospital today. We shot video as Dr. Ian Bare of our group and the Northrise students presented the head of the hospital, Dr. Kapakala with medical supplies. Northrise donated much needed supplies, medications and antibiotics, equipment and surgical instruments.

I spoke with the head nurse, Clementina Mihango (Joyce) and her deputy Flavia Mvula and they were so appreciative of all that Northrise is doing to help with the needs of the hospital.

We made another stop at the school today and watched as the children were having their pictures taken with a Polaroid camera. They were called outside in twos and stood in front of a painted backdrop, grinning from ear to ear. Earlier they had made frames made with popsicle sticks that they had personalized and decorated. The children love having their pictures taken. Even when you shoot them with a digital camera, they are anxious to see their image immediately.

What impressed me about the kids is how respectful they are. They stand in line either waiting to be called to play a game or while waiting for their food. They are so attentive and can stand quietly for such periods of time. I can't recall the last time I saw kids waiting for anything when they weren't rowdy and loud, no matter what the age.

As I had mentioned before, the children are free to roam and play about the village by themselves. This is quite intriguing to me. Yes, they live in abject poverty with clothes that they have been wearing for days/weeks. Yes, they live in unbelievably dirty conditions. Yes, the only food that they may eat could be the meals that they have had at school that day. Yes, many orphans have been created when parents have died of HIV/AIDS or left home altogether. Then you see them play and run around the village, laughing, smiling and generally having a grand time.

But, when I see the spirit of the children in Zambia, I see a freedom and hope in their smiles. I see hope in that this is a Christian nation where the children sing openly and lovingly about their Jesus, their God. I see hope that a place called Northrise University can one day teach those children, educate them, give them a strong foundation so that they can go out and change Ndola, Zambia and the world. Yes. God is doing amazing things in Ndola.

Oh yes, and I can't leave out that my pals Agness and Pimpa serenaded us by singing our National Anthem as they walked in to dinner tonight with an American flag and cake to celebrate the 4th of July! These girls are tricky. They had asked me earlier in the week, while on the bus to the farm, to teach them the National Anthem. To which I laughed and said, #1 I can't sing and #2 that most American's have a tough time with the song as it's most difficult to sing. I think I only got through the first line with them – but clever as they are, they went to U-Tube to get the song and lyrics down in order to surprise us for our Independence Day. And sing they did! With great voices and style, they did honor to a song we usually mangle.

Lucy Addeo – The Kitchen Team

I came to Ndola to help serve the food and to walk alongside the Northrise students. Originally, I had planned for food for 150-200 people a day for 4-5 days. In preparation, we bought 3 tons of food and shipped it in a container in December. Thank God the container arrived just a couple days before the group arrived in Ndola. We supplemented what we shipped with daily runs to the store for milk, eggs, etc.

I really enjoy working with the students. They are so respectful... they call me Madame! They have so many stories, as many are orphans. For so many of them – their lives and their families have been touched by death.

One night, I asked them if they wanted to eat before dinner was served. They said that they wanted to serve the group before themselves. The whole kitchen team works and functions from their heart. Their hope and their goal, is to do the very best they can. They are content with what they have, but strive for more...yet not at the cost of anyone else.

What they said to me is "we live our life to the fullest because that's all we have."

Day Eight

The day started off bittersweet, as all started contemplating our departure. Every person on this trip has been affected in ways we already know, and anticipate others God has yet to reveal. Our hearts have been profoundly touched by the students and the people of Ndola we have walked alongside. Moffat gave the morning devotions and then we broke into small groups to review the week for

Northrise. The entire team then regrouped for a debriefing session. Since this is the first Impact Ndola, the feedback will be helpful in the planning Impact Ndola 2010.

Northrise organized a free afternoon concert for the community. As we were heading off to walk to the concert, I heard screaming and turned to see a hug-fest (if you will) at the front of Northrise's entrance. It seems that a group of children from Mapalo school walked 3 hours to come join us and attend the concert! It speaks volumes to the ones in our group who worked with these kids for the past week and built relationships with them. I was in awe that they walked 3 hours!! I know trust, bonds and friendships have been birthed out of Impact Ndola 2008.

The concert was kicked off by a guy with great vocals (sorry, I don't know his name) who sang an entire set of contemporary Christian songs which we most of us knew. It was great to be able to worship and sing alongside our brothers and sisters of Ndola. Zambian Christian/Gospel music is alive and well and on fire, with Ephraim, Adonai, Tiko and many others taking the stage to sing God's praise. The house was rocking and everyone in it was too!

Day Nine

We left the hotel and loaded onto the bus at 6:00AM to make our way to Lusaka. It was sad to leave our newfound friends and a city and it's people that we grew to love. As we drove I sat watching an incredible sunrise. The sunrises and sunsets here are unbelievable, a huge bright orange/red ball of fire. I put my headphones on to listen to the radio as I took in the sight of the rising sun. I listened to many a Christian station playing songs that glorified the Lord, as I absorbed the beauty of God's creation and the wonder that is Africa. Tears rolled down my eyes as images from the week shot through my brain. So many thoughts, so many faces, so much to process. In time, I know that all of this will gel. But one thing I am certain of, is the one thing that people warned me about. Be careful they said, you'll lose your heart to Africa. I did and I'm glad. I'm so thankful for an opportunity to serve in this beautiful country with such beautiful people. We do indeed serve an awesome God!