

# Mark Greenwood

## From blossom to fruit

August 2020

[www.bmsworldmission.org/mgreenwood](http://www.bmsworldmission.org/mgreenwood)



Hello again,

Sitting here in 38 degree heat, with two fans belting out cool air over my desk, and so remembering many days in Ceará (well, almost every day really - right down to the office in the back garden - see pic of our garage set-up), I feel bizarrely connected to people around the world and to yourselves who support our work. Since 16 March I have visited Baptist House on merely one occasion, to pick up some equipment, and have worked face-to-face with no-one. Yet the work has continued, meetings in UK have gone ahead, mission workers still are daily living out God's blessings with local believers and serving their communities (admittedly with varying levels of COVID-19 related restrictions), supporters have been corresponding, praying and giving.

For me, I think the most important concern has been to continually seek discernment on how to pastor and oversee the mission workers and relationships with local partner organisations, who are having to constantly adapt their ministries due to the changing face of the crisis. There have been some really positive pieces of work done, including distributing mobile top-ups to rural pastors' in Mozambique so they can communicate with church members (see more stories here; <https://www.bmsworldmission.org/news/coronavirus-world-response/> ). Nevertheless, my monthly calls to each mission worker in my region clearly show that there are stresses and challenges due to the constantly shifting sand, and not being able to get on with much of their core ministries.

Last time I wrote about two couples who have had to relocate to UK temporarily, one from Guinea, and another from Mozambique. Though the couple from Guinea came because of severe civil unrest which has

settled down, they now can't get back yet due to COVID-19! Pray for both couples, that God might give them patience, and that we might be wise in deciding when to send them back!

A particular area of work which has gone on unabated, with no crisis restrictions, is agriculture. In Mozambique and Uganda the BMS agricultural livelihoods projects have continued, with happy reports of good harvest. This means that some of the poorest communities in these countries (and, indeed, the world) have had enough to eat in these uncertain times. As these programmes count heavily on the involvement of local Christian communities, they are a witness to God's love and provide opportunities for spiritual nourishment too.

In addition, there are the various teaching programmes we support which have been able to continue on-line, or even over local radio - Ministerial Training in Peru and Zimbabwe, Legal Education for churches and communities in Mozambique and Uganda, Healthy Living for Families in Zimbabwe, English in Guinea!

Of course, many planned activities and ministries have had to be put on hold whilst folk are active in the crisis response, and that can lead to frustration and times of boredom, but on the whole we have much to celebrate with the results of the crisis work and of those regular programmes which have continued.



They do have summer activities and placements lined up, but these are all looser than originally planned, so please pray that they can deal well with the extra free time they have had forced on them. Next year Edward is due to do a placement abroad and is having to deal with the uncertainty of whether it will happen or not. If not, he'll go straight into his last academic year.

News from home is that Suzana is just completing a series of assignments, both written and practical, towards becoming qualified as a nurse prescriber, which will increase the capacity of her team and reduce the need for the constant oversight of a consultant to sign-off medication. Thank the Lord that she has had this wonderful opportunity and that her newly acquired skills will make a positive difference to the Oxfordshire TB service. Although it is a "secular" job, we very much see this as what God has called her to at this point in life, and she certainly gets to serve the most needy and vulnerable in Oxfordshire, including the migrant and prison communities, as well as locals.



You probably will have picked up that Edward and Ana have been at home from university since 23 March, and studied their last term online, doing the exams online too! They both have been performing really well; Edward in International Development at Reading, and Ana doing Psychology at Bath Spa. It has been a great family time together: walking, cycling, cooking and we praise God.

Well please do again pray for each person and situation we have mentioned. It is great to have your support and interest, and to be in this work together for the Lord. Perhaps we didn't expect home-working to continue long enough for us to see the blossoms we photographed in spring to turn to the fruit of summer, but may that be symbolic of all our work during the Coronavirus crisis.

God bless you,

*Mark and Suzana*

If you would like to support Mark Greenwood by prayer and committed regular giving, visit [bmsworldmission.org/partners](https://bmsworldmission.org/partners) or call 01235 517617 for a 24:7 Partners leaflet.



PO Box 49 129 Broadway Didcot Oxfordshire OX11 8XA Tel: 01235 517700  
mail@bmsworldmission.org bmsworldmission.org

The Baptist Missionary Society: registered in England and Wales as a charity (number 1174364) and a company limited by guarantee (number 10849689)

If there are any changes to your contact details, or you wish to unsubscribe from this prayer letter and/or other BMS communications, please contact the BMS Supporter Services Team by phone on 01235 517638, by email at [supporterservices@bmsworldmission.org](mailto:supporterservices@bmsworldmission.org) or by post to the address below. For more details on how we use and protect your data, visit [www.bmsworldmission.org/privacy](https://www.bmsworldmission.org/privacy)