



The Atkins Family

Jason, Emily, Savannah,
Nathaniel, and Miriam

Serving in Guinea-Bissau,
West Africa

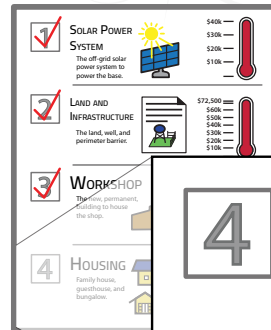
April 2021

Jason will be joined by his dad for a six-week trip to Guinea-Bissau in May/June to work on the storage building and shop!

New Base Fundraising Progress

May-June Trip *by Jason*

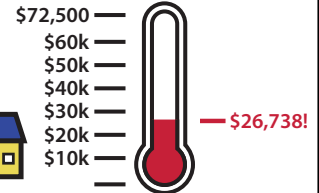
In mid May, I'll be making another six-week trip back to Guinea-Bissau without Emily and the kids. The trip will have two main focuses: to roof the garage (which my guys have been laying the block for in March and April while I've been away), and to pour the foundation for the shop. It's an ambitious goal as we stare down the beginning of the rainy season (likely in mid-June), but if we're able to pull it off, it will mean that the pounding rains will begin to compact the dirt so that we're ready to pour the slab for the shop later this year. Fortunately, I won't be making the trip alone! My dad, who recently retired, is going to make the trip with me! Please pray for endurance for both of us as the time will go by fast and the heat and humidity make these some of the physically hardest months to be in Guinea-Bissau.



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HOUSING

Family house,
guesthouse, and
bungalow.



Water Tower! *by Jason*

In the final edition of stories from my first-quarter trip, join me on the journey of building the water tower for our new base! In Guinea-Bissau, it's quite uncommon to have water systems work like residential wells do here in the U.S.—where a small pressure tank is filled, but the pump essentially turns on anytime through the day or night that you need water. The reason that system isn't a great fit for Guinea-Bissau is that electricity is either unavailable (in the case of neighborhood generators) or much more expensive (in the case of an off-grid solar power systems causing wear on expensive batteries) when used at night. So, if you want indoor plumbing, the way to do it is with a water tower which you can fill during the day when there's electricity and use throughout the evening and night, then fill again the next day. Our tower is built, the tank is up on the base, the pump is connected, and everything is working great. This 1,000 gallon tank will supply all of the houses, guest housing, and other buildings on the base.

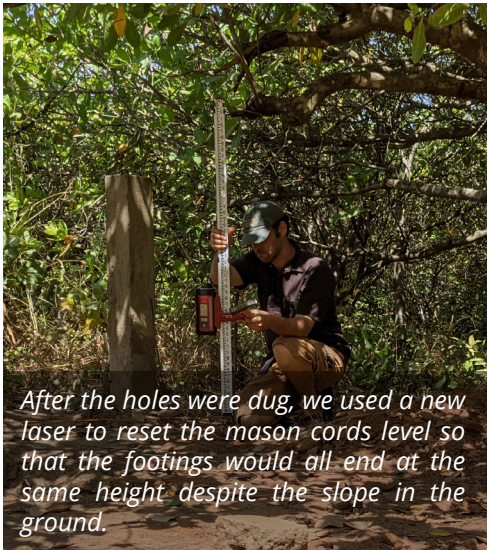
For anyone curious about the process of building such a thing in West Africa, we've expanded this newsletter into a jumbo edition with lots of pictures of the construction and fabrication.



It's going to be a huge blessing to have decent water pressure from a strong, stable plumbing system!



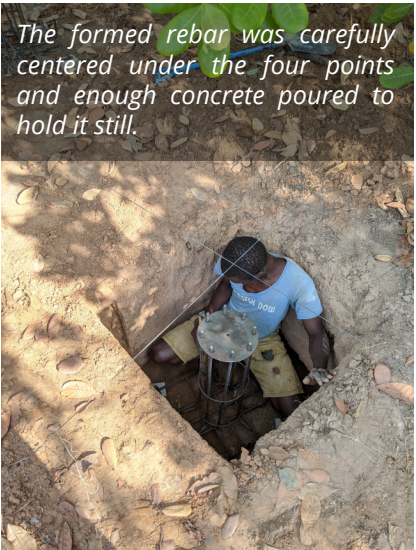
The first step was to carefully measure and line out the spots for the four tower footings. After the four points were laid out, our expert diggers set to work with shovels, picks, and a digging bar.



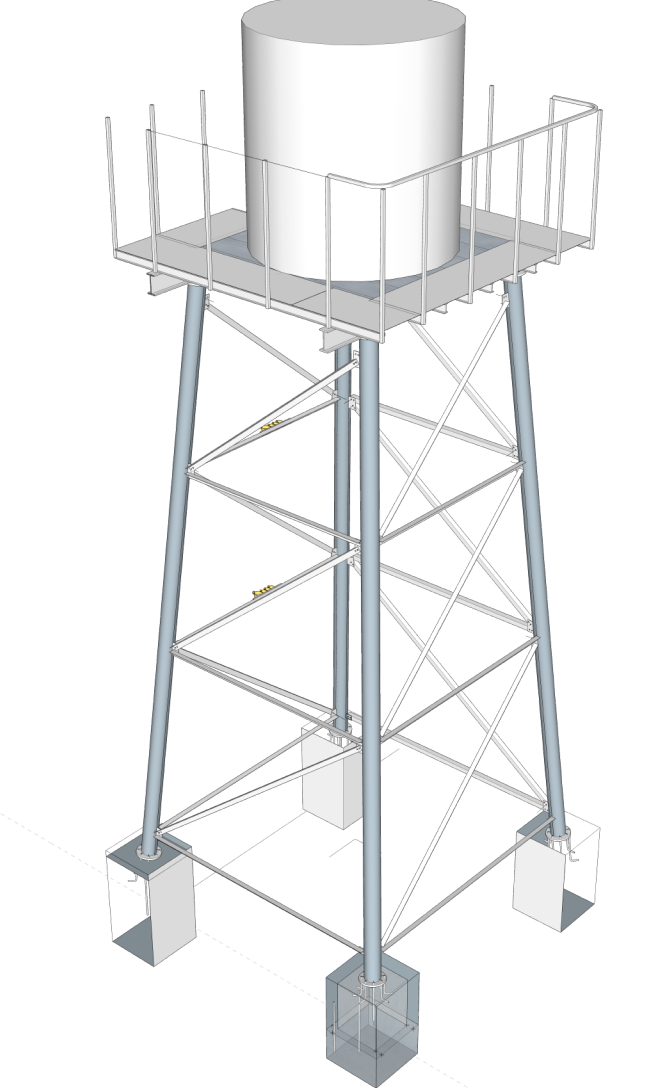
After the holes were dug, we used a new laser to reset the mason cords level so that the footings would all end at the same height despite the slope in the ground.



From 20' lengths, the guys cut, bent, and tied the rebar to be poured into the footings.



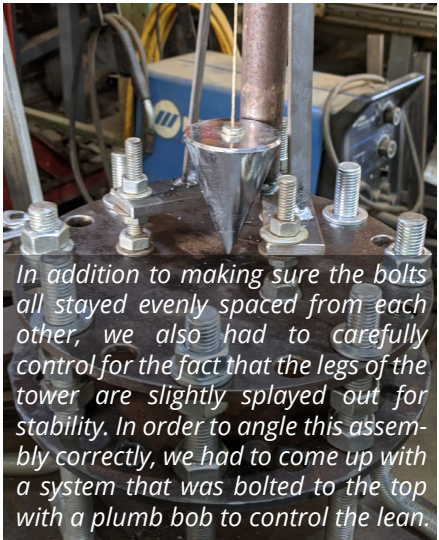
The formed rebar was carefully centered under the four points and enough concrete poured to hold it still.



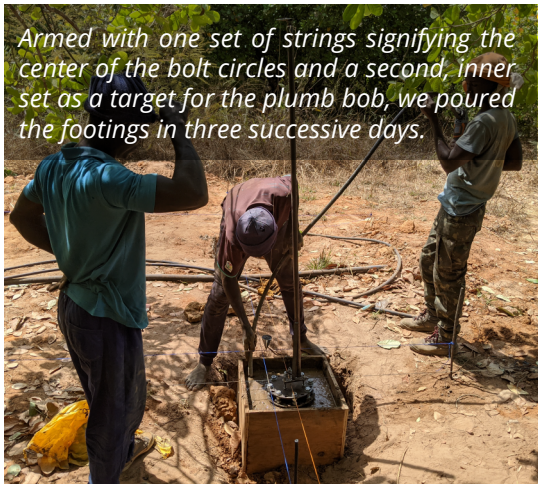
The upper part of the metal work in the footing was the threaded rod which the tower legs would bolt to. We got to test out a hydraulic bending machine donated by Legacy Metal in Michigan for the last container.



Being inexperienced at this, it took some time to make templates which would ensure that the bolts stayed properly spaced during the pour, or they wouldn't line up with the bolt holes that were already in the tubes we bought from the scrap yard which would become the tower legs.



In addition to making sure the bolts all stayed evenly spaced from each other, we also had to carefully control for the fact that the legs of the tower are slightly splayed out for stability. In order to angle this assembly correctly, we had to come up with a system that was bolted to the top with a plumb bob to control the lean.



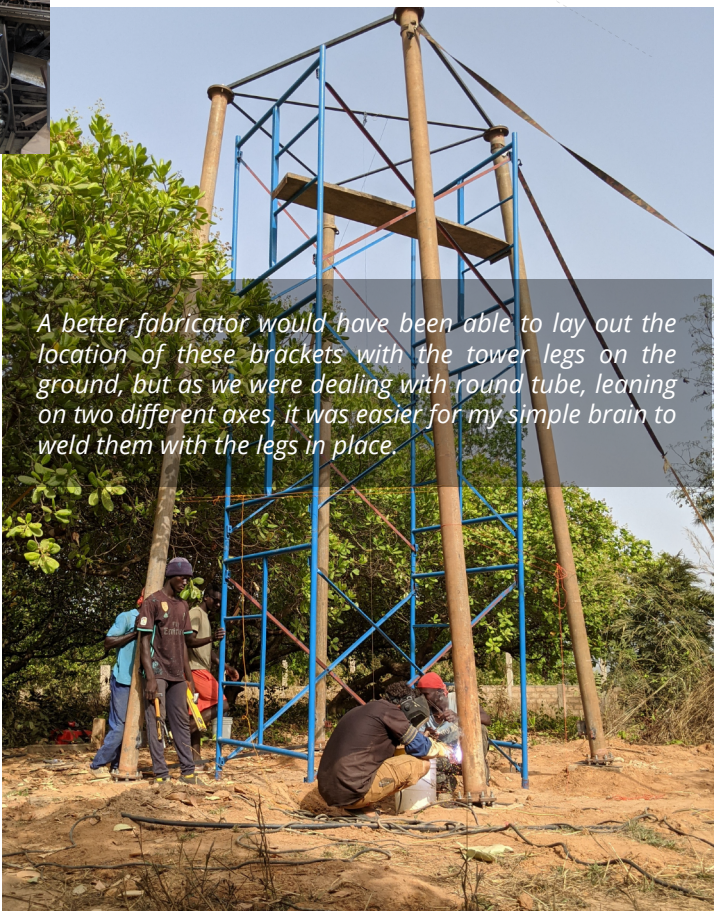
Armed with one set of strings signifying the center of the bolt circles and a second, inner set as a target for the plumb bob, we poured the footings in three successive days.



It's always amazing (and sometimes frustrating) to me that you spend so much time and money just getting back up to ground level! But, good foundations are Biblical, right?



Our computer controlled plasma cutting table made quick work of turning some scrap plate into the brackets we welded on to the legs to give the cross-bracing something to bolt to.



A better fabricator would have been able to lay out the location of these brackets with the tower legs on the ground, but as we were dealing with round tube, leaning on two different axes, it was easier for my simple brain to weld them with the legs in place.



Final assembly day saw us bolting all of the cross bracing onto the tower legs, welding the top platform, and installing the decking. Unfortunately, we didn't get time to install the safety railing before I had to leave to catch the plane that evening!



As we look back over the last year, we are immensely grateful to each of you who have been a part of this project through prayer, giving, advice, and encouragement.

We're amazed at all that has been accomplished in a year with no significant injuries, major conflict, or accidents.

Please join us in thanking God for how far the project has come, for guidance and protection as we move forward, and ultimately for the way He will use us and this site to build His kingdom in Guinea-Bissau!



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