

Euros and Kwachas and Shillings, oh my!

We've packed our bags, checked our lists, and sorted our money: Euros and Kwachas and Shillings. On this, Roger's 31st and Ginger's 13th trip to Africa, we are flying through Amsterdam so we need a few Euros for Schiphol Airport, plus Tanzanian and Kenyan Shillings and Malawian Kwachas.



Malawi is our first stop where Roger and I will connect with some of the miners and brokers we met in January. These miners are farmers first and miners by accident, you might say. In Malawi, there is not currently a place to learn about identifying the gems they find while farming. The gem industry in Malawi is very young and needs education and support. The Gem Association of Malawi in conjunction with the Mines Department has asked us to do a training on identification, sorting, and selling.

Tanzania welcomes us next along with a team of 19 others: retailers and consumers with an

and Sune who were part of "[Sharing the Rough](#)", are Tanzanite miners, and support the Kitarini Children's School near Longido. We will be consulting with Pia and Sune about innovative programs for the school, a place near and dear to our hearts. We want to come alongside them and assist in providing what they need.

We'll introduce the team to Peter Salla's Arusha Gemmological Centre where locals are learning to facet gemstones often with scholarships, books, and precision machinery provided through the [Devon Foundation](#). Then a Tanzanite mine, the Maasai Women's Market, and the Arusha National Park.



New precision faceting machine delivered June 2015



Nancy Schuring of the Devon Foundation, Peter Salla and Roger

Our final stop will be Kenya, which holds such memories for us. It is very bittersweet being in Voi without Okeno, yet we will spend our time with his widow Esther, her brother Josie, and Okeno's children. We'll travel to Okeno's mine, which Esther now runs and peruse the gem rough she has amassed. What a picture of the change in our world: to be friends with and support a female business owner in Voi, Kenya!



Roger and Okeno during the filming of "Sharing the Rough"

We'll report back in a few weeks about how we spent our Euros, Kwachas, and Shillings!

A team of 21 passionate people on our 31st African adventure!

4253 COOLIDGE HIGHWAY, ROYAL OAK, MI 48073 • T: 248-545-3546

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