



I'm so excited to be able to give today's update! We all had a BIG day today!

We got a good night's sleep but woke up a couple times by sounds of critters and noises from outside. It was good to get some rest and wake up to the sound of children's voices at the school within the compound. We watched all the children picking up trash and sweeping each of the classrooms and the grounds. We were so blessed to see these children take care of the gift of being able to come to school here.

Clint and Chris went to the "Operation Joseph" 10 acre farm that Pastor Stanley has developed utilizing the funds raised at last year's Art for the Heart of Africa Benefit Auction. It was a 2 ½ hour drive with the dump truck on roads that are not meant to be driven on in American standards. The total driving distance is only 20km. Imagine riding in a dump truck through roads with 4 ft deep craters! The guys offered to ride in the back of the truck but Pastor Stanley insisted that they ride in the front with him. They were so glad they rode in the front as they would've gotten beat up in the back. On the way to the farm they picked up a guard with an AK-47. While at the farm Clint was able to carry it around-he was pretty excited about that. 😊

Pastor Stanley has told us that his workers spent one month clearing a 5km long path before they were able to even begin clearing the 10 acres for planting. This was ALL done by hand! Watching how the people of Sudan do everything with their hands and bodies is so amazing to me. The workers had to clear out trees and all kinds of plants with their own hands!

Clint and Chris were very impressed and excited about how the crops are growing. The land is between 2 rivers that create a "Y" so the soil is very rich. They will be harvesting peanuts, corn and beans next month. This will be a great income and food for the children at New Generation Dreamland Children's Orphanage. This is so exciting as it will save them a lot of money and the children will be eating very well.

While the guys were travelling to and from the farm, us ladies were at New Generation Dreamland doing photography of all 100 orphaned children. We had to go in with a plan to make sure they were all covered. As we drove up in the dump truck the children were in their classrooms. Santino, who does the construction for the orphanage ... and Martin, who helps at the orphanage ... rode there with us. All of us ladies had so much fun getting personal with each child. With the help of one of the teachers, as each child was photographed, we were able to greet them by name and see a bit of their precious personalities. Some of them were a bit shy but some showed a lot of personality. 😊

Once we made sure that each child was photographed we were able to take hundreds of random photos. Oh my goodness, what an experience! Each child loved having their photo taken. It seemed that no matter where Tara and I were with the cameras, a crowd of children followed us and they all wanted their photo taken.

We learned that the children are creative and talented. As we took photos, Lisa and Maria entertained the children with other things. Lisa sang songs with them in groups and Maria played games in the dirt and discovered that mixing the dirt with water created clay. Watching some of the children create a ball, a face, a pot, a doll and other things out of clay was simply amazing to us! We watched some of the older girls do cross-stitch on old bed sheets. They create their own pattern and then make it very beautiful with thread. We were almost speechless by the beauty created by the minds of these children. We will be bringing some of the cross-stitch creations back home for the benefit auction. We are so excited about this discovery!

On our way back to the house, it started raining. It felt so good getting rained on while riding on the back of the dump truck after being in the hot sun all day. The rain was so refreshing.

In hindsight we now can see how God worked through our luggage being left behind in Uganda. With the medical supplies and the art projects not being here we were able to get the children's photograph for the Art for the Heart of Africa Benefit accomplished (which has been a major priority) and the guys

were able to go to the farm with Pastor Stanley. God has been so good! We are understanding that God has a plan in everything. It has been so great to see God at work in so many ways.

I know that here in a couple days I will be leaving a part of my heart here in Yei, Sudan when I leave. One can't help but fall in love with the people of Sudan. My heart hurts for them because of all they have been through with various tragedies, such as war and illness. Many have broken hearts but are truly beautiful people. Because of this, I simply cannot help but fall in love with them.

Thank you to all who have been praying for us as a team. God hears each one and is answering them with a specific purpose.

*Rose Schwartz*