

Abbas Rest Orphans-helping children in Africa Newsletter July 2011

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Hi there everyone, yes the boy's back from his adventures in Malawi. Where to begin i ask myself. There were highs and very few lows, i am glad to say.. This is a bumper edition so sit down with a nice beverage and enjoy the news. Arrived in Blantyre on 23rd March and next day down to business with a meeting with William and Harry. Received reports to give me an idea where to start first. As usual there were the long list of things needed, but i am experienced in the Malawian way now and the Malawian answer to everything is i have no money. We bought a few things in Blantyre before heading off to the centre at Chiringa. We reached our destination about 6pm and the staff had waited for me at the centre to give me a Malawian welcome. We greeted each other with me trying to remember all the names again, some happy reunions were made, then i was off to my accommodation for a good long sleep.

Over the next few days more meetings and decisions being made. The first priority was the maize. It was not ready yet so we kept a close eye on the harvest. It was looking good though.



The maize came on sale after a few weeks, and it was all hands on deck, the price was much less than we paid last year so we wasted no time in buying our yearly stock, there were some late nights in getting and storing the maize, but all the staff, older boys and girls stayed on till the job was finished without being asked to. We priced the maize at Muona and discovered it was dearer there so we priced transport and found it was still cheaper buying the maize in Chiringa and

transporting it across Malawi to Muona Centre. So we started again in sourcing and buying the maize for our other centre. As you can see we



needed a big lorry and it still took two trips to get all the maize to Muona. It was great to see

all our staff working together for the good of the children.

No one wanted to leave until the job was finished, by the time we loaded the lorry for the second time it was night time and we had to use our vehicle to shine light on the loading, no street lights here. We went to Muona the next day and was there to receive the truck for unloading and paying the driver. Again another



late night in getting the maize into the store. A good job finished for another year. We stayed in Muona for two days,

arrangements had been made for children to be at the centre for photos and measurements. So a full day was in store, no rest for me. Also sponsor's gifts to hand out. Like little Malita at Beka.

Still the same old story, trying to get a smile out of them. when they haven't a camera pointing at them the smile is a beaming one. Some sponsors had sent money for their child instead of gifts . So they had great delight being taken round the market to buy what they wanted, within reason of course. Mary when she bought a top and skirt went to leave but i told her she still had money to spend and off she went again looking, it was hard to keep up with her as this was not something she could do otherwise. After Muona we set off for Ngabu to get the maize there, we arrived after 4 hours to

the market going full swing, maize a bit dearer here but still cheaper than last year. We bartered for our maize and transport and sent the lorry off to Beka. We went for breakfast and then set off to the village. We arrived to singing and dancing from a grateful people that the maize had come to their village. We had Seliza with us, she was the one we had to take to Chiringa from Beka as she was being neglected. Her guardian had kept asking for her to visit so we decided to let her stay with the guardian for a couple of weeks until we returned to collect her. Another day of



photos and measurements, ending off with a maize distribution. On to motel and next morning off to Blantyre. We arrived back in Chiringa 2

days later to another list of things to do, but at least the most important thing was done, which was the supply of food for the year for all the kids. Next on the list were blankets, mats and hopefully mosquito nets. This is another major outlay for Abbas Rest, but it is necessary for the welfare of the children. After checking all the outlets we managed to source good blankets. The next problem was how to get them from Limbe near Blantyre to our main centres at



Chiringa and Muona. They come in bales of 30 and our vehicle normally holds a good

number of things but these bales are big as the blankets are thick. We could take no more than 3 at a time. So we decided to buy the Chiringa blankets first and cram them into the car any way we could. As we had already some bales of clothes and other items it was a squeeze. the back of the vehicle was full of things with no room even to put a bag of messages.

The back seat was also full of stuff with William having to struggle to get into the vehicle. We also had to put stuff on the roof as there was no more room inside. So 2 bales of blankets were tied to the roof bars. It was quite a laugh struggling with all the items but we made it. Off we drove to Chiringa knowing we had 2 police checks to get through, if i had not been in the car the boys would have had to take everything out for the police to check.

We got back safely and prepared to hand out the mats, blankets, clothes and educational



supplies to the children. It was a lot of work but well worth it when you see the happy faces of the children.

We gave out to all the children in our program. Chiringa, Muona and Ngabu. We travelled from one side of Malawi to the other and back again. The children in Muona centre were running around showing each other the things they got. We then set about getting all the children photographed and measurements taken. Another monumental task but the kids loved it. Some of them are now getting into posing stances now and they love it. We have had a few children left now and it gave us the opportunity to add new children to the program who were in need of help. We wish we could take many more children but we have to be realistic in our management. Especially finances. We had people turning up at sub stations on hearing we were taking some new children on . It was hard to tell them we had a quota and we could not take everybody on. Abbas Rest has been built up slowly and we will continue to do that as it is the best policy and we can use our finances to the best use and the greatest benefit to the children in our care. I found the children were more happier since i saw them last especially in Muona district. The first time i visited there was not much time to interact with the children. As it was maize time but on my second and third visits i had more time with the children. I installed a small 950

Watt generator at our Muona centre as the solar equipment was faulty again, which delighted the children immensely as they could go to bed with the lights on in their room and be able to see what they were doing. At night i rested at the centre and sat outside which gave the children the opportunity to do some singing, dancing and some drama for me. They were a delight singing about all the things they had been given by Abbas Rest during my visits. It was a humbling experience i can tell you. I am not ashamed to say i had tears in my eyes with their way of thanking Abbas for their much improved lives.



They are deeply thankful to their sponsors and other people who support Abbas Rest. They know that being a part of Abbas Rest has given them hope

for the future. While i was in Malawi i got a message that two boys, Ben and Connor had given a donation to Abbas Rest. I wondered what we could do with the money. I had an idea in my mind for over a year of taking turkeys to our Muona centre. I felt that the timing of the donation gave us the opportunity to go ahead with the project. We bought 3 turkeys, one male and two females and transported them to Muona. We had bought a few chickens the year before and they bred with great success at Muona giving the children extra food in eggs and chicken meat. This is a first time there has been turkeys in the area so they are a novelty to people passing by the centre. Our aim is to breed them and give more variety to the children's food intake and maybe more income by selling some of the extra turkeys to locals. So i am very



hopeful that this project will be a great success and a valuable asset to Abbas Rest centre at Muona. We will keep you all informed of the progress of the

project. Quit a few presents arrived for the children which put big smiles on the children concerned. One child after being given her gifts

was asked if she had any words for her sponsor



for sending the gifts. In her innocence she said to pass on her thanks to the sponsor for sending her gifts, but please to keep

sending the gifts. At least she was honest. Some of the presents had taken a long time to get to the local post office, there was one which had arrived after a lengthy time and the next parcel arrived for the child so she got two parcels on the same day. William has asked me to pass on to the sponsors that when they send parcels to the children that they write the children's name on the outside of the parcel as he wants them to open the parcel themselves. Most of you do that already so William thanks you for that.



Here are 3 of the new children to the program getting new clothes mat and blankets. Some of the boys and girls are

nearing the age where they are leaving the program. We make sure that they can sustain themselves outside the program before that. One of our children who had reached the age for having to leave Abbas Rest, but we felt that she could not sustain herself so as she was a great help to the staff in helping them with the children, we decided to employ her at the Chiringa centre. I tell you she was one of the most difficult girls to get a smile out of, even when her sponsor had sent money to buy her things. We took her into the market to pick her own clothes which she did with relish but hardly a smile on her face. She was also very shy with me when i tried to talk to her. As soon as i told her of our plan to employ her after the school finishes for the term, she is smiling all the time, she is going round her friends at the centre telling them that soon they cannot call her by her name but will have to call her Auntie

She even talked to me with a smile and i did not have my camera with me.

End of May saw the annual power cuts start because the electricity is generated by Hydro and the water needed for the electricity was getting less. It started off at one hour cut per week but by the end of my stay it was every day between one hour and three hours and always morning and evening. You learned to have hot water and food prepared before the cuts started.



The goat program is still producing young goats for the children, more female ones thankfully.

Some of you are still interested in going to Malawi to see the children in our programs. Most of you do not wish to go alone, so if you are interested in visiting us in Malawi then please let me know what dates you are available to travel and we will see if we can match you up with someone else at that time. We interview volunteers before they go out and fill them in on the reality of Malawi. Where we are there are no 5 star hotels, or luxury guest houses, so be prepared to rough it a bit. You will love the



place, children and the friendly people. You will see how they live and manage in their villages and homes. I guarantee that when

you return to your homes, you will see things differently. The computer classes have restarted after the first computer teacher decided to stop after asking for more money and being refused. We employed another teacher who could teach computer skills and it is already benefitting the children with new teaching. We have also employed a part time secretary to cover the office files and updates. This will help immensely in getting information back from

Malawi quickly. It is an important exam time for the older children, those in Standard 8 and those in second and fourth year secondary school. For the standard 8 children this is the exam which determines if they have the ability to go on to secondary school. The second year secondary children it is the exam to see if they can go on for another two years in school. The



fourth year secondary children it is their final exam where they are given certificates if they pass. A testing time for them all, our thoughts are with them at this important time

in their lives. June was the month that all the loose ends needed to be tied up, i was kept busy, running here and there. But the time passed quickly. I was sorry to leave Malawi when i did as i felt there was still more to do. I am probably going back to Malawi at the end of August for about two months, sorting out some things that cannot wait until next year. It will be hotter at that time so that will be a test for me. Saying that one day when i was in Ngabu it was so hot the locals were even complaining and i had a candle in my bag and it melted. I will leave you with the youngest addition to Abbas Rest. Now before you reach for the phone to sponsor him, i am sorry you



can't, Joseph is the latest addition to our manager William's family, i was given the honour of naming him. Thank you for your help

and continued support to Abbas Rest. We are really grateful in these difficult times of the support we do have. Remember you can only contact me by the mobile number on the front page of the newsletter or by email. Until next time, stay well and keep Abbas Rest in your thoughts. God Bless, Richard

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ , and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all 2 Cr 13v14