



## How Can We Respond?

by Amy Spenn

On the southern edge of the Sahara desert sits a tiny village of about 200 people. It's a place filled with goats, colorful lizards, onion fields, and some of the most beautiful people you have ever seen. This remote village acts as a haven and a training center for Christians who have fled their homes due to persecution. It is a bright light in a very dark country.

In West Africa, Islam is on the rise and quickly becoming the majority religion in many countries. Those who convert from Islam to Christianity often face violence and persecution from their community or even their own family. But for new believers in this region of West Africa, they have a safe place to go.



Local children from the village in West Africa.

Hannatu is the leader of the discipleship training center in the village. She is a strong woman. Bold in her faith, yet humble and kind. Christian leaders in the region know that they can send new converts to her for refuge and training. Despite living in an area that is heavily Muslim and known for persecution of Christians, Hannatu has dedicated her life to teaching new believers how to walk with the Lord and how to share their new faith.

It takes a lot of courage to share the gospel in the face of possible persecution. But our students did not shy away from opportunities to tell others about Jesus. Our team of five from ITEC had the honor of

conducting dental and mechanical trainings in this little village. All 14 students are Christians. Most of them are from Muslim backgrounds. They all took a week off from their own lives and traveled to this remote village to learn new skills that would give them opportunities to share the gospel with their Muslim neighbors.



Dental clinic early during the training in the village.

Like Hannatu, Yusuf is another strong example of bold faith. Yusuf is a former Muslim sheik. Due to his deep understanding of Islam, he is highly skilled at explaining the gospel to Muslims in a meaningful way, and he rarely passes up an opportunity to do so. Yusuf runs his own discipleship training center for Christians from Muslim backgrounds. Sadly, his ministry was attacked twice by Muslims, so he is now looking for a new location.

During our time in the village, Yusuf shared the gospel with countless people. He even formed a group of 15 Muslim men and women who were especially interested in learning more about Jesus. They met each day, and by the end of the week eight of them gave their lives to Christ!

After seeing the strong faith of our brothers and sisters in West Africa, we are humbled and inspired. So how can we in America respond to such an experience? How can we support our fellow believers as they courageously live out their faith?

Let's start by praying for them. Pray for our students. Pray for the persecuted church around the world. Ask the Lord to strengthen them and to help them remain faithful. But let's also honor them by taking full advantage of the freedoms that we have to share our faith with our own neighbors. What excuse do we have to do anything less?

# UPCOMING TRIPS

PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYING FOR THESE TRIPS, THE ITEC TEAM, AND THE CHRIST-FOLLOWERS THAT WILL BE TRAINED.

## JULY

- Ecuador- July 5-14  
Wao Vision Trip

## AUGUST

- Southeast Africa- August 2-12  
I-DENT
- Southeast Asia- August 14-27  
I-FILM
- Southeast Asia - August 12-18  
Site Visit
- South America - August 20-22  
Conference

## SEPTEMBER

- East Africa- Sept 6 - 16  
I-FILM, I-FIX, I-MED
- Central America- Sept 20-29  
I-FILM
- Middle East - Sept 21 - Oct 1  
I-DENT
- Southern Africa- Sept 26 - Oct 3  
Site Visit

## OCTOBER

- Haiti- Oct 19 -27  
I-MED

## DECEMBER

- Central America- December 1-9  
I-MED, I-FIX, I-FILM

## DATE TBD

- Europe- Fall TBD  
Trauma Counseling, I-FILM
- East Africa- Date TBD  
Training TBD
- Southeast Asia- Date TBD  
Training TBD
- Southern Africa - Date TBD  
Training TBD
- Southeast Africa- Date TBD  
I-MED, I-SEE, I-FIX

Trip List:  
[itecusa.org/trips](http://itecusa.org/trips)

# CONTINUED FARMING DEVELOPMENT

The team at ITEC developing our farming training program had the opportunity to attend a training at Farming God's Way headquarters in Wisconsin earlier this year. Many new and helpful concepts were learned and have already been put into practice as the corn continues to grow skyward in our test plots.

Farming lends itself to some great spiritual truths, as found throughout Scripture. Through analogy, agriculture can show us how we can cultivate spiritual growth, work hard, and be watered by the gospel. We are reminded that humans put forth the effort and work the soil but ultimately God brings the yield.

As our team learned more about methods to yield a larger crop, they were reminded of these spiritual parallels of farming. Psalm 101:14 says, "You cause the grass to grow for the livestock and plants for man to cultivate, that he may bring forth food from the earth." Farming is a great avenue to train people around the world and speak to their spiritual need as well. Our desire is for future agriculture students to take this tool and feed their people both physically and spiritually.

Among the many things taught through the week, our team learned to make small changes to a compost pile to improve nutrients into the soil, leading to larger yields. In many developing areas, farmers are faced with small or decreasing yields in their fields. The techniques learned by our team will be of great help to our brothers and sisters across the globe in improving their harvest.



The conservation test plot at ITEC starting to shoot up.

expertise with us. Pray for wisdom as the team currently works to develop the ITEC farming training curriculum and simultaneously continues work in our test plots.

God has provided an amazing opportunity to use farming as a tool to spread the gospel. We are extremely grateful for all He has done and will do!



Dave working the fields at the training in Wisconsin.

Our team at ITEC is working hard to use these conservation agriculture principles on our test plots that have been planted this season. We anticipate a sweet corn party in the ITEC future!

In different cultural contexts, there can also be spiritual battles that affect the land. In some regions, farmers are taught to bring witch doctors in and have sacrifices made on the land in order to produce a larger crop. Pray that this bondage can be broken through the name of Jesus!

Moving forward, we ask that you pray with us that God would prepare the way and move as only He can. We are thankful for our partnerships with Farming God's Way and Foundations for Farming, and their openness to share their curriculum and

## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

MORE ARTICLES ABOUT FARM TRAINING DEVELOPMENT



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