



Forsyth Sagas



Greetings from Uganda!

Nov 2021

It hardly seems real that Christmas is just a few weeks away! In the midst of ongoing uncertainty in life, the one thing we can be sure of is that our God is sovereign, and He is unchanging. Just as He has been faithful to us in the past, He is faithful today, and He will be faithful in the future.

We are so grateful for your prayers to support our work here in Uganda. Thank you.

Programme news

On occasion, MAF is privileged to fly VIP's who are able to use their status to speak up for the rights of those who often don't have a voice.

In September we flew the Danish Ambassador to Moroto to make an important assessment visit for several community projects. The Danish government are helping to provide support to local miners and other development projects that are addressing growing poverty in the region.

“We had a great time up in Moroto and saw a lot of developments up there. MAF was, as ever, taking really good care of us and I've really enjoyed being here in Uganda. We spend around \$50 million a year helping refugees, farmers, civil society. We were on a field trip in Moroto with my other European colleagues seeing the developments of the European Union and their member states. We met with civil societies and local miners, we met with the first lady (Janet Museveni) which was really good. We heard a lot about the problems in Moroto, the alcoholism, the development needs, the poverty, the insecurities which are rising unfortunately in Moroto. The situation is deteriorating which is not good and the conditions out there for people are very tough.”



Thanks to the generous donation of a USA church, MAF was earlier this year able to repair three remote airstrips in the Karamoja region of the country that had been closed. These have been of great benefit to the local communities and our partners working in the region.



Amudat residents welcome the aircraft after runway repairs

We are also grateful for your prayers that the work that we carried out on our own runway at Kajjansi was successful. Due to high lake levels the runway was flooded but at the beginning of the year as levels subsided and we were able to increase the height of the runway and recover its full length.

In July, over four days MAF pilots Emil Kundig and Hansjöerg Schlatter ferried Cessna Caravan N2114G from Switzerland to us in Uganda for it to undergo an engine overhaul, service work and a repair to its floor. This work was completed last week and the aircraft is being readied for its final ferry flight to our new Guinea programme based in Conakry.



In May, a farewell to Kowalski, Swanson and Waterman families – our first get together as a team for over a year due to COVID-19 restrictions. The venue was an adventure park on the shore of Lake Vitoria. The children, and some oldies, were able to navigate the high wire and zip line course. Others, preferring the peace and quiet of the woods and wetlands, enjoyed a great bird watching walk.



Philippa hosts the international staff ladies to a farewell meal to say goodbye to Becky (right of picture). Becky and Dave recently joined the MAF programme in Liberia. Fortunately, we were able to accommodate everyone on our outside veranda maintaining COVID-distancing (apart from taking the photo!)



A day in the life of a Programme Manager

So what does a Programme Manager actually do? Steve recorded the highlights of his day on 11th Nov...

- Awake at 0530. Make my pack lunch. Take my breakfast on our veranda together with our two dogs and enjoy the sunrise over the city and my quiet time. Take the dog for a walk/run up to the top of our hill. By 0715 take my motorbike on the 16km ride through the traffic to Kajjansi Airfield
- Just after 0800 the office team meet together for a short devotion and prayer time then I work on and off throughout the day managing my two email boxes (plus the Operations Manager's as she is on holiday)

- Geoff, my Safety and Quality manager for the AMO (aircraft maintenance), meets me to discuss the root cause analysis of why our certifying engineers did not get their renewals updated over summer! Further discussion on how our deputy safety manager in Liberia can attend the on-line MAF Quality and Safety conference later in the month.



Steve with Sam Baguma - Regional Finance and Development Manager

- Over lunch I receive a call from Michael, my airfield manager (on holiday), that Entebbe tower has notified us that a neighbour's aircraft is inbound to Kajjansi with a possible undercarriage problem (does not have '3 greens' to indicate his wheels are down and locked). I alert Rembrand (acting Operations Manager) who initiates contact with the pilot over the radio. Our Ground staff get the fire trolley in position. I provide Entebbe tower an update over the phone as the pilot flies overhead and we confirm his gear is at least down, if not locked. The aircraft lands safely and I update Entebbe tower.
- Meet with Kees, my Chief Engineer, who is trouble shooting an aircraft snag with our pilot inbound to Arua from South Sudan. After a quick discussion with Rembrand he starts prepping another aircraft in case we need to fly Kees upcountry while I take on standby Ops. Fortunately, Kees and the pilot safely resolve the issue after the pilot lands at Arua and the aircraft continues on back to Kajjansi.
- Our Chief Finance Officer from Ashford HQ, Anna, calls asking for help on behalf of a UK Christian charity whose Country Director is trying to evacuate from Ethiopia. I join an online meeting with the charity's management team and offer to contact a former MAF pilot working in Addis Abba. He agrees to help out and this is fed back to the team.
- Meet online with Christiaan (Operations Support Manager based in UK) to prep together for interviews next week for two internal candidates applying for our Uganda Director of Operations vacancy
- A quick online discussion with Bastiaan (South Sudan Programme Manager) on the timing of a proposed visit of a Dutch couple coming into East Africa to do filming for MAF in the New Year
- Receive two visitors who own property adjacent to our airfield and looking to sell their land. I put them in contact with another aircraft operator who might be interested, but also express our potential interest in renting their house for one of our staff families if there is no sale
- Leave Kajjansi at 1645 to get to our town office at 1715 to meet up with a new staff member who needs a driving check out. He gets our standard safety and security briefing and I am surprised how well he manages in the traffic driving (for him) on the wrong side of the road and avoiding all the motor cyclists.
- Arrive home at 1830 and enjoy a meal and nice evening with Philippa.

To be honest there is never a dull day: Always new challenges working with an amazing team. MAF has vacancies for Programme Managers as well as other roles. Maybe you, or someone you know, would be interested in applying to MAF? <https://www.mafint.org/serve-in-maf.html>

Steve reached 60 years young this year and for more than a year considering his role and work in MAF for the next 5 years. He recently applied and was accepted for a new role in MAF "Digital Solutions Architect". This will involve getting MAF's information systems to 'talk' to one another so that managers across the whole organisation can have real time information to help with planning and decision making. The location for this role is flexible and management are happy for us to remain serving Uganda. Ruth and Duncan Jack, who have done an incredible job in the MAF Arnhem Land programme over the last three years, are moving to Uganda in March 2022 for Ruth to take on Steve's role.



Ruth and Duncan Jack

Family News

Both Jessica and Bekkie graduated this year! Jess as a Doctor of Medicine from Pembroke College Oxford (she is pictured here with her wonderful boyfriend Khal).

Bekkie with a Bachelors in Fine Art from Loughborough University. We are almost free from needing to provide student support funding!

Bekkie did really well to win a job with DeVol which is a leading kitchen design firm, only to contract 'long COVID'. She has had to resign from her work in order to take extended sick leave and we would value prayers for her recovery. We hope that she will eventually be able to re-enter the world of work and pray for another job in the creative sector for her.



Jess is pictured here with Steve during the circular 19 mile 'Three Castles Walk' which runs past Philippa's Mum's house in Wales. After graduation she moved to London and is now happily working for the NHS – oh yes she is! Currently in the first year where the junior doctors rotate around several different departments – partly to learn the ropes, and partly to help them choose their eventual specialism. Jess has not made her mind up yet, she just says, "I like the patients". Long may that continue.

We value prayers for her safety – both at work and in London – and for guidance as she settles on her specialism.

Philippa has had a challenging year with heavy workloads. Her team have been responding to very many calls for help as international development organisations adjust their strategies and staffing to cope with reductions in funding at the same time as a steep increase in need.

This report from the UN Development Organisation highlights the challenges that are faced: [Multidimensional poverty and COVID-19 \(undp.org\)](https://www.undp.org/publications/multidimensional-poverty-and-covid-19)

Interestingly (to Philippa at least!) we have always found in the past that economic recessions increased demand for organisation restructured; but this time, we have also had an upsurge in requests for recruitment support and leadership development. Her team have taken on two new members of staff to deal with the workload.

However, we have also made a BIG effort to have sufficient rest and recovery. Our family doctor prescribed a four-day weekend every six weeks and we have followed his advice diligently:



Prayer points

- Please pray for Ruth, the new Programme Manager, and her husband Duncan as they transition to be with us in the Uganda programme in March; pray for a good handover for and for Steve as he picks up his new role in the MAF International IT department
- Uganda has had the longest school lockdown anywhere in the world. Since the COVID-19 outbreak most schools have been closed and as a result Uganda has the highest rate of teen pregnancy in the world. Some private schools have been able to conduct on-line classes. Its planned that the schools will reopen in January. Pray for schools to manage the logistics of reopening. BBC news has a good article on this <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-59507542>
- Please pray for safety and security within the country. We have recently experienced several suicide bomb attacks from members of the ADF. Security authorities appear to be uncovering several cells but the risk for further attacks is high.
- Pray for Asse a 14 year old lad who is living with his aunt as his father has died and his mother has left him. We are helping him with school fees.
- The COVID situation in Uganda where the second lock down is being slowly eased, but where vaccination levels are still very low.
- Give thanks for the joy that Jess is experiencing in her new role; please pray for guidance over decisions for her future. Please also remember Bekkie and pray for a full recovery from the chronic fatigue that is currently restricting her so badly.
- Pray for the many organisations being supported by Philippa and her team, that they will remain strong despite the challenging circumstances we all find ourselves in.

If you would like to support us in prayer or by making a regular financial gift please get in touch with our MAF UK office who will be happy to help or click on one of the links below.

We really appreciate all who remember us through their prayers and giving.
For more information please contact Adam Pope adam.pope@maf-uk.org
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