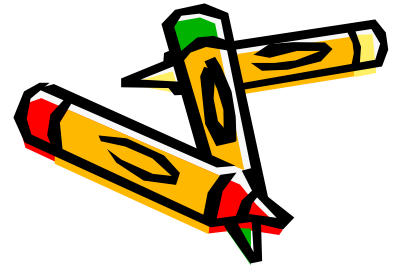




Saturday March 4th 2006

The day the road vanished

Today we are going to travel to Singonhali Primary School. The school which were selected as winner of the donation from the "Colour the World" competition mentioned in my report february 20th. We are going to have a hand over ceremony at the school and this ceremony was originally planned to be held last Thursday, but the date was changed as the District Education Officer asked us to change the date to Saturday instead, enabling more officials to participate, this we accepted as it was a splendid idea and chance to have more officials at the ceremony.



Last night we had heavy rain in Dodoma and the question was how the roads would look like. While driving out of the city, we find the roads quite muddy and it is not possible to drive as fast as we are used to. After a while it looks like the sky is getting brighter and brighter and we think that the weather will be fine and no more rain.

When coming to one of the bridges we have had problems with before (a big tree had fallen down and we were forced to cut it in pieces enabling us to get through) we noticed that the bridge probably had been flooded during the night and the culvert could be seen from the road due to the lack of soil on the road / bridge. We tried to get over the culvert and suddenly we were stuck. This was solved by getting lots of stones to fill up the hole, enabling the vehicle not to sink down in the soil. We have managed to solve our first road problem of the day.



Stuck on the culvert

After a while we came to a watercourse (now without water) which seemed to give us some trouble as it was a bit steep to get down and up from the watercourse. Anyhow, after some discussions how to pass we tried and did not have any success the first time. We tried another way from the watercourse to get back up to the road but without success again, the car was stuck in the sand and the risk to flip over was high. We needed to dig under the wheels so the angle could get less critical. After this we could continue digging enabling us to come up to the road again. Several people helped us and several people passed during this job. And after some hours! We were able to be back on the road and we wondered how the officials, who were travelling from Mpwapwa, would be able to get through to this ceremony at Singonhali.



No success



Let's dig and find a solution



Near to flip over



We need to dig more...



Finally we manage to get by... Back on the road again and we have a feeling that the officials never will be able to get through to Singonhali, we are very late, several hours and as the mobile phones do not have any coverage in these rural areas, we can not get in touch with the school or the head master to inform that we are very late.

When travelling for another half an hour, we arrive to another passage of a watercourse. This is the end of the road, because the road has vanished. The watercourse has changed to a river and swept away the road, and have a discussion if we should give it a try or not. We all agree to that it is impossible to pass as it will be too risky.



This means that we can not have the ceremony as planned and no chance to arrange the ceremony at another date as we tomorrow will change camp and go to Singida region to start up next project, the construction of water harvesting tanks.



If we, travelling with a 4-wheel drive vehicle have such problems, you can imagine the problems the drivers of the WFP trucks have when distributing the food to all schools in these rural areas. They seems always to solve all kinds of problems and are really to be considered as inventors when it comes to solve problems when on the road, getting stuck into the mud or sand, when having flat tyres etc. They are doing a fantastic job.



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