



The Atkins Family

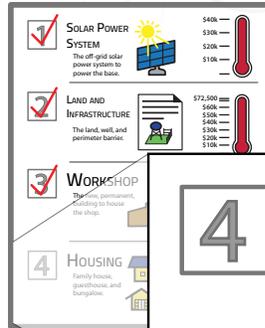
Jason, Emily, Savannah,
Nathaniel, and Miriam

July 2021

Serving in Guinea-Bissau,
West Africa

We will begin our trip
back to Guinea-Bissau
on Sept. 5th!

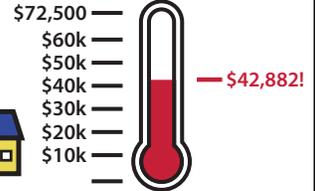
New Base Fundraising Progress



4

HOUSING

Family house,
guesthouse, and
bungalow.



It Begins! *by Jason*

We have been humbled and amazed at the way God has worked through our support team to provide the funding for the construction project! Your generosity and faith in the work we are involved in have been such an encouragement. With the money for the new shop complete, we were able to begin construction in June!

The new workshop will be almost 5,000 square feet and provide space for both metal fabrication and machining areas. We're excited about all of the new opportunities that will open up by having the shop equipment in a protected space big enough to safely allow for lots of work and training to be happening at the same time and adequate (organized!) storage.

The project began with carefully laying out the foundation on the ground, then my team got to work hand-digging the entire foundation footprint. Though we chose the flattest spot on the site, there are several feet of fall in the level of the ground from the front of the shop to the back, so the digging was significant. With no backhoe available, my team spent several



weeks carefully digging with axes, digging bars, duckbill shovels, and machetes.

The shop will be built using the method most common in Guinea-Bissau—block laid between periodic rebar-reinforced cement columns. This type of construction requires that the rebar cages that will eventually be inside the cement columns are formed and included from the very first foundation pour, so the next step was to form hundreds of yards of rebar into cages for columns and footings. The process of bending and tying the rebar was all done by hand, and the crew did an excellent job!

With the various rebar elements laid out in the foundation trenches and tied together, and with the first rains drawing closer, we set to work pouring the concrete. Concrete work in Guinea-Bissau is most often done by shovel-mixing the

It Begins! (cont'd) by Jason

sand, gravel, water, and cement in a wheelbarrow or a pile on cleared ground. For large commercial construction, cement trucks are available, but only in the capitol. Fortunately, we've kept an old cement mixer alive over the years, and it's been receiving quite a workout! The foundation was poured one side at a time. Each section was over 20 single-sack cement mixer loads, which were mixed and then transported to the trench one wheelbarrow at a time.

By the time my dad and I left in late June, three of the six pours had been completed. Fortunately, we've been blessed with a dedicated team of guys and a communicative, responsible, foreman (Cirilo), who are continuing the work even as we're away, with lots of measurements, photos, and calls going back and forth. They will be completing the last of the pours in the next few weeks.

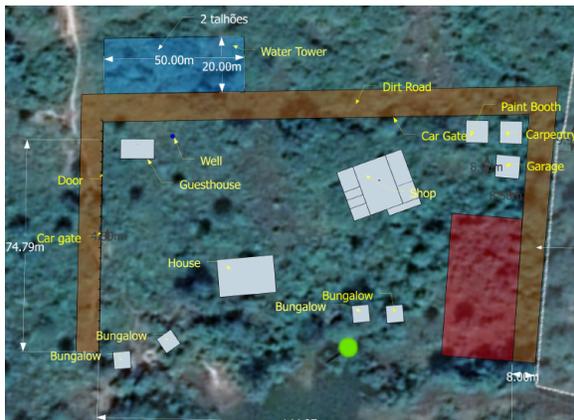
When we return in September, the next phase of the work will begin as we fabricate the metal form system needed to pour the stem wall, which will be a pair of significant processes. After that, we will backfill, compact, pour the slab, and begin producing and laying the block to build the walls! It's incredibly exciting to see things moving forward and we are deeply appreciative to all of you who have been part of it!



Transformation by Jason

It's amazing to take a step back and realize that although we have a lot of building still ahead of us, so much has been accomplished since we bought the land 18 months ago. It was a cashew forest without even walking paths around it, but today has a perimeter wall, gates, security lighting at night, clean water, a community tap, and the beginnings of several buildings. We're excited to see where we'll be after another 18 months!

Left: Satellite photo from early 2020 when the site was nothing but an idea.



Right: June 2021, it's starting to come together!



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