



The Atkins Family

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Nathaniel, and Miriam

Serving in Guinea-Bissau,
West Africa

February 2020

Our new base project is
moving forward, but on
a different piece of land.

Whiplash *by Jason*

It has been an action-packed month of craziness since our January update talked about how close we were to being ready to purchase the eco-hotel property for our new base! Shortly after that update, after having met with the owner and agreed on a price, I circled back with him to see if he was ready to officially accept our terms (half down, the other half on a land contract). He told me then that in the intervening three days, he had sold the place to another buyer for 15% more and all cash! He'd alluded to the other buyer before, someone who had been interested six months ago - so we assumed it wasn't a real prospect. I imagine our offer being on the table gave the impetus he needed to get the other buyer to get serious. So, eco-hotel property off the table, now what? There were a lot of things we really liked about that site!

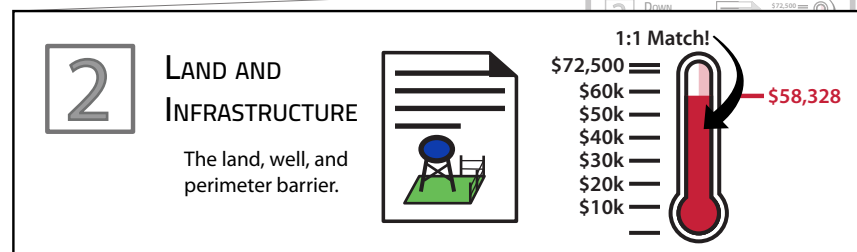
After a 5-minute pity party, I got to work looking for alternatives. The need for a permanent, stable base from which to operate our ministry hadn't changed. Some searching and asking around yielded another property whose owners were trying to sell. I checked it out on Google Earth, then zipped over to look it over. It's beautiful! A little over 2 acres, with a 300' side right on the same river we already live next to! It's totally undeveloped, except for a dirt road that leads to it, and only a few hundred feet away from the eco-hotel, so still close to our current neighborhood.



We have had several meetings with the family who owns this new site. They are interested in selling, and we have begun the process of walking and marking off the land. It's likely that sometime in the next week, we will have a final agreement worked out and be ready to purchase the land.

The purchase price, including taxes, will be around \$50,000, depending on exactly where the land ends and the final parcel price, which we've agreed within 10% on. Fortunately, thanks to continued generous giving, we've reached the point in the second phase of the fundraising to have that ready to pay!

New Base Fundraising Progress



Cooking for a Crowd *by Emily*

I have always loved cooking for people, and over the years in Guinea-Bissau our table has been blessed with visitors from around the world. Just over this past month we had a friend from Sweden for lunch, an American guest for the weekend, a team of 23 Brazilians for coffee and biscotti, a group of 4 Americans who work in the south of Guinea-Bissau here for two days, and a group of 5 Americans from California who ate with us every day for a week.

It's always fun to see Guinea-Bissau through the eyes of someone new, to make their time here a little easier (or at least a little tastier), and to take the opportunity to share many things that we love about this country where God has placed us.



The Machines! *by Jason*

The drinking water filter factory workers stayed hard at work while we were in the U.S., and have a giant pile of filters to show for it! As we wait to finalize our testing criteria later this month so the batch can be released for sale, the filters that the factory has been producing have been piling up. They filled all of the shelves we made for them, filled a spare shipping container, and finally started stacking them in rows on the ground next to the factory! Very encouraging! The factory workers' perseverance deserves most of the credit, but I'm also happy to report that they're saying the new screening trommel I built them has increased their sawdust output 20-fold! The sawdust screening was one of the most time consuming and energy-sapping tasks in the production flow, and it sounds like the new setup is working great.

The most recent project was a correction and improvement to the hammer mill they use to grind up the unfired bricks into clay powder and wood chips into fine sawdust, to be screened. The mill is actually a garden chipper/shredder which we modified to produce much finer output. However, since it was designed for mulching rather than pounding clay into fine powder, its gas engine has always had trouble. The fine clay blows everywhere and gets into everything, including the motor.

The project was a two-fer. The idea was to put some separation between the dust and the engine, and at the same time cut down on the dust getting everywhere in the first place. The new arrangement, rather than letting the dust fall out of the bottom of the machine onto the ground and into the air, collects the output into a chute where the mouth of a sack is tied! It's making the whole process a lot less messy.

Onward and upward!

Before (below)



... and after. The belt guard hadn't been installed yet, for anyone dialling OSHA.

My old buddy and longtime shop assistant Widafa, who has been studying in Brazil for the last several years, came back for a visit and helped me out on the project.



To Give Online:

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with "Atkins" in the memo.