



Psalm 117:2

For great is His love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever. Praise the Lord.



1989-2014 – 25 years Zaire/DR Congo



Wow, I'm already active on the mission field for 25 years. In Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of Congo. Okay, I've been in Uganda in 1997, but that was because I couldn't return to Zaire. Also there were furlough periods, some of which were extended because of insecurity. In 1999 I've studied for a Master's in Community Health in the UK. Still, 25 years. Years that were not always easy. Years in which God showed Himself a faithful God. For which I am very grateful to Him.

Oicha

In Oicha the first question was if I, as a nurse, did come to teach at the school of nursing. While in the job description it only said that maybe I would be involved in some teaching on the spot, but that would be at the hospital. What can you do? I said yes and thus I was standing that first lesson in front of the class with trembling knees and butterflies in my stomach. I've always enjoyed doing it. In Oicha I came to know the disease AIDS. A sister to my house help was infected with HIV and died. In 1998, after evacuating from Zaire, I was in Nairobi, Kenya, where I found a manual for theological institutions about AIDS, and I wanted to know if it had been translated into French. Nobody knew, and I started to translate it. Only to discover in 2002, when I came back to Congo, that it had already been translated in 1996. My translation though helped me with the use of the book and in the teaching.



AIDS Awareness Program

After the Master's in 1999 AIM decided, together with the church in Congo (CECA), that they no longer wanted to employ me as a nurse tutor, but in the AIDS Awareness Program that the church started at the end of 1999 after a conference in Kenya. In 2002 I left The Netherlands and came to Bunia. Because of the insecurity and because Congo was still a country at war, I left for Uganda in August and couldn't return. I went to Aru, in the northeast of Congo and in 2007 to Adi.

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In Adi the program developed into a program with many projects and activities. We received financial support from “Red een Kind” (Help a Child) from 2007-2010. Examples of activities organized by the program were: Support and Action Groups (SAG, volunteers in the local churches who are involved with people living with HIV and who also teach about AIDS) and CARM (support groups for people living with HIV). We also started to support orphans and the children that came with Mama Anna when fleeing for



the LRA (Uganda rebel group). Help a Child decided that we should work in 4 health zones to well establish our activities and only then broaden our ministry. When they decided in the beginning of 2011 not to continue with their support five of our staff decided to continue while others found a different job.

From 2011 the program has been without the support of big funding organizations. However, it must be said that Parousia Zoetermeer (my home church) and my parents have been involved. Many thanks for this. In spite of the small financial means we could continue our ministry. The Support and Action Groups have developed agricultural and husbandry projects to generate money. The AIDS Awareness Program has paid school fees (in total or in part) for 64 orphans. Information



about AIDS has been passed on in several ways: by radio broadcasts in Ingbokolo (Adi), through film shows, at schools and in churches. Also we have been working on the production of a manual for the Bible schools and a film as a sequel to the film we produced in 2010. Of course we have been assisting people living with HIV and AIDS. Some of them give their testimonies during teaching sessions. Many know the staff workers and ask them for help when they need to go to Uganda for ARV treatment. Especially the two staff members of Adi and Ariwara then jump on their motorbikes to take the patients there. A peak experience in 2014 was the training in January given by the National AIDS Program. For that we have received money. Moving on from this training the hospital in Adi has started testing

people for HIV and is treating people with ARV. Several of our health centers have also started testing people for HIV. Our staff members participated in the training following lessons about psychosocial aid. One of the volunteers in Adi joined them and will participate more in the activities.

Aru: Alio and Okusaru



Ariwara: Bhayo



Adi: Likambo and Badaru



Adja: Ayikoyo



Prayer points:

- Praise God for His faithfulness and presence in all;
- Pray that we will find financial support for the AIDS Awareness Program;
- Pray for personal support for Annemarie;
- Pray for all the activities of the AIDS Program and the hospital in Adi and for the staff members (see photos here above).

Many thanks. May God bless you, Annemarie