



Habari from the Ziems April 2022



WORLD WATER WEEK CELEBRATION!

The entire SON Team was together for a week at the Morogoro Workshop. We had a great time of learning together. Some of the highlights included:

- A team contest to see which group could build the best filter.....It was very difficult to make a choice as they were all very good!
- A service project at Rahab & Stephen's church near the workshop where the team cleared a playground area for Kids Club and dug a rubbish pit.
- Introduction & Review of various SON Policies and Procedures.
- Learning about the Ethics of Being a Christian from Bishop Mguluka (EAGT) and how to apply it in our lives both personally and as we work.
- Discussion of the Challenges the various workshops
- Chicken & Chips together in Morogoro Town.



A TANZANIAN TALE FROM TODD.....

Everyone in Michigan complains about the Secretary of State Office and the procedure to renew your driver's license and plates. Here in Tanzania there is not much of a difference, lots of complaints. As long term residents we know the "normal" process for license renewal. It is somewhat confusing, usually a little different process each time and always time consuming, but overall has been fairly smooth. However this year was a bit of a different story.

We completed the application form, which in itself is rather confusing, but you don't actually fill in all of the blanks, and had it "approved" by the TRA (like the IRS) and then walked over (a few busy blocks away) to the traffic police inspectors office where we turned in our form to a Traffic Inspector and the Assistant Regional Traffic Officer (RTO). But there was no electricity at the time, so they could not do their computerized authorization, so we would have to return tomorrow. It is important to note that there is a difference between "regular police" and "traffic police".

We return the next morning.... and we get right in and the assistant RTO joins us as Ann gets her application approved. Then they begin questioning me. "You only have one arm! How can you drive? You can't drive!" I explained that I have had no problems during my 18 years driving in Tanzania. The two of them agreed that they will not approve my license and I need to go to Dar Es Salaam or Dodoma to get a special approval to drive, both locations are over 125 miles away and take at least 4 hours, just to show someone that I have one arm! My first instinct was that they just wanted cash. So I went to another police reception area and asked to see the Regional Police Commander to plead my case. A very friendly Officer greeted me. She wanted to show me that she knew the process and would be happy to walk me through it. I objected slightly but I didn't want to offend her. She returned me to the traffic inspector's office to talk with them. Needless to say, it was not productive!

I still had a few days before my license expired.... so I decided to just let it be for the moment. Two days later we are pulled over by another traffic police officer in an area we drive through 2-4 times a day, and have been doing so for more than 8 years, without ever being stopped. We are informed that we have 2 outstanding tickets for driving with defective tires. These tickets were issued in August of 2021, in an area of Tanzania that we have never been. Mmmm..... we ask the officer to look at our truck... a 2020 Ford with less than 18,000 kms (12,000 miles) and the original tires. But logic doesn't work. We are taken to guess where? The traffic police office! And who do we meet, but our buddy, the Assistant RTO and his "friends". "Leave your truck here along with the keys until you pay". There was no discussion and the words were repeated over and over. So Ann's pays 120,000 Tsh or about \$55, at the local wakala or agent to keep our truck out of jail!

Over the next few days, I am encouraged to write a letter to the Regional Police Commander with regard to the "ticket" that was physically impossible to have happened. So I write the letter, detailing that we were out of the country at the time of the citations and the truck was parked at our house as well as a copy of the recent maintenance report and a few other specific details. I also asked that they look into their system and that my money be returned to me. I took the letter to the "registration desk" at the police station, which is the official process for letter delivery at any government office. Mail delivery via the post office doesn't work. To my surprise an officer of some distinction was standing close to the desk and asked to let him see the letter. After reading it, he says: Let's take care of this. So we all go down to the RTO's office. After a bit of time sitting in a very hot office and lots of discussion, it is agreed that it is a case of misidentification and the fine should be refunded. Wow! Just Wow! We then waited and waited quite a bit more, but eventually someone came and just handed me all of the cash back! There was no documentation that the money was returned. I could hardly believe it actually happened!

As an aside, most expats here in Tanzania take a different approach in interactions with any government offices especially the police. ...For a "fee" you can pretty much get anything done. After this fiasco, I decided to try this "back alley" service. I was referred to a local merchant that assured me he could get me a license. He takes a picture of my license and WhatsApp it to the first contact in the TRA. He says it will be ready on Monday. Monday comes and no word. At the end of the day on Tuesday, he tells me, the traffic police have blocked my file and I can't get it done. He said they just want more money.

So it was about this time when Ann sent out a prayer request..... (Thank you all so VERY much for your prayers!)

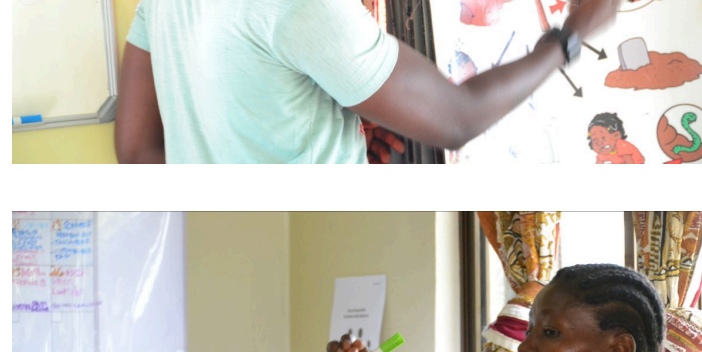
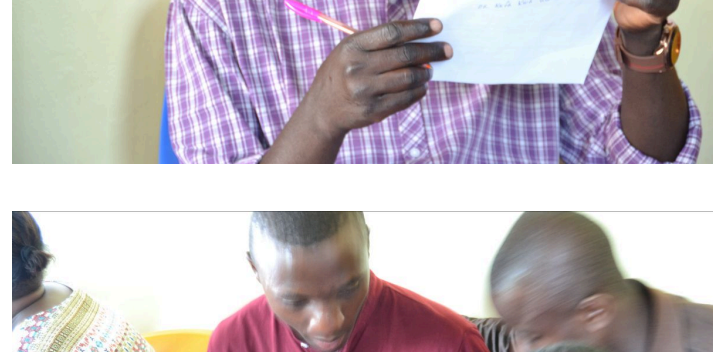
As plan "C" failed, and my license has now reached the day of expiration.... I decided to return to plan "B" and go back to the Regional Police Commander, especially now that he has already helped me. Dennis, my coworker, and I go once again to the Regional Commander's Office. We wait for him for about a half an hour and then the Officer that helped with the ticket issue walks in and tells us that the Regional Commander would be here shortly. Somehow we had been given the impression that he was the Regional Commander! We waited another hour or so. The Real Regional Commander finally comes and I plead my case about my license. He definitely agrees that 18 years of driving in Tanzania proves that I was competent. He says to come back tomorrow and we'll talk to the RTO. I return at 9 am as requested and of course he is not in his office. His assistant says that he is offsite at a meeting and is not available until the afternoon. She offers to give me his phone number and encourages me to call him. So I do. He answers his phone and apologizes for not being in his office and tells me to go to the RTO's office to find someone I had never met before. I present my case to her and add that if she has any questions she should call the Regional Commander. She made a few calls, but I'm not sure to whom she was talking. After a few minutes, in walks the original traffic inspector who told me I couldn't renew my license and she escorts me to her office where she opens her computer, retrieves my file and a few key strokes later give me back my application and tells me to go back to the TRA. MISSION COMPLETE!

I pay the fee and collect my license the next day. Then to my surprise, I find the license has no restrictions to drive, like an automatic transmission, and as an additional bonus, I have approval to drive a motorcycle! It is also very interesting to point out that on my license I look exactly the same as I did nine years ago!



Training of Trainers

A refresher for some and the first time for others learning how to teach and facilitate a SON Filter Seminar. We are really proud of our Team!

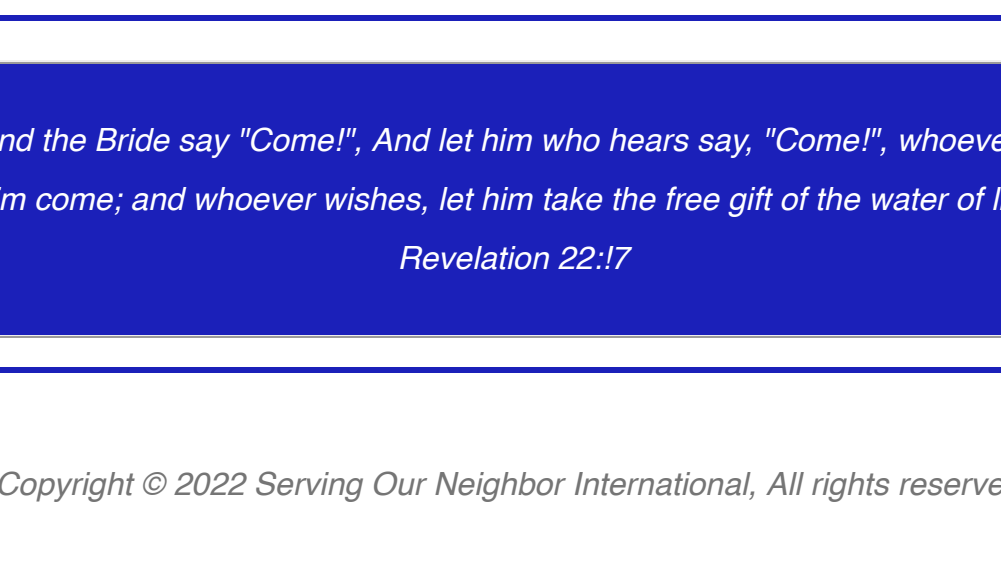


The prayers of a righteous man are powerful & effective!

Please commit to praying with us.....

- Praises for the resources and opportunities God has provided to continue His work.
- For us, along with the entire SON Team to place trust in God each and every day.
- That all members of the SON-TZ Team will be likeminded and work with integrity.
- For the SON Team Leaders to make wise decisions that will glorify our Lord, especially Charles, Dismas, Emmanuel, Dennis, Nixon, Yusto & Salmon.
- For protection from sickness for the SON Team, there is a lot of "mafua" or colds as well as other illness in recent weeks.
- For additional volunteers & partners that have a heart for sharing Jesus in practical ways, especially in the areas of education & outreach.
- For God to continue to provide the necessary financial resources to accomplish His purposes for the SON Ministry. (Especially Vehicles)
- For Pastor John & his wife as they serve the people of Mkoko Village. That they be able to trust God and show his love through their integrity and real life examples. For upcoming events in Mkoko Village...for hearts to be opened to the message and hope of Jesus.

AS A REMINDER.....



The Spirit and the Bride say "Come!", And let him who hears say, "Come!", whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life." Revelation 22:17