

# Kate`s Uganda Newsletter: November / December 2009.

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Greetings to all you all from sunny, hot Uganda!

As I write this, there is a part of me wishing that I was back home in England, enjoying all the Christmas festivities, school nativity plays and even the cold; I like the idea of snuggling up under my duvet with a hot water bottle right now! However, I am also very happy that I`m here at Kasana and am continuing to enjoy my time here very much.

This past month has been a busy one and has flown by. God has answered many prayers including keeping us safe as we`ve travelled around both in the car (I`m borrowing Nancy`s Toyota Rav as she has gone home to America for Christmas,) and on public transport (mini bus and motor bike taxis both of which are famous for their crazy driving!) I have also now got my work permit sorted for which I am very thankful as there are many still waiting for theirs. The schools have now finished for the long Christmas holidays and we are thankful that almost all of our family group did well and have been promoted to the next class. One of the younger boys called Dodo Vico is unfortunately going to have to repeat P4, partly due to his exam performance but also because of his behaviour. He came to me in floods of tears on the day he found out and I really wasn`t sure what to say.....so I just prayed with him. Please remember him in your prayers – he has had a very difficult upbringing and he puts up a real front of being the tough, cool guy but underneath he is very sensitive and hurting a lot. Please pray that God really reveals himself to him and helps him to change.

Another answer to prayer was finding someone to replace Auntie Justine who was one of the ladies helping with Hassan that we had to fire last month. Auntie Jordanna is a Burundian lady from our church who has just moved into a nearby village and had been looking for work for a while. So far she seems to be a very hardworking and honest lady and she seems to be quite good with Hassan too although she mostly does washing, cooking and cleaning. Now that I have finished the institute, she is only needed 3 mornings a week but we certainly appreciate having her around!

The highlight of November was definitely graduating from the Institute (praise God that I actually managed to complete all my assignments on time!) I was really glad to have a friend here from England for the ceremony – Ann from Eastbourne (originally from Alton!) In true Ugandan style, the ceremony was very long and we finished for lunch at around 2.30pm. Thankfully the rain held off until then and we managed to squish everyone inside to eat!



In the final couple of weeks of the institute course, we had fun in our small groups designing our own children's ministries and presenting our ideas to the rest of the class. We also did an 'outreach' which involved helping to construct a kitchen for Mama Jane (one of the institute cooks) who lives in a village nearby. It was great fun though hard work in the heat. We spent about an hour to start with passing bricks along a line whilst others dug the foundations. When it came to the brick laying, we left that to the men and one woman who knew what they were doing whilst the rest of us dug & weeded in her garden.

Other 'happenings' have included the return of Bambino our puppy. I got him from the dog rescue centre a couple of months ago when he was small and very cute but also very naughty! After a week of having him here and rather a lot of 'accidents' and 'mishaps' (such as going into the children's houses and stealing food etc,) we decided it would be best if he went to live on the Bakimi's farm. However, he soon got himself into trouble there too and after several chickens had been eaten, Auntie Gertrude requested that he came back to us.....so now we have a much bigger and still very mischievous puppy. The children were all delighted to have him back although some of them have since changed their mind after being jumped up on!

I think it has now been decided that we are not going to be able to start the special needs class in February as we had hoped. So, the current plan for next year is that I will spend mornings helping in the lower end of the primary school mainly supporting children who are struggling. In the afternoons I will have time to fundraise for the special needs class, recruit children and of course I will still be living with and caring for Hassan though I will continue to have Lydia helping me with this.

Speaking of Hassan, he is scheduled to have surgery next Wednesday to insert a gastrostomy tube into his tummy so he will no longer need the nasal gastric tube which we use currently to top up his fluids and calories. This will be much better for him as the NG tube has to be changed at least once a month which is not pleasant for Hassan, whereas this one needs changing only once per year at the most! The surgery will be done at the local hospital in Kiwoko by a German doctor who works there. Apparently it will only take 30mins and Hassan won't even have to stay in overnight if all goes well. However, all of this depends on us being able to get hold of a tube for him to use. Zoe Oliver (our current Muzungu nurse,) has been into Kampala twice trying to find one and has so far not been able to get one! She even went into two hospitals trying to locate one but none of them had them. When we took Hassan to see the doctor last week, he suspected that Hassan may also be having hydrocephalus (water on the brain) which is probably the cause of his epileptic fits which do not seem to be stopping despite medication. Unfortunately the scanning machine was not working so he couldn't check but he will do so as soon as possible. If Hassan does have this, he will also need to have another operation to insert a shunt to drain the water.



Angel reading to Kakande.



Kintu with our dinner.



Hassan with a tortoise on his lap.

This past month we have also been having more frequent visits from a young man called Kakande. He has significant learning difficulties and a minor physical disability (he can't use his hands very well!) He lives out in the village with a brother in law who is apparently a witch doctor. Their house is just a mud hut and his feet (and to a lesser extent, his hands) are riddled with jiggers which are flea like creatures that bury their way into the skin and then lay eggs and then more hatch etc.... He also has a bad wound on his leg where he was burnt by the exhaust of a boda boda motorbike taxi. He has been hanging around at New Hope for years and various people have helped care for him but mainly the nurse Roger who works in our clinic. However, he often disappears for months on end and comes back in a complete state. He has been coming to Hassan's house most days for the last month and we send him with water and soap to bathe and get him to wash his clothes (which he needs a lot of help with if they are to get properly clean!) He likes his food so is always happy to eat with us or the David family kids. He is illiterate but he loves looking at books and pretending to write with pencils! He is currently pestering me to take him to the dentist at Kiwoko hospital as his tooth hurts but last Wednesday when I had planned to take him (the dentist only comes twice per week,) he didn't show up! The children in David family have really started to care for him and this morning several of them offered to remove jiggers from his feet (don't worry I gave them some gloves!) One of the older lads has given him a shirt and a belt.

#### Prayer Requests:

- Please pray that Hassan's operation would go well and that there would be no complications or infections. Please also pray that the scanner machine will work soon so that we can establish whether or not he needs a shunt fitted to drain water from his brain.
- Please pray that those children who are going home to relatives for Christmas will have a good time and that God will protect them as they travel and spend time with family. Also pray that they will be a blessing to their families and be able to share some of what they have learnt / received from New Hope.
- Pray for those of us who are remaining here; that we would enjoy a restful (and healthy) Christmas.
- Please pray that this month I would get some time alone to rest and spend time with God. Christmas/New Year will be quite busy as I am taking care of Kayesu (3) and baby Dan (from the baby house) as well as Hassan. Auntie Lydia is going to visit relatives so I will be relying on the children remaining in David family to help me (about 8 of them I think.)
- Please pray for Kakande – that his wound would heal and that he would somehow understand and realise his need for Jesus.

I shall finish by wishing you all a very **Happy Christmas !**

Thank you once again for all your prayers, encouragement and support. May God continue to bless you in the coming year.

With much love from,

Kate & Hassan x x x x