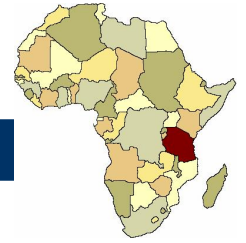


# Tanzanian Testimony



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LORIEN KNAPP

MAY 2009

Dear Friends,

I realize I have had a bit of writer's block these months. I think that all of the experiences of the land have finally caught up with me, and I have really been trying to digest my new understanding of Tanzania and the world. It is nearly impossible to be immersed in a land with such need without being profoundly affected. I am surrounded by children with no home, widows who are isolated by society, sick and dying people who have no shoulder to lean on. I am often overwhelmed by all of the needs and my inability to help. It is only God's amazing power of love that keeps me going.

But there is a delicate balance to strike here in Tanzania. I have seen that the more I give His love, the more people I meet and the deeper the relationships become. This is a great blessing but it is also a great challenge because as more and more relationships grow, I feel that I am stretched thinner and thinner. Surely God sustains me until I can find the moments to get away for some vacation time.

I look forward to the beginning of June when I will spend a week on the coast just relaxing. My dad will meet me there and then stay for about a month. It will help to ease my stress, having an attentive ear by my side. It will also be a blessing to reconnect with one who comes from the West. I often feel so disconnected from my old life, though it is only natural that each of us continues on the journey laid before us. Though I am far away I continue to cherish your love and encouragement... it helps me to feel that I am still a part of that world. I am merely an extension of your love and support. I look forward to a time when we will meet again and share in rich fellowship together.

## PRAYER CONCERNS:

- V **Praise God for the miracles he offers as reminders of his continuous presence... Praise him for what he has done in the life of Mathias.**
- V **Pray for the staff of TCRC to be driven by love, even in frustrating circumstances. Pray that we can be imitators of Christ.**
- V **Pray for the street ministry to continue growing so that we can encourage those children who are still living in such difficult circumstances. Pray for the Lord's provision in their lives.**

**If you wish to offer financial support, mail check to:**

**AIM: Finance PO Box 178 Pearl River NY 10965**

Checks should be made payable to AIM in order to be tax-deductible. Include a note stating my name, and the money will be credited to my account.

Your support and encouragement are appreciated!

## Mathias

It was a night for a typical street outing. We walked through the dark city armed with bread and a guitar, ready to love all of the children who crossed our path. After many hours of walking and talking, numerous encounters with children, and having used our entire stash of bread, we were calling it a night. As we walked back to the car we noticed a very small boy sitting on a curb alone. He looked shell-shocked. We went to talk with him and discovered that 9-year old Mathias was in a desperate state. He came from a region far away where he lived in an extremely abusive situation. He was put on a bus and told to come find his sister in the city. Unfortunately it is a bit of a challenge to find someone in a city with over a million people. To make matters worse, Mathias' sister had recently married a Muslim man; according to tradition she had to change her name to a Muslim name. Mathias didn't even know her new name. He was completely lost, and sadness didn't even begin to describe his state of mind.

We decided to take him with us. He was not yet adjusted to the street life, and having come from a village he didn't understand the ways of the city. We took him to get some food since he had been without any meals for a week... he ate as if he had never seen food before. He began living at TCRC and studying at the school. His life was gaining joy but he still had a void as he wondered where his sister was.

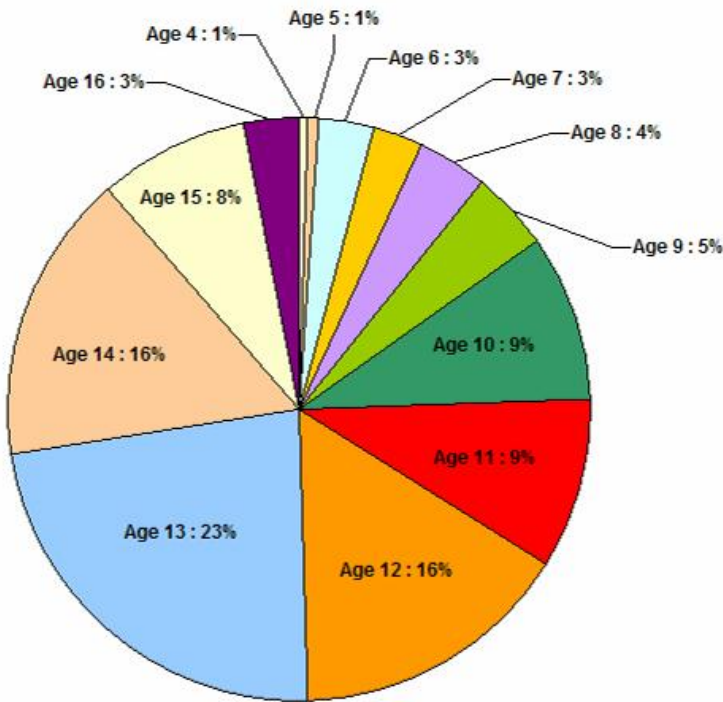
A few months later he was walking by some shops near the TCRC campus. He noticed a familiar face. It turned out his sister lived very near to TCRC. It was a joyful reunion and she agreed to have her little brother come to live with her. Mathias continues to be a part of the TCRC family, and he enjoys all of his dear friendships with our boys... we want to continue to encourage him with Christ's love even though he is now living with a Muslim family. We are encouraged to see him filled with happiness now that he has been reunited with his sister.

I know that this story has been a miraculous reminder of God's love and provision. What are the chances that we would run into this boy and take him to live in the exact same neighborhood where his long lost sister was living? I am filled with a profound peace as I see such stories unfold as it is a reminder that our Lord is watching out for us. He cares for all his children, especially the least of these... Society may overlook a child in need, but the Lord will provide in his perfect way.

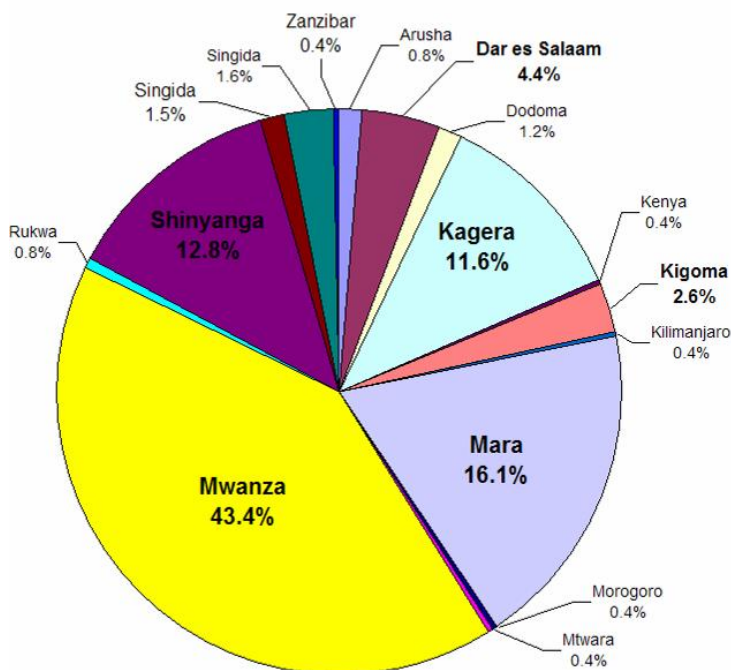
Street Statistics

Each time we go to the streets to visit the kids we try to collect data so that we can have a better understanding of the street situation. We pretty much stay in the downtown area so the numbers are only relevant to one neighborhood. One of the benefits of staying in one part of town is that we get to develop relationships with the kids in the area; seeing them each time we visit. I would love it if we could grow in this outreach and expand to other Mwanza neighborhoods. The following data comes from 350 children over the past year.

AGES OF CHILDREN IN STREETS



ORIGINS OF CHILDREN IN STREETS



From the numbers you can see that most of the kids in the street are around age 13. The second graph shows the different regions of Tanzania from which the children have traveled to get to Mwanza. Many of the kids are from the Mwanza region, but a huge number have traveled from great distances hoping to find some opportunity for life here in the city.

*Jeremiah 9: 23-24*

*Don't let the wise boast in their wisdom, or the powerful boast in their power, or the rich boast in their riches. But those who wish to boast should boast in this alone: that they truly know me and understand that I am the Lord who demonstrates unfailing love and who brings justice and righteousness to the earth, and that I delight in these things. I, the Lord, have spoken!*

UPCOMING TRAVELS

I WANTED TO LET YOU ALL KNOW THAT I WILL BE BACK IN THE USA FOR A VISIT AT THE END OF THE YEAR. I PLAN TO RETURN TO INDIANA FOR THE MONTHS OF NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER. IF ANY OF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ARRANGE A VISIT LET ME KNOW AND I WILL START WORKING ON MY SCHEDULE. I HOPE TO HAVE A CHANCE TO RECONNECT WITH AS MANY OF YOU AS I CAN. YOU ARE ALL SUCH A BLESSING TO ME, AND YOUR FELLOWSHIP IS A TREASURE. I WOULD LOVE TO SHARE MORE ABOUT THIS MINISTRY WITH YOU.

