

Greetings to All:

January 25, 2001

MZ2 – Work Begins

From: School of Medicine
Catholic University of Mozambique
Beira, Mozambique Africa

We are now in our second week and beginning to really get organized and start work.

Grant writing and web site design are well underway. Betsy taught her first classes this week. She is teaching in English (spoken slowly) using many sketches and overheads. We will try to learn more Portuguese while we are here and hope to take more lessons when we return home.



House. Our beach house is complete. The water works perfectly, and Mr. Graham White, originally from Zimbabwe, and a fantastic furniture maker, delivered a whole house full of custom made furniture. Beds, dressers, master desk, etc. These are made from a dark wood - almost like walnut – called "punga-punga", or something like that. Graham said that he could make grade A furniture locally for less than anyone could import the flakeboard stuff. So everything he makes is solid wood - and absolutely beautiful. I will ask him if he exports his work! He and other business men are right now in the process of building a joint web site. I offered to help - as a volunteer representative of UCM.

It will be important to nurture the university-business relationship.

Neighbors. A new visiting faculty member from Lisbon, Portugal just arrived a few days ago. Professor Fernando Alves teaches business management and will be here for the semester. His wife will arrive in several weeks. He has been almost everywhere - including having spent several years in Connecticut for one of this degrees. His university has an agreement with UCM to send one faculty member each spring semester. Our other close neighbors live in four smaller houses at the rear of the compound. Most of these folks work in some way for the university. We guess that these houses were originally servants quarters.



Food. We are on the outskirts of town and therefore a bus ride away from the downtown. But we have a great restaurant at the Swedish compound just 2 blocks away and right on the beach, and several on-the-beach restaurants all we can easily walk to from our house. There are corner venders selling ice-cold coca cola, cookies, etc. Then there are neighborhood markets. Our section of town is called "Macuti", and not too far from a lighthouse.

There is even one "shopping mall" that opened just last month. It is like one of the mini-strip malls back in the States. It includes a bank, and "ShopRight" supermarket. We believe this one comes from South Africa. Since many things are imported the prices are a bit high - but most everything is available. Sadly, (or fortunately, depending upon viewpoint) it is on the other side of town and we don't get there very often.

Even better, there are large areas of open-air market where we can find the freshest and best tasting fruits and vegetables. All of our international friends have commented upon the fact that the US food may look pretty but does not have very good taste. We are beginning to understand what they mean. Guess the manufactured food has lost something.



Transportation and Working Hours. There are public bus and mini-van ("chopa") routes all over. We rode a choppa into downtown yesterday to change a traveler's check. It was full when we got on and along the way they crammed another six people in. But the cost was only 3,000 metacais (about \$0.16 USD). We don't see many taxis - but also don't need one. On the way back we did take a taxi, costing 65,000 metacais (\$4). Luckily, the university provides transportation to and from work every day. That probably allows them to worry less about us getting lost ... and at the same time insures that we put in a full day of work! Remember, these are mostly Jesuits with a serious work ethic. As I believe we mentioned before,

the university van picks us up about 7 to 7:15 AM and we work until noon. Then we ride home - for lunch and a siesta. Ride back to work at 2 pm and stay until 5 pm. I believe Betsy that this may be a longer, harder workday than she is used to working.

Best regards - Dave and Betsy Walker
walker@marshall.edu

