

Kate's Uganda Newsletter: March 2010.

I am writing this from my new bedroom, enjoying the cool breeze and the sound of torrential rain outside my windows.....just had to close my shutters as the laptop screen was getting sprayed!

The last two months have certainly been eventful and there have been quite a few changes in my schedule as well as a relocation to Nancy's house. As was originally planned, now that I have trained up two ladies to work with Hassan, I am going to be moving back to Nancy's in April and Lydia will be moving in with Hassan. This month, I moved most of my things back here (to Nancy's) and have been spending 4 nights a week here as well as my 2 days off. This has been quite difficult for me as although I have enjoyed having more time for rest and relaxation, I have really missed Hassan and of course all the other kids in David family. However, I know that it is the right thing to do as it means that I will have the time and energy to do all the other things God is calling me to without getting burnt out.



LEFT: Nancy & I
at Institute
Graduation.

RIGHT: Nancy's
house where I
am now living.

Unfortunately the moving out and letting go process was made more difficult due to the results we had following Hassan's brain scan in Kampala. The Doctor told us that from what the CT scan pictures show, it is amazing that Hassan is still alive and functioning as well as he is. He told us that most of his brain is already 'dead' and that the brain is all very swollen and full of water. The most difficult thing to hear was that due to the pressure increasing inside his head, Hassan could stop breathing ANY time! The Doctor did say that they could do an operation to drain off excess fluid (I think I mentioned this before?) However, he said that realistically he thought it was too late for Hassan and also very risky. Obviously I (and many others,) were all very upset to receive this news but God has given us assurance that Hassan is in HIS hands and there is no safer place for him to be. God will sustain Hassan until it is time for him to go home and be in a place where he will no longer be trapped in a body that doesn't work. However, your prayers for Hassan would be very much appreciated. You never know, God may choose to heal Hassan completely in this lifetime.....we just have to trust that He knows best.

Since term began in February, I have been helping out at school both in the pre-school and in the primary 2 class. It has been a challenge getting used to teaching with so few resources and also not being able to speak or understand much Luganda although I am beginning to learn more! Probably the thing I've found most difficult is getting used to the discipline methods; I really struggle with having to spank children but I can see that if done correctly, it is biblical. I have started up a twice

weekly afternoon group for the children in P2 who are struggling with Maths and English. Surprisingly they were all delighted when their teacher told them they would be staying at school for the afternoons. Sadly, one of the most needy boys in the group has left following a month of running away from his home (in one of the New Hope family groups.) Before coming to live at New Hope 3 years ago he was living on the streets and was brought here by the police. He was very traumatised and apparently would not speak and had some very strange behaviours. However, in the last year he had settled down (apart from one or two incidents such as driving off with the clinic van in the Christmas holidays ☺) Unfortunately, things changed when earlier this month Museveni (the President of Uganda) landed his helicopter here at the secondary school and the young man (we think he is 11 or 12) decided to try and convince the soldiers to take him with them and give him a job..... Anyway, to cut a very long story short, last week his family father and another staff member took him to Kampala to try and look for some of his relatives who he was running away to try and find. Apparently after a very long day of riding on motorbikes around a slum area that he remembered living in, they eventually came across some people who recognised him and took him to his Aunt. He was so overjoyed and insisted on staying with her. Apparently the family all thought he was dead as he went missing when he was 5. The next day, the Aunt contacted New Hope to say that they were on the way to the village where his father lives. God is good and it is wonderful that he has found his family but we pray that God will protect him and provide for him in this new chapter of his life. Like all of us, he needs to turn to God for healing as there are many unresolved issues that he'll never be free from wherever he goes unless he allows God to touch him.



LEFT: Hassan with some of his Pre-School friends.

RIGHT: Kakulu and his Jajja (Grandmother.)



Thank you all so much for your prayers; these last couple of months God has really been opening doors for me to get involved with disabled children in the local community. We now have two other 7 year old boys who have Cerebral Palsy who will be coming to visit regularly. One of them is called Kakulu; he has lived with his Grandmother since his parents died several years ago. He is able to sit up and feed himself with one hand. He can also say a few words. He loves music and 'dances' along to the radio when he comes to Hassan`s house. The other boy is called Ivan and lives with his Mum and his siblings; his father disappeared last year and blames the mother for producing such a child! Ivan is so tiny he looks more like he is 2 than 7. His Mum sits him in a plastic basin to feed him. I haven't been able to do much in the way of exercises or massage with him yet as he is terrified of my white skin! At the moment I am really praying about and talking to people here about the right way to help these children. It is so hard to know where to start as both are from such poor families who literally have nothing but the food they grow in their gardens. I want to avoid doing anything that will cause the parents to think they can just leave their child with us rather than continuing to care for them themselves. But at the same time I know that they desperately need help and support.

When I come home at the end of June I hope to be able to do some supply teaching at my old school and also do some fund raising for this special needs project. If you have any ideas for events or other ways to raise funds or if you'd like to be involved please let me know.

Kakande, a man with special needs from a local village has continued to come to Hassan's most days to bathe, eat and earn some money. I have now got him collecting water for me every day but I've learnt not to give him the money or he goes and gets drunk on the local brew! He is gradually learning that Auntie Kate keeps the money in a pot and then he can buy something at the market on a Saturday. Unfortunately he thinks everyday is market day so everyday he comes saying (in Luganda) "Auntie, today we go to market!" Actually, Kakande is probably the best Luganda teacher I've had as he repeats everything so many times!!!! This last week he was so proud of himself when I sent him on a Boda Boda (motorbike taxi) to Kiwoko to buy beans, tomatoes and a pumpkin.....it helped that the driver was an ex New Hope student and member of our church so he 'helped' Kakande with the money side of things!

Points for Prayer & Praise:

- I am so thankful that God has kept Hassan fit and healthy this last couple of months. Since having his proper gastrostomy tube he has already gained 2Kg.
- God has really blessed the ladies here with a Beth Moore bible study (DVD and accompanying work books) called 'A Woman's Heart.' It is teaching us all about the Tabernacle. Each week we have daily homework to complete and this has really encouraged me to make sure I spend time with God each day. I am also learning a lot too!
- Praise God that he has already brought Kakulu and Ivan to our attention.
- Please continue to pray for Hassan's health and mine too.
- Please pray that Lydia and Jordanna who are now caring for Hassan will really love him and take good care of him.
- Please pray that God will give us wisdom to know practically how to help the children with disabilities (& their families,) in the local community. Pray that God will encourage and strengthen Kakulu's Grandmother and Ivan's Mother as they care for their boys.
- Please pray that when I return home in June I will be able to earn and raise sufficient funds to really get this special needs project up and running. You can also pray that I will be able to find suitable wheelchairs to bring back for Kakulu and Ivan.

Well, I shall sign off here but once again I want to thank you for all your support, prayers & encouragement. May God continue to bless you.

With much love from Kate x x x x (Hassan sends greetings too and a big thank you to the people who have sent Auntie Kate chocolate.....he thinks it is most delicious!)