

Prayer Letter

August 2007

Inside this issue:

Life Here...	2
Praises	3
Prayer requests	3
More pictures	4
My address	4

Important Info...
All packages that are mailed to the P.O. Box must be 8 1/2 x 11 or smaller. Letters are very much appreciated as I can read them over and over again. If you send large packages to the Kenya or New York address, remember that I must pay to get them out of customs.

Karibuni

Karibuni! (Or Welcome!) Karibuni is a way of life for the Zaramo. We hear it often throughout the day, as it is a greeting welcoming you to sit and join them. So, I thought it appropriate to name my prayer letter Karibuni.

Wow! We've been here less than a month and already I have more than I could possibly share in one letter. The Zaramo are very warm and frequently greet you enthusiastically. Their language Kizaramo is only spoken by them, however, they are bilingual speaking Swahili to those outside their tribe and for business. And, they are over joyed that we are learning their language. In fact, our neighbors correct other Zaramo now if they at-

tempt to speak to us in Swahili. We know just enough to sound like babies learning to talk. 😊



Our team

Our Homestay

We just finished our home stay with a Zaramo family to experience a week of true Zaramo life. Momma Ted-y was our host. She is BiBi (grandma) to several children, four of whom live with her. Her home is a stick and mud house with a dirt floor, no ceiling, and a tin roof. She lives by candlelight at night. Despite the strange foods (ugali – flour balls as a main dish & fish – head and all) that were served over and over until we finished them, showering outside in a closed-in grass “bath”, using an outhouse, and the

brand new bar (moonshine is common with the Zaramo) that opened next door we survived! 😊 We learned quite a bit and were hosted very honorably by Momma Ted-y.



The kitchen in Momma Ted-y's house.

Life here...

As far as Zaramo life the women work in their yards each day preparing meals, cleaning and doing chores. They often sit with each other and share work/ The men occasionally have jobs, but mostly lounge around during the day. The Zaramo are very communal so they share everything from food to sleeping space to parenting, etc... They spend almost the whole day outdoors visiting in some fashion. And, there is often a visitor at our doors wanting to "talk" or borrow an item. They love ngomas – drum dances. We are occasionally awakened even in the middle of the night by an ngoma that just started. We even had an ngoma take place in our neighborhood recently that was an attempt to drive spirits out of a woman.

There are three churches within the larger area and the Zaramo attend none of them. They are Muslim if asked but few (mostly children) are ever seen at the two mosques. It is common and ac-

cepted for a woman to have extra men on the side besides her husband as they are taught from a young age how to manipulate men for their needs and take great pride in it. Men are considered mature only once they have several wives. Marriages are broken often. Most elderly are divorcees here.

As I said there's far too much to share in one letter. I do hope to send these at least monthly. If you e-mail me try to be brief as I have limited time on e-mails. As it turns out also, all mail should be mailed to my Tanzanian PO Box please. Please continue to be in prayer for our team, the Zaramo, and God's work here. Our team is where the Lord wants us but it is difficult and trying here for all of us.

Please continue to be in prayer for our team, the Zaramo, and God's work here.



This is the front porch of my house.



This is the side view of my house. Notice the water tank for catching and storing rain water.



Praises

- We are learning some language!
- No one has been seriously ill or injured.
- The Zaramo have been open to us living among them and are very relational with us.
- We've had a few more resources than we thought would be immediately available.
- My quiet time with the Lord has been really valuable.



Prayer Requests

- Our frustrations levels are high. We know only enough Kizaramo to greet, but not carry on a conversation. The Zaramo talk and talk to us even when it's obvious we're clueless. We need to learn the language
- Pray for the four boys on our team. They, too, are going through culture shock but don't know how to express it. There is resentment, tantrums, and disobedient behavior. As one of our little boys said – God may have brought Mom and Dad here, but how do I know He brought me here.
- Willingness for our team members to share real struggles with one another – we're getting to know not only the Zaramo but each other too. I perceive that many on our team (including myself) naturally keep their emotions hidden.
- For our moms to balance the duties of being mom and team members.
- Pray for the team as a whole – we're riding an emotional roller coaster trying to assimilate into life here and deal with grief of leaving our home, families, and friends.
- I am struggling a great deal with missing home and loved ones and for private time (the Zaramo culture is VERY communal – they can't comprehend that someone would want to be alone.)
- Pray against the bugs! Paulina (my roommate) and I have had a horrible time with the creepy crawlers. We're certain Satan was targeting the "single girls" by sending nasty things our way. We're often awakened by some bug or rodent in our room or above our heads. I won't go into detail just know we're having a really hard time feeling comfortable in our home.
- Pray for good sleep. Nights can be pretty noisy between ngomas, roosters, night owls, and the bugs. Not many on the team are getting consecutive good nights of sleep.

*Pray for good
sleep.*

*Hope to talk
with you soon,*

Monica

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**Website to come...stay
tuned for more information**



My housemate, Paulina, in our room at Momma Tedy's during our homestay.



My room in our house. I have some room for storage and notice my wonderful mosquito net.

Our long-drop (also known as the toilet) in our house. It just consists of the device you see plus a really deep hole.

