

NEWSLETTER

NAMIKANGO MISSION

“DO YOU NOT PERCEIVE IT?”

As we celebrate the beginning of 2021, I'm sure many of us wonder what is in store for us this year. No one would have predicted a year ago that we would be where we are now. Many have experienced some loss, whether in the form of work, or people we love, or otherwise. Others may have gone through COVID without being majorly affected in the larger scheme of things. But one area that we have all shared some commonality is in regards to change. Before 2020, many of us had never touched a facemask. Where previously we insisted on meeting “face to face” for some important issue, we've learned that a virtual meeting must and can suffice. Change is never an easy thing for us as people, but it's amazing to see how we can stretch when we must.

2020 was a year of change for Namikango, even in spite of COVID. Three new board members were brought on in January. In August, Cameron Mayhill joined our US team. In December, after 46 years of service, Sidney Vaughn retired from his operational role at Namikango. This is a massive change. In Malawi, change has been happening as well. Our staff have grown from 50 to almost 80 in the last several years. In 2021, several new events that have long been in the works are scheduled to begin. Next month we plan to open the Out-Patient Clinic as an addition to the Maternity Clinic that has stood and served alone since 1974. Shortly following this opening, we expect to launch our coffee business which

has been in preparation for the last several years. The soccer field will open to the community in the spring. And finally, perhaps one of the largest changes, will be the opening of Namikango's Discipleship Training Institute. Several major undertakings to launch in one year. Change. Challenging... and exciting.

“ Reflecting on all this, I'm reminded of the words of Isaiah: “Forget the former things, do not dwell on the past. See I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?” (43:18-19). We tend to live much of our lives in the past. Isaiah speaks the word of God to his people in the midst of difficult times and tells them not to look backwards to the time when they weren't in exile and say, “Those were the good times.” Rather, God is doing something now, something new, in the midst of the struggle. “Are you able to see it?” This does not mean the past is not important, or that the “new thing springing up” is better than what was before. But it does mean change. The past is what has brought us where we are. Now, we must walk humbly knowing that God will use us, but it may be different than we expected. May God help us all as we walk with him this year. ”

By Ben Hayes





Post Labor Ward

“WE ARE CONNECTED BY A COMMON THREAD OF LOVE AND RESPONSIBILITY”

We moved to Malawi just a few months before the birth of our first child. On many afternoons I walked the long dusty road, past corn fields and staff houses, from the main entrance to the maternity ward – a road that countless women before us have walked since it first opened in 1974. If you happen to come and visit the mission, you will likely be invited to attend a devotional time at the maternity clinic, where you too will see some of their faces. If you ask questions to get to know them, you will find that they range from expecting their first child to their eighth or ninth, some having delivered many times before in this same location.

Rose Sugar is a new mom from a nearby village. On January 7, she delivered her first-born son, Kevin. Her smile spreads across her face as she leans over him when we prepare to pray. Her face elated as she tells of the surprise she experienced when she delivered a baby boy, and of her gratefulness for the prenatal education that she received at Namikango, where nurses taught her how to identify possible danger signs during pregnancy.

While a lot of wisdom can be found in the community, from mothers, grandmothers and midwives who have delivered before, there is largely a lack of understanding at the individual level of a woman’s cycle of health, including the gestation process and birth itself.

“Rose, like all women who deliver at the clinic, must have come to the clinic 8 times before delivery, to receive ante-natal education, HIV testing, and family planning sessions. If a problem is identified before or during labor, they are referred to the nearest government hospital for further care.

Women may travel from up to an hour away to be prepared to arrive at the clinic in time, as it is illegal to deliver in the village in order to prevent maternal death. There has recently been a large emphasis on reducing the rate of maternal death, and the Namikango staff takes great pride in its achievement in this area. “I feel good when I see that we have had no maternal deaths,” says Nurse Memory Somanje.

At the end of the visit with Rose, I ask what we can pray for, and she unsurprisingly asks God for a long and healthy life for Kevin: That he would grow and be able to help her, her family and the larger community. While we may all wish the same for our own children, many in Malawi are aware the success and health of the individual leads to the success and health of everyone. ”

HIV and AIDS prevention is one way that the individual's health directly affects the health of the community. Billiard Kyambujo is an HIV and AIDS counselor who takes a lot of pride in being born at Namikango Mission in 1977. Part of his work involves testing both mother and father for HIV and AIDS. By a mother knowing both her status as well as her partners status, it significantly reduces the risk of HIV transmission in the community. According to Maternity Administrator Moses Nsema, while HIV and AIDS numbers may still be high, the local death rate is lower because of the medicines and commitment to people receiving them.

In a few weeks Namikango will soon begin operation of an Out-Patient Clinic; a major milestone for Namikango as well as for the community, as the nearest health center currently serves a very large population. Before the opening of the Out-Patient Clinic, only pregnant women and children under five were able to receive medication at the clinic, including for treatment of life-threatening illnesses such as Malaria.

Women in Malawi face very serious challenges during pregnancy and after the birth of a child, and the Namikango maternity clinic has gained a positive reputation throughout the area as one of the best places to receive care. "People come to Namikango because they know it is a faith-based organization, and has developed trust," Moses informs me.



Head Nurse - Memory Somanje



HIV Counselor - Billiard Kyambujo

“ Now this trust will open more doorways to reach families in the community as services are offered to those beyond the scope of the maternity clinic, including spouses, siblings, and children who have “aged out” of the cover of care by being over the age of 5.

Walking these roads, and meeting women such as Rose, we find that our concerns for our families are the same around the world. While facing the global challenge of the spread of COVID-19, as well as the specific challenges that our individual communities face, we are connected by a common thread of love and responsibility, choosing the best option for care - always.

Thanks to the partnership and services of stateside and local partners, Namikango has provided the best possible location for care for women and children in this area for over 40 years and will now be able to continue to reach out with medical services to the larger community through the opening of the Out-patient Clinic. ”

By Justine Hayes

Namikango Mission
PO Box 16528
Lubbock TX 79490

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NEW ADDRESS

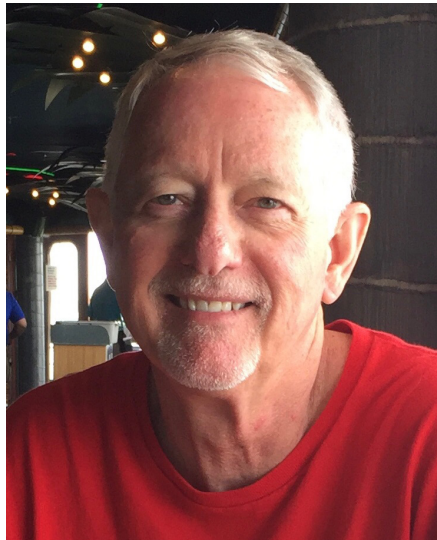
As we move into 2021, God has opened doors for us to move into a new season with a new US location! We want to thank Robin Vaughn Hughes for her tireless effort on behalf of Namikango Mission over the years in South Houston. Robin let us know in December that she was going to step away from the work of the mission. Thus, the board has prayerfully considered re-locating the mission office.

As of January 11, the address for mailing donations has relocated to Lubbock, Texas! Our new address for receiving donations is:

**NAMIKANGO MISSION
PO BOX 16528
LUBBOCK, TEXAS 79490**

NEW TEAM MEMBER

We are pleased to welcome Dave Carter to the Namikango Mission family! Dave just finished a long tenure with Lubbock Christian University and has joined our team from Lubbock as our new Office Assistant! If you have any questions about receipts or processing of donations, please contact Dave at dave@namikango.org or 806-392-0229.



STAY CONNECTED

BEN HAYES - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
ben@namikango.org

CAMERON MAYHILL - US DIRECTOR
cameron@namikango.org or 765-461-1585

 namikango.org

 www.facebook.com/NamikangoMission/

 www.linkedin.com/company/namikango/

 [namikango_mission](https://www.instagram.com/namikango_mission)