



AUGUST 2020

FINALLY, A BUSINESS TRIP AGAIN!

Prayer

- Pray God would bring about His reconciliation to the political impasse and instability in English-speaking Cameroon
- Pray for Florence's efforts to run a dental clinic in Douala, precipitated by the depressed economy in Bamenda.

Praises

- Creativity and resilience of God's church to minister through the limitations and risk of the coronavirus pandemic.
- For the opportunity to again travel for ministry, and for God's protection.

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:18-19 (NIV)

Before English Cameroon's political unrest and before the coronavirus pandemic, it was normal for us working at the Finance and Development Department to make regular trips to stations, departments, and ministries of the Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC). The purposes of these trips were to address accounting issues, carry out internal audits, and have meetings to review operations. For security and health reasons, these trips have been highly mitigated. Trips out of Bamenda are now much less frequent. While appreciating how so much can be communicated and shared via phone calls, emails, text messages, WhatsApp, Skype, Zoom, etc., sometimes you really need the in-person communication and accountability.

Neither political unrest nor pandemic has subsided, nor have their inherent risks been removed. Yet I was very happy that at the end of July and beginning of August it was deemed necessary that my young colleague Desmond, our driver Silas, and myself go to the coastal area and have working sessions with four different ministries.

First Stop: CBC Central Pharmacy, Mutengene – The main objective of



CBC Central Pharmacy, Mutengene





this department is to source for medicines and medical supplies and then distribute them to the CBC Health Services' six hospitals and 32 health centers spread across seven regions of Cameroon. (Part of the Church's compassionate care ministry). It also receives the NAB's White Cross shipments and forwards them to the various health units. The purchase of many of their medical supplies is on credit. Due to some abrupt personnel changes, tracking of and reconciling of creditor accounts was lacking some organization. Our team helped their staff reinstate an appropriate system to reconcile such accounts.

Second Stop: Baptist High School, Buea – The first school on this site at the base of Mount Cameroon was a teacher training college to develop primary school teachers.



Baptist High School, Buea

When that school moved, the site was used to start an all-boys boarding secondary school, which later transitioned to a coed boarding school. Like all other Cameroon schools, it shut down in March 2020 in response to the coronavirus pandemic. The Cameroon government decided that at the beginning of June those classes that are to write end-of-year promotional examinations should return to school while the rest of the classes remained suspended. So the class 5 students returned to prepare and write what is called the O Level (ordinary level government common entrance) exams and students in upper 6 returned to prepare and write A Level (advanced level government common entrance) exams. At the beginning of the 2019/2020 academic year, a new bursar was transferred to the school. Our team conducted an internal audit of the bursar's financial records that was satisfactory.

Third Stop: Mboppi Baptist Hospital, Doula – Situated in Cameroon's largest city, and in a

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remarkably busy part of town, this hospital (started in 2002) is a hive of activity. So far 20 staff have contracted the coronavirus and all have recovered. Our assignment was to work with their finance staff to improve on the tracking of staff medical and rent assistance debts. Some progress was made, but there is still more improvement needed.



Mboppi Baptist Hospital, Douala

Fourth Stop: Baptist Comprehensive College, Soppo, Buea – This secondary school is located just below Baptist High School, Buea. Originally the site hosted a primary school, but as the number of primary schools in the area increased, it became unviable. So a day secondary school was started. With time a boarding option was added. This school too had a new bursar transferred at the beginning of the 2019/2020 academic year, so we conducted another internal audit that again yielded satisfactory results.

A side benefit of this business trip was spending time with my wife, Florence, at her Douala apartment. She joined us for the return trip to Bamenda. The road from Douala to Bamenda has some difficult stretches, especially the last two hours into Bamenda. While I have not been on many road trips lately, Florence frequently is as she has the challenge of overseeing her Bamenda clinic and developing the Douala clinic. Often she travels by public transport, and a trip which should take six hours has taken 12 hours and one even took 22 hours. A common Cameroon proverb is, "Nothing good comes easy."

During this time of increased economic difficulty, I am humbled by the steadfast, regular missionary support. Your prayers are appreciated and continue to be needed in this fight against spiritual principalities and powers. Thank you!