



A NEW LIFE WAS BEEN BORN TO THE HANDS ACROSS NATIONS (HAN) FAMILY
April 2, 2018

Just before Christmas 2017, Peter Pule Otuku, HAN Lead Teacher-Trainer and his wife Anna, were blessed by God with a baby girl. As an honor to Kemper Rojas, Hands Across Nations (HAN) Treasurer and Co-Founder, and the daughter to Carolyn Jones, HAN Co-Director, this precious little one was named Kemper Amolo. The second name belongs to Peter's sister. In Uganda, a safe birth is not a given, and Anna's first trimester was a challenge with serious malaria requiring strong medications. Many women and children die of malaria, so there was earnest prayer for Anna and her baby.

Peter and Anna had gone to pre-natal classes, learned the delivery process and had the birth kit all ready to go on the day Kemper was born. Peter stayed in the delivery room right up to the birth – a first for him. Kemper was born with all her fingers and toes and is a smiley, placid baby – able to cry but doesn't use it often.



In Uganda, girls are considered “wealth” and boys are considered “strength”. When girls are married, in the village “traditional marriage” ceremony, her parents are given a dowry of cows, goats, chickens and other animals along with a special dress for the mother in law, and a suit for the father in law, money and other things that are required by the future in-laws. It is explained that the new groom is paying a “bride price” for the girl, with the price being higher the more educated she is. He is thanking the parents for educating her. The price is negotiated between the leaders of the families of the boy and girl. So parents are happy when they have girls as it will mean they will receive something later in their older years when their girls are married. In some families, such as Peter's family, they accept the gift

that the future son in law offers rather than doing a negotiation so that the bride and groom do not start out with very little to live on, having given a high price to get married.

New babies are kept from having a lot of contact with people outside the family when they are first born. Girls don't go out of the house for 4 days, and boys for 3 days. Parents are very protective of their new borns partly from tradition and partly from knowing that many people have diseases against which they want to protect their baby. Many Ugandan children die before the age of 5 due to malaria, typhoid, diarrhea, infections, accidents etc. Most mothers breastfeed their infants at least until they are 2 years old, often longer. They know that breast milk is the best protection for their babies, and it is very acceptable to breast feed in public without covering.



Left to right: Anna & Kemper, Lucy Arim (HAN office mgr), Ruth Okello (friend), Martin Agem (former inmate, literacy teacher-trainer), Carolyn (HAN Co-Dir), Lameck George (ESL teacher-trainer) Kemper is now almost 3 months old and made her first "appearance" at the Thanksgiving Prayer Celebration for Lameck George (far right). He is the HAN, English as a Second Language ESL Teacher Trainer and former inmate. He was exonerated of all charges and released on February 3, 2018 and has returned to 3 prisons to train both men and women inmates to be high quality ESL teachers.



On Sunday, March 18th, at All Nations Gospel Church, Kemper was dedicated to the Lord by her parents with close family and friends standing with them, promising to help raise her to be a Godly woman.

Recently, Peter's experience as a new father came into play in another birth. One evening he was going through the Lira Hospital gate to visit a sick friend, when a young mother in labor arrived on a "boda boda" (motorcycle taxi). Immediately upon getting off the boda, she squatted on the ground and her baby appeared right in front of Peter. Because he had just been through his daughter's birth, he knew enough to take the woman's large scarf and wrap the baby in it, placing the baby next to the woman as he ran off to find a midwife. There was only one on duty and she was already helping another woman to deliver. Peter ran to the maternity ward, "commanding an old woman to come help him with this baby that had just delivered at the hospital gate" (Peter's words). He said he acted like a doctor who knew what he was doing so the woman, though protesting that she didn't know what to do, came with him.

The new mother, had the birth kit with her, and Peter knew the parts and how to use them. So he and the old woman, who he said "was actually the right one to help because she knew just what to do to cut the cord and deliver the placenta." She barked out the order for each piece of equipment she needed from the birth kit, and Peter was right there handing them to her confidently! After successfully completing the birth, the three of them went to the maternity ward where Peter was greeted with frowns and stares as the others in the ward thought he was the negligent husband who let his wife wait too long and had to deliver on the ground. He just smiled and left them there, after ensuring the woman was ok.

The next day, the REAL husband, who was a night security guard and was not home at the time his wife went into labor, was with his wife and all the people in the maternity ward were praising Peter for his

help to the woman who had been a stranger to him. It was the highlight of Peter's week, knowing that God had prepared him in advance for just such a moment in time! What a creative God we have! Children are just one of his great gifts to all of us.

We hope all of you had a wonderful Easter celebration of our Lord Jesus and His Resurrection!

Please visit our new website, www.handsacrossnations.org to follow us, make comments etc. Or you can contact us at: carolyn.jones@handsacrossnations.com (she checks emails often), or keith.jones@handsacrossnations.com

Blessings from Uganda,

Keith and Carolyn Jones,
Co-Directors, Hands Across Nations