

February 2005

It is a busy month again for TT&F, so I thought we could review who we are actually helping as it may not be clear from the pictures and stories. We are buying medications for several children now. Let's start with Hope House children, Balomi, Saulosi, Zalia and Estelle.



Balomi is probably the biggest success. The horrible fungal rash (ringworm actually) that covered his body has receded and he is looking great. He has gained 1.5 kgs since starting ARVs, has had no side effects and his diarrhea is slowing down.

Saulosi is still flourishing on anti-TB medicine at the end of this money will start on ARVs as well. He has that protuberant abdomen that is seen in kids with protein deficient diets (and there was a bit of extra fluid in their because of TB, but that is now resolved) but he is incredibly active and happy.



Zalia, with the congenital cataract in her right eye and the strange brown hair, a sign of malnutrition, is also doing well. Her CD4 count is due back this week and we will most likely start her on ARVs.

Estelle has gone back to her mother, who is dying in the compounds I have not seen her this last week. I understood that her mother is unable to even raise her head off of the bed but is refusing all help. Estelle has nasty scabies so no one out there wants to touch or help her, which is how she found her way to Jeanne Mulenga at Hope House. He should be seeing her again soon, I suspect, once mum is dead.



Jeanne has gone to a TB conference in Geneva and so these three kids are staying at our house for the next two weeks. We had a lovely weekend of swimming and bought them some clothes. They will attend the hospice Day Care centre while Jeanne is away.

Key people here are Jeanne Mulenga, who runs a project

for People Living with HIV/AIDS based at Hope House (she has HIV herself and believes that it is something that needs to be talked about) and Judith Morris from the US Embassy in Zambia who sends us cases, such as Jeanne's kids, and pays for much of their care herself.

Jon Hospice Day care has 30 HIV+ children who live in the surrounding compounds and come each day to the Day Care. They are mostly hospice related, in that one or both of their parents have died there (or are there right now) and the children are referred to Day Care through the Home Based Care workers in the compounds who bring in the people to the hospice. It is a requirement that the children be HIV+ to attend Day Care. Five of the 30 children are already taking ARVs through one of the various programs in Lusaka. Our plan is to start medical charts on each of the children and then gradually begin testing their CD4 cell counts and starting them on ARVs, to be transitioned at a later date to one of the government or NGO schemes. Why so many children are not part of the system, especially the ones in reasonably controlled environments like the Day Care, no one seems to know. But it is a reasonable goal for TT&F to bridge this gap. We have already purchased Septrin Syrup for the Day Care and multi-vitamin syrup and this has already reduced the number of diarrheal illnesses amongst the children there (and protects them against the AIDS-related pneumonia). Key to the Day Care Project is the Day Care Music Therapist Corey Ann Elliot, and social worker Gift Tembo.



There are a few others as well, such as Biswasi, a child who we have started on ARVs and is doing well although he came up in a shingles rash late last week. He started on the right medicine for that condition. There are Seli and Joseph at the Kasisi orphanage, who we “rescued” out of the hospice where they had been admitted from Day Care with serious AIDS-defining infections. Both have started on ARVs and will transition to the government system which provides ARVs to many of the children at Kasisi.

Judith Morris has asked me to present TT&F to the American Canadian Women's Club this week, so I am looking forward to that. Increased Zambian-side support for our activities would be very welcome.

Dr. Tim Meade