



# NYAMUHU'S UPDATE

## NYAMUHU KABOGO

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### Greeting from Kenya!

Some of my partner churches have requested that I write more about myself so that they can be specific in their prayers for me and also connect better with me. It's not that easy to write about oneself, particularly because I have a tendency to be reserved in some ways. But I will try.

Many of you know that in October I donated my left kidney to my ailing brother Ndegwa. You supported me with prayers, encouraging emails, cards and newsletters. Thank you to you all. Your prayers kept me going during the healing process.

### Ndegwa's Benevolence:

Ndegwa was very fortunate to have had so many people prepared to donate their kidney. I was among other siblings, nephews and nieces who offered their kidneys. Ndegwa is one of the most kind hearted human beings I have ever known. He has been a strong pillar for our family since both of our parents died. He is always the first to offer moral and financial support - be it to our neighbours, friends and relatives. He is a problem solver and has reached out to thousands of people in many ways. As it goes with such benevolence people his virtue unfortunately resulted in high blood pressure and consequently kidney failure. My brother has never been over weight, so it was a surprise that he even got HP let alone kidney failure. His kindness paid off as indicated by the number of people who rallied to give their kidney.

### Tests Upon Tests:

Kidney transplant is delicate and finding a good match is not as easy as I had thought. I cannot remember how many tests we did, but as the tests progressed so did the number of available kidney donors. It was one week until the operation and there were three of us sisters left with no clue who would be the donor. On the evening of Friday

October 10 I was informed that I was the most suitable donor. The next day I did a 99mTc- DTPA REROGRAM test, and then a CT RENAL ANGIOGRAM on Monday.

When I learned that I was my brother's donor I said to myself "okay - so now what next?" Suddenly I was in unfamiliar territory. The emotions I felt were foreign to me. The best way to describe them are elation, passion and apprehension. Neither fear nor doubt was present however; instead I felt the presence of God. The certainty that my decision to donate my kidney right thing to do came with peace that I've never felt in my life - a sweet peace.

On Monday October 13 I went for my final test, then I called Ndegwa. He asked me a peculiar question: "Did the tests confirm you had 2 kidneys?" Then he asked, "Are you certain you want to go through the surgery?" I answered "yes" and my eyes flooded with tears once again.

### Kidney Transplant:

Kenyan doctors and surgeons have been doing kidney transplant for the last 25 years in several hospitals. I was admitted at the Agah Khan University Hospital in the afternoon of October 14. Ndegwa's kidney specialist, my anesthetist and surgeon visited me at different times in the evening to inform me about surgery procedures and what each doctor's role would be. The kidney specialist role was to care for the kidney once the surgeon had "harvested" it; caring for the kidney involved lowering its temperature, cleaning and handing it to Ndegwa's surgeon. At the end of each visit they all asked the same question: "Are you certain that you want to donate your kidney?" I was a little irritated by this question, but I knew that they were required to ensure that I was freely giving my kidney. The surgeon's talk was the most memorable of all; he informed me that the surgery would be a little tricky,

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but assured me it would be successful. It would take twice the time of the normal surgery because of the way my kidney was located and the fact that it had two arteries instead of one. This was rare but not abnormal. Then he added that he may remove the lowest and smallest rib to give him space to remove the kidney. My sister Virginia, who was beside me all this time looked at me and it was at that point we comprehended that this really was a major surgery. I then turned to the surgeon and asked, "What will you do with the rib?" He looked at me and jokingly said "You can take it and make your Adam with it." I looked at my sister and we burst out laughing. Then it hit me that I may not just leave the hospital less one kidney but also without one rib. The surgeon then repeated that question: "So, are you still willing to ahead with surgery?" The next day the surgeon confirmed that my rib was intact. I chuckled and remarked, "So I will not get my Adam then?"

My brother's and I went for surgery on October 15; my operation took place at 7:45 and his later. My surgery lasted five hours instead of the normal 2 ½ hours. Later the surgeon explained that my surgery was further complicated because my kidney was covered by scarred tissues. I was immediately concerned that my kidney would be no good to my brother. However the kidney specialist reassured me that it was one of the healthiest kidney's he had seen. Then told what I really wanted to hear: Ndegwa's transplant was successful and the kidney had started operating immediately.



Nyamuhu at theater entrance



Nyamuhu's surgery

The next six days in hospital were very trying and I couldn't sleep well. I had to sleep on my right side; normally my sleeping position is flat on my stomach. At times I was in a lot of pain, but fortunately the pain killers the doctors prescribed made sure it did not last long. On Saturday morning I was wheeled up to see Ndegwa for the very first time since the transplant. When I saw him I was once again engulfed with emotion, but content that I gave him my kidney. His expression had brightened – he did not have that dull colour he'd had when he was under dialysis - and he looked five years younger. He did His appetite returned and he could now take fluids, which he had not done for months.

That was two months ago and today we are much better. Last Sunday I visited Ndegwa at his home and he is doing very well. His is still on controlled low immunity level to counter kidney rejection. He is also on anti rejection medicine. But he no longer looks down trodden. Ndegwa is energetic, strong and his enthusiastic demeanor is back. This is the Ndegwa we knew. Please keep him in pray that he stays in good health and comes to know the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thank you again for all your prayers and messages!  
I hope you all had a blessed holiday season!!

~ Nyamuhu Kabogo