

Dear Friends & Family,

Time flies. Ila returned to the US a month ago already. When she left the next task was to do our first maize and cow peas distribution. Unfortunately, our transporter was two weeks late. We decided to use that time to do a baseline survey of our beneficiaries.

To do the baseline survey, we took a statistical sample of our beneficiary population (in our case 10% or 200 families) and asked them questions to understand their lifestyle and learn what foods they are consuming and how many meals per day they eat.

Our goal is to repeat this survey at the end of the project so we can have a measure of the changes. Our hope is to see that our beneficiaries are eating more meals per day and healthier foods as a result of our work. We found that currently, quite a few people are subsisting on water lilies and water hyacinth bulbs. This is a survival coping mechanism and not very nutritious.

On Sunday, March 6 our four trucks arrived with 100 metric tons of maize in 50kg bags and 20 metric tons of cow peas in 10kg bags. Each truck carried 30 metric tons. We unloaded the trucks at nine different drop points, churches and warehouses.

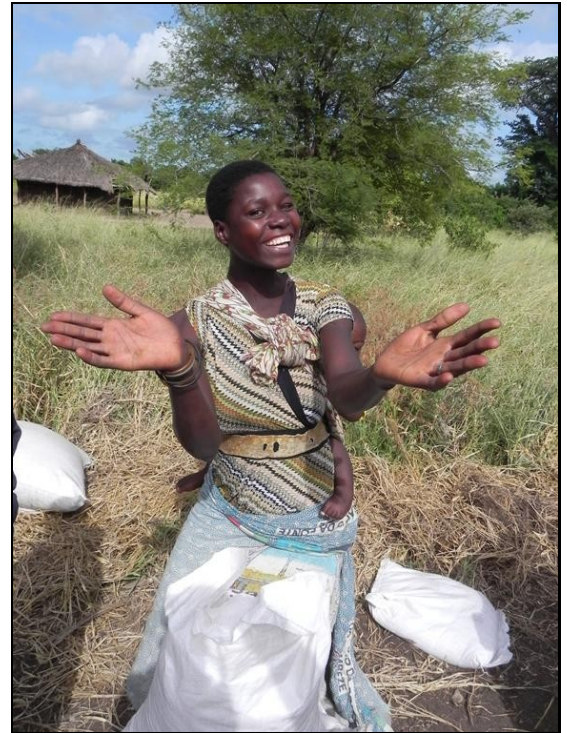
Over the next three days, we held distributions. Those were three long and busy days. The last day it rained very hard and I was fully challenged to complete the trip over very muddy and slimy roads in 4WD low. But we made it and completed the job.

The next day I went back to Lilongwe to meet John & Hilda Van Gyssel. They are the new couple that has arrived to replace Ila and complete this project after I return home.

The Van Gyssels and I have now arrived back in Mutarara. Upon our return, we discovered that while I was gone there was a lot of rain and the roads to Inhangoma were once again flooded and impassable. This time due to rains, not the water being released from the upstream dam.

Fortunately, the water level is now coming down each day and we

Over Please...



PRAYER REQUESTS

We ask for prayers for:

- Ila as she continues her recovery at home
- John & Hilda VanGysel as they adjust to life in Mozambique and learn their roles as IRMS
- That the rains will not make roads unusable for our next distribution



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Living Justice, Loving Mercy

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believe that it will not be a problem for our next distribution.

I will attach a few pictures to give you a flavor of the distributions and the Zambezi river. If Ila were here she would be writing some of the human interest stories that we sometimes include.

I have read reports that Mozambique has experienced 8% annual GNP growth the last few years and is continuing its economic recovery from the past civil war.

One piece of evidence we saw to confirm this is that the 7 km long Dona Ana Bridge—the longest railway bridge in Africa - has been re-opened within the last year to rail traffic (freight only), re-establishing the rail connection from Tete to Beira.

So the country is making economic progress but in spite of that we sure see a lot of poverty and hunger here in Mutarara district.

God bless each of you.

Pete & Ila

Photos: (from top to bottom)

- John & Hilda VanGysel
- Unloading maize and cow peas
- Waiting for food in the rain
- Carrying maize
- The Dona Ana Bridge over the Zambezi river

