

HAKUNA MATATA

Kenya Newsletter January 2013



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We Shall Know-Julia Groothuis

When I asked our host mother what she was planning to do for Christmas and New Year she answered me with: "We shall know." Meaning, I don't know, but we shall see. Projects Abroad had asked us to help at a children's orphanage on Christmas day. Since the day before had been a very slow day at work we decided, (while having our Christmas eve dinner at Gilani's, a restaurant/bar in town where you can get all kinds of food and where we had so much fun the waiter barely dared to serve us!), that helping and playing with babies on Christmas sounded like a very nice idea! And it was.



We were picked up by Jessica, Assistant Director of Projects Abroad Kenya, grabbed a motorbike (still scary but so much fun!) and headed to the entrance gate of Lake Nakuru National Park. Here we met with all the babies and the care takers of Kardesh Orphanage. And the babies were (are) so cute! All aged between ten months and three years, this was their first time meeting monkeys! There were many children to look after, so everyone had their 'own' baby for the day. Mine was a fifteen month old boy, named Gideon, and of course after only two minutes I fell in love with him. And so did Thialda with hers: "Can I take you home? I'm going to take you home!"

After about an hour we drove to a friend of the orphanage's house where we got food to feed the babies. Milk? No. Baby food? No. Just food like us: rice with a lot of spices! And they ate amazingly fast! When the babies had finished eating it was time to change nappies and sleep time. While the babies slept I learnt the story behind every baby. My heart broke: left at the hospital after being born, neglected and put in a cupboard, incest, starvation (one girl was 2.8 kg when she came in 5 months ago. She is 2 years old. I see babies who are born, weighing more), a mother who died after birth and no one came for the baby, and little Giddy was found at the side of the road, with a rope around his neck. He was only 3 hours old.

They are all so lucky with their loving care takers at the orphanage because they are doing an amazing job! All the kids have their own bed and clothes, are being bathed every day and they get health care if needed. They try to get them adopted before the age of three, but adopting a baby from Kenya is hard: You have to live here first with the baby for 7 months and have to be married or together with you partner for a certain amount of years.

We went back on New Year's Eve to help and play with them. As we went for a walk I tried carrying Giddy like my father used to carry me because I loved that: on the shoulders. How

did he do that?! It's hard! I used to sit on his shoulders for hours; I could only handle Giddy for 15 minutes.

Anyway, it was the best Christmas and New Year's Eve I've ever had! Holding and playing with Giddy, hearing what he already has been through in his short life, I just wanted to hold him and protect him from all the evil in this world. They are incredibly fortunate with the orphanage; they are very much loved, get enough food and health care. But unlike us, they don't have two main important people in their lives: a Mom and Dad. They don't call for 'mommy' when they are crying. But we enjoyed it so much and it was very special, so we're planning on going back!

Thinking about it all, I can only hope and wish they will be as loved as I am.

After Christmas work at the hospital was fairly quiet, only one day when I was cleaning the wards I suddenly heard the woman talking louder and louder and then I heard a loud 'whooshwhopwhlop', like water falling and there was a mother holding a baby between her legs! I ran to get the nurse, who calmly cut the cord and gave the baby to me for weighing and dressing. The woman lost a lot of blood and was HIV positive so the nurse kept a very good eye on us! But we were safe; we always wear a medical coat and 2 layers of gloves. What an experience!

Sometimes we have to transfer a mother to Provincial General Hospital (PGH); as there are no doctors at the Bondeni Medical Clinic so when the mothers don't feel comfortable they are transferred to another hospital. PGH is government owned, it is a big hospital and they have too many patients and too few nurses and doctors. We learn something every day, although when some days are slow, so we usually clean and sterilize the labor beds and instruments.

The mothers here are very young, most of them are in their twenties, but some of them are as young as seventeen or eighteen year old. Working at the Provincial General Hospital has really opened my eyes to the realities that these Kenyan women face and it has been a humbling experience

I only have four weeks left here, which is surreal. Time flies and it feels like home somehow. My host family really feels like my real family, we joke around with our sisters and still adore Miriam; we're very used to our host mom now; she is really kind to us! We find our way around town well, meet people we know while walking down the street, and we know nice places to eat or to hang out with friends and know where to buy what. We've kind of build a life here. But I admit, I miss home every now and then! The one who invented Skype deserves an award!

On New Year's Eve we counted down under the Kenyan stars, with all our volunteer friends and Kenyan family. It was very special to experience the New Year in Kenya!

And so it is time for 2013 to start! I just wish you all a wonderful 2013, filled with friends, family, love, happiness, dreams, and... great travelling! What will 2013 bring? We shall know.

Heiallesammen!-Tonje, Siri and Ingrid.



Da harvi ENDELIG fått internett på rommet, og er klare for å starte bloggingen for fullt. De siste dagene har vi startet jobben på barnehjemmet (som nå viser seg å være mest arbeid på den lokale skolens omslærere assistenter). Nesten alle barna er på skolen på dagtid (8-4), så det er her vi skal tilbringe det meste av vår tid. Vi har fått observere de ulike trinnene og fagene i noen dager, og i morgen skal vi ha møte med sjefen Millie for å bestemme timeplanene våre. Vi bruker ca. en halvtime til lokal buss til jobb. Disse minibusserne har sitteplasser til 14 + sjåfør, men vi har opplevd opptil 21 + sjåfør. Heldigvis var det tidlig på så vi slapp å henge i døren....

Sure 24 er dreven av Samuel og kona Millie. De har nå 98 barn der, til tross for 85 sengeplasser. De hadde vært en del barn som kom inn før jul, og de hadde ikke noe annet sted å være, så Millie og Samuel bestemte seg for å hjelpe dem likevel.

De tre guttene har som er bedret i trustet i njetehuset, ettersom dette er ganskent nytt.

Barnehjemmet har mange prosjekter på gang for å sysselsette menneskene og tjene penger som igjen skal gå til barna. De har laget en fiskedam for at små fisk skal vokse og kunne selges og spises. De har også gravd en brønn som de pumper opp (skittent) vann fra. Dette selger de for 5 shilling pr. 10 liter (0,35øre) til lokalbefolkningen. De holder på å utvikle en metode for å rense vannet slik at de kan selge drikkevann for litt mer penger og for å gi barna bedre vann å drikke. De ser også det at ikke alle barna ønsker å gå på college, og har derfor verksted, garasje og symaskin som de kan få jobb på.



Ellersgårdagene med tiltuktuk, matatu, Kevin og Simon. Vibegynner å blivant med rushtigateneogdetroligelivetellers. Men vikanvelinnrømme at Africantimekanværeganskeirriterende. Påonsdagvarvipå social event med de andrefrivillige her iNakuru. Detvarstas! Da haddevi quiz ogdanse-ogspisekonkurranser. Sirisitt lag kompå 2plass, Ingrid sitt lag kompå 4plass ogTonjesittpåsisteplass! Da skaldetsies at Tonjesitt lag røkpåspisekonkurransensomgikkutpå å spiseugaliogdrikke juice. Ugalier en hvit masse avmaismelogvann. Smakercaingentingogharekkelskonsistens. Vi harfaktiskvært med å lageUgalipåbarnehjemmet en dag.

Nåerendelig alt påstell. Alleharfåttkenyanskesim-kort (somfungerer) oginternett (somfungerer). Sååkan vi endeligslappe av. Vi harnyttnoenettermiddagerved "poolen" påhotelletibyen, men detharbegynt å regnecahver dag i fem tiden. Og har vi forrestenfortalt at vi borrettsidenavnasjonalparken?? Av ogtilser vi bøffelsomgårheltopp mot gjerdeneog vi håperjopå at detskalvandrenoengirafferforbi en dag. En dag skalvidra inn inasjonalparkentilog med!

Tonjeerblittfriskere, Ingrid harikkefåttsoleksemogSiri harblittsykere!

Mango ogananaserskikkeliggodt!

<http://sitafrika.wordpress.com/>

Placement Introduction- Cherish Exchange Foundation Street Children Project.

It is all dust and poorly built rough structures that meet you at the end of Shabab, an area getting its name from a loose translation of the word suburb. Cherish Exchange Foundation Street Children Project is not different from its surroundings when you spend time in the home hosting 70 slum children with their guardian struggling to feed them two meals a day, you realize how much of a hustle it is to feed them day in and day out. In most cases these are the only meals these children are going to have, which keeps them coming to the home.

Volunteers will have a lot to do; from teaching, playing and cooking for the children, to general cleaning. And of course the exchange of culture and the volunteers being an inspiration to these young ones will be of major importance!

