

Everyone went to Kampala today but I stayed home to catch up on some work. I went out when I heard kids playing to take some video and pictures. At lunch here you see some things that you see at home. Kids looking into other kids lunch pails and a lot of trading going on.



There are also things you don't normally see, most of the kids had filthy clothes and many of the actual kids were filthy, just dirt smeared all over their legs and arms. There was a lot of smacking each other until they saw my frown and you see a lot of bare feet. During lunch I noticed one child (Kenneth) had flies all over his feet and his feet looked, I don't know how to describe it, wounded. Later one of the teachers pointed out that he had Jiggers. Jiggers are fleas and they burrow under your skin to lay their eggs. Yes it is disgusting. They take up to 2 weeks and swell up until they lay their tons of eggs. They are painful and extremely itchy. It turns kind of into a blister with a black dot in the middle. The black dot is the back legs and the reproductive organs sticking out. Are you puking yet? I'm not done.



Wikipedia says, "If the flea is left within the skin, dangerous complications can occur including secondary infections, loss of nails, and toe deformation. These are relatively rare, but a heavy infestation combined with unsanitary conditions greatly increases the likelihood of complications".



Here in Uganda where there are heavy infestations and unsanitary conditions, complications are common. "Heavy infestations may lead to severe inflammation, ulceration, and fibrosis. Lymphangitis, gangrene, sepsis, the loss of toenails, autoamputation of the toes (your toes fall off), and death may also occur".



Kenneth is 4 years old and his feet already look bad. Sometimes the weight of the responsibility here is enormous. How can I let this child suffer any longer? Or any of the others? The one I saw limping today? They are all so ADORABLE and so needy. Yet there is never enough money to build everything, to heal

everyone, to help everyone. Sometimes I am tempted to stay in the house and shut my eyes so I won't see any more. But now that I have seen their feet, do I sit in the house and cry or try to help? Well, I've had my cry now I will try to help. I talked to the nurse to see what we could do about it. She said that many of the kids had them. These kids have no shoes and the jiggers are in the dirt and their houses probably have dirt floors, so they mostly have them in their feet. I noticed another child having trouble walking so I pointed him out to the nurse and she said he had them too.



Getting out the Jiggers is a process and sometimes is the cause of the spreading of other diseases like AIDS. They take a safety pin or a needle and dig the suckers out. Once it is exposed it tries to bite onto the flesh to stay in. You try to remove it whole because if the head breaks off it can cause a secondary infection. You have to keep the foot clean which here is difficult. If you want to see what damage these fleas can cause if they are not removed, google jigger infestation photos. How can we help?



These kids really need shoes and socks. We would like to get every kid shoes and socks immediately, we were going to shoot for Christmas but can this little 4 year old Kenneth wait? Or the others? It will take a lot of time and pain to remove them and we don't want to do that until they have socks and shoes to protect them from re-infestation. This will cost about \$25 per child and we have 60 children.

\$25 will buy shoes for 1 child

\$100 will get 4 children shoes

\$250 will get 10 kids shoes

\$1500 will get the whole school shoes.

Believe it or not, for the children here in Nabisooto, if they could ask for anything for Christmas, it would probably be shoes. Shoes for kids are a luxury here. If you can help out with this, please donate on our website at www.inthefieldministries.org and write "shoes" in the memo line. Please help Kenneth.

Another difficult day. When I woke up this morning to check Facebook I was overwhelmed by the response to help with shoes. Thank you so much! So now the work begins. The teachers sent down kids who they knew had Jiggers. It is something here that kids are embarrassed about. 8 kids came to the clinic. I talked with the medical staff and told them about the issue and how we wanted to help. They brought each child in one by one. Out of the 8 only 1 girl had shoes but her socks were so filthy that the nurse did not want her to put them back on. Believe it or not some of these kids are also responsible for doing their own laundry. They sat them down over the shower drain and methodically cleaned their feet and legs. Oh, my, I don't think these kids ever wash. The water was completely dirty coming off them. All of the kids say that they bathe themselves. The ages ranged from 3-6. One boy said he bathed twice a week. We encouraged them to bathe every day and to properly clean their feet. Fiona showed them how to clean their legs and toes, where to scrub, when to bathe, all that good stuff. She said it would really help if we could get them a bath sponge. Then she would spread the toes and show me where the jiggers were. I have to say I was a big baby and cried most of the morning. The kids must have thought I was nuts standing there with my Kleenex. None of them cried. I told each one how much God loved them and that he loved every part of them and all their toes too and how we wanted to help them have healthy feet. One child told the nurse that he removed his own jiggers with a safety pin. He is 6. We told him to come to the clinic to get help next time. 2 of the kids had secondary infections, some had parts of their toe nails already gone but sweet Kenneth had the worst of it. He has 45 jiggers feasting on him, in his feet and his hands. It was horrific. Once we washed his feet you could see the bottom of his feet once clean and the black dots that were some of the jiggers. That poor sweet boy must be in a lot of pain. It has to hurt to walk. No wonder he is so quiet. I asked him if it hurt and he said yes so quietly, it made me cry more. I did get him to smile and I gave everyone a cookie when they were finished and sang them a song. But it does get worse; Kenneth and 4 other kids also had rat bites on their feet. I don't even know what to say about that. At 1:30 they are coming back to the clinic, we are loading them up in the car and driving them home to check out their living situations. I have to brace myself for this. I think I will wear my rubber boots. I need a space suit ASAP and another box of Kleenex.

Get your Kleenex ready. House visits. Piled the kids into the back of the vehicle, oh they looked so cute. You could tell that riding in a car was either a first or at least not a common occurrence. They were back there giggling the whole time.



Our first stop was Richard and Maureen. They live with their Grandparents down a quiet road in a mud hut that needs repairs. She has a beautiful flower garden. The kids were in a mud/kitchen eating or shelling beans. Richard is 3, Maureen is 4, and they have 8 jiggers and Maureen also had scabies last week. Richard has a grin that looks like he is up to something. Maureen's smile would light up a room. She is a doll. The Grandparents look TIRED. Han and Fiona explained to them about their feet, how to keep them clean. They said they could not afford to spray for the bugs, which was obvious. We will take care of it, thanks to your donations! Our next stop was at Emmanuel's house. He is the one who was skipping school so his father beat him. We went to talk to his Grandparents but they were away for a few days taking care of mentally ill grandchild. I'm not sure who was watching Emmanuel; I don't think anyone is really caring for him. We are taking rat poison back to that house. Next was Alex and Veronica's house. They have a mud hut and dirt floors and 3 younger half-dressed siblings. They cook inside their house, not good. There were piles of motoke peelings on the floor and even a chicken in the living room picking through it. I asked if they had a kitchen and they said no. I told them that if they built a small mud kitchen outside and did their cooking there it would keep the rats out of the house since the rats were going after the food and biting the children's feet. Not much of a response. The father says that he brings water for bathing at night but Alex doesn't want to wash. We spoke to Alex for a while then he burst into tears and said he had a headache. Apparently he had a fever yesterday. Maybe he has Malaria or maybe it was the heat but I felt so bad for him. He went to lie down and we could hear him crying. Poor sweetie. Diana and James had already removed their jiggers but had rat bites on their feet. They live really far away. I can't believe how far they have to walk to get to school. We clocked it and they live 2 miles away, they are ages 6 and 8. Their Mom seemed nice, all the parents/guardians did. We are going to spray that house and kill the rats as well. Gerald lived in a pretty nice house, a clean house with his grandparents. His Grandmother is beautiful. You can sure see a difference between the people that have a little easier life and the ones that are really struggling to survive. Gerald is also just too lazy to wash but hopefully now he will. Kenneth's situation was by far the worse. . We pass by his house

whenever we go to town but then I did not know it was his house. There are always lots of children in the front yard and most of the time they are naked. Kenneth lives here with his old Grandmother who looks completely WORN OUT and is losing her sight. Kenneth was eating some beans and Motoke outside on a piece of a burlap sack or something like that. I have never seen so many flies on those dishes. The Grandmother had 3 babies on the mat with her; all of them were about 1 year old or less, all 3 of them filthy, barefoot and half naked. The lady says her son keeps on having babies and then he brings them and drops them off with her. They must all have different mothers because they all looked the same age. The irresponsibility just staggers me. She said that she knows she owes us school fees but can't pay them. Sweet lady, we will spray her house and the ground around and we will put down rat poison and we will wave her school fees if they can't get the father to pay them. They got his phone number and I think they are going to give him a "talking to". The urge to tell the grandma that we would take the babies and Kenneth and then send her on a nice senior cruise to Mexico for some well-deserved R and R was a strong one. Those babies were so helpless. I don't know how she can do it and I'm afraid what will happen to those kids as her eyes get worse. She needs some prayer for sure. I don't know what else to do. We can fix Kenneth's feet and get him shoes and educate him on how to avoid sickness and disease and hopefully as he grows he can help his Grandma, but I wonder how long she will even live and then what will happen to those darlings? One more week and I will be back in my comfy home in the states and things will be "back to normal" but really you never forget what you see here. The pain dulls a bit but when I see this stuff it just make us work harder to fundraise and tell people what is happening here as we plan to come back. We want to build 6 more classrooms so we can teach through 7th grade. We want to build a technical school to teach mechanics and sewing for those that can't go to college. We need another teacher housing unit very soon and this one needs a bathroom. To get our school credited we need a soccer field and a play field for the girls too plus a testing room and offices. I really want boy and girl dormitories so we can take in those kids that so badly need help. We need roads, water towers, solar power, employees and a boatload of money to do it all. Deep breath..... Thankfully God is in charge, not me. I just need to trust and be patient. It's hard to be patient.

