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Jason, Emily & Savannah Atkins

Filters *by Jason*

The drinking water filter factory project is moving forward! We recently had the privilege of helping host a team returning to Bissau to build a factory here in Guinea-Bissau which will produce clean drinking water filters suitable for households. We're excited to see the project move several steps closer to success, and map out a few more ways we can be involved in supporting it!

The project is being spearheaded by a Californian chemist named Richard. He first visited Bissau several years ago. Richard owns a lab in California which tests, among other things, water quality. He took samples of drinking water from various Guinean wells, public water faucets, and locally bottled water. None of the samples he took would have been considered clean or safe in the States. Clean water is fundamental to living productive lives. It's a contributing factor to the fact that 1 in 5 kids don't make it to 5 years old here. When you have chronic sickness every few weeks because of drinking infected water, it's pretty hard to focus on doing a good job at work, or anything else. We're honored to be able to help out with this effort!

This trip he was joined by a representative from Potters Without Borders, named Kai, who is a ceramics expert and has helped build several of these factories in other countries. They're working in partnership with the social arm of the church we attend, so we were asked to help facilitate their week here, translating and advising. We were also able to connect with UNICEF who does a lot of work in the country trying to provide clean water. They said this project is the same shape as a hole in their clean water plans for Guinea-Bissau. We're hopeful a partnership can be formed with them, as they already have lots of public education programs teaching about germs, hand washing, and clean water.



Touring a brick making factory to check out the clay they use



Testing different mixtures of clay and sand to find just the right mix for the filters



Weighing test samples before putting them into the form



Jason welding up a test form for the blocks



Our friend Richard and the National Director of YFC Pastor Ze Augusto with a giant tiger shrimp at a restaurant just before the guys headed back to the US

Continued...

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During their time here, we saw several possible building sites for the factory. We had lots of meetings about budgets, clay sources, machine sources, and design ideas. Our shop is going to be able to help in several ways; including the filter press we've shown previously, building drying shelves for the filters, and possibly constructing the actual factory building as well.

When we built the shop, we knew there was a need for a clean water supply in the church and non-profit community. However, we didn't know exactly what projects would come up and what kind of help we could provide. It's a big honor to be able to pitch in with such a cool project and put our capabilities to use showing God's love to the people of Guinea-Bissau by helping take care of such a basic need!

A New Atkins by Emily

One of the most amazing blessings in my life has been being a mother to our adorable, compassionate, outgoing, two-year-old Savannah. God has blessed our family yet again and I can't wait to meet the latest littlest Atkins who has been growing prodigiously in my belly these past four months! Our sweet little one is due in June, so we'll be headed back to the US in the end of March (in the 7th month). If all goes well, we hope to be back in Bissau with a three month-old precious Atkins to help celebrate the birthday of our then three-year-old Savannah in October.

We would appreciate your prayers for my health as this pregnancy has been much more tiring than Savannah's was (could that have anything to do with the toddler who keeps me on my toes?!? hehe). We can't wait to see you guys in a few months!



Savannah and her friend Daniel chatting while sitting on inflatable reindeer on Christmas day



Our new little Atkins is certainly making his/her presence known. Almost half-way 😊

Saxon + Emily

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