



RCA Global Mission

2020 Year in Review



Chad and Dara Vanden Bosch – Mozambique

Every year at Audio Scripture Ministries (ASM), we take the time to create goals and desired outcomes for our particular roles. Here are the three major goals from my ministry area:

Goal #1: Distribute 4,000 audio Bibles (Outcome - 3506)

Goal #2: Record 100 hours of scripture-based materials in local languages of Mozambique (Outcome - 45 hours)

Goal #3: Implement Phase Two (training phase) of the Agriculture Project (Outcome - launching of agricultural extension program)

My role (Chad) in this partnership is to oversee the Audio Bible and Agricultural ministry for ASM here in Mozambique.

Blessings of 2020

One of the most exciting outcomes from this ministry in the past year was the distribution of quality seeds to 120 families in our local community. This was such an exciting program because we were able to connect an RCA church (Meredith Drive Reformed) with a very practical but impacting project. The seed that was distributed was a huge blessing to the local community, and it came right at the perfect time as people were preparing to plant their fields. It was also a great way for us to kick-off our extension program as we visited families in their homes and were able to share God's love with them. Since the seed distribution happened, we have faced many weather challenges with cyclones and huge amounts of rain, but we are seeing that the plants that have come from the quality seed we distributed have weathered far better than the traditional low-quality seeds that are typically planted.



Another great outcome from 2020 was the completion of the New Testament recording in the Makua Meeto language from northern Mozambique. There were plenty of challenges with logistics because of pandemic protocols, but by the end of the year, we had completed this project. The completion of this recording means that there are another 1.2 million people who now have access to God's Word in their heart language.

A third good outcome from the ministry in 2020 was the continuation of audio Bible distribution. It had to take on a bit of a different form because of COVID-19 protocols, but God's Word continued to go out in the languages of Mozambique. What we saw was that as churches were not permitted to gather together for many months, there came an even greater demand for audio Bibles. We received many great testimonies of how people had been feeling isolated and alone but how God's Word in audio had given them hope and comfort in these difficult times.

Challenges of 2020

We cannot ignore the fact that COVID-19 was a major challenge in many aspects, but it also pushed us to find new ways to do the ministry the Lord had called us to. The major impact for us was that travel and the gathering of people were restricted during the lockdown periods (which continue to today). This meant logistical challenges as we tried to record and distribute audio Bibles. This also forced us to shut down the agricultural training part of the agricultural project as groups of any size were not allowed to gather together. We were also forced to reduce staff by half for about three months because of COVID-19 restrictions, which also raised some challenges, especially with the agricultural project. Despite all of these challenges, we were able to think outside of the box and continue with the ministries and, in many ways, make significant strides ahead. We found new ways to distribute audio Bibles without gathering groups and we also were able to transform our training program into an extension program where we were able to visit farmers in their homes and provide training and assistance there instead of at our facility. I think these forced changes will bring us better outcomes in the future.

One other major challenge was cyclone Chalane that hit right at the end of December. Although a much smaller storm than Idai (2019), it gave us a direct hit and caused significant damage to New Harvest Farm and in the wider community. Crops were lost, homes destroyed, and infrastructure damaged. We praise the Lord that many crops have bounced back, but the damage has negatively impacted many families in our area who were just finally recovering from the losses from cyclone Idai. At New Harvest Farm, we lost a lot of work we completed during 2020 as flash floods destroyed earthen dams, irrigation ponds, road infrastructure, terraces, and fields. Many months of work were lost and the landscape of parts of the farm has been re-written.



Learnings from 2020

One thing we continue to be amazed and encouraged by in our local community is resilience. In the past couple of years, our local community has faced incredible challenges from extreme weather, crop failures, lack of economic opportunities, and now a pandemic. Despite all of these mounting challenges, there is incredible resiliency. When we look at the challenges around us we can feel overwhelmed and want to quit, but our neighbors' resilience pushes us on. No matter how deep the pit feels there is always light if we will look hard enough.

Hopes for 2021

One thing we are looking forward to is the completion of the New Testament recording in the Makua Shirima language. We expect this project to be completed by April 2021. We are also looking forward to continuing to distribute audio Bibles. We have our first order of audio Bibles that should arrive in Mozambique in March. We also very much look forward to receiving the shipping container of supplies for our ministries sometime around

August. We are also looking forward to the continued development of New Harvest Farm. We have made huge strides forward in the development over the past two years and we look forward to that continuing in 2021. On a personal note, we also look forward to possibly being able to travel to the U.S. for a furlough before the end of the year. It has been over five years since our last furlough, so we are looking forward to getting a bit of rest and also visiting our supporting churches.

How We Can Pray

We covet your prayers for our ministries and us. We know that there are so many people lifting us in prayer every day and it is what keeps us moving forward. Here are some current prayer items:

- Please continue to pray for the completion of our daughter's adoption. This has been in process for over four years now and we are exhausted from the fight. There have finally been some positive steps forward, but we ask for your prayers for the finalization of the adoption.
- Pray for the COVID-19 situation in Mozambique. In 2020, Mozambique was largely spared from major outbreaks of COVID-19. In 2021, there has been a major wave that is overwhelming the already stressed medical infrastructure.
- Please pray for more opportunities to distribute audio Bibles in Mozambique. The demand for audio Bibles is huge, but our supply is small and the logistical challenges are numerous.
- Pray for the work at New Harvest Farm as we rebuild after the devastation of cyclone Chalane. Pray also that we would continue to have great opportunities to share not only about agriculture but about the Creator and Sustainer of life.

Additional Needs

We are excited that in 2021 we have a very practical way our supporting churches can support our ministries here in Mozambique. We are in the process of collecting agricultural, medical, recording, and household items that will be shipped in a container to Mozambique later this year. Logistical and supply chain problems mean that oftentimes we struggle to get the supplies we need to push our projects ahead. The shipping of this container allows us to ship supplies that we need for the development of these ministries for years to come. It is also a great way for churches and individuals to be involved in our ministries in a very hands-on way. There are many opportunities to collect items, rebuild used machinery, crate up, and raise funds to cover the shipping costs. More details to come.

Thank You

We have seen some very practical ways our partnerships with supporting churches have impacted our ministry over the past year. One way was through the seed distribution project. Another way was through the donations received from supporting churches for audio Bibles. Another way that these partnerships impacted the ministry is through encouragement. Because of everyone's need to use video conferencing programs such as Zoom, we have had more opportunities to interact with supporting church congregations over the past year, which has been a huge encouragement for us. It has helped us feel much closer despite being half a world away. This has had a great positive impact on our ministries.

