

Centre for the Blind (Bishop Willis Demonstration School Campus) - Iganga
Short visit by scout team (David, Paula, Susanne, Peter) in **November 2006**



During our visit to the Blind School in May 2006 we were appalled by the conditions the children were living in. The immediate need to decorate and make their dormitories sanitarily safe took financial priority over the dangerous condition of the beds they were sleeping in.

However, our second visit in November 2006 enabled us to concentrated on further improvements to the living conditions with particular attention to the infamous

There are currently 28 young people resident in the school, their ages range from 5 to 13. Those with parent(s) are expected to provide their own mattresses. The reality, unfortunately, is very different; most of the children are orphans—their parents dying, mainly, from HIV AIDS. Therefore money for such luxuries as a mattress is non existent. The mattress featured in the opposite frame was home to a colony of red ants! (a five year old partially sighted girl had no alternative but



Thanks to the generosity of family, friends, Brownie Groups, and work colleagues we were able to replace four of the double-decker bunk beds with four new steel and lacquered frame (red) bunks with mosquito canopy. We also had sufficient money left to equip the new bunks with 4" deep mattresses. The photo's below show the new bed frames and the mattresses loaded on the truck and ready for delivery to the



A new double-decker bunk bed costs (approx £65) ; a new 4" deep mattress costs approx £8. We still have 4 more bunk beds to buy and 4 single beds.

This is our aim for the March 2007 visit.

Centre for the Blind, PO Box 267, Iganga
 Friends of Iganga team visit—May 2006



The 3-week renovation project saw a marked improvement in the living conditions in the two dorms



Little Dora is just five years old, she is partially sighted as a result of contracting measles at the age of two. Blindness is common in Uganda, it can be caused by three main diseases HIV Aids; Measles; river blindness. Dora has slept in these dreadful conditions for three years, she has no parents—they died of Aides related causes. Her bed is broken and dangerous, her



← Just to prove that the Project Manager really did get her hands dirty!

Whilst the team did a huge amount to refurbish the dorms. The available finance would simply not stretch to replacing the beds. It is hoped that subsequent visits will continue the work. It is hoped that in 2007, some or all of the beds will be replaced and the kitchen, pit latrines, mosquito protection; and roof, receive urgently needed



From this



To this →
 In 3 weeks!

Moving-in day was



Centre for the Blind Proposed Programme of Works for 2007



Re plaster kitchen, clean, replace sink, provide shelves and decorate...
£150

Build safe cooking facility
£40



Julia is nine, she is partially sighted and an orphan. She lives, during term time, at the Blind School, as an orphan she is not funded so has to earn her keep. Her job is to light the cooking fire and prepare breakfast for all the children at the school. As you can see, she is kneeling on hot embers in order to ensure that there is sufficient wood under the cauldron to cook the corn for breakfast!

Julia is a real-life cinderella



Paul is the son of the Iganga Clinic lab technician. He was training to become a doctor until a particularly severe bout of malaria necessitated a hospital stay. Whilst in hospital he was given an overdose of quinine and lost his sight totally. He is now a teacher of the blind and it is because of Paul that we visited the Blind School in 2005 and discovered the dreadful conditions the children were living in. Paul occupies a private room at the school which is every bit as poor as the main building was. During our May visit Paul declined our offer to decorate his room in preference to the children's accommodation. Now it must be Paul's turn. £100



Fill eves to prevent inhabitation by bats etc. £20



Provide mosquito frames to all dorm windows



Centre for the Blind Proposed Programme of Works for 2007



To the left is a photo of the wash area in the girl's dorm. This area has no adequate drainage or wall tiling. Project for 2007 to half tile the walls and provide safe drainage from the room into a pro-



Redundant water tanks are a health hazard and provide ideal breeding ground for mosquitos and other water-born diseases. The tanks should be removed from site and the ground levelled.



Basically, the roof is watertight for the time being. However, rust damage (already evident) will soon cause the roof to deteriorate and allow water ingress. Roof needs to be sanded and painted to prolong its life and prevent further



It is anticipated that the cost of the remedial ground and roof works would be in the region of between £1—£1.5K

There is still a need to push ahead with bed replacement in 2007



Some Ugandan Friends



← Street kids in Kampala. They live by their wits and are vulnerable.

5-year old Hassan with Robyn's teddy. Hassan is an orphan and lives at the orphanage. →



2 year old George wearing my grandson's (also George) coat. George also lives at the orphanage



The steel workers. These fab chaps made the new bunk beds for the Blind School. They made me so



These are my little stars, and my reason for being in Africa. !

The brave children from the Blind School &

← The fantastic kids from the Orphanage →



This is my beloved Margaret. Margaret and I met at the Blind School in May—it was both our first visit. She had come all the way from Gulu and I from the UK. Her story is the saddest one I have ever heard, She is the daughter of a doctor and a mission hospital matron. Both parents and brother were burned alive in their hut by the rebel militia. She escaped into the bush with her sister and has lived in refugee camps ever since. I sponsor Margaret at teacher training college, she is on a two year course to become a teacher of the blind. She is very proud of her 85% pass in a recent exam and her tutors are confident she will achieve excellent grades and make a fine teacher.