

Hi to all that have requested this letter. To those of you that haven't, please excuse my audacity in assuming that you may be interested; I am desperate to inform and get as much support as possible.

February saw Rob, Denise, Simeon and Alice joined by Jon, Julie, Joshua and Jacob Church on a trip to Uganda. We got involved with so many things, probably too many to commit to paper, but I will be as brief as I can.

When we booked initially due to the particularly bad exchange rate the cost of flights was very expensive and so we decided to minimise cost as much as possible and travel overland from Kenya. This proved to be a one way journey as it took us three days to arrive in Kampala. The mountain road was being resurfaced (all of it) and so we travelled on the very precarious, dangerous and dusty road at a very slow pace. Whilst it was beneficial, in that we saw Kenya as well as Uganda, and understood the immensity of Africa and a little more of the life that many lead, it was a one way journey as we elected to return to Nairobi by plane.

This was always going to be a different kind of trip to last year, but we hadn't prepared ourselves for just how different. It was a trip with every emotion and for me, with extreme highs and deep lows.

First let me tell you what we managed to accomplish this time. - 'The Highs'

Uganda is a nation with many difficulties – a nation decimated by Idi Amin's regime in the 1970's, a 20 year war in the north of the country on the Sudanese border, a greatly depleted parent generation, few grandparents and a large percentage of the population with Aids. 50% of the population is under 15 (by comparison the UK has 17%). We felt this trip that to meet the immediate need should be our priority. We could always raise more funds on our return but when presented with a dire situation or obvious need it was our responsibility before you and before God to meet that need. We were able to put 10 children into school – 4 for the first time and the others because there was no one to pay for their school or because food had been a more pressing need. We want to make education a priority in our future dealings with these very vulnerable children. For what is a very small amount of money, we can ensure safety, security, nutrition, tuition and social acceptance. A growing problem in this part of the world is child trafficking, abduction and child sacrifice. By investing in education we can ensure that the children are safe and secure, that they will get two nutritious meals per day, and that they will be given a future that otherwise wouldn't be possible. We will be seeking sponsors for the children who are unable to attend school and are preparing a data base for this purpose. If you feel able to support the children in this way and would like to contribute £20 per month for this please let us know.

We were privileged to help put two children through an Aids clinic assessment in the Mbuya slum. Jacqueline (6) and Lucky (5) have now been diagnosed with HIV aids and have begun a treatment program. Pauline (6) is shown to be negative and therefore not carrying the disease. this is good news. These three were also enrolled in school for the first time at the newly formed Mbuya Sideview Education Centre - a makeshift affordable school for the underprivileged of the slum.

We met a Canadian man who is developing a business installing the 'biosand' eco filtering system <http://www.biosandfilter.org> that is purely natural and can provide up to 80 litres of pure water a day. We installed two. 1 in the Kiwi Orphanage and 1 in the Need For All Orphanage. This will mean that the endless boiling and cooling of water is now a thing of the past. The weekly cost of charcoal is greatly reduced. and the children and their carers can have as much pure water as they require for drinking and washing thereby minimising waterborne diseases like Cholera, Scabies etc. We were expecting to get the building work under way this trip but as it turned out that was not possible. However we did make considerable progress in that regard. This time, as we had children with us, we elected to stay in a new guest house. It was closer to the Kiwi orphanage at Mbuya and, although more expensive than we would have liked, made the stay more bearable for them and saved us many wasted hours trawling across Kampala through the polluted cloud of traffic. Amazingly for us, staying at this new guest house for only two weeks was Chris – The Building/Plant Manager for 'Watoto' -The largest orphans' charity in the whole of Africa. Chris

costed the dormitories to the last brick and bag of cement, and advised on building options and materials etc. When we can build he will be a most useful friend to have made. Truly he is a gift. Because 'Possibilities' is accountable to all that give of their hard earned cash, we have a responsibility to make sure that all monies are spent wisely and without risk, where possible. We also want to ensure that the money serves those that it was intended for. We took the advice of 2 very good solicitors in Kampala and decided that the safest way forward was to create a 'Possibilities' (UG) in addition to 'Possibilities' (UK). This will give us a better official standing and more legal clout than otherwise. When this is done we will be in a much better position to secure land and begin building. With this in mind we have also begun the process of transferring Kiwi's lease to Possibilities. This will secure the plot of land and make sure that there are no prior claims on the land. This will ensure that no-one can take the children's home from them.

Some lows

We also visited Need for All children's home in another part of Kampala and found that things there were quite bleak. This is a home with very small children. 2, 3, 4, 5 year olds, as well as older children. There was (literally) no food in the house and the water had been turned off, the rent had not been paid for 4 months and the children's schooling had not been paid. The woman who supports this home from her own wage had lost her job in the economic downturn and was struggling to pay for anything. We bought sacks of food, fruit, cooking pans, cups and plates and also put the four oldest into school. We also installed a water filter here - there water was being bought in by truck and donated from the neighbour. No description on paper can describe just how desperate we felt. It was great to help out a little here but we wanted to do so much more and feel compelled to follow up the children at Need for All.

#### Summary at **Kiwi**

We were able to: -

Put 6 children in school (fees / uniform / books / toilet rolls / bag of cement)

2 children enrolled on an Aids program

Bought new bed sheets for Kiwi

10 pairs of school shoes

2 mattresses / a suitcase / exercise books etc

A water filter installed

A hot water Flask

3 Washing plastic bowls / cups and plates

Large Kettle

Large sack of charcoal

Donated clothes / toothbrushes / toothpaste / toys

#### **Need for All**

Put 4 children in school (fees / uniform / books / toilet rolls / bag of cement)

A water filter installed

Bought sack of beans, fruit, branch of Matoke (Plantain) etc.

Cooking pans / plastic cups and plates

Donated clothes / toothbrushes / toothpaste / toys

Thank you for your continued support of Possibilities. We will endeavour to keep you informed and up to date with the next piece in this unfolding jigsaw.

Please consider if you can sponsor one of these children on a monthly basis.

Rob