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**Jason, Emily & Savannah Atkins**

**Growing Rice in Gabu** *by Emily*

For years it's been a dream of Jason's to use the shop to make simple machines to help farmers. This past week we took a trip out the village of Gabu to visit some missionary friends of ours, Diego and Tanja, who have an agricultural project partnered with their church. While we were there, Jason went out the rice field to check out the machines they have borrowed and rented from various places, and see if any of them could be made with the tools we have available in the shop here in Bissau.

Jason took lots of pictures and it looks like several of the machines would be able to be made cheaply enough for farmers to be able to afford them. He and Diego were also able to modify a chaff separating machine with broken motor so that it could be driven with a bicycle!



Broken motor?  
Let's hook it up to a bike!



An old rice thresher - one of the machines Jason wants to make in the shop.



Savannah playing with her favorite twins out in Gabu - Kristin and Daniel.

**Project Lifecycle** *by Jason*

Every project we do here is a little different. While there's no such thing as a typical project, I wanted to give you a look at the Junkyard Wars style adventure one of this month's projects became. We're working on a machine to help with a water filter factory project we've mentioned before.

The press is used to compress two halves of a form to create a clay filter that, once fired and treated, sits on top of a 5 gallon bucket so that dirty water can be poured in, and will then filter into the bucket cleaned. The project is a great idea, and although it isn't ours, we feel more connected to it the more we work on it.

The press machine we were going to build needed to be tough enough take a lot of pressure without buckling, in order to properly form the clay. There are a good amount of different shapes and sizes of steel we can buy here, but some projects require something stronger than what the steel suppliers here stock, so we have to get a little



Strong steel found in a scrap yard and loaded up to take back to the shop.



Grinding the steel they cut apart from the scrap yard into straight usable sections.



Beats cutting with a hacksaw!

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creative. Over the course of a few weeks, I made several trips to a couple of scrap yards here in Bissau and we finally found some things that had some pieces of the type we were looking for. I think one of them used to be the chassis of a dump truck! We went back to the scrap yard with the youth center's truck, bought and loaded our steel, and brought it back home.



Our press blade starting to take shape



Painting to



The first test of the new press brake is a big success!



Tada! The finished press brake.



There aren't many tools in the shop that don't get lots of use!



The filter press in progress

Once back in the shop we set to work trying to figure out the best way to cut the pieces up to give us the most useful lengths. Once we had the pieces all cut apart and cleaned up, we put them on the saw to make finish cuts, and then set to work welding them together. The machine started to take shape, until we realized that in order to finish it we'd need to be able to bend some pretty thick steel. We needed a press brake, but the shop didn't have one. We decided to build one so that we could finish the filter press.

Happily, the scrap we had already purchased was enough to make both machines! I'd been wanting to make a press brake for the shop for a while anyway, so it was a perfect opportunity. We had to find a few more parts at a different scrap yard to make the movement parts of the brake work, but after a few weeks we got it set! I think it turned out pretty well. Now, we get back to work on the original project!

Training in December by Emily

The teachers have a few weeks off when the semester ends in December, so I've been busy preparing to do several days of training with them. We're going to be working on some of the usual English teacher stuff - different ways to help students with pronunciation, games to reinforce grammar lessons - and we're also going to spend some time talking about how to pray for the students and how to have the heart of an evangelist as a teacher. I love training and encouraging our teachers and getting them excited about making a difference in the lives of our 300 English students each semester!

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