

Deaf Ministries International

Issue 43 | December 2022



Taking the Gospel to the Deaf

It's been another challenging year yet we remain thankful to God for His kindnesses, and hopeful for the year ahead! With the pandemic easing, we have been able to travel to our supporting countries to share testimonies of God's work in the fields and to fundraise, and to our supported countries to encourage, teach and guide, as you'll read about in this newsletter. We have also seen a number of facilities built, new projects begun, students return to school, churches open their doors again and, most wonderfully, many Deaf enter into new life in Christ.

We are always grateful to our supporters who enable this work through unceasing prayer support and generous giving. Please don't stop! We look forward with great expectation to 2023.



From all the staff, board, members & volunteers at DMI Australia, we would like to wish you a blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Give praise to the Lord, proclaim His name; make known among the nations what he has done. Psalm 105:1

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Andrew and Matthijs Visit Africa



It was all cassava, kentes and mosquito nets as Matthijs and I visited east Africa - the first time for me - to review current developments, partake in trainings, visit loan and self-sustainability projects, gather PR material, encourage staff, and

preach the gospel in churches. While there were challenges to overcome, the overriding impression we received was very encouraging. Our teams there are doing a sensational job and the fruit of their work is plain to see.

Supporters might be surprised to know that it was not only my first time to visit our east African fields, but it was also my first time to meet Matthijs in person! We have been working together for almost 3 years and leading DMI together for over a year, yet because of the pandemic, we had only ever met via email and Zoom! It was a pleasure to finally meet in person. Matthijs and I share a very similar work style, vision, sense of humour and passion for the Deaf. To paraphrase Psalm 133, how good and pleasant it is when leaders live and work together in unity!

Burundi

Churches

We have six churches in Burundi serving 750 Deaf. Not being there on a Sunday, we weren't able to attend any of the services, but we did get to meet our pastors and evangelists and see some of the work they are doing in schools and in the community. Fabien and the board presented to us a vision they have for the Deaf in Burundi. They plan to build, over a 5-year period, a church, Bible training centre and Christian resource centre just outside Bujumbura. This will serve as a wonderful home for the Deaf church in Burundi, as well as provide opportunities to train future evangelists and pastors, accommodate visitors and serve as an income generating facility as well. Two cars driven as taxis, which we need to help them buy, will help to finance this project.

Schools

We visited three schools for the Deaf in Burundi. The first was the Ephphatha School for the Deaf. We don't currently support this school but are connected to it through many of our board members and congregants who are graduates. The school has 10 deaf blind students - enough for one class - who need sponsorship which will help care for them and provide a teacher. We visited two campuses of the National Institute for the Deaf, schools which our evangelists visit weekly to teach sign and to teach the gospel.



Burundi National Institute for the Deaf.



Employment

Our team in Burundi is excelling in small business support for the Deaf. Our group loans program has set up carpenters in their own joineries and helped dozens of women (and men) get a start in their own tailoring businesses. Many work together and do a stellar job. I was so impressed with their work that I bought three shirts!

Our self-sustainability community project is also getting underway. We rented five fields outside Bujumbura (for the shocking details on how we got there, see blog #44: <https://deafministriesinternational.com/44-burundi/>). The rains have come just in time, so planting commenced a couple of weeks ago with high hopes of producing bountiful crops. This project will feed Deaf families, employ Deaf workers, and bring a profit into the community.



Rwanda



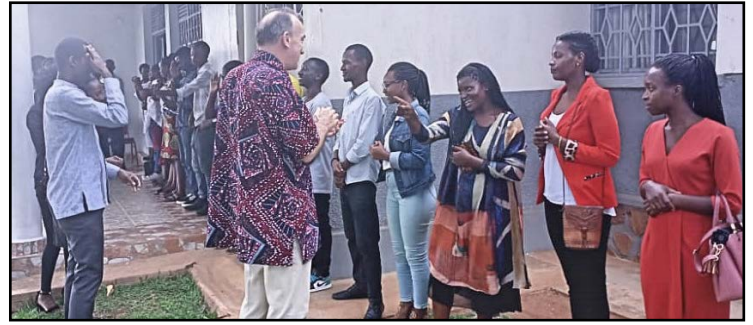
Churches

The church in Kigali is a thriving hub for the Deaf. Matthijs and I were honoured, not only to attend the church - which was packed to the rafters - and participate in worship, but to share the gospel there as well. The famed 'long goodbye' of the Deaf community was a part of proceedings as the service closed with each of the 60 members passing the peace to each other member. Suffice to say, I can now sign 'The peace of the Lord be with you' in Rwandan sign!



Rwanda has 9 churches serving about 270 Deaf. The pastors and board members form a strong, united team. Every night one of the pastors or board members would host us and the whole team at their house for dinner. It was a rich time of fellowship, feasting and weird signing (mine).

Alphonine with her son, Stephen.



'Passing of the Peace'

Schools & Employment

Our Rwandan field doesn't have any schools as such but they are running a sound adult education program. On our second day, Matthijs and I led a training day for our evangelists and staff members. On the third, a seminar was held for those wanting to starting small businesses. This was run by a professional business training organisation and was attended by about 40 members. It was a functional training. Attendees formed groups which would apply for small business loans - ventures which include small restaurants, hair salons and retail outlets. We're very excited for our Rwandan field and the direction it is going.



Group loan workshop.

Uganda

Churches

Our Uganda field has 20 churches for the Deaf, headed by our church in Makerere, Kampala. It was wonderful to speak to the church there and join in their worship. The highlight for me was watching Sylvia (blog #27) lead worship. That woman is gifted! The way she brings joy to the room is something everyone should experience at least once in their lifetime. The Makerere church serves 70 Deaf each week, part of the 650-strong network of Deaf believers we serve around the country. Led by Stephen Kasumba, the church is attended by many of our staff, our Bible school students and Rose, the widow of founding pastor David Bulime.

Sylvia leading the worship.

Schools

We sponsor 10 students in Uganda across several schools. Our largest educational institution is the Neville Muir Comprehensive School, led by Dennis (Blogs #25 & 26). A school for the Deaf and disadvantaged, 300 students are enrolled there, 50 of whom are deaf. We were privileged to be guests of honour at the graduation, a resplendent affair well worth



the trip, even if it did take 7 hours to get there on one of the most pot-holed roads in Africa! The ceremony was wonderful, including traditional dances, songs and speeches. Dennis was quite upset, however, that the Ugandan Catholic Church came and hijacked the ceremony making long speeches and taking two uninvited offerings. DMI, the prime supporter of the school, was sidelined. Dennis assured me that this would

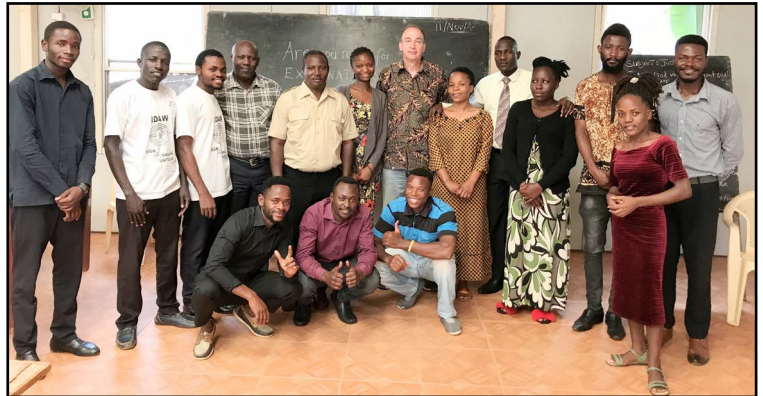


Andrew, Dennis and Matthijs.

never happen again. Still, we were very glad for the students and their parents who had worked so hard to graduate. Uganda also hosts our African Bible school. This is at the



heart of our mission for today and our vision for the future: training the Deaf to take the gospel to the Deaf. It was wonderful to meet Paul, the new Principal of the school, and the dozen students attending from Uganda, DR Congo and Zambia (including Emmanuel, the young Deaf man who was wrongly imprisoned for 10 years and released earlier this year - he's doing really well!). We are in the process of redeveloping our Bible School in Africa so that we can better educate and ordain more Deaf evangelists and pastors to take the gospel further across the continent.



Bible school students



Employment

Ugandans have been the main recipients of micro loans through our MREDF program (see September 2022 newsletter). It was rewarding to see how many of them are benefiting from the fund. We visited Winnie in her hair salon. She said she is making a good income and is hoping to expand her premises! We also stopped by the coffee shop where Sylvia was being supported by DMI during her internship. She has completed the internship and now works as manager of the cafe! What a wonderful development! I couldn't resist having a chocolate milkshake there and it was probably the best I've



ever had. I recommend it if you are in the area...

It was encouraging to see how well our teams are working and how effectively they are fulfilling our mission - taking the gospel, education and employment to the Deaf. Our support is making a difference. Lives are being changed.

Andrew Miller, International Operations Coordinator



MREDF Carpentry business.

Zambia

New churches, new life

Two new churches in Zambia are winning souls. Our church in Chipata started in August last year and now has 52 members. Our church in Katete only opened a few



months ago and already has 38 members. In the last three months, 17 new believers have been baptised in the two churches. Zambia now has 7 churches in total, caring for over 300 Deaf. There are plans to open an eighth church in a village 24 kms outside of Chipata.

It's not all smooth sailing though. In Chipata, members meet in an unfinished building without a roof. With rainy season just around the corner, there are concerns for how they will meet when the rains come. Many church members are unemployed and struggling to make ends meet. Lewis, our Director in Zambia, has asked for extra financial support for Christmas. Readers who would like to support our Zambian churches in this way can send gifts through the 'Donate' page on our website (<https://deafmin.org/donate/>) using "Zambia" as the reference.

DR Congo

Emergency Food Distribution

As reported by several news agencies, violence between government forces and the M23 rebel group has erupted again around the Rutshuru area in DR Congo. This has had a disastrous impact on the local people and none more so than the Deaf. Many have been displaced and are without food and water. Thanks to DMI supporters, we were able to send emergency food supplies which have kept 51 Deaf families alive in circumstances where many others have, sadly, perished. Papy, our Director in DR Congo, passes on his great

thanks with details of the distribution. Each person received 5 kgs of beans, 5 kgs of flour, 1lt of oil and 2 boxes of salt. It is expected that we will need to send a similar amount next month.



2022 Projects Blessings

We thank God for the special projects we have been able to complete this year, and extend our gratitude to our many generous supporters:

2022 Projects

- ✓ DR Congo, Beni secondary school (AUD117,000)
- ✓ DR Congo, DAC office (AUD4,000)
- ✓ Malawi disaster relief (AUD8,800)
- ✓ Malawi Vocational Training Centre rebuilding (AUD20,000)
- ✓ Malawi, Dorm Building Construction (AUD28,000)
- ✓ Tanzania Development Loan (AUD12,600)
- ✓ Philippines, Ligao Church building completion (AUD2,800)
- ✓ Eastern Uganda, temporary church building (AUD2,900)
- ✓ Uganda, Neville Muir Comprehensive School's new classroom (AUD61,000)
- ✓ Uganda, Ideas Workshop Internship program support (AUD17,000)
- ✓ China Loan Extension for café business (AUD13,500)
- ✓ Uganda, New Bible School land (AUD55,000)
Kenya Junior High school building (AUD133,000)

On top of these special projects, for the second year in a row, we were able to send 100% of our budgets to the field every month this year. We praise God for these wonderful provisions. Thank you all so much for helping us to do this.

And here is next year's wish list. So many needs! So many lives to lift!

2023 Projects Wish List

- Burundi Church, training and resource centre (AUD150,000)
- Tanzania, Bible school and training centre (AUD150,000)
- Burundi, 2 cars as IGAs (AUD20,000)
- New Africa Bible School facility (AUD250,000)
- Rwanda, Head church in Kigali (AUD80,000)
- Kenya, Extra land for Kenya school (AUD40,000)
- Kenya, Secondary school (\$TBD)
- Kenya, Head church in Nairobi (\$TBD)
- Myanmar, Self-sustainability chicken coop (AUD\$10,000)
- Rwanda School for the Deaf (K-12) (multi-year project) \$1,000,000
- Kenya, Extra land (AUD22,000)
- Minova elementary school (DR Congo) \$70,000
- Philippines, Sale of school in Davao

Please join us in prayer and giving to help us develop these projects.

Christmas Gift Catalogue Out Now!

MEANINGFUL GIFTS, TRANSFORMING LIVES
www.deafmin.org/donate



News from Supporting Countries

Thank You



Thank you, Jack and Keiko! It is with sadness that we announce the retirement of Jack and Keiko Marshall from our team in Japan, effective December 31. Jack and Keiko have been with DMI from the very beginning – back when it was just Neville and Lill, and then World Opportunities International, and now DMI.

Their presence has been so large and central to DMI's work and to DMI Japan's culture that it's hard to conceive DMI Japan existing without them. The ministry is the Lord's so the work in Japan will survive and, God willing, thrive, but Jack and Keiko will be sorely missed. Their service to DMI and to the Deaf around the world whose lives have been lifted by their prayers and works cannot be measured. Keiko has for years diligently kept the accounts, and Jack has always brought such wisdom and joy to the ministry. We thank them sincerely for their many years of service and friendship.

Garage Sale for DMI

Thank you, Rachael!

Rachael McAulay, one of our DMI and DA supporters, held a garage sale at her house as part of the Garage Sale Trail movement. She kindly nominated DMI to receive a percentage of the profits from her garage sale of pre-loved items. The house looked like an op shop with many bargains to be had and treasures to be found. Rachael raised \$548 from the garage sale with \$250 of that raised from people just wanting to donate to DMI. Thankfully the rain held off until they finished the sale.

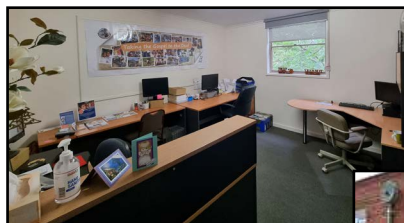
We'd like to thank Rachael for her generosity and commend her on her creative way to raise funds for DMI.

Maybe Rachael has inspired you to support us by doing some creative fundraising...



New Melbourne Office

In our last newsletter we shared with you that after many years of our Melbourne office being in the town centre of Pakenham, we would be relocating to St James Anglican church in Pakenham. We are happy to inform you that we are happily settling into our new location. The St James community have been very warm and welcoming. Andrew gave a mission spot there on December 4, and we have enjoyed meeting some of the church members during our day-to-day work over the past few weeks.



This new location is an answer to prayer and a testament to God answering in His perfect timing. We are renting two small rooms on the second floor (yes, we are still recovering from carrying all our belongings up the stairs) which are the perfect size for what we require. We even have room for a desk for Andrew when he comes down to join us from Sydney! The location is central for all our three Melbourne staff members who are all working mums. We are truly thankful for God's provision and look forward to what He has planned for DMI as we begin this next chapter.

Our phone number and postal address remain the same.

Ambassadors, Members and Volunteers Needed!



On the back of this newsletter there are 5 faces which we claim are running DMI. That's not quite true. There is actually a legion of volunteers, advisors, members and ambassadors – and of course supporters!

– who help keep DMI operating. For 2023, we need more volunteers, ambassadors and members. Volunteers typically help in the office preparing newsletters. Ambassadors represent DMI at various conferences and events throughout the year. Members serve as advisors at the AGM (and other meetings). If you are interested in serving DMI as a volunteer, ambassador or member, or knowing more about these roles, please contact Andrew at andrew.miller@deafmin.org

We would love to have your help.



International Conference Set For August 2023!

Set the date and start saving! After a long COVID-induced hiatus, DMI's 8th International Conference in Kenya is finally happening! Originally slated for 2020, the conference will take place in Mombasa, Kenya, on August 7-12, 2023. The speaker will be Heo In Yeong from South Korea and the theme will be based on John 17:21 "That all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you".

The resort holds a maximum of 300 people. Two other hotels/hostels will also be available in Shanzu. Breakfasts will be separate (by accommodation) but for lunches and dinners we will all be together. There will be opportunities for tourism after the conference.

Details will be provided in future editions of this newsletter and on social media. For now, mark it in your diary and get yourself a kufi hat!

Praise and Prayer

Bible School Students

Give thanks that our Bible School students have all arrived safely back in their home countries for the Christmas break. Pray blessing upon them as they spend time with family and share their growing faith.

Funds

Pray for our general fund and for a good response to our Christmas appeal.

Australia

Give thanks for the successful moving of the Melbourne office. We pray for God's continual blessing as the staff begin a new chapter in a new location.

Travel

Give thanks for Andrew and Matthijs' safe travels to Africa in November. Praise for all the positive work that is currently going on in the countries they visited.

China

Pray for our churches and Bible study groups in China. Ongoing lockdowns have prevented in-person meetings for a long time. Meetings continue online. Pray for strength and the easing of restrictions.

Jack and Keiko

Give thanks for Jack and Keiko and their service towards the work of DMI for so many years. We pray for God's blessing upon them as they now take a step back, giving thanks for the wisdom and joy they brought to the ministry.



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Amy Jack
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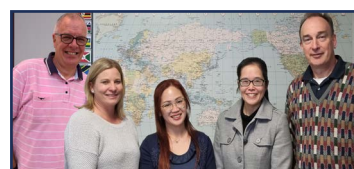
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