

## JOURNAL FOR SEPTEMBER 10 TO 17, 2007

SEPTEMBER 10, 2007: The day began with Dholuo and Kiswahili lessons taught by Mary Lieta. Mary began with greetings for the times of the day in both languages. My previous five months listening to the languages helped me to pronounce and understand some of the greetings. After class we met to organize our water and other projects. Follow up meetings to develop projects begun and to organize other villages were our focus.

Fr. Aloys picked us up before noon for our trek to Homa Bay. Half way there, the truck came to a slow stop. Friends of Father from Mbita stopped to help. One the men remained to fiddle with the engine. He was able to revive the ignition only to have the truck come to another stop after a hundred meters. This happened about two other times before the engine finally decided to operate. We drove directly to the repair shop then left Fr. Aloys with a friend who offered him lunch. Mary, Angie, Anika and I went to the Red Rose Café for a very late lunch after which we went to the internet café while Mary went off to connect with Silvans Molo to purchase materials to finish the renovation of the faculty housing. Towards the end of our work at the internet café, Fr. Aloys called to say that the truck was fixed. We made arrangements to meet him at Shivilings where we could shop. Mary's assignment was to buy the vegetables and fruit from the open market while we shopped for food and household items at Shivilings, we were able to purchase what we needed in record time.

We then went to the Hardware Store to pick up Silvans and his materials. When we prepared to load the materials, the truck died again. Fr. Aloys called the mechanic to fix the latest problem. We waited for another hour before the truck was fixed. By the time we reached home, it was about 9:15 p.m.. After we unloaded everything, we joined Fr. And Lucy for late dinner before turning in for the night.

September 11, 2007

After our second language lesson, we set off by foot for Donyo to meet with the Luala Kibirebi CBO interested in water. The organization was first formed to care for orphans. The 21 members come from two sublocations: Kotunde and Ouku Ondiege. The CBO has a bank account with the Kenya Commercial Bank.

The short cut to the meeting turned out to be about 4 miles long. Simeon Onyango met us across the Osakwe us Seventh Day Adventist Church and walked another 2 kilometers to the meeting site. I was bushed by the time we began the meeting. The leaders summarized their priorities: 1) Clean Water; 2) Improvement of their roads; 3) Support of widows and orphans; and 4) Care of persons living with HIV+/AIDS. Mary translated for us during the meeting. In 2006, government contractors dug out Achuna Dam, but never completed the work separating the animal and people drinking ponds. As a result the pond water is polluted causing waterbourne diseases. The people want rain catchment water for drinking. They wanted the system put on the Donyo Catholic Church which is in the middle of the two sublocations. Komuga Sublocation which is scattered in different places in the area was excluded.

The CBO owns 2 acres of land that they cultivate for income generation. They voiced wanting irrigation using water from Awach Tende River nearby. I said we were not agricultural experts but would try to connect them to the right resources to accomplish that.

The upshot of the meeting was to have the CBO consult with the chief and subchief about a more inclusive meeting of the two sublocations to set priorities. Mary urged them to have the meeting in a more public place near Kandiege Road and to provide us with transportation to the meeting. We walked back to Kandiege after the meeting to see Chief Kephher and to meet with the Health Clinic Coordinator. The chief gave us good information about the location and promised to make us a detailed map of it. We walked over to the clinic where we met the young coordinator. On the way to the clinic, we met Sr. Frances Cassidy and Bishop Colin Davis who were on their way to Kisumu to shop for Sister's house.

After the two meetings in Kandiege, we trekked back to Raruowa. We walked a total of 8 miles for the day.

September 12, 2007: : The early morning began with mutiny at St. Lucy's after some girls were caned for bathing naked in front of the dorm. Some of the girls egged others to resist the teacher in charge of morning duty. Sr. Frances Cassidy and Bishop Colin Davis had left for Kisumu the day before to shop so were not present for the early morning chaos. Kenneth Nyatol, the deputy principal, ended up suspending about half a dozen girls who were sent home soon after some girls confessed. Mary later filled us in about why the girls bathed in front of the dorm. They are apparently afraid of running into snakes in the ramshackle bathroom in the early morning hours.

Jemimah, Mary's sister, had arrived the day before in the worst rain. She was completely drenched while on the way to Raruowa on the motorcycle. Fr. Aloys picked her up near Siburi and brought her to Mary's home. Jemimah joined us for breakfast and gossip about the mutiny at St. Lucy's. The incident was fodder for speculation and discussions about how the incident could have been handled.

At 10 A.M. Aloys Mambe arrived to meet with us about the Kanam Water Proposal. We agreed on the phasing of installation of rain catchment systems throughout the three sublocations of Kowuor, Koguta and Kanyadenda over a five year period. Mary and Anika were tasked to edit the proposal with Aloys providing a detailed map showing the location of rain catchments over the five year period. KALEF or Kanam A Location Educational Foundation will cover the project. It has its CBO certification and a bank account. The budget will be revised to reflect the phases. Contributed labor will be cost out and reflected in the budget. A lawyer will be consulted about drafting a memoranda of agreement with homeowners where the rain catchments will be installed.

After our meeting with Aloys, we all walked to Kandiege to catch motorcycles and bicycles to Kanam where KAPLWAS or Kanam People Living with AIDS had arranged

a series of visits with members so Jemimah could videotape and interview them for a CNN special feature story. Aloys, Jemimah and Angie rode motorcycles to the interviews while Mary and I took the more leisurely bicycle ride for 8 kilometers. It sure beat having to walk that distance. Since we arrived later, we missed the first several interviews, but were able to get in on the one with Bahati. Anika remained at home because she was ill.

Bahati had become mentally ill after contracting HIV. Her first husband died of AIDS also infecting her. She was inherited by another man who got infected and died. An old man last married her and also died leaving her with a two year old toddler. Bahati has a small shamba and mud hut where she lives with five children and her grandchild. She can remain lucid most of the time if she is on medication. About two years ago, when she was hallucinating, Bahati thought the world was coming to an end so she doused herself with kerosene and set herself on fire. Her eldest daughter saved her from total burns. Bahati's chest bears patchy skin where most of the burns have healed over time. Mary looks after her from time to time. Bahati calls her, "Mama."

We walked back to Mary's home and had late lunch. Fr. Aloys arrived just as we were finishing our meal to take us back to Raruowa.

September 13, 2007: The day began with a heavy downpour causing us to cancel out our trip to Nyaoga, Koliech, Abundu and Miranga with Elijah Molo from Give Us Wings. We spent the day resting and catching up with our written work.

September 14, 2007: I got up early to prepare for my trip to Kisumu. Mary and Jemimah were to leave for Homa Bay. Fr. Aloys took us to Kadel to catch our respective buses. My bus arrived after Mary and Jemimah had left. Jemimah was to catch a matatu to Kisii and take the Nairobi shuttle. My bus stopped off for rest room breaks at Kendu Bay and Ahero before it rolled into Kisumu.

I contacted Nicholas Koriko at EABS Bank and walked down to see him. Nicholas took me across the street to meet the owner of Sans Electronics where I was to purchase a 64 watt solar panel, battery, charge control and inverter. Apparently, Nicholas' introduction got me a good deal. I met Tom the electrician who would conduct the inquiries and purchase at the Sollatek shop. After our purchases one of the clerks got a taxi for us to take us back to Raruowa. Since the solar panel was large, we changed to a taxi which could accommodate it. When we got to Kandiege, the taxi could not negotiate the muddy stretch so we sought an alternate route via Oriwo Secondary School which ended up to be a mistake. We got stuck in a muddy hole, but got freed by passing boys and the men. I told the taxi driver to take us back to Kandiege where we would call Fr. Aloys for a ride.

I could not reach Fr. Aloys so we got a bicycle to pack the battery, charger and inverter while Tom hefted the panel on his back. We walked to Raruowa. About half way there, Maurice and Kennedy Otieno met us to relieve Tom of the panel. When we got to the house, Tom set out to measure rooms and look at spaces for installing the solar system. He had a list of materials that he needed to purchase. The cost of these materials was

divided by Mary, myself and the two St. Joseph Workers. We were desperate for light and power to operate our computers and charge our cell phones.

September 15, 2007: A day of rest and catching up.