

Annet Ttendo Miller and Damien Miller

Prayer letter, September 2017
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It is our great pleasure to be sending you this prayer letter from Beira. After an extended period of uncertainty we have settled back into life and ministry in Mozambique. Here is a summary of what has happened since we last wrote to you in January.

Those who wait upon the Lord...

Waiting upon the Lord implies an expectant attitude of faith. At the time of our last prayer letter, we were busily engaged in a whole lot of waiting, for Patience's documents and for Annet's National ID Card. At one point Annet's own Ugandan nationality was questioned by the authorities and her ID card application placed on hold. This also had the effect of delaying Patience's birth certificate and passport as she could not be confirmed as Ugandan until her mother was. Annet was told that any foreigner could pay a bribe to obtain a Ugandan passport and so it was not valid proof of her nationality. Her education certificates and other documents were also not accepted as proof of her nationality. Instead, she was sent on an elaborate quest to navigate the labyrinthine twists and turns of the Ugandan administrative system, collecting signatures and stamps from unfamiliar bureaucrats and stern soldiers to confirm that she was indeed a Ugandan.



Miller family in Maputo

It is easy to take your nationality for granted. But when something so fundamental as your own citizenship is threatened, your sense of identity is shaken and all other human rights are put at risk. Annet bore this

surprise complication with patience and good humour. She often stated that our citizenship is in heaven in any event, as Philippians 3:20 reminds us. Despite the frustrations, there remained a hopeful expectation that all of these processes would be resolved and that we would find ourselves smiling with the documents in hand before long. In February Annet finally received her National ID card, and in March we received Patience's remaining documents. We were finally ready to travel back to Beira. God sustained us through this difficult period, and so did you all, standing with us in hopeful expectation through your prayers. Thank you.

Back to Beira: Old friends and new beginnings

On 24th March we said goodbye to friends, family and the Uganda Christian Lawyers' Fraternity and travelled back to Beira. We were given a warm welcome at the airport by our BMS colleagues and friends from 1st Baptist Church before returning to our home in Manga, which felt a little stuffy and damp after a nine month absence. However, there were more changes in store for us. The lease on our Manga home was set to expire at the end of March so we immediately set about packing up our belongings for another move. It was sad to leave the old house, especially for Annet who had lived there since she first arrived in Mozambique in March 2012. However, the new house is even more comfortable and is located in a central neighbourhood just a five minute walk from the AMAC office and our church. We have a larger kitchen and more rooms, and Patience loves to play with her toys on the spacious veranda.

Having moved house, we returned to our ministry with Mozambican Association of Christian Lawyers in early April. The character of the AMAC Beira office had also changed since we were last in Mozambique. The Legal Aid Assistant, Isaque Bonga, who had been with AMAC for three years, left the organisation in March, as did Legal Education Assistant, Armenio de Roda, who travelled to Brazil for postgraduate studies. Thankfully, it did not take long to fill the vacant roles and since May we have had the pleasure of working with Gervasio de Jesus João Lima Jojo in Legal Aid and Jeremias Arone Donane in the area of Community

Legal Education. Both have started well and are already making significant contributions to the ongoing work of AMAC. Please pray for them.

Maputo and the Mozambican pastors' conference

In May we joined the Christian lawyers in Maputo as they hosted a conference for 147 pastors. Andrew Caplen, a Christian lawyer and former President of the Law Society of England and Wales, spoke on access to justice and the rule of law. His wife Lindsay, a Baptist pastor, delivered a message challenging God's people to live ethically in order to fulfil God's mission of blessing all nations. AMAC president Mateus Mosse impressed that one of AMAC's primary roles was to partner with the church regarding justice issues. Dr Carlos Mondlane, the President of the Association of Mozambican Judges, spoke about cultural perceptions of domestic violence and his experience of these cases in court. Annet presented the findings of an AMAC research done with Mozambican pastors that considers their experience of conflict and legal disputes. Many of the pastors had never before realised that they were dealing with matters of law in the course of their ministries. An important conversation has started between Christian lawyers and pastors that can help improve access to justice for the poor and vulnerable in Mozambique.



AMAC fellowship with the Caplens

After the conference we returned to Beira to prepare for the visit of Andrew and Lindsay Caplen. Andrew visited us in April last year for a few days but this time he and Lindsay were able to join us for a week. Andrew spoke at two universities on access to justice and the rule of law, drawing upon his own experience as a former President of the Law Society. The students were offered a signed copy of the Caplens' book "Justice Matters". Andrew and Lindsay then facilitated AMAC's June fellowship in Beira. Pastor Lindsay also spoke to the Baptist Women's Association and preached at the First Baptist Church of Beira. As with Andrew's previous visit in 2016, the Caplens' time in Beira was fruitful, opening opportunities for AMAC and strengthening our relationships with other organisations.

We thank God...

- That we received all of Patience's Ugandan documents and Annet's National ID card, allowing us to return to Beira.
- That we have all adjusted well to life back in Mozambique, despite all the change.
- For the new AMAC personnel, Gervasio de Jesus João Lima Jojo and Jeremias Arone Donane.
- For a successful pastors' conference in Maputo that has opened doors for collaboration between church leaders and Christian lawyers and for the visit of Andrew and Lindsay Caplen.

Please pray...

- For Patience's application for a British passport, which we recently sent to the UK.
- For the ongoing work of AMAC, as they continue to give legal advice and assistance for the poor and vulnerable, and provide community legal education on gender based violence and other topics.

Annet, Damien and Patience

If you would like to support Annet and Damien by prayer and committed regular giving, visit bmsworldmission.org/partners or call 01235 517617 for a 24:7 Partners leaflet.



Annet and Damien will be on home assignment in the UK and available to request as BMS Speakers from #####. Churches wishing to request Annet and Damien as BMS Speakers should use the online speaker request form at bmsworldmission.org/speakers or call the Church Relations Team on 01235 517600. Please submit your request by #####.



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