



Matt & Becki Dillingham in Tanzania

A Pastor for Mahaka

MAF have been flying into the village of Mahaka, as part of the Kilimatinde safari, for many years. This monthly medical and evangelical safari brings pastors and evangelists from Dodoma to Mahaka and surrounding villages to serve the people living in the area. To get there by road involves a 3 hour drive followed by a 3 hour walk across difficult terrain so without MAF bringing the team in by air (taking 25 minutes), people would not have received the Gospel or had access to medical care.

In recent months, the need for MAF to fly teams into Mahaka has reduced, as a medical clinic has been set up in the village and a full-time pastor, Obadia, has relocated here. Obadia has worked in ministry for 18 years, in different parts of Tanzania but he felt called by God to set up home here. "What made me accept to come to Mahaka was to fulfil my calling to serve God, without considering the place, he said, referring to Matthew 28:19, which calls followers of Jesus to "Go and make disciples of all nations." Roshan Stephen was the pilot for the flight which took Obadia, together with a mattress and some kitchen supplies to his new home.

His arrival in Mahaka was met with much excitement and he was given a tremendous welcome. "I felt very happy, the people showed love" he said. "People sang and danced. The community gives a lot of cooperation because they are happy to receive a church minister." People have continued to be supportive of their new pastor. "Even government leaders work well with us" he noted. However he has found a community that faces spiritual challenges. "People still believe in traditional healers and they worship at graves" he said. Despite this, his hope and expectation is to see Mahaka transformed, for people to believe in God and to see the church grow.

MAF will continue to support Obadia by flying evangelists into Mahaka to support his ministry but the frequency of flights has reduced since he arrived. "It's not like we've completely let go of the village, but we just slowed down the number of flights because the village itself is sustaining" Roshan explained. "This allows us to focus on more places where help is needed" he concluded.



(left) Obadia, wearing the orange t-shirt moving to Mahaka to start his new job as the Pastor for the village. (right) His luggage, loaded in the aircraft

New Partners

In her role as operations manager for MAF Tanzania, Becki has been focussing on developing new partnerships with organisations working, or wanting to work in Tanzania. The Pamoja clinic, which we wrote about in our previous letter, continues to bring different medical specialists into remote villages to provide more varied health care. There are a number of organisations planning to use MAF for the first time in the coming months, to enable them to reach more people in more places.

One organisation that has already begun flying with us is "The One New Heart Tanzania". Their vision is that no one would die of treatable heart conditions due to lack of access, awareness or timely care. They recently joined our regular medical safari to the village of Chidudu, adding heart screening, hypertension and diabetes checks to the existing medical services provided. Co-founder, Godfrey Maro explained the importance of their work: "These services are critical because remote communities often lack access to specialised care, early diagnosis and clear referral pathways, leading to delayed treatment and preventable complications. Partnering with MAF allows them to reach communities that would otherwise be inaccessible. By joining MAF's well-established medical clinics, everything is already set up for them to reach people and provide early diagnosis of heart problems. When this is available, treatment is more effective, costs are lower, recovery is faster and mortality rates are highly reduced. Godfrey is hopeful that the new partnership with MAF can bring this kind of change. "Together we can combine resources and expertise to better serve under-served communities," he explained.



(Top): Peter Griffin flew The One New Heart workers to Chidudu.

(Bottom): The One New Heart workers carrying out a feasibility study to understand access to heart care services for mamas and newborn babies.

Tamsin

Tamsin Demelza was born on Sunday 8th March, weighing 7lb 8oz. She was born at home at 8.46pm. We thank God for her and the timing of her birth as our midwife was due to travel to Zanzibar for an 8 day training conference the following morning. Bethan and Luke were still awake and joined us as soon as she was born. Friends from church have been bringing over meals for us, which has been a huge blessing. We have enjoyed our first week with her, while Bethan and Luke have been a great help.

Praise

* Tamsin Demelza arrived safely and is doing well, as is Becki. We were able to have the home-birth that we hoped for.

* New partnerships have already begun with "The One New Heart" and Pamoja clinic to provide a greater variety of medical services to remote communities in Tanzania. Meetings with other prospective partners have been encouraging too

* Matt received a consignment of tools from Tools with a Mission, to start the woodwork training course at Heshima Learning Centre. The tools were delivered to Mwanza, a 12 hour drive away but a friend at church was able to arrange transportation to Arusha so Matt didn't have to leave Becki alone with 3 children.

Prayer

* Pilot Roshan Stephen is busy doing his C-strip training, as Becki did last year, which will mean he can fly into Tanzania's most challenging airstrips. He will also begin training to fly the Cessna Caravan in the near future. Please pray for him during this busy time.

* With Becki on maternity leave and the Griffin family on home-assignment for 6 months later this year, the program will face challenges so please pray for the rest of the team and for additional people to join short-term as required.

* Obadia, the new pastor in Mahaka requested prayer that he may continue to love God and be patient as he serves the community there.



Bethan's Blog

I have a baby sister! She's so cute. Her name is Tamsin, but I mostly call her Cat as that was what we called her before she was born. At school I've been training for our climb up Mount Meru next month. I started doing a course called Alpha after school. We meet at my friends house and watch a video and discuss big questions about Christianity.



A Letter from Luke

I've been making bows and arrows with our guard, Kipaile. He is Maasai and is very good at making them. I also make them for people at school. I've been learning guitar this year. Now my sister is born I play her songs and read to her every day after school. At church our childrens group (called Burning Pineapples) are creating a play to perform at Easter. I'm

playing the cockerel.