

Possibilities Africa USA



**CELEBRATING
20 YEARS**

A JOURNEY WORTH THE WALK *by Martin Simiyu*

I have traveled a lot over my short life. Three of these journeys remain the most defining for my life. The first was when I left my remote village of Namawanga in Western Kenya to travel to Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya for the first time. There I witnessed civilization and modernity I never dreamt existed. A second trip was when I left Nairobi to travel to Chicago in December 2000, where I experienced winter, snow, and the great American abundance.

The third journey was in April 2005 returning to my country Kenya from the USA with a vision to set up what today is Possibilities Africa (PA). This journey, to rebuild lives and communities in rural Africa continues. In all these journeys, my mom's words that education, faith, and hard work are quintessential for change have guided me.

As an African student in the USA, all I prayed for was my college fees and upkeep. The idea of starting a ministry to impact a continent was beyond what I could imagine or think. Given my background, this mission would be impossible for me. Today, at its 20th anniversary, PA is still growing strong. **God strengthened my faith with Matthew 19:26; today, He has proven that nothing is impossible with Him!**

Since independence in the early 1960s, most African countries have received multi-billion dollars in charity and development funds. Countless nonprofit organizations work across Africa to end poverty. Why, with all these investments, has poverty only grown and expanded in Africa? Does Africa need more charity, handouts, or building things for poor people? A simple answer is No!

PA believes that Africa needs total transformation founded on the Word of God. If the Word informs people's belief systems, and how they think, and behave, then many will live responsible and dignified lives. PA sees this possible by equipping the pastor leaders to nurture their churches to be the light of the world and the salt of their communities – Mathew 5:13-16. We teach that God created man in His image and made him (man) a steward of God's agenda on earth through work.



Martin Simiyu, Founder & CEO



Martin and Moody Faculty & Students, 2004



Taken in Rwanda, 2019



Women sorting tomatoes, 2010



Handicapped brick builder, 2010

Like Nehemiah taught and mobilized the people of Jerusalem, to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:17) we too challenge the people of Africa to arise, take responsibility, and rebuild their lives. We teach that God's saving grace through Christ is the foundation for all these.

PA started small in my little village. Intentionally, inspired by Mark 1:3, we targeted the underserved rural villages and towns starting small but believing in God for the ministry to grow to impact many just like a Mustard Seed (Matthew 13:31-32). **Twenty years later, PA is active in over 170 communities across seven countries. Over 3,000 spiritual leaders, including over 2,000 pastors, have been trained. These pastors are reaching a combined total of over 260,000 households and impacting over 1.3 million lives.** The ministry has directly supported over 40 employees who have worked with PA at one point or another. Believing that God can give us the nations for an inheritance (Psalm 2:7-12), we have set an ambitious goal to double the above numbers over the next five years.

God has kept His promise in Mathew 28:20, "...Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the earth." In my daily emptiness, brokenness, and inadequacy, I have continued to run to God in surrender, crying for His grace to be multiplied upon me. He has fulfilled this scripture to me through each of you by your giving, praying, and visiting on mission trips. From Chicago to Los Angeles, Nebraska to West Virginia, and throughout my journey, God has raised someone to stand with me and walk with me to fulfill this calling. What we celebrate today is what God has done through all of us, enabled by God's grace.

Only God can take an African boy from a poor unknown village and make him a channel for such an amazing work. **Twenty years later, we continue rebuilding Africa, one village at a time.** This journey is worthy of walking because, with God, all things are possible!

Martin Simiyu
Martin Simiyu
PA Ministry Founder and International Executive Director



Martin training pastors, 2012



Pastors worshipping at training, 2012



Martin & staff member Gideon, 2015



Martin, Doug, and a few Kenyan staff, 2019



Martin, Doug, staff, and pastors, 2020



Malawi Staff, Martin, and USA partners, 2024

THE QUESTION

WHY HAS AFRICA NOT SEEN SIGNIFICANT CHANGE DESPITE BILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF AID PROVIDED OVER THE YEARS?

THIS IS WHY WE EXIST

WE BELIEVE THAT THE WHOLE GOSPEL, IMPACTING THE WHOLE PERSON, TRANSFORMING THE WHOLE COMMUNITY IS THE ANSWER.

Although many people presume it lacks natural resources, Africa is, in fact, rich with resources of all sorts. But because rural villages have been especially plagued by decades of acute poverty, deprivation of opportunities, and corrupt government systems, many believe things can never change. They have become accustomed to waiting on the next handout because they haven't been taught that there is another way. Many lose themselves to illegal substances. Nothing seems to matter, and the people have lost hope that tomorrow can be better than today.

What would it take to see those impoverished do more than survive? What if they could truly thrive? This is where we come in. We do this in three ways:

1. **Spiritual Leadership & Discipleship**
2. **Economic Productivity**
3. **Mentoring the Next Generation**

Possibilities Africa is dedicated to rebuilding hope by helping people realize they have the power to transform their lives, villages, and countries; not hope in someone to give them another meal or handout, but hope that can only be found in Jesus Christ. That alone provides the change that includes not only the material things but also their mental, cultural, socio-economic, and spiritual needs.



OUR VISION

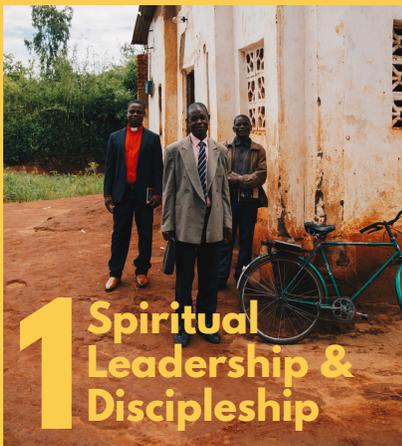
The vision of Possibilities Africa is to make aware and awaken every person, family, and community of their potential, responsibility, and opportunity that is within their reach for life-long change and transformation.

The cycle of extreme and all-inclusive poverty in Africa can be broken. We do this by coming alongside the local church leadership and their people to give them a hand-up, rather than a handout.

We provide training and support for the God-given entrepreneurial spirit within them to grow and burn brightly and for the people to live with dignity and significance without dependence on others.

Possibilities Africa cannot be quantified in numbers only but also mental shifts, cultural change, spiritual growth, and productivity.





1 Spiritual Leadership & Discipleship

Possibilities Africa equips spiritual leaders who go through training to embrace holistic ministry in their communities through local accountability groups. This model has a domino effect as congregations are encouraged to start similar groups for further discipleship. Family dynamics, workplace ethics, government practices—all these and more change as our leaders invite the presence of Jesus into every aspect of life.

Through this lens of God's mercy, leaders preach the gospel, disciple believers, and apply life-giving Biblical principles so that every aspect of their community begins to flourish. We have had **over 3,150 spiritual leaders** go through our training programs.

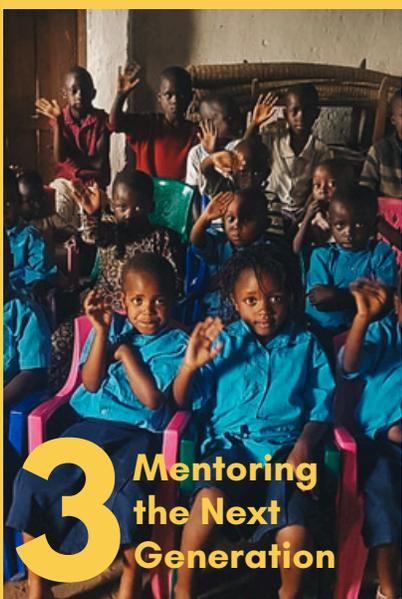


2 Economic Productivity

Pastors and church members start micro-businesses to fund the local church and their households. How it works:

- Church members form small groups that create micro-savings and loaning enterprises. Possibilities Africa also puts seed money into these groups.
- Members take out loans on a rotating basis to create their own micro-businesses.
- The members repay the loans so the money can be loaned out again to other members. A small amount of interest is paid to grow the group's capital base.

Local support and accountability ensure these loans are repaid. The repayment rate is nearly 100%. Businesses include animal and vegetable farming, solar lighting, shops, and other economic projects in local communities throughout Africa that alleviate poverty. **Over 20,300 micro-businesses have been started.**



3 Mentoring the Next Generation

We train leaders to begin educating parents on the needs and value of children. Then, they decide what their children need and how to teach it. Some areas offer Vacation Bible School, and others have started preschools and Sunday school classes to teach Biblical truths.

Over 50,000 children are invested in annually because of the Possibilities Africa training that starts with the Bible. We also focus on casting a vision to the kids about how they can have a better tomorrow. At this age, we focus on their spiritual growth, personal responsibility, and economic possibilities so that they can become change agents in their families, communities, and countries.

An outcome of this ministry model we see is communities that are motivated and equipped to minister beyond children to orphans, the disabled, and widows.

FLYING BY FAITH IN THE GOD OF POSSIBLE

by Merrell McIlwain



— “ —

THE MINISTRY OF POSSIBILITIES AFRICA STARTED FROM NOTHING WITH A FEW GRADUATE STUDENTS WHO HAD A BIG DREAM BUT VERY FEW RESOURCES OR INFLUENCE.

— ” —

Twenty years ago, after our mission group from Moody Theological Seminary returned from Africa, several of us started meeting and praying about what we could do to improve things there. We knew it wouldn't be easy, but we trusted God to guide our efforts. We were also blessed to have the former senior Pastor at Moody Church in Chicago, Warren Wiersbe, as an advisor. He told us that if we could ever explain what was happening, we could be sure God was NOT behind it – because God's plans for us are always much bigger, bolder, and better than our own.

The ministry of Possibilities Africa started from nothing with a few graduate students who had a big dream but very few resources or influence. I believe that the best way to explain what happened next is an analogy to something we can all relate to—airplane flight. Our flight started a lot like that of Charles Lindberg crossing the Atlantic in a one-seat, single-propeller plane taking off on a dirt runway, but not exactly sure what would happen next. With God's blessing, however, our early “flights” went well... and gradually, things grew – an airplane with two engines instead of one, a mechanic working to keep the plane flying, a co-pilot, and eventually a paved runway.

I don't know where we are in that flight now—we have 18 employees, are in 7 countries, and have impacted the lives of tens of thousands of Africans, but my point is that as we have grown, God has led and blessed each step. We believe the best days are yet to come, with the result that the ministry of Possibilities Africa will continue to be far more than we ever could have imagined. This is not to say that there haven't been difficulties, misunderstandings, and challenges. There always are. But we worked through those, only to discover that they were getting us ready for the next phase of our growth.

Without the leadership of Martin Simiyu, our flight would have ended before it began. Martin has always been very humble and doesn't like the spotlight. But without his sacrifice, tireless efforts, courageous decisions, dedication, integrity, honesty, and faithfulness, Possibilities Africa would not exist. He is a visionary and has been the steady hand through the many challenges that have come our way. He has kept our plane flying through it all.

And thanks to you, our many faithful supporters, who have also come alongside and shared in the ministry. **You have made it possible for a child to believe that with God, there can be a better way of life,** for parents to believe they don't have to wait for the next handout but can begin to improve their lives now, and for pastors of different backgrounds to believe that together they can bring their congregations to the life saving and life-giving belief in Jesus Christ.

But the real “star” of our story is God, and to Him belongs all the glory. Indeed, we have seen that God's plans are far greater than we could ever ask or think, and we thank Him for entrusting us to manage this ministry. To God be the glory, for with Him, all things are possible.

TIMELINE: OUR HISTORY



Group traveling to Kenya, 2002

2002-2004

While studying in the U.S. at Moody Bible Graduate School, Martin Simiyu shared with a group of faculty and students his desire to return to Africa to help poor communities. Martin, with the help of Merrell McIlwain, registered Possibilities Africa as a 501c3 in 2004.



Martin & Merrell in West Virginia

2005-2008

Martin returned to Africa and initiated a cow project to alleviate poverty in his home village. A community needs assessment was done in four communities, and the first group of pastors was formed. The first local "CIFA" (Community Incorporated Fellowship Associations) was conceptualized, and a multi-faceted approach to ministry was developed to address real needs.



Gideon, Doug Shada, Martin, and church members, 2010

2009-2016

During this time, significant investment in economic empowerment grew through micro-savings, loans, and repayments. Many pastors and leaders were trained in theology. It was an exciting time to see this unique approach to holistic ministry developed and led by Africans. The ministry expanded to 83 CIFA groups in Kenya, Malawi, and Rwanda.



Doug & Jill with staff members and pastors, 2019

2017-2019

Evaluating the ministry revealed that not everyone in the program was properly motivated and committed. As a result, a new baseline was established to work with committed pastors and CIFAs. This temporarily reduced the number of CIFA groups to provide for future quantitative and qualitative growth.



Ethiopia training, 2023

2020-PRESENT

Possibilities Africa is igniting transformation throughout the continent of Africa through spiritual leadership & discipleship, sparking economic development, and mentoring the next generation. This is a God-sized movement and we are privileged to join Him.



Malawi pastors & members, 2024

20TH ANNIVERSARY | YOU'RE INVITED

Join us on Friday, November 15 at 6:30 p.m for dinner, stories, and fellowship.

The 20th Anniversary Celebration will take place at the Younes Center in

Kearney, NE. RSVP to Emily

(efrenzen@possibilitiesafrica.org).

STAGGERING IMPACT

by Matt Shada



For the last 20 years, I have watched God take a vision that He placed on Martin's heart and turn it into a reality. While there has been resistance and spiritual opposition along the way, God has honored steps of faith and courage. I remember early on when people who were in deep poverty did not want to be a part of Possibilities Africa because instead, they wanted a handout. Today, Possibilities Africa has a different challenge. The challenge is meeting the demands of people on the continent who cannot wait to participate in what God is doing. God is using the ministry of Possibilities Africa to impact tens of thousands of lives.

I met Martin at the Moody Bible Institute over 22 years ago. While he had opportunities to stay in the United States and live a more comfortable life, he had a passion for helping those in poverty on the continent that he called home. Being from Africa and a native Kenyan who grew up in poverty, he knew what the needs of the people were and what changes needed to be made. No more handouts! No more just doing things for people! God created people in His image and has placed within them creative ideas for a better future. It was time to stop telling people what they should do and start challenging people to develop their own vision to better their lives, families, churches, and communities. What started in one small village in Kenya is now thriving in seven different countries.

In 2006, we took a group from our church to Kenya to participate with Martin and his team in what God was doing. I had the privilege of introducing my parents to Martin and traveling with my father to Africa several times. My father was so moved by what he saw God doing that he became an incredible champion of the ministry here in the United States, including serving as chairman of the board for Possibilities Africa. That passion continued until the day he went home to be with Jesus.

The model of ministry Martin and his team have developed gives hope to the hopeless and encourages people to take responsibility for their own lives. It is a reproducing model of ministry that equips church leaders and teaches them how to empower others in their communities. The transformational impact is seen spiritually, economically, emotionally, and socially. It truly is the whole gospel impacting the whole person and ultimately ends up transforming the whole community! **I've seen it with my own eyes and it is staggering to see the impact.**

It's important that we stop and celebrate what God has done over the last 20 years because it is a testimony to God's faithfulness and provision. The past 20 years are also a testimony to Martin's steady, faithful spiritual leadership. What has happened over the last 20 years would not have been possible without people like yourself who have faithfully joined in the work God is doing on the continent of Africa. We praise Him for what He's done and for what He's going to do! To God alone be the glory!

Rejoicing in Him,

Matt Shada

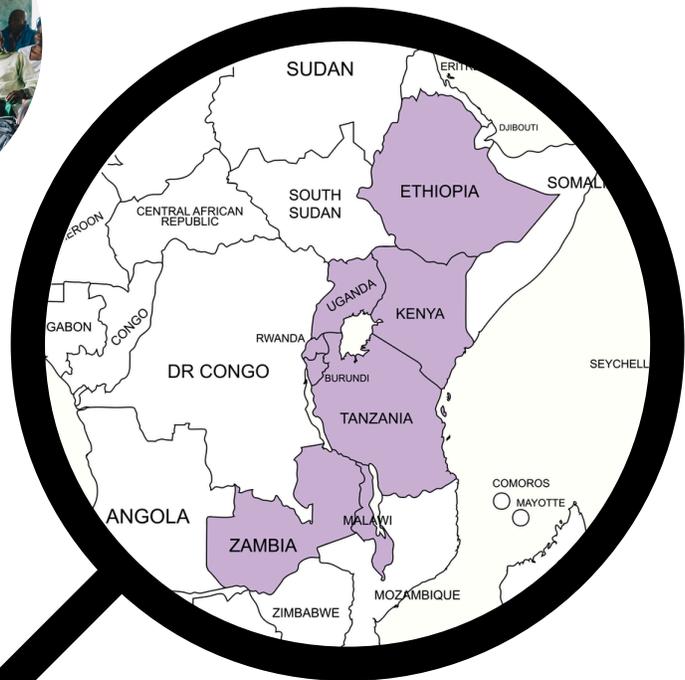
“WHAT HAS HAPPENED OVER THE LAST 20 YEARS WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT PEOPLE LIKE YOURSELF WHO HAVE FAITHFULLY JOINED IN THE WORK GOD IS DOING ON THE CONTINENT OF AFRICA.”

WHY PARTNER WITH POSSIBILITIES AFRICA?

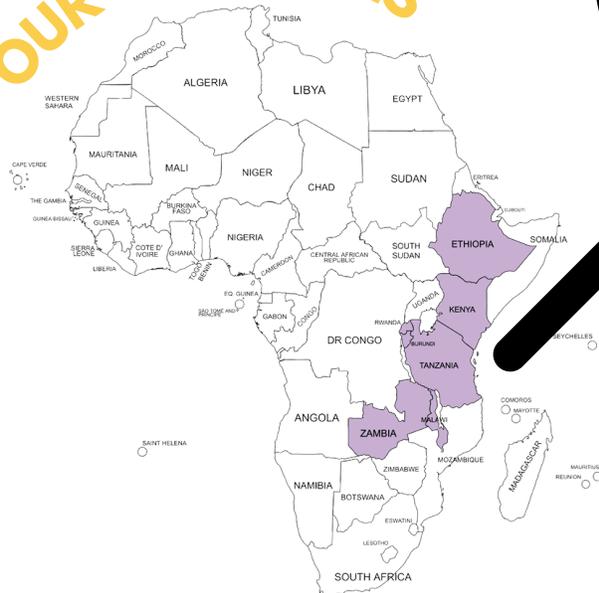
Over the last 20 years, Possibilities Africa has made a radical impact on the lives of tens of thousands of people. Our model is reproducible, sustainable, and growth-focused. **We need you** because transformation cannot happen in this life-changing ministry without our generous partners. We are building into **3,150 pastors/leaders** who know the language and culture to lead a church. These leaders are influencing 1.3 million people from their congregations and communities in seven countries: Kenya, Rwanda, Malawi, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Burundi, and Zambia.

As we look ahead, Possibilities Africa seeks to double its presence in African countries from 7 to 14 in five years.

We are asking God to open doors for us to train pastors in the following countries where we have potential connections—Uganda, Ghana, and Zimbabwe. Our goal is to reach all of Africa. Many of these pastors live in communities where Islam is growing, and they need to be equipped to share the good news of the Gospel.



OUR COUNTRIES



WHY IS POSSIBILITIES AFRICA DIFFERENT?

- 01 Possibilities Africa exists to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.** Every training and program ultimately seeks greater Gospel access, regardless of people's economic status or background. The heart of our business training is to provide financial income so the pastors can teach about Jesus without the burden of poverty.
- 02 Possibilities Africa provides a hand-up** for economic productivity to the African people **instead of a handout.** While other programs ask Africans to stand in line for a temporary fix for their problems, **we believe people can change from the inside out.**
- 03** Possibilities Africa doesn't find a problem to solve and then impose its solution on Africans. **This may be the single greatest difference in our ministry. When we get involved, we allow the local people to define their problems for us.** Once they define the problem, Possibilities Africa works with them to find the best solution that works for them and the necessary resources for implementation.
- 04 Possibilities Africa is African-led.** We have 20 staff members and interns committed to serving and seeing change in their homeland. Knowing the language and culture is a huge advantage when recruiting and training pastors. **Decisions are made in Africa** by country boards and ministry staff. ****Staff members are pictured below and on the following page.***
- 05** Possibilities Africa brings the village groups to maturity, with each group having a structure, plan, and local drive to continue implementing activities under the three programs. We then relinquish the lead to the group so it can continue cultivating its agenda while we watch from an arms-length. **As we complete work in certain villages, they become self-sustaining.**
- 06** Most Africans believe ministry support ought to be provided by Westerners because Africa is a third-world country. Possibilities Africa challenges this mindset by teaching local believers to grow in the **culture of giving** to community causes.

OUR AFRICAN STAFF



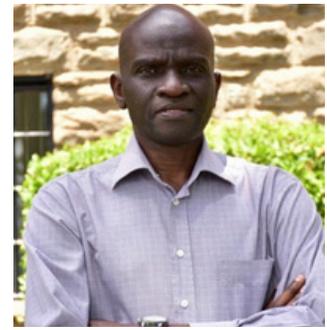
OUR AFRICAN STAFF



Albert Simiyu
Kenya



Betty Mwakelemu
Kenya



Dr. Stephen Andai
Kenya



Gilbert Sang
Kenya



Kevin Kanyi
Kenya



Victor Shalakra
Kenya



Elvis Kisiangani
Kenya



Harrison Mutwiwa
Kenya



Richard Andai
Kenya



Haron Koimur
Kenya



Marvel Simiyu
Kenya



Lengwe Ngulube
Zambia



Luheto Vunda
Zambia



Christopher Chama
Zambia



Berry Mwansa
Zambia



Abenezzer G Tafa
Ethiopia



Grey Makhole
Malawi



Davie Maluwa
Malawi



John Mastern
Malawi

LEGAL STRUCTURE

Possibilities Africa (USA) is a 501c3 non-profit US corporation. We are members of the ECFA (Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability) and complete a 990 report yearly. We use First Fruits, a financial firm based in Lincoln, Nebraska, for our bookkeeping records. Our partner, Possibilities Africa Kenya (PAK), is a legal nonprofit corporation in Africa. Each corporation has its own board of directors.

We have a verifiable approach to accountability, including a written agreement with the ministry in Africa (PAK) that details our mutual responsibilities. We must approve their use of our funds. We also require a segregated account and an annual budget with regular financial reports and photographs to document the work there.

We conduct frequent visits to Africa to see the work, and a representative from Africa visits the U.S. regularly to report on their activities. We audit to ensure that all funds given are used exclusively for their stated purposes.

We can demonstrate spiritual leaders who are well trained, children who are being educated, microfinance activities that are being initiated, and countries that are being transformed.

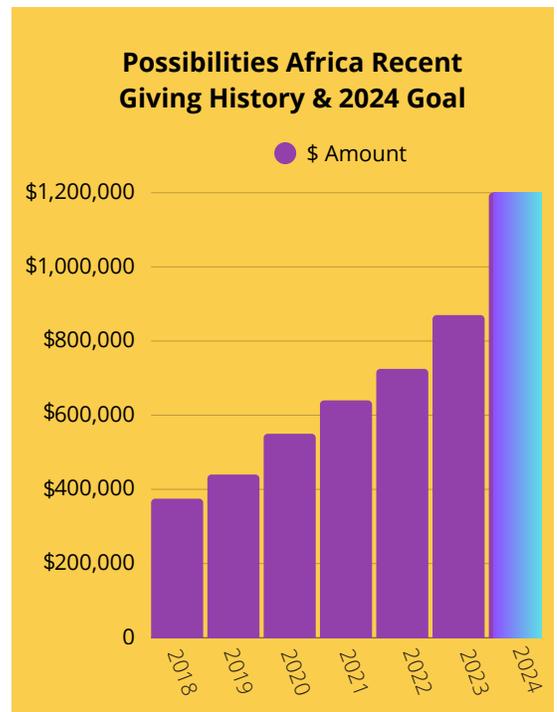
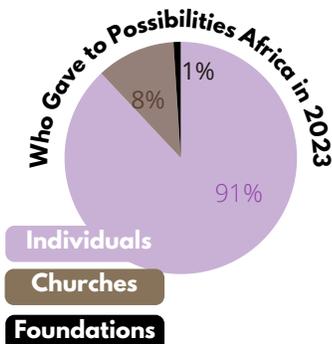


Some of the Possibilities Africa Kenya Staff with the 2024 USA team on the annual vision trip



FINANCIAL STRUCTURE

- **\$2,500** trains one pastor for his/her entire 2-year program.
- **\$25,000** trains 10 pastors (local accountability group) for a 2-year program.
- **\$250,000** is the cost of starting a new country for the first two years. The goal is to have 200+ pastors training in the new country within two years.



20 YEARS OF TRANSFORMATIVE MINISTRY

What are the chances of a young man from a humble village in southwestern Kenya establishing a ministry that has not only endured but flourished for 20 years? This ministry has expanded to encompass soon-to-be eight countries and touched over 260,000 households. Statistically, the odds seem slim. So, what's behind the extraordinary success of this ministry? The answer lies in the exceptional leadership of Martin Simiyu, whose vision and dedication have played a crucial role. Yet, Martin would be the first to point to an even greater reason: **God at work.**

Henry Blackaby's book, *Experiencing God* (1990), emphasizes that "God is always at work around you," and that He reveals His will so believers can join His activity in the world. In 2019, during a mission trip to Africa, I encountered a ministry where it was evident that "God was at work." **Since 2004, Possibilities Africa had been dedicated to training pastors, fostering small businesses, and educating children.**

My passion for Africa ignited in the summer of 1987 when I joined Campus Crusade for Christ (CRU) in Kenya to show the Jesus film. Our team of five college students presented the film to thousands, leading over 4,000 people to make a commitment to follow Christ.

It was a privilege to see God work in this way. However, I was troubled by one question: Who would disciple these new believers? How often had they responded to an altar call? I met local pastors who were deeply committed to serving God but lacked the training needed to shepherd their congregations effectively.

Although I recognized the need, my unfamiliarity with the language and culture left me unsure of how to address it. Martin Simiyu grew up aware of this same need for pastoral training in rural Africa.

His firsthand experience motivated him to pursue an education, work hard, and return to Africa to create meaningful change through local churches. **I am more convinced than ever that God is actively working through this ministry to fulfill His divine purpose.** Will you join in His mission by partnering with Possibilities Africa?



Doug Reed

Doug Reed
Managing Director PA, USA
dreed@possibilitiesafrica.org
308.991.0402



USA BOARD MEMBERS



Matthew Jacobson
Rumson, New Jersey



Martin Simiyu
Nairobi, Kenya



Matt Shada
Omaha, Nebraska



Nancy Gibson
Monument, Colorado



Peg Nyffeler
Loveland, Colorado



Merrell McIlwain
High Point, North Carolina



Tyson Griffin
Tunnel Hill, Georgia



Walt McCord
Uniontown, Ohio



Doug Reed
Holdrege, Nebraska

CONNECT WITH US

Monthly Prayer via Zoom

Join us for 30 minutes of prayer for Possibilities Africa via Zoom on **the first Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. CST.**



Meeting ID: 791 0886 4125
Passcode: paUSA418

Go to bit.ly/PAusaZoom or scan the QR code to join the virtual prayer room.



Available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and YouTube



Scan the QR code or go to linktr.ee/possibilitiesafricausa to hear the untold stories of what God is doing in African countries.

Possibilities Africa USA

Partner

Sign up for our email newsletter:
usa.possibilitiesafrica.org

Social Media

Find us:
Possibilities Africa USA
[@possibilitiesafricausa](https://www.instagram.com/possibilitiesafricausa)



Donate online:
usa.possibilitiesafrica.org/donate

Mail a donation:
Possibilities Africa
PO Box 209
Elkhorn, NE 68022



Contact Emily

Emily Frenzen
Creative Director PA, USA
efrenzen@possibilitiesafrica.org
308.550.0931

WE BELIEVE THAT **THE WHOLE GOSPEL**,
IMPACTING THE WHOLE PERSON,
TRANSFORMING THE WHOLE
COMMUNITY **IS THE ANSWER.**

