

Newsletter No.4

August – December 2022

Annemarie Boks



Isaiah 41:10 → “Don’t be afraid, for I am with you. Don’t be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.”

Dear prayer friends,

The last months I have really needed that power of God. And I have experienced that He has given it to me. God has been with me all the time and has been holding me up.

It has not been easy this year. There have been valleys but also high mountain tops, with for example the 65th wedding anniversary of my parents. I’ve been to The Netherlands for this occasion, although we didn’t have a huge celebration.

CECA 20 and the AIDS Program

When I returned to Aru, Congo in May a delegation of CECA 20 was also there and heading for Adi and I could have a lift! I got home very quick. In the first weeks back, I realized that CECA considers the AIDS program more as my personal program than a program that has its origin in the church. I started writing about the history, how it is now and how the future could look like. I sent an initial brief version to Bunia in



July and the leaders talked about it. For the executive council of CECA in November I have sent them a complete version, which I have sent also to the medical coordination. I have presented this paper before the church leaders of Adi district in October. We have also started to look for a ‘Timothy’ here in Adi, someone who will first work with me, but who ultimately can take over. What has encouraged me greatly is the brainstorming that I have been doing with Ayila, Margaret and Emmanuel, a young pastor who works as the assistant of the church

section. I know I am not facing it alone.

Thank with me for Ayila, Margaret and Emmanuel who are involved with me and the program. Pray too for continuation of these brainstorming sessions.

Pray that CECA will continue to talk about the development of the program and how they can be involved in it.

Pray for the search for a Timothy. Someone who is filled with the Holy Spirit and wisdom.

What we also need is continuous financial support. This year we have not been able to organize workshops of ‘Channels of Hope’ just because we didn’t have any money for them. I could follow a couple of webinars (despite a slow internet connection) about fundraising and how to write proposals. I now need to clarify it in my head and put it into practice. The big question is where I can send these proposals, and how to divide it into smaller parts (Bethsaida, Channels of Hope, work with the youth...). I have not continued yet with my website, but it is still on the to do list of my agenda.

I am going through a battle with the AIDS Program, but there are always little lights shining that give me hope and motivation to continue.

Thank with me that I could follow some webinars.

Pray with me that I can clarify it in my head and put the lessons learned into practice.

Pray for the search and contacting potential donors.

Bethsaida

Also, in the orphan project we have known battles and saw them too in the lives of some of the children. Neema, who is doing practical training in sowing, didn't want to continue. Her mother is not strong and needs help (she is HIV positive). The tutor where she lived for six months, could not continue to help her with lodging. Neema moved, and now lives a bit further from Ingbokolo where she follows the lessons, but she continued! We decided however to give her some more opportunities to go home and help her mother in the garden.

Dorcas failed her exams last year and was told by relatives to redo the year in Aru. Despite family problems here she decided against this, and also decided to redo the year on the same school. After a huge inner battle, she has restarted full of courage.

Amisi, one of the students at the primary school here in Adi, 6th grade, has been caught involved in black magic. He had written down the names of ten of his fellow pupils to be given to demons so that they would be killed, and he then would be given a huge amount of dollars. The hand-over should have been done in a special way, which he didn't follow. The list has had no influence at all on the pupils. But Amisi's compliance has been discussed unto high level at the office of the chief of the Kakwa. Amisi was dismissed from school and removed also as a pupil from Bethsaida. His family has turned themselves against him and Amisi is no longer in Adi.

Do you want to pray with us for Amisi that he will get to know Jesus in a personal way and will start to walk in the light?

Pray also for Dorcas and Neema and all the other kids that they will experience, whatever their circumstances are, that King Jesus is with them?

Pray also for the organization of a retreat that we want to prepare for the children during Christmas holiday.

Rianne

End October Rianne (AIM NL) visited, and we have had a good time together. She could see a lot. I showed her the hospital, the schools in Adi, how testing for HIV is organized during antenatal clinics. That day there



was also a team from Aru to take blood samples for the viral load, where the presence of the virus shows a low immunity. Wednesday, we went together on the back of two motorbikes, to Ati (direction Ariwara), where the people of the church district had a meeting and where I could give my presentation. Also, on Friday we could follow a lesson given by Emmanuel about part of 'Notre Voyage' (The Journey). These lessons have started on the CECA secondary school here in Adi district, but also several non-CECA schools use the book! And when I am talking with a teacher who gives these lessons, all are in favor of the lessons. We want to organize an evaluation about the lessons after the Christmas break.

Thank with me for Rianne's visit, and for the things we could do.

Thank as well for the positive feedback I receive about the lessons 'Our Journey' (integrated in the lessons about religion). Pray for the evaluation the beginning of next year.

Margaret

Margaret is a good friend who also helps with activities of the AIDS program, for example during the workshops 'Channels of Hope', she translated part of 'The Journey' and is involved with the testing of women during antenatal clinics and this helps me to spend time on other things of the program. Since two months she works in the health center of Adi to keep her nursing knowledge up to date (she is a graduate nurse trained on registered level).

Nevertheless, she still meets with discrimination. And we don't know why. Is it because we are befriended, and because people think she gains a lot of money also working for the AIDS program, while at the same time getting paid for being involved with another organization that helps people living with HIV??? Because people think that she'll be sick often? (Not more than others.) All questions. And we don't know the answers. Fact is that she is not paid well, just enough to keep her head above the water. I would like to have her fulltime in the AIDS program, her life with HIV gives her an experience she can share with pastors, and she can be an encouragement for people who hear that they are HIV positive, but the AIDS program doesn't have financial support and thus cannot pay her. It is a huge dilemma and everything all together it discourages Margaret, and me also. What can I do to help her? How can I be there for her, except in prayer, and with the small amount she gets for her work during the antenatal clinics with the testing.



Please pray with us for understanding in others, in colleagues with whom she is working? For acceptance and against discrimination? For wisdom for me and that God will speak and act in the whole of this situation? Thank you.

Of course, with this letter I want to wish you a blessed Christmas and the presence, care and leading of God in the coming year. He has a plan with our lives, wants to use us in His Kingdom wherever we are and whatever we do. He wants us everywhere and always to live His life and model it for the people around us. He is Immanuel, God with us.

Thank you for all your prayers and support.

May God bless you.

Annemarie Boks

Photo credits: Rianne van Leeuwen

I also use Facebook. Look for Annemarie Boks; Bethsaida, project for orphans, DR Congo; AIDS Preventie Programma/AIDS Awareness Program, CECA 20



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