



HEATHER IN MOZ - SEPTEMBER 2015

A Newsletter at Last!

Yes it really has been 6 months since you've heard from me via a newsletter! I'm very sorry for this. The main reason is that I was a bit behind in writing a newsletter when my house was broken into one evening when I was out and my computer, along with the internet dongle was stolen. A very kind friend then lent me a computer but it is not until recently that we got around to replacing our internet dongle. So here's a brief summary of what's been happening over the last six months!

Girls reading group

Since I last wrote I have started meeting with girls in the local community to help them learn to read Portuguese (the language that their schooling is taught in). I have for a long time felt that I wanted to help the girls in my community, who are the ones who do many of the household jobs, including looking after their younger siblings. Their various responsibilities within the home means that it's common for them to skip school or to drop out early. It is also sadly very common for girls here to marry at a very young age. A recent UNICEF report stated that 48% of girls in Mozambique marry before they are 18 years of age. As a result, girls drop out of school, having very limited ways and means of supporting themselves. The girls I'm working with are very local - just a few minutes from Kedesh and are aged 10-15.



From top left - Twins Fatima and Maria, Hilda and Louisa.

Some days we have really productive times together sitting under a tree on a straw mat. But at other times there are too many distractions - loud music, people passing and wanting to interrupt, younger brothers and sisters wanting attention and other family members calling the girls back to do some kind of housework or errand. These days are frustrating but I'm continuing because I can see the girls progressing and I really hope that learning to read now will equip them a little better for the choices they make in the future. They are also a lovely bunch of girls who I enjoy spending time with and hope that I can influence them positively in other ways through my friendship and time with them.

A Holiday and birthday celebration

In April I went away with a friend here in Beira to celebrate my birthday in Zambia. We were there for 10 days, staying at a place right on the Zambezi River with the spray from the famous Victoria Falls in the distance. Needless to say really that it was a beautiful holiday! I had visited Victoria Falls 15 years ago so it was great to make it back and appreciate it once again and in April the water flow was at its highest so it was quite spectacular! Another thing I really enjoy doing in Africa is safari-ing and in Zambia and neighbouring Botswana where we went for a day we got to see lots of animals very close up - sometimes a little too close for my liking! One of the highlights was getting really close to elephants. Such an amazing example of God's creativity.



From top left - Mia, Madelena, Teresa and Dominga



New arrivals to the Kedesh family

Last month we welcomed two new members to our family. Half-brothers, Joaquim (14) and Neto (11). Both their parents have died and they were living with an Uncle who has a learning disability and alcohol dependency issues. Both boys have settled in very well and seem to be very smart and well adjusted.



Update on Angelina

I'm sure most of you remember Angelina, the young widow who came to us for help and who we discovered was living in a tiny house made out of sacks and bamboo without any means to take care of her 5 children. When we saw her we thought that she was dying of aids because she was so thin but after medical investigations we found out she was dying of untreated diabetes. What she needed was to inject insulin every day but, although the doctors knew about her diabetes there was no treatment they could

offer her as they knew about her living conditions and that she would have had no way of keeping the insulin (as it has to be refrigerated). So we have been keeping her insulin in our fridge and she's been coming twice a day to inject. She was a very unwell lady when she came to us so progress is slow and it's also impossible to affectively monitor her sugar levels here but we are praying that God will also intervene and help her get stronger. At the same time, a few Kedesh boys plus a couple of former boys, have built her a new, stronger, traditional style house which she recently moved into with her children, It's only as a result of the donations from friends that we are able to, not only support our boys and the running of Kedesh but also help widows such as Angelina, so thank you all for your support - It means a LOT!



Her 'old' house made of grass and sacks and inside her new house with two of her children.

Other random news

Visit to the crocodile farm - In the last year or so a family have opened up a crocodile farm about 15 km's outside of Beira. They came to Kedesh one day to donate some food and also invited us all out to see their crocodiles. So we went for a visit and I think the boys enjoyed themselves!



John's birthday - In July it was John's birthday and we celebrated in our traditional way of having a big party, lots of food and lots of volleyball! As well as our current boys and local friends, we also have lots of John's former boys who come to celebrate and wish their 'dad' a happy birthday.



From back left - Quite, Pedu, John, Jose, Luis, Alberto
From left - Paulo, Antonio, July and Chiquinho

First ever trip to the beach - Kedesh is about 25 minutes by car to the coast and our closest beach, yet for many of the new boys we receive who have grown up in this area, it is surprising how common it is that they have never been to the beach or seen the ocean. A few months ago I took a group of the boys to the beach and amongst them were several like that, who had never been in the sea. After a few comments of 'it's salty' and 'will it take me away?!' they soon become very comfortable in the water!



From left - Cadoso (luis's brother), Edson, Francisco

Pequeno and Delso (Gabriel's brother) at the back.

The widows are in the hood! - Whilst the West has been enjoying some summer weather we have been enjoying our winter weather. It actually is a very nice time of year, usually sunny during the day but it can get quite cold at night. So we decided to buy the group of widows that we support 'hoodies' to keep them warm during these cooler months. I think they looked quite good in them!



Making clothes washing fun - Here at Kedesh we believe in the boys learning the skills that they need in everyday life. One of these things is how to wash their clothes. Here it's all done by hand and the younger boys in particular usually need a bit of prompting and help to get them motivated. But I was pleasantly surprised recently when I saw several of the younger boys washing their clothes together in a large container and having a lot of fun at the same time. They even had the idea of getting into the container and stomping around in order to speed up the process! I'm not sure really how clean the clothes looked at the end but at least they enjoyed themselves!



Graduation Day - Near to Kedesh there is a college for young people to go to and do courses in practical subjects. This year we've had several of the boys carry out a 6 month part time Electrical Engineering course which they passed and recently went to a graduation type ceremony to receive their certificates. The good thing about learning practical skills is that there is always plenty of opportunity to practise what they learn at Kedesh!



From left - Santinho, Paizinho, Jona and Joao.

Dogs and their friends - Typically in Mozambique, people either do not treat their dogs well or are scared of them. At Kedesh, we try to teach the boys to treat the dogs like part of the family. Recently this was principal was taken to the next level when John put cake mixture on one of the boys faces and got one of the dogs to lick it off. Before long, several of the boys were doing the same, purposely putting cake mixture on their faces for the dogs to lick! Very unmozambican but I'm glad that the boys are so relaxed and happy around the dogs!



Answers to prayer/Thanks

- For good friends around me who were so kind and helpful after I got burgled.
- That the burglary was not as bad as it could have been - they did not find the Kedesh finances which I had hidden!
- For Joaquim and Neto settling in well
- For the girls in my reading group in the community - their personalities and how they are progressing
- For a great holiday in Zambia
- For having the funds to complete Angelina's house and her and her family now enjoying living in it
- For God's financial provision for us over the last 6 months which has allowed us to repair things and make a few improvements around Kedesh as well as build Angelina's house
- For a former employee being 'let go' and leaving without difficulties and a much better atmosphere at Kedesh as a result
- For beach trips, graduations and fun times!
- For all the boys at Kedesh who are each unique and interesting and keep us busy!
- For safety and good health

Prayer needed

- For Neto and Joaquim as they continue to get used to us and their new schools
- For the last term of school and those doing exams in the coming months.
- For Angelina - her health to improve.
- For the group of girls I work with in the community - that they continue to progress with their reading and that I am able to positively influence them through my friendship.
- For finances to continue well in order for us to continue to improve the Kedesh environment as well as build houses for people who need them in the community (we hope to start building houses for 3 widows soon).
- For the political situation, which is still unstable, for continued peace and resolution amongst the different political parties.
- For continued safety and good health.

Much love and blessings to you all and thank you for your continued prayers, interest and support. Feel free to contact me - hevdawnpev@gmail.com

Heather