

***Together for West Africa (aka 2gether4westafric, 2g4wa, TFWA)  
Advisory Board of Directors FY22Q1 meeting: Thursday, December 9, 2021***

***Meeting Minutes:***

**Members present:**

Meeting held virtually via the Internet using online Zoom meeting software platform with the following members in attendance – Mike Hutchinson (Field Personnel), Lynn Hutchinson (Field Personnel), Ric Stewart (Secretary), Laura Clark (member), Allen Clark (member), Cindy Stewart (member)

**Topics of Business**

**Allen Clark opened the meeting with prayer.**

***1. Financial Reports – Ric Stewart, Secretary***

- a. Ric explained that a letter requesting a waiver for the FY20 IRS 990 late filing penalty was sent to the IRS challenging that the form was actually *not* a late filing. Due to the Covid19 pandemic, special “late filing” extensions were allowed by the IRS as reported in a highly respected and accurate Business Magazine. Also, 2g4wa because of its Religious 501c3 status is not even required by the IRS to file an annual 990 form, but we do so because CBF as a partner recommends that we file the form to allow the annual financial statements to be available on the GuideStar website.
- b. Ric explained that special precautions will be used to file the FY21 IRS 990 form before 2/15/2022 eliminating any chance of an IRS claim of “late filing.”
- c. Ric explained that we now have Directors & Officers (D&O) Liability Insurance to provide funds for legal representation if the Directors and Officers have claims of malfeasance brought against them personally.
- d. CY21 Donor’s YTD report was briefly reviewed to show the strength of the financial support for 2g4wa by its donor base.
- e. FY21 EOY Statement of Activities, FY22 YTD Statement of Activities, and the Statement of Financial Position reports were briefly reviewed with no questions from board members.

***2. Togo Program Ministries Report – Mike & Lynn Hutchinson, Field Personnel in Lomé, Togo, West Africa***

***[The following report is from an email update in December 2021 from Mike and Lynn. It reflects the essence of the oral report given in the FY22Q1 (December 9, 2021) Advisory Board meeting by Mike and Lynn.]***

Update for 2gether4westafrica

December 6, 2021

Togo House has a new location. We are in the same neighborhood but have a new house to rent. Our old location was too run down and was closed in with construction. Our new Togo House is on an open street with more traffic and seems to fit our ministry needs. At this point we are using CBF funds to pay the 600 dollars a month rent for Togo House. Electricity runs around 150 dollars a month. Water is out of our own well so no bill for that.

Togo House has been closed due to covid restrictions in country. We try to follow government regulations on churches for our activities. We hope to be up and running the first week of January. At present we are having English Club for middle schoolers directed by a young man, Armel, who has been in our program for 2 years and is now in high school. We still have Sunday Lunch at Togo House that always has a different group. Kids continue to come by for to touch base. One such case is Ibrahim. He has been with us for 2 years. His father is a Moslem leader. The father has four wives in 4 locations and looks after non of them. There are 5 siblings along with his mother living in an abandoned refugee camp room. One toilet for 24 people and you must walk 3 blocks to buy water. There is no security in this camp except the bosses that come by to take what they want when they want it. Ibrahim's best friend were swimming and parted ways to go home to get back together that night. 15 minutes later the other boy was attacked and decapitated. He was also 14 years old. The guilty seems to be his older brother who he was living with and has since skipped town. Ibrahim was shocked and more shocked that when the boy's mother arrived she did not shed a tear. The boy was simply scraped off the beach put in a white cloth and brought straight to the cemetery. No one seemed to care at all and this is what hurt Ibrahim the most. Was his life also worthless, nothing? What a great opportunity to sit hour after hour with him and assure him of God's love and value for him. He has stayed a few nights off and on with us when his fear becomes to great to stay at the camp. We will be using 2gether funds to find his family a safe place to live and pay 2 years rent for them. Rent is about 30 dollars a month for a safe place.

Our ministries that are not on site continue. We have planted many trees in our region. We try to plant only fruit bearing or lumber producing trees. More and more trees are cut around Lomé. This includes avocado and plantin. The prices of these have skyrocketed. Cashews are almost non existent now. People are hesitant to plant trees in front of their houses as they are sure people will steal the fruit. They do not have the ability to vision a neighborhood so full of papaya or banana trees that thieves would be welcome!

Two other ministries outside Togo House that are being fully funded by 2gether are 1. Pastor Up and 2. Village Up. We have made initial visits and donations of rice to 6 rural pastors and now will visit them each month for three months total. Three of these look like good prospects for working with to help them and their families. Three do not look like people that are interested in partnering....very interested in receiving a free gift, but not building relationships. We are sure that as work with these three positive pastors that they will put us in contact with others. Village up has us working through a church, if possible, to touch an isolated rural school. We have targeted an area and now narrowing down which villages are in the most need. This program is mostly funded by a grant from CBF foundation. But if it works well we will use 2gether funds to expand it.

Upon return from my short visit to Atlanta for a reorientation meeting that is required of all CBF field personnel every few years, I found that our house had been looted of any thing of value. This includes my laptop that I had left in Togo. We have since changed guards, but a

financial loss. At the same time our assistant at Togo House just simply went mad. It is the only way to describe it. He also left stealing many items. So a double whammy upon my return. We have a new assistant now at Togo House named Philip. He is assembly of God and learning the ropes of how we do things bit by bit.

Our truck continues to be our most expensive item. So far we have used CBF funds for this but may shift some repairs to 2gether in the next three months. Keys have to be changed and clutch work has to be done. Seats are also splitting after 8 years of African heat so we will need to find a solution for that.

We will be full ministry Jan thru March 2022. In April we have 2 weeks' vacation scheduled in Portugal and then straight to our CBF team meeting in Athens, Greece. We will then head to USA for our PDA (furlough). We are going to extend our time in the states this time. We are always rushed, in and out. But we have 300 days of furlough banked!!! 300 days! So we will use that time to have more visits, get our house in Long Beach up to snuff and visit some of our supporters that live off our beaten path, like Texas and South Carolina.

***Lynn Hutchinson closed the meeting with prayer.***

**Submitted by:** Ric Stewart, Together for West Africa, Secretary

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ric Stewart". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ric" and last name "Stewart" clearly distinguishable.