

The Stadtlander Story

A newsletter of a missionary family in West Africa

Volume 5, Issue 5

August 2010

Rainy Season

We Pray:

- For abundant rains this year giving the Djoloff a good crop harvest and healthy animals.
- For health for all in the Djoloff during the rainy season.
- For safety in travel and seasonal migration.
- For a Fulani family who has come to Linguere during August for baptismal training.
- For two members of the Linguere congregation who are attending bible courses in Dakar in August.
- For our family who continues to surround us with love and support even though most of the year we are miles apart.

**Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.**

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It is once again rainy season in Linguere. Due to our Home Assignment schedule, we only experience the full season every other year. This year, the rains started just as we left for a one month vacation in July, and now will continue through September.

When we first moved here, we celebrated rainy season as an almost magical time in which life springs forth from the desert and the rain brings reprieve from the incredibly hot temperatures of May and June. While it is still a definite change and life flourishes, we now consider it the most uncomfortable season to live through in the Djoloff. We are thankful for getting to skip most of it every other year.

It's not all negative of course. The thunderstorms are exciting and bring wonderful cool breezes. The lush green countryside is a welcome change for the eyes.



And of course, it is absolutely necessary for life to continue here. As dry season continued through June, the cattle grew thinner and thinner, waiting for the rains to come. Market produce became scarce except for "root crops" like yams, potatoes, manioc, and onions.

Though everyone is hoping for an abundant rainy season, they dread living through it. The humidity brings on skin problems and infections in young and old. Having a light on at night invites swarms of bugs (we're glad to have window screens). The sheer

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Pastor Dirk, Sarah, Eva, & Ellen Stadtlander are ELCA Missionaries serving with the Lutheran Church of Senegal

Rain

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number of flies means that disease is spread, and hospital visits are much more common. With the increase in mosquitoes, malaria is more rampant.

Adding to our neighbors' plight this year, Ramadan falls during rainy season. This means that villagers work their fields or watch their animals in the heat and humidity with no food or water during the daylight hours. Grouchiness seems to be an epidemic due to food and water deprivation, rainy season illnesses, or humidity-related discomfort.

In the midst of the rains, we do remember that this is a life-giving season. The grass is so abundant that not only does the year-round cattle population eat it, but the Djoloff is also inundated by seasonal herds who will be here until October. Crops are grown which will be harvested to supplement the human population's diet. The ever-present dust of the Djoloff takes a summer vacation. And flowers and vines planted in our yard flourish without much work at all.

So we pray for lots of rain and look forward to the cool, dry season that will follow.

Summer Vacation

This year, we decided to take our month of vacation in the United States. Because Home Assignment is so busy, it's hard to feel like we're really on vacation when we try to squeeze it in between congregational and medical visits. So, as soon as school was out we took off just in time to make it to the annual Stadtlander getaway in northern Minnesota. We then spent time with Sarah's parents, also in northern Minnesota, before heading to Iowa for our last week of the trip.

We were fortunate that our schedule worked out with Sarah's brother and his family as they were preparing to leave for language study in France, followed by missionary service in Mali, a country neighboring Senegal. We also spent a lot of time with Dirk's sister and her family and the girls absolutely loved their time with all of their cousins.

It was a month of rest and recreation.

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Thank You

Thank you for sharing the gifts that God has given you with us in Global Mission. Your prayer, emotional, and financial support is an encouragement and keeps us serving in Christ's name among the Fulani in Senegal with the Lutheran Church of Senegal. For more information about giving globally through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, please contact:

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