

Visit to Irundu 20th July to 10th August 2010

The St Matia Malumba Health Centre III

When I arrived the staff were on their knees! Victims of their own success. Very busy with out-patients, in-patients and deliveries which often require attention through the night. We have now appointed another clinic officer, Annette, and an enrolled comprehensive, Robert, both of whom have fitted in well. Noah and I did the stock-taking and gradually everyone is getting used to record-keeping and form-filling as required by the Diocese and the District Health Office. The solar will be going into the newly renovated building shortly and we shall move into this building when I am there in October. The old Health Centre building will then become the adult male and female ward plus pre- and post-operative centre. Fr Stephen has just taken a little boy with two club feet for an operation paid for by the profit from necklace sales. He will be in hospital for two months then come home to us for his final recovery. We now have the immunisation drugs so we shall be working towards a mobile service to get them out to the far flung villages.

Micro-credit

It was a very busy time with a lot of paper work. I made 35 ox-plough loans, 25 start-ups and 9 business loans. The latter two groups being loans for bakery, trading in second hand clothing, shoes, etc, paraffin, bicycle parts, milling – a multitude of small businesses. We are still actively pursuing our contact with Agro Ways and working towards setting up a co-operative amongst the interested farmers, probably about twenty at present, so that they can represent themselves in their dealings with the company. We shall be extending their loans for an agreed length of time and probably lending a further small amount for the hire of transport. They have worked it all out so I shall be sitting down with them again in the autumn to fine tune it ready for the January harvest. It should make a big difference to their income. It was raining when I was there which is unusual so the poor farmers were having problems drying the harvest – they really do have a lot to contend with.

Friendship House/Visits

House is fine, tank is full but we still need to use water sparingly. Emily Cullom was there for four weeks in July and did some work in the classroom with Sr Agnes in the primary school and helped in a few of the classes in the vocational secondary school. The visitors coming in October will include Fr Peter who is coming to do a reccy with a view to taking out a group of boys next year who could really make a difference both materially and in forming friendships. Unfortunately our visitors this time will not be there for either the parish pilgrimage on Oct 10th or the parish open day on Oct 16th when the Bishop, Vicar General, etc come and we have a big party after Mass. It's very disappointing as both of these events are good occasions for building our friendship with the community in Irundu. I shall be at both!

Vocational School

The Carpentry students are enjoying the additional space in their new building – it's a lot safer too. I took out the money for the second year students which Fr Stephen was very pleased to have. I also took out the top up for the teachers' salaries.

Sales of Necklaces

Jenny Harrison has worked really hard at this and I was able to pay the women for making the necklaces who were delighted as they can now send their children to school next term. The profit goes into a fund for operations for disabled children and women with problems following childbirth.

Pen-Pals - no movement on this.

House Groups - I took out one letter.

Cynthia Haynes

