



CRWRC

CHRISTIAN REFORMED  
WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE

*Living Justice, Loving Mercy*

**NEW**

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**Praise God for:**

I'm so thankful for good closure to my time in Sierra Leone and for all that I learned while I was here.

I'm also thankful that God has graciously granted safety, protection, and good health.

**Please pray for:**

Please pray with me for a smooth transition to Nigeria as I learn about the work and for unity as I join the team.

Please pray too for the friends I am leaving behind in Sierra Leone that they would know God's grace and mercy in the challenges they face.

# Melissa in Sierra Leone

May 2008

'Transformed Lives' -- that is what the *poda-poda* (public transport van) I saw yesterday was called. While I am sure an argument could be made for the fact that riding a *poda-poda* will in fact change your life, it's not the quite the kind of transformation that we talk about at CRWRC. I wanted to share with you a bit more about the transformation we pray for and desire to see -- here is a quote that sums it up well:

"The 'transformation' we seek in communities is as deep as the human heart, and as broad as the whole range of the human experience in the world God made. We want our approach to faithfully declare that our God reigns; Jesus is Lord over every inch of creation. 'From him and through him and to him are all things.' (Rom 11:36) We want to do community development that reflects the depth and breadth of the Kingdom."

As most of you know I am in the process wrapping up my

time here in Sierra Leone and moving to Nigeria to work with one of CRWRC's partners there, Beacon of Hope. Beacon of Hope works in partnership with several churches in Nigeria to see this kind of transformation happen at the community level, particularly by helping communities respond to the HIV and AIDS pandemic.



*Left: Traditional Birth Attendants*

*Below: the poda-poda fittingly called "Sweat."*



Incidentally the *poda-poda* I was riding when I saw 'Transformed Lives' was called 'Sweat.'

As I say good-bye to Sierra Leone and prepare to say hello to Nigeria, lists begin to form in my mind about what needs to be done, who I need to see, and a host of

other things. Here is a list of just a few of the things I'll miss, and things I'm looking forward to...

- Things I'll miss...
- my church here in Freetown
  - working with traditional birth attendants and mothers in the communities
  - being able to see the Atlantic Ocean and all that comes with that
  - the friends I've made having the neighborhood children wave and call "padi" (friend) as I walk home
  - speaking Krio
  - navigating Freetown
- Things I'm looking forward to...
- working alongside the church in HIV and AIDS work
  - working and living with/near other CRWRC-ers
  - learning more about Nigeria
  - rumor has it that Jos has a temperate climate (in other words I'm looking forward to not sweating as much!)
  - an opportunity to work at learning Hausa
  - not having mold grow on my clothes

So welcome to Nigeria! There is a lot to look forward to!

*Melissa Dilworth*