

**JANUARY 2023
UPDATE
FROM HEATHER AT
KEDESH, MOZAMBIQUE**



Take the future out of the street and give him hope.

Secondary School Education*

All our boys passed this year so I'm very happy about that! Out of the 26 girls we started off the year supporting in secondary school, 4 dropped out due to getting pregnant/having a baby and 2 dropped out due to lack of motivation. All of the other 20 girls who stayed in school passed the year. It's obviously disappointing every time a girl drops out (one of the ones who just had a baby is only 15) but I have to try to celebrate the successes! Albertina passed with 11 (they mark your grade out of 20) which doesn't sound great but is a good grade for 8th grade which tends to be a big adjustment for kids following on from grade 7 of primary school. Just to also put it in perspective, the highest score any of the girls received was 13 so they really don't like giving out high grades! We have already been asked for support by 6 more girls so the 6 spaces we had due to the drop outs have now been filled! I think there may still be a few more girls who come to ask for support. The tailor came today to start the uniform process. I had a nice catch up with the girls whilst they were here being measured and we chatted about the coming year and staying focused and working hard. They gave me all the right answers so I can only hope and pray for the best! I decided I'll treat the girls to a trip to the beach in January. They're quite excited about this!



This picture shows some of the girls getting measured for their uniforms.

Albertina is at the back, sitting down poking her head out next to the girl in purple.

Higher Education

Etelvina is continuing to do well and working hard. She's just started a placement on a general medical ward putting some theory into practice. Rosangela, a friend, is also being supported by Patricia from Switzerland to study nursing and I think they are enjoying studying together.

Two other girls, Rosinha and Calcilda are studying law and being supported by Ben and Angela. They are also doing very well. I'm thinking of inviting them to the beach when I take the secondary school aged girls so that they can perhaps inspire the younger ones!



This picture show Heather with the four girls studying at university. Elvetina is closest to Heather.

Boys moving on

In January (20th) we will have a 'send off' to say goodbye to four of our older boys as they move on from Kedesh. Gabi, Neto, Stélio and Zeca. It looks like they all plan to move into a house together for the time being. Stelio will continue to do a part time car mechanics course (it's his dream to work in this area). Zeca is very academic and is going to be supported by a friend from the states to study a 2 year course to be a medic assistant which Zeca hopes will give him work so that he can eventually pay his own way through medical school to become a doctor. Gabi and Neto are less sure what they will do so please pray for them. They're very competent and are already able to do lots of practical things including carpentry, building, electrics etc. But unlike Zeca and Stélio they don't have a particular interest they want to work towards yet.



← Zeca



Stelio →



← Neto



Gabi →

Boys stepping up and Bikes!

As the four boys move on, other boys will move into their places in the 'move on' apartment (a one roomed building with a bathroom at Kedesh everyone calls the 'apartamento' where the bigger boys stay before they move on). Two of these boys are 17 and likely be moving on from Kedesh in about a year but the other two are still 16, turning 17 next year. My thought is that it would be great if as part of moving to the apartment we could also buy them a bike as this would give them more freedom and independence and help them pursue extra courses in the year/years before they move on from Kedesh. So if there are still people wanting to donate money specifically for bikes this would be very appreciated at this time!

Widows

The widows group is still going strong! We will be giving them a few extra things for Christmas (money raised for this by my mums craft group).

Summer Projects

We're now in our 3 month summer holidays and we have various projects on the go (including getting rid of an outbreak of bedbugs!). At the moment a lot of time is spent eating mangos but other than this the boys have been making pillows using the fluff from the kapok seeds, making boxes to put under their beds, using the lathe to make cups and bowls (they now like to glue bits of wood together so they get multicoloured wood cups and bowls) and making cars out of wood in preparation for our end of year car race. It's getting very hot (hard for you to imagine I'm sure!) but we've had a good amount of rain and some great thunder storms so everything's staying green and lush.

Visitors

We had Ben with us for 2 months in October and November and he did amazing work with the 'middle aged' boys (14-16). He got them into a great work routine in the mornings, dishing out disciplines of 20-50 push ups if they arrived late. They moaned but I think they secretly loved it! They managed to rebuild the dividing walls to their bedrooms upstairs, build desks and draws as well as paint a mural. Ben also made desks for the younger boys bedroom and a climbing frame and rope swing which went down very well with everyone (although I'll confess, it's too high for me!).

John's break

Whilst Ben was with us John was able to go away for 10 days to Casa Msika, the place near Zimbabwe that we've taken the boys. He seemed to have a really good and relaxing time. Ben has offered to come back to Mozambique to help at Kedesh if and when John wanted a longer break to visit family and friends in the States. But in conversations with John about this offer, it seems John does not see this as a priority for himself at this time and instead would rather have Ben back to work along side him and the boys to do other projects. So I think I was wrong last year when I said John needed a longer break back to the States! Or maybe he just really values having another competent man around to help work alongside the boys on practical projects. But I'm glad that he got a break away from Kedesh and that things went ok in his absence.

Friendships

I mentioned that I did not have too many people I could meet up with in Beira. Well this year I've become good friends with a lady from the States called Paula. She's here working for USAID and really enjoys coming to Kedesh on Fridays and celebrating Shabbat with us in the evenings. Sadly, she will be moving back to the States next year but I think Kedesh has made such an impact on her that she will continue to keep in touch and plans to fundraise and visit again in the future. I thank God for this friendship He's given me this year.

Some sad news is that my good friend Liz and her family have now officially resigned from BMS World Mission and will be leaving Mozambique in June. I don't think I need to say how much I will miss Liz and her friendship but praying God will bring other good friends along.

Me

I'm keeping well. I've had no health problems - praise God- I really don't take that for granted! I recently acquired a Ukelele and am enjoying trying to learn it. The biggest news of this year has to be my visa which is now in my hands! 5 years!!! A real miracle.

I'm hoping to plan a trip back to the UK this year, but still trying to work out when is best. Ideally it's great if we have other people here to help out.

Fiona Coombs is coming to visit in March for a week, and her daughter Samantha is joining her. I'm really looking forward to this!

That's really all for now. I'm very sorry I haven't been able to join the ad hoc group. I do think about you all a lot, thank you for continuing to pray for me and the work here in Kedesh.



****Just an update on the update (page 2).*** We now have 30 girls from the community on our books to support this year, which is more than last year! We are now having to turn girls away as we think that 30 probably should be our limit financially. School starts on the 6th February and I've made progress with things like getting everyone measured for uniforms and the buying of school bags. Just the materials to get now. I will take the girls to the beach for the day in the last week of January as Patricia is arriving then for another visit for a month so she will come with me and help make sure no one gets into trouble in the sea (a surprising amount of people here don't know how to swim!).