

Here in Kenya 2009

29 June 2009

This month has also flown by but this time I can report that building has begun and we may even get all the land back that we had thought we had bought. Our God is good!



Digging the well.



Inspecting the site for the well.

We have begun constructing a well. It is dug by hand and is incredibly circular all the way down. Not sure how far they have reached but they have gone at least 5m down. They have struck water but they have continued their work. They bail out the water as it comes in and keep digging. They are now also lining the well with bricks and cement. For immediate use it is hand drawn but when it is complete we will have a pump built into it that will be able to pump water to tanks on the homes for the periods when rain is little.



Deep down the well

The homes are going to be made from interlocking bricks that we will make on site. The Ministry of housing have several hydraulic brick making machines that they are lending out around the district to make affordable houses. This has been a particular project of theirs. We have things in place and are now just waiting on the machine to arrive on our land. We have been told it is hired out for free as we are building an orphanage. Someone else has said we will have a maintenance fee. However it works it should reduce the cost of the homes considerably as cement and labour is greatly reduced in the construction of the walls.

In order to dry the bricks and let them set we need a large structure to keep them from the rains. We now have a structure 10x12 metres which when the brick making has concluded can be walled for a hall.

It only took 3 goes and lots of convincing for the roof to be put on level! Thanks to some men who came on site to help me convince the fundi that a roof needs to be level!



Andrew, one of our amazing helpers



Climbing the rocks at the falls.



A rainbow over our hall to be!

This structure is now complete for the time being.

Material is arriving for the brick making and cement slab for the first home. The foundation is being dug this week. And yes...all by hand!!!



Water being drawn from the well. Another worker is down in the hole.



The Quarry



Women smashing rock with a hammer.



Men digging foundations to the right. Materials being delivered to the left. In the background to the left you can see the brick shelter and the Building to the right is the small cottage already on the site that we will Renovate to be office space and living quarters.

I was allowing the men who were with me to go and negotiate prices of the gravel that is to be used for the foundation. White skin sometimes means higher prices. So I waited under a tree as they walked into the quarry, unseen from where the car had to be parked. Due to the condition of the road we could drive no further. They hadn't been gone long when they called for me to come and see this most picturesque quarry. Cliffs of stone were surrounding a beautiful lake. Women were seated pounding the rock into gravel. These women work very long hours in the quarry.

Building here is very labour intensive!

The land issue went to court between the previous owner and the people trying to take the land as their own. A long story short, the previous owner has apparently won the case. We haven't got the news officially and there are still 14 days in which the other party can appeal. But we are thankful that it is now a greater possibility to reclaim that which we thought we had bought. Damages are also being calculated and taken to court. We are thankful to our God for this!

Due to all of these land issues taking place and before we had heard of this initial victory in court, we had begun to use the land we had, which meant changing the site plan. As you know, court proceedings can continue for years, so as not to delay any further we decided to start construction. Considering all factors, we are continuing with the revised site plan and will come up with greater detail as we hear about final decisions concerning the land.

But it is not only about the building of the homes.....



Using their heads. Carrying food and water for picnic.

We went for a picnic on the site with all the children (plus a couple of extras). We had to hire a mini-van to get us all there. After some clearing of rocks we had the games. These children really know how to enjoy themselves.



Playing on the site.

We have had a couple of Birthday celebrations. Jackson (my house host and co-founder of Robins Nest) as well as Haggai who turned 13 this year.



House Parent, Jotham, feeding Haggai his birthday cake.

We have also had two visitors from Australia. Cory, a marathon runner. She ran everywhere. Even between the towns of Webuye & Bungoma (about 36km?). Although this was nothing after running 90km in South Africa the day before she arrived to visit us. Cory is also talented musically.



Cory running home to Webuye after our picnic in Bungoma.

A request from the school the RN children attend was to be taught a Scottish dance. Cory really taught them well. The children are still practising for interschool competition. They have come through one round with the possibility of two more rounds. The last one is in Mombasa. About 12hrs away by road. The second round is this

week sometime. The date keeps changing so I can't be specific.

Greg from Newcastle also came to visit. He accompanied us on an outreach visit to those sponsored through Robin's Branch.



Greg , Naomi, Susan, Peace and Leah



A sack of maize to help the girls and their grandmother.



A visit with Sarah & Lois.

For more snippets go to <http://jes1402.blogspot.com>

You are welcome to email me at jes1402@gmail.com

Thanks for your interest, love & support

Jan