

Kosova Mission, October 2008



CDs Packed before we left the UK

We met up with our team at Gatwick and flew to Pristina in Kosova, arriving in the lovely sunshine. After meeting up with our friends there we drove the 2 hours by mini-bus to the centre in Gjakove where we would be based for our time here. Before we left home some people had asked me what we would be doing. We said we didn't really know but we know someone who does! This turned out to be the case for the whole time there.

We met up with our team at Gatwick and flew to Pristina in Kosova, arriving in the lovely sunshine. After meeting up with our friends there we drove the 2 hours by mini-bus to the centre in Gjakove where we would be based for our time here. Before we left home some people had asked me what we would be doing. We said we didn't really know but we know someone who does! This turned out to be the case for the whole time there.



Typical Village

We set off next morning after devotions and travelled into the Goran region on the border of Albania and Kosova. Our plan was to meet our contact and great friend Mukim, who last April had made recordings in the Goran language for us. This was to be the first reach out to these people in their own language. We were really excited and a little apprehensive, but we enjoyed the beautiful scenery on our way into the remote villages in the mountains. We met our friend and had a chat and a coffee and met some local people. We then headed to a village with plans to visit a primary school.

We set off next morning after devotions and travelled into the Goran region on the border of Albania and Kosova. Our plan was to meet our contact and great friend Mukim, who last April had made recordings in the Goran language for us. This was to be the first reach out to these people in their own language. We were really excited and a little apprehensive, but we enjoyed the beautiful scenery on our way into the remote villages in the mountains. We met our friend and had a chat and a coffee and met some local people. We then headed to a village with plans to visit a primary school.



Children in School



Opening Presents

When we arrived the children were so excited to see us especially with all the goodies we had with us for them. We played games, had them recite in English 1 to 10 and ABCs. The teachers were so very welcoming and so excited we had come to their school. We gave the children toys, teddies, pencils, pens, sweets, and books, showed them our puppets, and sang songs. It was the most wonderful thing to

When we arrived the children were so excited to see us especially with all the goodies we had with us for them. We played games, had them recite in English 1 to 10 and ABCs. The teachers were so very welcoming and so excited we had come to their school. We gave the children toys, teddies, pencils, pens, sweets, and books, showed them our puppets, and sang songs. It was the most wonderful thing to

see their faces as they received all these goodies. We played football and games outside and they all loved the fun...and we did too.



After we left on the 2nd evening the local Muslim Inman leader spoke to the school director and asked who invited these people (us) to come. He said they came themselves. The leader obviously didn't like us there. But our friend said to him..."We will believe in whom we want to believe." Wow.. we were amazed and blessed when they told us the next day.

There are 28 villages of Goran speakers with approximately 30,000 people living in the region. Many live in America, Netherlands, Belgium, UK and many other countries where they have gone in search of work. These lovely people are very isolated, marginalized and persecuted. They are nominal Muslim and each village has a mosque. For the next few days we visited them and spent time with them,



Teacher receives a Flip Chart

gave out aid and our new Goran recordings on CD and cassette, drank strong coffee, laughed with them, told stories and generally enjoyed each other's company. We visited 3 schools...one of which had only 4 children of different ages...it was a lovely surprise for the kids.

We said we would come back next day and they were surprised when we did as they are not used to people keeping their promises. They are quite isolated and treated badly by both Albanian and Serbian speakers. We visited a high school and spent time with the teachers and told them we would like to offer aid to them. The buildings were terrible and with over 150 students cramped into a few small rooms. No nice posters or anything on the walls etc. They had no toilet in the school - I don't know what they did...The teenagers we chatted with were great and glad to practice their English on us.



Kids loved Puppets!

They invited us back the next day to share what we did and give out our CDs. They were excited to have us back. We sang songs about Jesus and they joined in. We told them God loves the Goran people and we do too. One teenage boy told us, "everyone treats us like pigs, but you have treated us with much love." They couldn't understand why we should visit and spend time with them and their families. We handed out warm blankets for the widows as it's freezing here in winter time.

Everyone wants relationship...and everyone needs a hug and a smile...a smile is the same in every language...so also is a small gift and a prayer. For generations they have been isolated and alone...now they have heard the Gospel for the first time.

During our time in the mountains the aid we distributed gave us a platform to give out our CDs with the Gospel message. We were able to give out 100s of CDs, books and cassettes.



Receiving CDs & Booklets

Sometimes we use terms like people groups and unreached people groups, but these are real people and not statistics. They have human needs and feelings like all of us and they need to be loved. They have no health service, no hospitals, dentists, no real resources for education and life is hard, but they blessed us more than we blessed them. Each night we returned to base exhausted but so thrilled and excited to have gone and visited them and to see how The Lord had directed and lead us. However we are also thinking about how we can help them more in the future. It seems like no one else is helping them so we feel its our duty to help in whatever way we can.



Recording with Mukim

While we were there we were able to make 3 more recordings in GORAN and Kosovan-Albanian. When these are edited we hope to return next year to meet our new friends again and reach more of the 28 villages. Also we trust that the local church in Gjokove will also help to reach out and catch the vision for these people.

We heard many sad stories while we were there, and the aftermath of the war in 1999 still is raw for all the people of Kosova. Such horrific acts of killing can't be forgotten even in a generation. Unemployment is high and with money scarce there is a sense of hopelessness. One girl we met back in April did the translation for us from English into Albanian and we met her and her mum. Her dad had died 6 months earlier with throat cancer. They never had money to buy morphine. They had watched him die in agony and the trauma showed on the mums face as she shared this with us. Her sister and her 4 children live with them as her husband was an alcoholic and abusive and they are now divorced. Nine of them live in a tiny house and have no income other than the mums pension. Life is hard as you can



Giving Aid to a Widow's Home

imagine. Our hearts went out to them. The mother also said her older son had died of cancer at age 29 and had left two children. They had lived in Holland. Her daughter in law hasn't let the two children speak even on the phone to her grandkids. This in its self is so terrible. Please pray for them.



A Widow and her family

We worked and recorded with a pastor and in 1999 he was a young Christian. One day the Serbians came to his village and got all the men and boys lined up outside their house ready to shoot them. Next a lorry full of dead bodies drove up. The night before he had been given a verse that he would not die. He prayed this over and over and even told those beside him in the line. You can only imagine the absolute fear. Next thing a UN plane flew over and the gunmen jumped into their vehicles and away. Our friends took to the mountains and over the rivers. What an amazing God we serve. Today he and his wife pastor a church in Gajahove, 2 large kids church programs and reaches out to the many Romany people there.

As usual where the Lord leads us Joan and I fall in love with the people and this is the case with these lovely folk. There is a huge harvest all around us and not only in far off places and it's ripe now as the Bible says. It's a real joy to bless the people we meet while we are there and to pray for them when we are away from them.

In 1999 we first heard about the Goran people and often wondered how we could ever reach them as there were no known believers amongst them. Now almost 10 years later we have recorded and distributed these in a language they can understand...their own. As we visited one little widow who was bent almost right over, we had the opportunity to pray for her and her family. I thought to myself I love this job the Lord has given us... what a privilege to be His vessel and channel to others and to tell them about Him... wow!!



Shiap, a blind man's new home



Giving out Aid to a School

Our pastor once shared with me something I've never forgotten and that is, that when we meet someone we should either bless them or they should bless us. Everywhere we have gone this has happened. We love to bless others and the more we bless them the more joy and blessing The Lord gives us.

Like Moses, God said use whatever you have in your hand. Keep giving out whatever you have, use whatever skills, resources you have...God wants to use you. Don't bury your treasures, gifts, monies... give them out to others in Jesus name.

Just to mention in closing, thank you for your prayers and financial support while we were in Kosova. We are all doing this together to God's Glory. Also to mention all our team who sacrificed and paid to go and bless the people of Kosova....it was a great time and we Praise The Lord again for His wonderful faithfulness.



God Bless and bye for now,

Kenny