

Dala Development - July 2017

Hello Friends,

In May we hosted a three-member team from E-Free church in Bloomington, IL. It was a nice team, they all had great attitudes despite some of the challenges we faced and in the end a great bit of work was done.

The goal was to add a classroom onto the existing village school and to build a stand-alone staff office. For the most part that's what was accomplished and it would not have happened if the team did not come.



Our fearless team: Amanda, Omar, David (at 6' 9" nicely nicknamed "Shorty"), and Dan



Once we chose the locations for the two structures and started cutting the vertical poles. One small factor wasn't considered when measuring so after cutting 13 poles the wrong length we used 2x4s.



Some bigger girls were sent to a water source to haul water to the work site so that the cement could be mixed.



Any loose topsoil was scraped off, a course soil was added and pounded down, then the local laborers hand mixed the cement with a single shovel for the floors. This guy is wearing rubber boots but some of the others chose to do it in bare feet.



Did you know there's no need to cut iron sheets? Just snip an edge, line another sheet up to the desired length and rip. That was a time saver. And a knuckle saver.



We had a battery operated circular saw that we charged for hours but even after that charge it couldn't rotate fast enough to cut bread so we called a guy with a chainsaw who made our 2x4s into 2x2s.



For lengths, notches, angled cuts, and any other thing we needed on the days we didn't hire the chainsaw, we just used a machete.



By the time we left the village this is how the office looked, nearly done. The classroom had a floor and poles, ready for iron sheet walls. The local laborers continued to work until the remaining supplies were gone.



We were told not to touch this massive, scary caterpillar. We didn't.



Amanda did a little teaching on oral hygiene and distributed little kits with a toothbrush, paste, floss, and a toothbrush cover.



Students with their kits plus an extra pouch for their pencils.

In addition to the classroom and office, Omar and Shorty identified some problems and fixed them. One problem was a jagged edge on the latrine door. After a little girl sliced her fingers on it Omar set to work better securing the edge of the metal sheet to the door frame. Also, there was a board of no structural significance that hung along the underside of the roof overhang. It kept all the windows from opening on one side of all four classrooms. They removed it, now air can circulate, sunlight comes in, and the students and teachers can enjoy the rooms much more.



As I mentioned, the team faced some unusual challenges which were not limited to building materials and tools. Each one got sick for two days and took another day for recovery. When everyone was feeling well enough we took a walk to the escarpment where we could see Lake Victoria and Homa Hills.



If we stayed in one place long enough children would just appear in large quantities.



Every day and every evening had a dramatic sky. One afternoon right before it rained we saw a complete rainbow with portions of its double.

After a week in the village, we went to Masai Mara for a safari. The highlights include sleeping inside the park which allowed us, from our beds, to hear (presumably) a wildebeest moan before what sounded like dozens of hyenas started giggling over their meal. During our game drive we came upon a cheetah eating a wildebeest followed by a flock of vultures who cleared the leftovers. There were giraffes, elephants, all sorts of antelopes, hippos, beautiful birds, baby hyenas, a rock python, zebras, two hiding lions, and the highlight... a leopard!

We are thankful for the team's visit, their flexibility, their cheerfulness despite frustrations, and the project that they were a part of.

Thank you (not just the team but all our supporters) for being a part of the development of this special school full of wonderful teachers and precious children. The school wouldn't be what it is without your generous support. I know we normally focus on the health side of our ministry so it's nice to focus on the school for this update. Take care and God bless!
Emily and Dan.

If you are interesting in supporting the work please visit: <http://www.globalhz.org/dala-development/>