

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF AFRIKA

Greetings from Conakry!

As I disembarked from the airplane, inhaled the thick, moist monsoon air, observed the small airport and the simply dressed local people and picked up our soaked-through suitcases, I felt as though after many years I had finally **arrived home** again. Such poverty, so much to be done, so many precious people. It reminded me a lot of our time in India.

Before going on I would like to write about what happened in the months before we came here. First of all, a sincere **Thank You** to all who helped us with contributions and the many preparations in order to get our **first container for Africa** ready: good storage places, more materials than ever before, new and old friends who helped us with lodging and food, the use of their telephone, fax, e-mail, the reloading of 67 cubic meters of material into the temporary storage etc. Our so far biggest and most complex project took more time than the ones before. At the same time we also tried to increase



Temporary storage: two 20 ft container filled to the top.



our net of helpers and friends, so that in the future we wouldn't have to spend so much time with the many preparations in Germany, but can spend more time here on the field to reach the people.

In the meantime we also **moved out** of Kosice and passed on our ministry there to our friends so that it can continue. When we moved into a very old East German house near Erfurt which is desperately in need of repair, cooked the first meals on a woodstove and ate sitting on our trunks, we were once again in need of some miracles. The Lord answered promptly and gave us the basic necessities for this **new base in East Germany** as well as for the work in Conakry. Daniela and the three younger girls are continuing to work on and set up the house, while the two older girls are helping me here.

At the moment we're counseling with the other German family that we have known from before and who have been actively working here for over a year, what steps we should take next. There are still many hurdles to overcome, most importantly with **customs**. Please pray that we'll get tax-exemption soon, that everything goes well with the transportation and distribution, and that we can reach with His message and help as many of these needy people as possible. Thank you so much for all your prayers, we couldn't do without them! We need **a lot of patience and perseverance** with the slow moving bureaucracy. The



Marianne having lunch the African way.



Marianne with a group of students.

usual answer is: „Tomorrow it's ready“. In the meantime we're also trying to locate the right places where we will later distribute the humanitarian aid. This is not an easy task because slums of the natives and Sierra Leonean refugees are abundant and all over the place.

Slowly we're getting accustomed to the new living conditions and the **difficult infrastructure** here. I.e. there are no telephone lines leading to the house and to send a simple email is not easy. You have to go to town to find a phone and sometimes the phone lines or the server is out of order. But once it works, you have more assurance that it gets there than a postal letter. For this reason we'd like to switch over to **E-mail** as much as possible. If you are able to get on-line somehow, please send us your or your friends email address where we can reach you. To be sure that everyone else will get this newsletter, Daniela will send it from Germany.

Some of you asked us when we're planning our next shipment and what type of materials are needed here. We can say that in general the **collection of aid will continue** as before, but how often these shipments will happen depends a lot on the finances. In order to save time and finances we will most likely send one big Container per year, the same amount as the two shipments last year. We're not sure yet when and where we'll send the second container, but one thing is sure: the need in Africa is endless and in Europe there is so much excess that is desperately needed here. It all depends on how we can best get it here.

The greater distances and more complicated transports increase the expenses. If we would have more support we would also like to do more projects to „help people to help themselves“, i.e. sewing and other handicraft centers etc. For this reason, we founded a Charitable Organisation in Germany called **„Afrika Direkt Hilfe e.V.“** (Direct Help for Africa). If you would like to have a German tax-deductible receipt, please use our foundation's account, otherwise our personal one. We would also appreciate it very much, if you could find other people who are interested to support this mission. Thank you so much!

If possible we would like to see you once a year or at least talk to you on the phone, when we put our next load together. Also we would enjoy it a lot to hear from you

and are sending you many loving greetings from all of us,

Wolfgang Schmidt, family and team

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