

CHAD & KARA HARRIS

MISSIONARIES TO THE TURKANA OF KENYA

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EJOKA NOI! HELLO, EVERYONE BACK HOME.

We are settling into our new home in the village of Nakor, Kenya. Nakor is a small village about two and a half hours from the nearest town, Lodwar.

It is hard to believe we have been here seven months now. We are all doing well. Kara is healthy and still feeling good. We are excited to finally meet the new addition to our family in late September. Elias loves being able to play outside so much, and is now beginning to be interested in learning to read. Aidan is beginning to walk and desperately wants to keep up with his big brother. It is neat to see his personality come out

more each day. He is a happy little guy.

WADIO, WADIO

Our time here has been focused on learning

the Turkana language and culture. We have a great language helper and translator, Joseph Esokon, to work with daily.

As we struggled in the beginning, Turkana would tell us, "Wadio, wadio" (slowly, slowly), and it has been true. We started by mispronouncing common greetings and speaking completely through Esokon, but have progressed to now working with him in daily lessons and rarely calling on him for translation.

Without any newspapers, radio, or television in Turkana, the only way to really learn the language is through usage. So, we spend a lot of time talking with friends over chai (hot, milky sweet tea), walking to the river and standing by wells, and visiting homes. We get to share a lot about ourselves: what our home and family in America are like, how we came to know Christ, how we decided to move to Nakor, and what our passions are. We also get to ask them about themselves. Thankfully, the Turkana enjoy visiting and gladly spend time with us.



I'm ready for rain! Aidan playing at the fourth of July picnic.



Our Curious George fan.



Esokon, our faithful language helper.

Likewise, culture is learned through spending time together asking questions or often just observing. It has been like starting over in life. We have had to learn everything again. What is the appropriate response to common questions? What topics are acceptable to discuss? How do you cook chai? How should you serve chai? How do Turkana tell a story? How do they pray? And the list goes on. Each day we learn something new, often something we did not know we needed to learn.



Chai time.

- Please pray that we may continue to grow in our understanding of the Turkana language and culture even as we spend time in Nairobi for the birth of our third child.
- Please pray that our love for our Turkana brothers and sisters would be expressed through our effort learning about them, their language, and their culture.

PART OF THE COMMUNITY

When we first arrived, we told everyone in Nakor we were glad to live among them and hoped, in time, they would not see us as visitors but a members of their community. It was a lofty goal.



Visiting a distant church across the river.

We have tried to live each day as though it were already true. We have worshiped together, visited friends after the birth of their child, gone to a baby naming ceremony, danced at a wedding, and been involved in countless other daily activities. We have laughed together, solved problems together, and shared sorrow together.



Chad dancing with a wedding party.

We still have a long way to go, but when I see Elias playing with kids at church, hear



Kara visiting with the ladies.

Kara laughing with Nachemoya, or a friend stops by just to talk, I know we are making progress.

- Please pray that we continue to build long-lasting relationships in Nakor.



The joy of throwing dirt clods is universal!

- *We are in the process of deciding where to live after our time of language learning. Please pray that we will know where to live for the most fruitful ministry.*

LOOKING TO THE SKY

We have been here during a difficult time for the Turkana. One of the two rainy seasons is from April to early June, yet we have not seen a hard rain since we arrived. Without heavy rain there is no grass, and without grass the livestock cannot produce much milk, which is a major staple of the Turkana diet. Now there is no hope for rain until late fall. It is a desperate time.

It is the season of akoro (hunger). It is bad enough now that all families are experiencing it. Without rain, the prices of goats, grass mats, and skins all fall. There is little they can do with such limited resources.

- *Please pray for rain to ease the suffering of the Turkana.*
- *Pray also that believers may look to God during this time and be a living testimony to those they live among. Pray that the church may grow through this struggle.*

SMALL GIFTS, LARGE REWARDS

While our focus is on learning language and culture, we cannot stand among so much need without trying to help. We have made food available to those families in great need. We have also taken grass mats and goat skins to town to sell.

One afternoon I spent a couple hours working on a bike for a handicapped church leader. The three-

wheeled bike frame was bent so that with his weight the hand crank would fall back against his chest. With a little effort, the frame was rigid again for him. I get excited now every time I see his tracks and know he is out at work.

Another day I was asked for some nails to help with a church building. It was a simple request, and I dropped some off soon after. My next time by, there was a church building nearly completed. A week later on a Sunday morning, I saw the church full of people singing praise to God. It was only a kilo and a half (about three pounds) of nails. Seemingly small contributions can and do have a great impact.



The new church almost complete.

JUST A GRAIN OF SAND?

If you have read our entries on our website, you have heard about our dog, Oregon. He and I often go on walks together along the river. There is one spot in particular we go that has large sand dunes overlooking the river and distant



Sunday morning worship in Nakor.



Women dancing at wedding.

mountains. It is a quiet place for prayer and reflection. As I stand and take in the view, I can feel the sand in the wind pelting my legs. From one day to the next, those dunes will move and shift ... one grain of sand at a time.

It amazes me that the God of heaven and earth who can move mountains, chooses to do so one grain of sand at a time. Some days I feel as though I can count the grains of impact, but I am confident that in God's eyes they are part of a great movement. We are so grateful for all of you doing your part in this ministry through prayer, support, and encouragement.

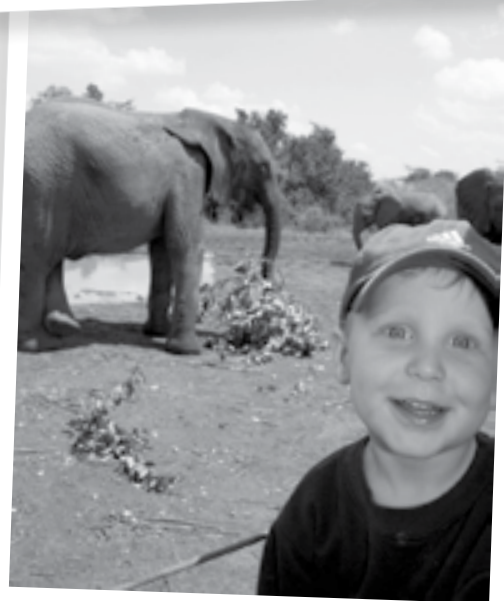
Kitopia Akuj (God bless),

Chad for the Harris family

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Elias feeding Daisy the giraffe in Nairobi.



Elias at elephant orphanage in Nairobi.

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