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Jason, Emily & Savannah Atkins

Shop Progress *by Jason*

Since the container arrived, our two main projects have been getting the shop organized and continuing the construction of the supports that will hold the solar power system. Most of the machines we brought over are wired for American power, so I've been changing out motors, breakers, and switches to get them ready to work here. I'm excited to get all of the machines up and running in the shop not only to get started on the farming machinery projects but also to facilitate the next phase of the solar construction project - making all of the ironwork to mount and lock the solar panels.

When the container got here last month, the stuff was all unloaded (roughly) into the areas it would work. At the end of the day, the shop was so full there was hardly space to walk between piles and equipment! Since then, we've been working hard to organize and create space so everything has a proper place. The plywood crates that brought everything in the container have now been reworked into a pair of great workbenches, a locker, and a paint storage shelving unit. Now, all of the little bags and boxes of supplies, fasteners, and equipment each have a proper place! Each time a new group of things got put away, I breathed another sigh of relief as work space opened up.

Our new tools and equipment are gradually being installed and pressed into service. One of the main pieces of equipment in the shop is our new metal cutting band saw, but it's motor wouldn't work on the local power, so we were forced to adapt one of the spare motors that was sent over in the container. After a bit of careful planning, a bit of cobbling, and a fortunately well stocked spare parts bin, it is installed and working great. Our new (1960's era) drill press is also rewired, installed, and working beautifully. No more slow drilling holes through steel with a hand drill for us! This next month will hopefully see the last two big pieces installed and wired up: our massive welder and big 45-year-old air compressor.

Lastly, despite having begun them before we came back to America last year, we are finally making good progress on completing the massive doors that will close the shop.

Solar Power *by Jason*

Our construction team has been working steadily on the reinforced concrete structure that will hold the solar panels. The project is making steady progress, as you can see in the photos. In the next week or so, the cement work should be complete, and then we'll begin mounting the security system, followed by the panel mounts and panels, and finally the

continued...



One of the new cabinets that Jason built out of wood recycled from the shipping crates going into it's new home in the shop



The shop from the back corner looking outside. One of the projects that Jason's currently working on is making rolling barn doors to cover those two huge openings



Thomas and Wade helping Jason in the shop. It looks pretty messy but it is 1,000 times better than it was and it's getting more and more organized every day

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electrical to tie it all together. I'm (a bit optimistically) hoping that within two months, we'll have our first solar operated day at the school. The system has incredible potential for helping stabilize the school's budget, our dependency on an unreliable generator, and the fluctuating availability/price of fuel.



The cement is mixed in our amazing cement mixer and then dumped into a wheelbarrow. After that they scoop it into buckets and hand them up to be poured into the wooden forms



Pouring the second story columns of the solar panel support structure



Filling the cement mixer with just the right amounts of gravel, sand, water, and cement powder

Seeing all of the equipment (including the 60 giant solar panels) shoved into a small storage room just waiting to be used spurs us forward. We continue to ask for prayer for wisdom and safety as we're working with heavy stuff up high!



After digging and pouring the cement footings this is what the structure looked like when we started



As you can see we are making tons of progress, and as soon as we pour the remaining columns to connect it all together Jason can start building the grid on top that will hold the panels

The Rains Came Down by Emily

We are now officially in the rainy season! At the present moment it's raining hard every few days, and in a few weeks we'll be getting driving rains every day. The best thing about the beginning of the rainy season is how green everything is. After seven months of dryness, the dust has been washed away from the trees, and grass and flowers are sprouting up left and right.

Because of all of the standing water, humidity, and bugs, the rainy season always brings lots of infection. Viruses and parasites run rampant and several of the last few years Jason and I have both been really sick. Please pray for God's continued protection over the health of our family these next few months, especially over little Savannah. Even though we're living in a place with many different diseases, she's been really healthy and we know that's because so many people have been praying for her.



In front of our little papaya seedling in May, right after the first week of rain



Savannah in her African dress in front of the same papaya tree about a month later. It is amazing how well things grow here

Support by Emily

Just to let everyone know we are still making progress with our funding. This month two new families joined our team and several people sent in extra donations. Thank you! If you feel God leading you to join our monthly support team you can send a check in with the form on the bottom of this letter, or you can give online. If you go to our website there's a link to YFC's secure giving site at the bottom of our homepage: www.JasonAndEmilyAtkins.com.

Jason + Emily