

Abigail NEWS

spring 2009

Another Fantastic Trip...



...Another Fantastic Team!

Whether or not they had been to Kenya before, the whole team worked together to excel in the work they did for the needy people they met. Those who had been before were again challenged by the living conditions and those who saw them for the first time were overwhelmed and knew they were seeing things they would never forget. It was a life changing experience for everybody. Every member

of the team gave generously of themselves and were a blessing to everybody they met. They tell of some of their experiences in their own words, but they would all say, a paragraph cannot convey what they feel or the impact the plight of the needy people of Kenya has had on their lives.

Miriam Recommends Going On An Abigail Ministries Trip!

I enjoyed my first trip in 2007 so much I sold my car to raise money to go on this one. You said about signing up for the next trips in 2010 and 2011. Do you have any plans for a 2014 trip!!? Unfortunately due to my studies and not working, I won't be able to go before then as I have no more cars to sell! I was thinking about selling the odd body part – maybe a kidney - but decided it was a bad idea and God was probably trying to teach me patience – but sign me up for 2014 PLEASE!!

BRINGING HOPE AND COMFORT TO NEEDY FAMILIES IN KENYA

Visiting Kerio Valley Again

I was longing to return to the beautiful Kerio Valley – and I was not disappointed! The journey there is long and arduous. Stowed in the back of a truck and being tossed about for many, many miles of hot, dusty, very bumpy and very steep roads would be quite off-putting if it were not for the spectacular scenery and knowledge that at the end of the journey were some wonderful but desperately needy families depending on us to bring some relief to their meagre lives.

It was like stepping back in time as we followed the oxen in that

peaceful environment, surrounded by beautiful mountains, planting ground nut seeds for Sheilah's family. We did the same for Magdaline's family. We pray they will have a good harvest resulting in food for themselves plus a little to sell.

Yes! We still planted groundnuts!! The people are very reluctant to risk growing anything new, but AM has leased a piece of land nearby where we planted water melon, pumpkin and aubergine seeds as a demonstration and experimental farm to show what other crops can be successfully

grown in the valley. Perhaps next year the local families will diversify!!

These families also need new houses. We hope to build them new ones like the mud one we built Rael and Joseph. This will probably be a project for the next group we take out with us so if you fancy experiencing these things for yourself, get your name on the waiting list soon. The lists for trips 2010 and 2011 are growing fast!

A serious problem in the Kerio Valley is the total lack of medical facilities. We have seen tumours on some people before but we

now discover they are caused by simple scratches being left unattended. Simple first aid and antibiotics could prevent these scratches becoming infected and developing into tumours. As it is, the nearest clinic is over 100kms away and the bus fare to get there is way beyond the means of most of the people. We were pleased to be able to give them a simple dispensary which the school teacher will control, but a more efficient and well equipped clinic is something we need to plan for in the future.

Shena



The Group had the privilege and responsibility to bring a spiritual input to the children and adults. This was with the children on several occasions at New Hope and Daylove as part of daily devotions, then with adults at church services both Sundays. The first Sunday at Uplands was amazing with over 300 present to join in and listen to us sing and to the message, which had to be translated. Never sure what the translator says of course! The second Sunday at Eldoret brought out around 700 and we sang and preached there also under the shade of an umbrella! At Uplands the service lasted around four hours and then at Eldoret around six hours as it included dedication of several children and the Seed School annual prize giving. We had refreshments at both services and the giving of gifts to the Group at Eldoret. Although not possible every night, the group had its own time of devotion and prayer on several occasions.

Roger

There was little encouragement when we visited Solomon and Emily and real sadness about Emily's condition. What would we find - Emily, having been too unwell to have the operation on her brain tumour, and now on palliative medicine? There has been real deterioration in 6 months. Emily can no longer speak and she has lost all her vitality and her joy is gone. She is unable to sit up except when her back is supported in a chair. We prayed with her knowing that God alone, the creator and life giver, was her only hope in this life and we committed her to Him. Her husband Solomon is so caring and after showing us a new piece of land he has been able to lease, was quickly back to care for Emily. This land is near water and with a new irrigation system we funded while we were out this time he will be able to have his crops to market early and before the main season and hence higher prices. What a worker he is, with many Passion Fruit trees, beans and pumpkins – we planted seeds. He also cares for his children and two aged parents.

They are really appreciative and give thanks to God for all the practical and prayer support they have been given.

So what did you do in Kenya? I built a mud hut!

Building the mud hut at Rael and Joseph's was just one of many highlights of my Kenyan experience. We were part of the build from almost the beginning to almost the end! After nailing bamboo rafters to the posts to form walls, we got down to the technical part – preparing the mud! Some of us couldn't wait to get our feet dirty - Beccy, Miriam and myself jumped in to the mud pond and began trampling it to get it nice and compact for the house. The feeling of knee high mud on your legs is two things – ticklish and

squishy! It is also very tiring. Once the mud was ready we had to turn it in to mud bricks and these were placed between the bamboo to create the walls. The next part and the most fun, was to grab handfuls of mud and throw it as hard as possible against the wall. Amazingly, the force of it makes the mud stick and spread evenly and creates a nice smooth surface! Having played a few innings of baseball on the mud hut, a few of us left that day feeling a little worse for wear. We also left feeling a great deal of achievement. Although we were not around to see the finishing touches go on, we left feeling confident in the fact that Muzungu's can build a decent mud hut!

Rangi



I was excited from the start about going to Eldoret; partly because it was somewhere new in Kenya for me with new projects to work on, partly because it's hot (and I do love the sun!), but largely because I was going to be meeting my new sponsor child, Japheth. I say 'child' but he is actually a 19yr old High School student! I knew when mum showed me his photo and told me his story that God was telling me I should sponsor him and I am so glad I listened.

Meeting him was awesome. It brought a lump or two to my throat when it was him leading the boys' singing and when he spoke on behalf of his school. Before I started sponsoring Japheth he'd had to leave school because of the troubles last year and not having money. When we spoke, he was so articulate and to think he might have missed out on education was hard. But, he is SO grateful for my small contributions every month and

There were many highlights on this year's challenging trip to Kenya ranging from totally new experiences to meeting up with friends made on the previous visit. Two occasions particularly stood out for me. The first was the opportunity to talk to a group of teachers who had gathered from schools from miles around with the common interest of working with Special Needs children. It quickly became apparent that they were working under tremendous difficulties and desperately needed the support systems that we are so used to in our schools. Their problems range from having children with parents who want to disown them because of their handicaps to the simple need of providing hearing aids for a partially deaf child. It was a tough day and I came away feeling totally inadequate but praying that they had been encouraged by getting together and sharing their problems.

Meeting up with some of the ladies we had taught sewing skills to on our first visit was a real delight. It was disappointing that local difficulty meant that their supply of material had dried up and that they had to do other jobs but it was encouraging to see them again and wanting to work. With new supplies they are promising to get back to the sewing and should be producing bags very soon. It was tremendous to see the Craft Centre in operation and to meet Simon, the manager, an enthusiastic man with a vision for helping people to help themselves.

Geraldine

When we arrived at New Hope Children's Centre we found ourselves surrounded by kids with smiley faces who all wanted to hold hands with us. Over the days we stayed there we got to spend time with them, playing, talking, colouring...

I was so touched by the fact that they have so little, hardly anything measuring by our standards and yet they seemed so happy. When we were leaving they prepared a farewell party with singing and dancing where the older kids had the opportunity to say something. One girl said something I cannot forget since. She said "Thank you for coming to visit us, we love you, we would like you to stay forever. When you go home give our greetings to your loved ones and to everyone you meet. But don't worry about us because God will look after us, he will take care of us always." It was so genuine, it made me cry. It's incredible to see how much faith those children have in such desperate conditions. It was a great lesson for me to put my trust in God always because if they can, the rest of us have no excuse.

Evi

meeting him and being reminded of the effect sponsorship has on people's lives was so encouraging. He promised me he will work to his full ability in school to repay me in some way for helping him out. I don't feel like I need anything in return from him. He seems like a great guy and seeing how happy he was because he could go to school is more than I'll ever need.

Beccy





It was really amazing to meet Daniel Rugut and his family in Eldoret. We have helped support his family since he left Aberdeen seven years ago and I have always dreamed of visiting him one day. Abigail Ministries made this dream possible and we received a great welcome from them. His wife Grace catered for our whole group in her home, where we met the extended family. The children, Kinyor, Chepchumba and Kathleen were delightful and it was wonderful to spend some time with them. Daniel has a great vision for helping his people and Abigail Ministries are happy to be working alongside him in achieving his dream.

I had been warned that the village at Dagoretti was unpleasant but nothing could have prepared me for the sight

of the "tin can" houses. These were made out of any metal container that could be hammered into a flat shape, from oil drums to biscuit tins. They appeared so flimsy that it was amazing that they could stay upright but they seemed secure and housed many large families. The houses were built on a hill and were so close together that it was difficult to walk between them. It was dry when we went to visit but when it rains, the paths between the houses are treacherous and the water runs through some of the houses. Abigail Ministries has arranged to build a cement wall around the back of one of the houses to prevent the house flooding in the rainy season.

Kathleen

During our time in Eldoret we visited the children at Seed School, a small primary school which has been assisted by AM and whom a number of children attend who are sponsored through AM. We were greeted with a tour of the school and children performed some songs for us. Considering that the day we visited was Easter Friday and the staff and children had come into school especially to visit us it was a very special and memorable welcome. Being a teacher myself I was initially taken aback by the lack of resources that the school had, some of these being an alphabet display made from plastic sacks and string and an abacus made from a cardboard box and pieces of fruit. After the initial shock however I realised how clever these resources were and how well they worked, the staff were showing us their classrooms proudly and explaining the lessons they taught and were not complaining about the lack of resources they had. I was amazed at how happy the students and staff seemed to be when they had so little. It was a real contrast from the large well resourced schools at home.

James



One of the highlights of my trip this time was meeting Francis - the young man I sponsor. Francis is a Kikuyu living on Kalenjin land. Sounds straightforward until you are made aware that following the Elections at the end of 2007, there was a lot of rioting between tribes last year. Francis therefore lives in a camp for 'Internally Displaced People'. He's a lovely chap and hopes to be an Electrical Engineer. Another of my highlights - well most overwhelming moment - was visiting the 'Grannies' who now live in brand new homes near New Hope. They are all so

happy. They each have a three roomed, stone built house and a shamba (garden) which they may utilise as they see fit. A far cry from the huts they used to live in which were to be demolished. Most of all I was overwhelmed by Phyllis's reaction to us. She welcomed us into her home and just sang a song of praise. It was incredible. You could just sense her joy and gratitude for her new home and surroundings. She voiced what all the women were feeling.

Lindsay





As this was my second trip to Kenya, I wondered what the impact would be, if I would be as affected by the poverty as I was before. On day 3 we went to visit the Granny Village, where Abigail Ministries has provided homes for some grandmothers. Whilst these homes are far from our standards, they are like palaces compared to the mud houses they previously lived in, made of stone and with 3 rooms. What struck me the most about the visit was that just outside is an old mud hut, cramped and falling apart. This house belongs to Esther - there were not enough houses in the Village for her to get a new one. Yet instead of being jealous, she even let the builders store their tools in her house during construction.

This generosity of spirit really touched me, combined with the reminder of how poor these people are. I don't think you can ever be prepared for it and once again it really saddened me.

Arriving at Daylove was the highlight of the trip for me, as we were greeted by happy, smiling little faces shouting our names. The children clearly remembered us, asking where others from the last trip were, and it really touched me seeing how much impact we had made in their lives by going to Kenya. The most special part was seeing our sponsored family again and knowing that they are warm and safe in their new home.

Laila

When we heard Roger and Shena were planning a second mission to Kenya we jumped at the chance. It was great to go back to see all the faces of those we had met back in 2007 and see how things had moved on since. With our time split between New Hope, Eldoret and Daylove and with some new team members the dynamics of the group and the experience was different from our first trip, which was nice.

Whilst at New Hope, one of our aims was to paint Joyce's house located within the Grannie's village. However, during our first day of painting we ran into a few difficulties. Firstly, the paint bought for us resembled

something out of the Barbie collection; Candy Pink! And for some unknown reason we had a mixture of manufacturers which meant different shades of Candy Pink! Our second problem was that when painting the living room we found that the paint wouldn't adhere to the shiny concrete surface. After a frustrating first day we put our troubles to the Lord and the next day we managed to source some 'Crown' paint, this time magnolia! Much to everybody's thanks and relief the paint managed to stick to the walls and the finished article looked great. Just another example of one of the many prayers answered on our trip.



Our final destination was Daylove, where Laila and I had the opportunity to see Sarah, Dennis and our sponsored child Sarah. We were really pleased to see them again after such a dramatic ending to our 2007 trip and it was great to hear they were

happy in their new home. Even though little Sarah had a cold when we arrived she soon cracked a smile when she saw the skipping rope we brought her. When is the next trip?!

Nick

One of the things that struck me on this visit is the noticeable increase in technology that you see in all parts of the country. When we visited the poorest of families they had at least one or sometimes two, mobile telephones which they were using constantly. This was surprising considering that most did not have any electricity! We discovered later that they made a journey to a 'charging station' to top-up the batteries.

The telecommunication companies have invested heavily in the mobile infrastructure providing an affordable system for even the poorest families. As a Ministry, we were able to make use of this by providing a laptop computer for the Craft Centre Manager at Daylove which connects to the internet via a Mobile SIM modem, enabling him and Roger & Shena to communicate across the world direct via e-mail.

I pray that this may develop to enable more support to be given to those who are working at the Craft Centre to build themselves a better life.

Alan





Please Can You Help Us!

The needs just keep on growing. We need;

- To build several more mud houses
- To provide toilets for several families
- To build and equip a clinic in the Kerio Valley
- To finance and establish several small businesses
- To provide equipment for Seed School
- To buy animals – particularly cows and chickens
- To buy land to build houses on for displaced and evicted families
- To install a guttering system to collect and save water for the Grannies

New Sponsors

For boys from the IDP Camp. They cannot stay at school without sponsors. If you would like to prevent one of these boys losing out on the chance of education, please sponsor him. £18 a month could transform his life.

Arrange An Abigail Ministries Presentation

Why not book a date as you organize your activities for your Church, School or Group for the coming year?

Please Respond To Any Of The Above...

By writing to: Abigail Ministries, PO Box 811. Harrow, Middx, HA2 2EG
or by emailing: enquiries@abigailministries.org

THANK YOU to:

- The Team for all their hard work on the Trip
- All our faithful sponsors and donors
- Everybody who prays regularly for the work of Abigail Ministries

Abigail
MINISTRIES

Abigail Ministries

PO BOX 811, HARROW, HA2 2EG

T 020 8861 1674 F 020 8723 1331

E enquiries@abigailministries.org

W www.abigailministries.org

Registered Charity No. 1106824

DESIGN: KSD ASSOCIATES LIMITED