

TANZANIA
LIFE
PROJECT

**TRIP REPORT
SEPTEMBER 2007**

Once again, the Lord has given us a wonderful experience as we made another trip to our beloved Tanzania. This time Katie and I went, and were accompanied by our son John and his wife Mary.

Mary proved to be our secretary, as from her notes, she has written a very detailed incredible 47 page report on everything that happened. John has taken enough pictures to have recorded everything that happened in those 47 pages, and helped us to manage many things also. They both really “got into it” and want to return. That says an awful lot right there.

We arrived in Dodoma to start our work on September 7th, and left there on September 16th. The trip actually began on September 4th and we returned on September 19th.

We began with an agenda meeting in our new office in Dodoma, with the “big 3” as we call our 3 part-time associates – Ben, Vincent, and David. The office is small but satisfactory for the first year, and things are set up very nicely for us. We have a computer, printer/fax machine, land phone line, etc. so our communication is well setup. I just sent a phone answering machine and a table speaker phone to complete the setup. Each of the 3 now have new cell phones and have internet access in their homes for our email contacts, with the new wireless system in Dodoma. **Without emails and our ability to wire money, this mission could not exist!**

We bounced back and forth between Mtumba and Chisichili over the days, visiting each about 3 times or so. We started in Mtumba, with a big meeting of the villagers under the big tree, and couldn't help but notice the upbeat atmosphere since we were there last. When we started, there were 4500 people in Mtumba. The latest census is about 6000, attesting to the addition of water and some electricity, which seem to be a draw. The villagers all expressed their feelings of gratitude for all we have done for them and with them. Also, our assistance was noticeable on many fronts with water distribution points all over, the new machine shop was completed and functioning with the oil milling machines (2), and the flour milling machine on the other side of the wall. Also, the new carpentry shop was completed and the big table saw was setup and functioning well, as were other tools as well. John and I worked for 2 half days with Willy and others in the shop building a new work bench for them, and mounted on there, a vise and grinder that Dan and I had bought on the last trip.

We all had a ride to the well area on the trailer, being pulled by the tractor that we had also bought for them. All of the village agriculture committee rode with us and we met at the well for an update by that committee. They are prepared to begin the growing season



TANZANIA
LIFE
PROJECT

with our suggested 240 acre plan where each of the 720 village families will have about 1/3 of an acre plowed and tilled for them, so they can plant their gardens. They also still have the money we gave them for the seeds, etc.

We met the 3 winners of the summer of 2006 garden contest, and also saw the area where the kids are currently running their garden contest. The work they have done in preparing this area is unbelievable. 100 kids are involved as a result of the kids in Minnesota providing them resources for seeds, etc. from their fund raising venture!

Mary and Katie spent a lot of time with the ladies in both villages and learned more about their needs, etc. (We have 3 pages of items that people in these 2 villages need, and we must review them to prioritize everything still needed.) The Mtumba ladies have acquired a new TV set, DVD player, and electric generator to power them for use anywhere, with money that we sent. They use these to deal with the women's empowerment issues, and training the ladies who could not make one of the training sessions that we sponsored earlier. Some of the women have bought chickens and feed and have made a small business out of raising them for sale. For others, we have had an extra water line run to their church area where they are planning a garden of grape vines as a new business venture.

Chisichili was another unforgettable time to say the least. The villagers were so incredibly happy and welcoming when they saw us coming down the road. They met us where their road met the main road. They started dancing, and singing and playing on their drums in the typical African welcome. A large group led our minibus up the path to the school yard in a big parade with some following the bus. When we got stuck at one point, within 10 seconds we were pushed out of the ditch by the big throng behind us. Then all 480 school children with uniforms on, lined the pathway on both sides clapping and singing for the rest of our parade journey to the school. This was truly a big deal for them as they and their ancestors have waited for hundreds of years for this day, when water may be coming. We were then placed at tables in front of the 1200 villagers for a meeting. 10 or more village leaders welcomed us, one at a time, with many cheers from the crowd. Then the village chairman read a long document to us, welcoming us again and listing the urgent needs of their village – emphasizing heavily the need for good clean water, among other things.

We addressed them, telling them how happy we were to be with them after all this time, and hoped we could help make some of their dreams come true. We had several meetings with their leaders, etc. and went to the well site to survey the situation. We had the driller, the electrician, and the water engineer with us to help finalize the plan before go-ahead. The next day, we met in the driller's office to sign a contract and get the drilling under way. It is progressing at the time of this writing. We also have adding electricity to our list, but it will have to wait until later in 2008 after the water project is done.

TANZANIA LIFE PROJECT

Before we left both villages, we were treated to some very excellent soccer games which were played using balls and sets of soccer jerseys we had brought with us for them from the USA. All of the villagers turned out to watch the games in each village. Soccer is really big here. Oftentimes they have played in the past with balls made up of plastic bags wrapped tightly with string and rubber bands.

So, while much work remains to be done in both villages, the wonderful Tanzanian people are so extremely grateful to all of our donors who are making all of this possible. They know that it will take time, but are so very thankful to God for listening to their prayers and finally sending some help their way.

This report is extremely abbreviated for your convenience. We will try to put much more on our website in the way of stories and pictures. Your contributions are being put to good use, and your continuing support is most appreciated by these very grateful souls!!

Addendum to Trip Report:

We just have to tell you this. On the last day of our visit to Tanzania, we were blessed with what I would call a real “long shot”. We had asked if we could have an audience with the new US Ambassador to Tanzania – Mr. Mark Green (from Green Bay, Wisconsin). They said we could be sandwiched between 2 meetings on his hectic schedule, for about 10 minutes, but when he came to get us – he spent 40 minutes with us. What a great enthusiastic man he is!! He and his wife spent a year teaching in a small village in Kenya (just to the north of Tanzania), about 20 years ago, so he was intimately familiar with life in small African villages already. He is helping to implement a program he helped sponsor when in the US Congress, namely the Millenium Challenge - \$700 million in aid from the USA to Tanzania over the next 5 years. The goals are to fight corruption, and to improve the infrastructure by building roads, etc. He was very encouraging to us – to continue our mission exactly as we are doing. He knows how badly all of the villages need help. He commended us for our fine work and wished us well. We left a few remembrances so he would recognize us next time.

Jim Vanderheyden & Ben Mlula prior to meeting Ambassador Green



TANZANIA LIFE PROJECT

12 6TH STREET N.E., #108, OSSEO, MINNESOTA 55369 (763) 493-9107

E-mail: charity@tanzanialifeproject.org

Website: www.tanzanialifeproject.org