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On the Fire Line

by Bill Henwood

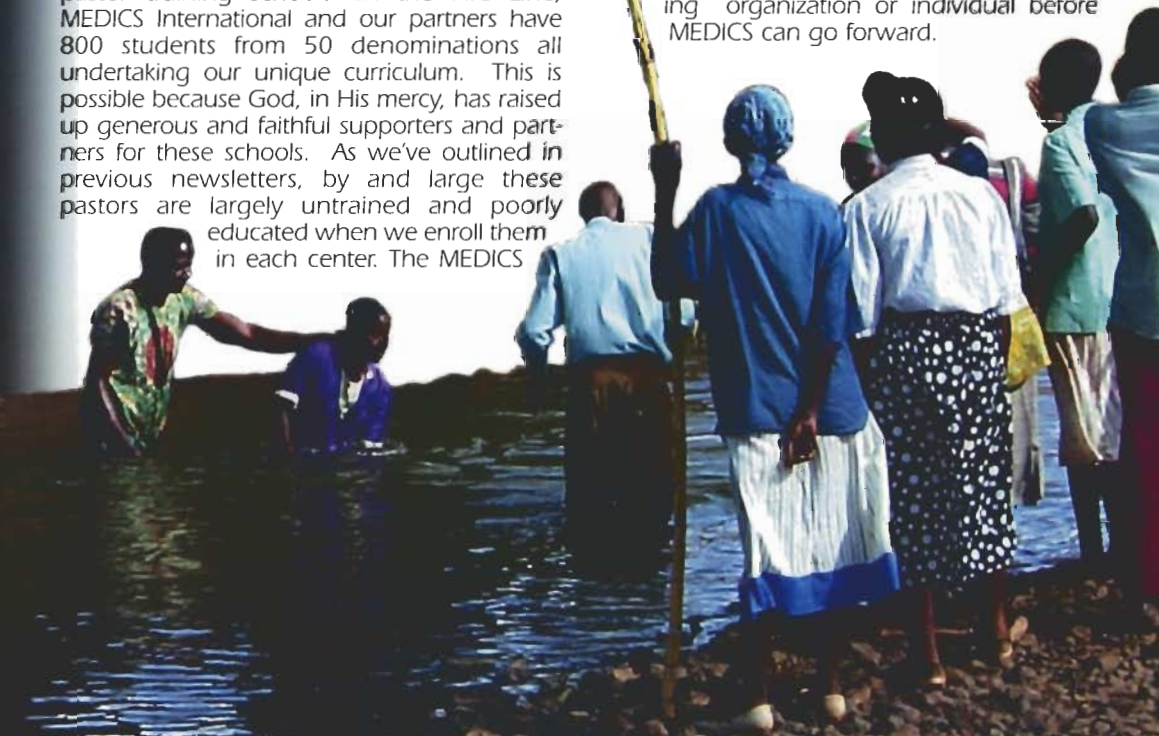
An excerpt from a recent trip report from our school planter in the Congo will give you an idea of the conditions in which he labors. For much of the last 12 months, he and his family have been living in Bangui, Central African Republic, where he planted MEDICS' newest central African school. Between January 5 and February 28, 2004, he visited our pastor training centers in Gemena, Bumba, and Gbadolite – all in the neighboring country of Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire) – and he investigated areas for new schools in Impfondo, Brazzaville and Kinshasa.

"All transportation means have been used: motorbike provided by MEDICS (3,600 Km), canoe (2 days), pirogue (small boat) (8 hours), car (45 Km between Dongou and Impfondo in Congo-Brazza), foot (8Km per day for 4 days), plane (2 hours for Impfondo-Brazza and 4 hours for Kinshasa-Bumba). The cost of the transportation was more than planed (sic)."

Thanks to the efforts of this faithful and inspiring laborer, and others like him, in our eight pastor training schools on the Fire Line, MEDICS International and our partners have 800 students from 50 denominations all undertaking our unique curriculum. This is possible because God, in His mercy, has raised up generous and faithful supporters and partners for these schools. As we've outlined in previous newsletters, by and large these pastors are largely untrained and poorly educated when we enroll them in each center. The MEDICS

International curriculum is similar to a vo-tech type and level of training, equipping our students to become more effective in their communities and in fulfilling The Great Commission. Church members testify that their pastors are getting more involved and being more effective in pastoral care and in preaching-teaching. Spouses notice the differences too.

As noted above, our Congolese "planter" has been targeting three Congo area towns: Impfondo, Brazzaville and Kinshasa. All three are strategic locations, but Impfondo bears special mention. As one of the key towns/cities in the region, Impfondo is under the economic control of Muslims, and their influence is very strong. We want to begin the school there right away. However, we need a funding commitment or sponsor for this school before we can make promises to prospective students (who are already located and recruited) and teachers, some of whom will have to relocate from Democratic Republic of Congo - no small matter. Similarly, there is an urgent need for a pastor training school in northern Uganda that will also impact southern Sudan, where systematic genocide of non-Muslims by Muslim militias has only recently gained the attention of the international community. That school, too, needs a sponsoring organization or individual before MEDICS can go forward.





www.medicsintl.org

WORDS OF LIFE

By Dr. Jeff Lester, CEO



Ministry Evangelism Discipleship In Christ's Service

As I was praying and meditating about this inaugural issue of our new publication for donors and supporters, I started thinking about each of you who sustain the Lord's ministry through MEDICS International. Your support has enabled us to make inroads in bringing truth and light to those living in darkness. The Fire Line is standing against the firestorm of oppression spreading from the Middle East and North Africa. As you know, the firestorm of darkness comes mostly from Islamic sources who have never learned about the way, the truth, and the life offered through Jesus Christ.

I have been honored to know many of you as personal friends to Marilyn and me. Others of you I only know as friends through your good works of generously giving financially to the Fire Line. As I was praying, the Lord brought to mind Paul's spirit-filled words,

"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works." (Hebrews 10:23-24) Certainly, your support of the Fire Line mission stirs our "love" so that we may continue the "good work" among Muslims and others living in darkness and despair.

Paul went on to say "Let brotherly love continue. Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by doing so some have unwittingly entertained angels. Remember the prisoners as if chained with them, and those who are mistreated, since you yourselves are in the Body also." (Hebrews 13:1-3) I don't know if you have entertained angels unwittingly, but I do know your help in bringing the love of Jesus Christ to Muslims is truly being "chained with them" and with your MEDICS staff on the Fire Line across Africa. Your missionaries are members of the "Body of Christ" and are risking life itself to be faithful to the Great Commission.

On the day the Lord rewards you for every good work, I believe you will be pleased with the seeds you have sown on the Fire Line. Our Lord said that the seeds we plant in fertile ground for the Kingdom will "...indeed bear fruit and produce: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." (Matthew 13:23)

You and I face very difficult decisions each precious day of our remaining lives here on earth. Some

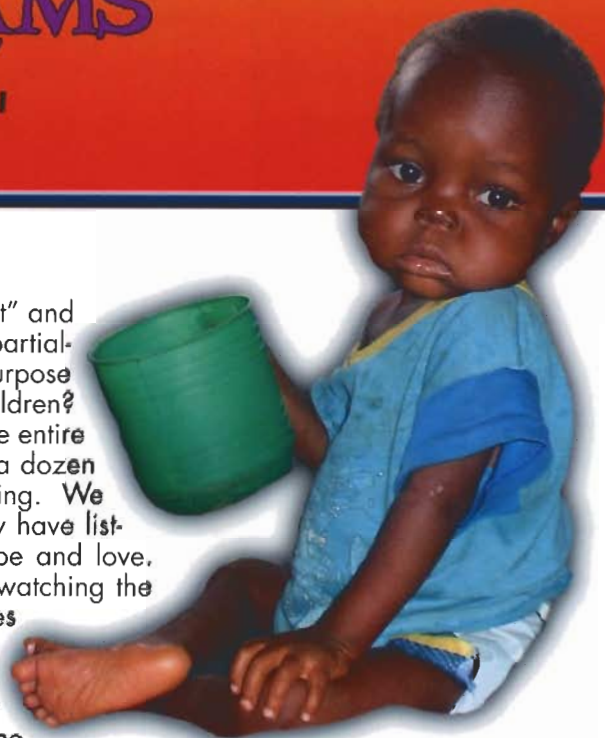
of us may very well be with the Lord before this year ends, but none of us know the number of hours or days we have left. One thing we do know is that Satan continues to increase his level of evil and destruction. Watch any world news show or pick up any major newspaper and you can see the results of those who do works of evil. Fortunately, you and I aren't of this world, though we are in this world. One decision you may be pondering is how best to invest the resources of your time, prayers, and money. I ask you, from my heart of hearts, to prayerfully consider if the Lord wants you to sow more of your resources into the Fire Line. Help us to reach those in darkness, so the firestorm of evil that invaded us on September 11, 2001, doesn't continue to grow exponentially as it has the past 30 years.



WOMEN and ORPHANS PROGRAMS

By Ann Morell

Picture yourself coming along with me to visit some of "the least" and "the last". Let us go to an orphanage in Meru, Kenya. There is a partially broken down fence around the place, so we are not sure of the purpose for it. Is it to keep animals and people out, or is it to protect the children? Nevertheless, it seems a rather useless guardian for the children. The entire place is about 80 feet wide and less than 100 feet long. We see a dozen small children. These children are not running, laughing, and playing. We soon know the reasons. They have not eaten for three days. They have listless eyes and they are very quiet, almost silent, for a lack of hope and love. Finally, someone emerges from a house nearby to say that she is watching the children. There are usually 100 plus children here. The older ones have gone with a lady to beg for food at churches and in the streets. As we look at the primitive conditions for the children, we see some dilapidated shacks with broken down beds. We learn that four small children sleep in one so-called twin bed, and two or three



large children share the same type of bed. There are no toilets. The children defecate outside the fence. (We wonder if that is the purpose of the fence.) We believe that this is a divinely appointed visit so that we can buy food for the children. We pray for the children. We show love to the children. In the end, though, we must drive away.

There are at least 11 million orphans in Sub-Saharan Africa, and the number is growing all the time. Some have parents who have abandoned them, and some have no parents because they have died of AIDS. Either way, they are orphans, children who are helpless and hopeless. Both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, we are admonished to care for the fatherless, the orphans. A few scriptures that you might want to read are Deuteronomy 14:28-29, Deuteronomy 16:2, 10-17, Isaiah 1:17, and James 1:27.

Mother Teresa said: "The greatest disease in the west today is not leprosy or TB. It is being unwanted, unloved, and uncared for. We can cure physical diseases with medicine, but the only cure for loneliness, despair, and hopelessness is love."

Life is all about loving, caring, and serving in the name of Jesus. Let us share the love of Jesus with "the least" and "the last." Thank you for contributing to the ministry for women and orphans.



EAST AFRICA UPDATE

By Tom & Jo Ella Wright



MEDICS International held its very first East Africa Leadership Conference in Nairobi, Kenya on February 22-23, 2004. Six of the USA staff and the Chairman of MEDICS' Board of Directors, Dr. David Gieser, and his wife, Mary, attended. The team met with almost twenty local representatives of our four current pastor training schools in Kenya and Uganda. Participants at the meeting included Dr. George Renner of the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology (NEGST) and Mr. and Mrs. Terry Jones, the East Africa Directors for Evangelism Explosion (EE). MEDICS International is blessed to be engaged with organizations such as NEGST and EE as

apply Godly precepts in their lives and in their church communities, and receive encouragement and strength from fellowship with other pastors in the region. In addition to hosting and conducting

the meeting in Nairobi and the visit to Meru, members of MEDICS' American contingent were able to tend to other areas of ministry business that could not be conducted from the offices in America. All-in-all, the time and resources for the East Africa Leadership Conference were very well and prudently used.



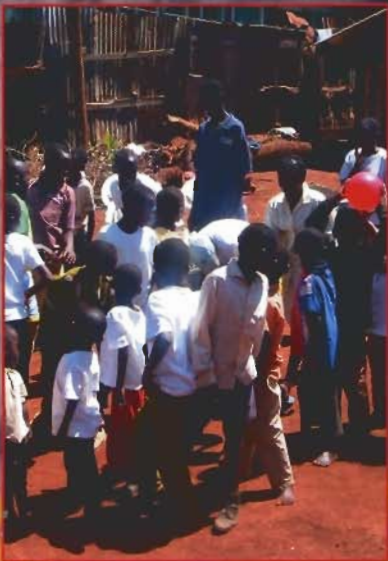
Jo Ella and I returned to Kenya for an additional two weeks in June (4 - 21). One of the highlights of this working trip was the privilege to see first-hand some of the results of the pastors training school in Meru. We visited a pastor who graduated from the very first MEDICS school. His church was filled to overflowing, and we had the very rewarding opportunity to see and hear him preaching and teaching his flock. We witnessed how MEDICS International is truly a vital part of the Gospel being preached on the Fire Line!



On a separate three-week trip to Kenya, Deborah Lynch from Ruston, Louisiana, a member of the MEDICS Board of Directors, visited the MEDICS pastor training school in Lodwar - one of the poorest areas of the country. She traveled with a team from Share International, MEDICS' partner in mission at the Lodwar school. As she was there for the dedication of the newest East Africa school, Deborah delivered some comments during the opening ceremony, participated in the ribbon cutting, and cut the cake at the celebration that followed. She enthusiastically reported that all of the pastors in the school were very warm and welcoming - and they are truly thankful for the opportunity they have to learn at the Lodwar pastor training school. Deborah returned from Kenya excited about what God is doing through MEDICS International, and our partners, and with a very clear vision of how the MEDICS model for empowering churches and communities on the Fire Line can be implemented!

we continually work to improve our school curriculum.

In addition to being a source of great encouragement to the leadership of our East African schools and the American team, the meeting was also a time for reinforcing strengths, improving in areas of weakness, ensuring accountability, and discussing needs. After the Nairobi meeting, MEDICS leadership and some of our African teachers made the trip by road to visit the Meru, Kenya school and to speak with students and staff. For those so fortunate as this team to visit one of the MEDICS schools, it is a wonderful blessing to see and hear the MEDICS curriculum being taught to pastors who need and are hungry for Biblical knowledge. These pastors are disciplined on how to





GLOBAL RESOURCE CENTER UPDATE



By Richard Williams

Container sent to Uganda....this is great news! For over a year the MEDICS International Global Resource Center prepared a shipment for a medical clinic in Kampala, Uganda. This shipment completely filled a 40 foot long steel ocean shipping container with medical supplies and equipment, furniture, and even a two ton diesel generator. The entire shipment was for a clinic recently built to provide medical care for the orphan children of Watoto Child Care Ministries in Kampala, Uganda. Countless hours went into inventory listing, stacking, boxing, and identifying all of the items donated. A heartfelt thanks is owed to all of the volunteers who helped with this particular shipment. While the MEDICS Global Resource Center (GRC) sends many small shipments

throughout the year, it is an exciting time when one shipment this large is sent to help the needy people and communities. This one was especially exciting for me because I was asked to accompany the team that went to Uganda to set up the clinic!

We are always in need of medicines, particularly antibiotics. Not too long ago, we received a call from a gentleman in Houston, Texas who was interested in donating two pallets of antibiotics to MEDICS, but we had a dilemma of how to get the palletized medicines from Houston to our GRC in far western Oklahoma, as the cost of freight would be prohibitive. We contacted **Hobby Lobby**, who has acquired and donated medical equipment to MEDICS in the past, to see if they

could help. They were so kind! **Hobby Lobby** sent a truck to pick up the pallets in Houston and take them to Oklahoma City where they were transferred to another truck for delivery to our Mangum, Oklahoma warehouse. It is wonderful to see evidence of God's provision such as the gentleman in Houston who donated the antibiotics and **Hobby Lobby!**

There are always needs for volunteer work teams at the MEDICS International Global Resource Center in Mangum, Oklahoma. If individuals or churches are interested in forming and sending a work team, please call (580)782-3781.

MEDICS International
MISSION STATEMENT

MEDICS International's mission is to assist Biblically-based, Christ-centered churches in the developing world to become self-governing, self-supporting, and self-replicating.

CENTRAL AFRICA UPDATE

By Glenna Loyd

...the students and staff think the curriculum is outstanding.



During a month long trip to visit the MEDICS' pastor training schools in Central African Republic and Democratic Republic of Congo, I was able to evaluate their administration, teaching staff, and facilities and give encouragement to the leadership and students alike. I listened to the staff and to over 50 of the students individually as I tried to experience the schools through their eyes. Following is a summary of their comments:

- Above all, the students and staff think the curriculum is outstanding. As I watched them during class, they seemed eager to soak up all the information taught them by the wonderful teachers. When I asked about the cultural relativity and practical application of the course, all were more than satisfied.

- Secondly, many of the students commented that not only their preaching had changed, but the

way they live their lives has changed as well. The material, the way it is presented, the contact with other pastors in this school situation, where they can discuss not only theology but also daily application with each other and the teachers, has transformed lives.

- They told of their relationships with other denominations before the MEDICS school started, saying that they would rarely talk with other Christian denominations outside of their own, they would never sit down to a meal with them or have them for friends. Now, with more than 50 denominations involved in our pastor training schools, that has changed and it has reverberated to those outside the schools. They wanted me to understand that there is a new feeling in the cities where the schools are held, that Christians are now feeling more like one family in Christ!

- Some of the needs expressed were for a Bible dictionary and concordance for each school for reference material. Some of the poorer students had Bibles very torn and water damaged from the recent war and hoped that newer editions could be provided. Other pastors wanted some training for their wives and children because of the transformation the pastors felt personally.

I came away from the experience of visiting the schools in Gbadolite, Gemena and Bangui, and with the director of Bumba school, in awe of the difficulty faced daily on the Fire Line and the perseverance required to run schools of the caliber attained.

M E D I C S International's supporters and partners can be proud of their involvement in these life-changing, kingdom strengthening institutions!



Update MOBILE MEDICAL CLINICS

By Bill Lester

The mobile clinic that I accompanied to Afghanistan in late 2003 was inoperable for a time due to a lack of spare parts. In early May, these spare parts were hand carried to Afghanistan by a U.S. Army unit that was deploying to that country to replace another unit that was rotating back to their home base. The clinic should now be operational.

The mobile clinic that is scheduled to be sent to South Africa is nearing completion of construction. It will be shipped soon thereafter.

Repairs continue on the RV-style clinic that was fire damaged prior to its donation to MEDICS. We

need approximately \$15,000 to finish these repairs. This clinic is an International Diesel Chassis which cost nearly \$300,000 new and has only 8,000 miles on it.



STAND IN THE GAP

In Ezekiel 22:30, God said, "I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, **but I found none.**" In order to continue the momentum along the Fire Line across the heart of Africa where MEDICS International is standing in the gap with pastors and their spouses, we need start-up and operating funds for new pastor training centers in the Congo region (Impfondo, Brazzaville and Kinshasa). Also, we need funds to establish a new school in northern Uganda, which will reach into southern Sudan (where the Muslim militia continues to bring death, destruction and displacement of people). **Who will God find to stand in the gap with MEDICS International for Impfondo, Brazzaville, Kinshasa, and northern Uganda / southern Sudan?**

Prayer Requests:

- For donors and sponsors who have a heart for the **Fire Line** vision and who will help us to stand in the gap.
- For partners who will work with MEDICS International in fulfilling the **Fire Line** vision.
- For protection for our planters, teachers and pastors/students along the **Fire Line**.
- For peace across the **Fire Line**.



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SUPPORTING MEDICS International

MISSION:
To assist Biblically-based, Christ-centered churches in the developing world to become self-governing, self-supporting and self-replicating.

MILEAGE TRANSFER

Some airlines allow you to share the frequent flyer miles you've earned from your personal travel. For a relatively small fee you pay to the airline, you can bless a specific MEDICS International missionary with a gift that will reduce the cost of their official travel including to and from the Fire Line. If you would like to donate frequent flyer miles, please call our offices at (918) 258-1155. You should consult your personal tax adviser regarding any possible benefits from your transfer.



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MEDICS International, along with more than 1,100 other organizations, is a member of Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability, representing organizations with a combined income of more than \$10 billion. Their website is www.ECFAMembers.org.

Most Critical Funding Needs:

- Sponsor 1 pastor training center/school for 1 month*\$ 4,000
- Sponsor 1 pastor training center/school for 1 year*\$48,000
- Sponsor 1 complete curriculum cycle (2 years)*\$96,000
- Start up expenses for each new pastor training center/school*..\$30,000
- Sponsor women's program at 1 school for 1 month**\$1,000
- Sponsor women's program at 1 school for 1 year***\$12,000
- Translation of women's curriculum into Swahili\$1,000
- Translation of women's curriculum into Lingala\$1,000
- Printing of women's materials***\$1,000

* Includes 4 teachers, 1 administrator, 100 pastors in training, classroom rental, instructional materials and equipment, and meals.

** Includes travel, desks, beds and bedding, kitchen equipment, tents (if used), minor construction (if needed), and initial deposits.

*** Women's program is able to utilize many of the facilities and equipment that is used for the pastors.

Note: All figures are approximate.



Monthly Support: \$20 \$50 \$100 \$500 \$_____

One Time Support: \$_____

MEDICS International is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charity: qualified donations are tax deductible.

Email: info@medicsintl.org

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