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Jason, Emily & Savannah Atkins

QUITE POSSIBLY THE END OF THE WORLD! by Emily

After living in Guinea-Bissau for almost seven years (where the trip back to the US involves four days by car, boat, and several planes) it takes a lot for a place to feel remote. Last week we took a trip south to help out Brazilian missionary friends of ours, Americo, Sylvia, and their son Junior, and when we finally arrived in their village of Iemberem I literally felt like we had reached the end of the world. ☺

In a country the size of the state of Maryland, the roads have to be pretty treacherous to stretch a 150 mile trip into seven hours of driving! Our poor car was not without casualties – about three hours in we started swerving left and right and Jason quickly determined that we had a very flat tire. He and our American friend Jonathan got the spare out only to find it was under-inflated as well, but it limped us about 20 miles up the road until we found a road construction company (very, very few and far between in this neck of the woods!) and the guys there patched up the gash in the sidewall of our original tire and we set out again.

As you go farther south it's amazing how much more tropical everything gets. The region that the village of Iemberem is in is not served by any kind of public transportation, so the villages there are isolated, quiet, and beautiful. It was wonderful to get out of the busy city of Bissau – away from 11 hours a day of drum lessons, our neighbors' blaring radios, constant traffic, and the Youth Center's 800 students – and escape to a quiet jungle full of monkeys and gorgeous birds.

The missionaries we went to help have been working in that village for ten years and they oversee a school and several church plants in neighboring villages. They also have a discipleship training program where they work with young men from the churches over several years, giving them a good Biblical grounding and training them to be teachers, mechanics, or pastors.

Our friends needed some advice on their solar power system and well pump, but our main reason for going down there was to help them set up a little computer lab in their school. They received boxes and boxes of donated computers, but didn't know what software they needed, how to set them up, or the best way to lay the room out.

Americo, Jason, and Jonathan unpacked the computers, arranged the room, and got everything configured to run on local power. We took a few of the computers back to Bissau with us to download and install open source operating systems and software that will be copied onto the other computers back in their lab.

Continued...



The red line is the route we took to the village of Iemberem. It was the first time we've been that far south in Guinea-Bissau



That is one dusty spare



Jason was amazed that they were able to patch the gashed sidewall in our tire. In the US that tire would've been junk



Unpacking boxes of donated computer equipment



Finding the right electrical parts to hook up the computers



Jason and Americo checking out the problems with the solar power system

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Showing Americo how to change the power supplies to work with 220 power



Smelling the beautiful flowers in the jungle village of Iemberem. Savannah wanted to take them all back to America for her Aunt Missy's wedding in April

While we were there we also had the opportunity to go to one of the neighboring villages for a night time church service. The church was tiny so we had a rowdy kids' service and then the kids played outside while many adults came to hear our friend Jonathan preach (Jason translated from English to Creole for him).



Jonathan preaching and Jason translating

Savannah had a wonderful time chasing chickens, watching screeching monkeys leap from tree to tree, petting rabbits and newborn baby kittens, and smelling every single flower she came across. She even helped with the cooking!

It's a blessing to be able to share some of the hard-earned knowledge we've gained in our time over here with fellow missionaries.



Savannah helped cook lunch. She was pounding hot peppers, garlic and onions into a paste to put on the meat

COME VISIT! by Emily

This is our last month in Guinea-Bissau for a little while and we have been hustling to get things done before we head back to the US. Luckily for us, a good friend of ours, Jonathan Quinn, planned a trip out here to overlap our last four weeks. He came equipped with a suitcase of peanut M&Ms, pepperoni, and pudding mix to give us energy, and he also brought some spare parts for the shop and some maternity clothes (don't you love online sales at Old Navy!). He's been spending a lot of time preaching in churches and at a special missions conference, and helping several churches get materials for construction projects. He's also been helping Jason in the shop, and carrying the boxes I've been packing out of our house over to the storage room.

We LOVE having visitors and putting them to work! If you'd like to come out we'd love to have you too! I'm a very good cook and we even have running water ☺ Just send us an email, pick up some M&Ms, and come on over. ☺

Jason + Emily



A tree fell down, blocking the road we were taking to a different village. No problem! That's why we had six machetes in the car ☺



Jason and Jonathan, true Americans sporting their "Coke" shirts lol!



To keep a road from washing out in the rainy season, just cover it with heavy logs

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