



We woke up early in Uganda this morning to make our way to the Entebbe Airport for our flight into Sudan. We had to go through four (yes, FOUR) security checkpoints. And when we went to board our very SMALL plane with our HEAPS of luggage, they told us that we would only be able to take one bag each and that the others would be delivered to us on Saturday. We scrambled to make sure that we each had our personal items and grabbed some of the supplies for the art project that we will be doing with the kids at the orphanage. We had to leave behind all the rest of our medical supplies, teaching materials, and gifts for the children. So - please PRAY that the luggage will come Saturday! We want to bless these kids!

Our flight into Sudan was cramped, and hot - a twin engine plane with 14 seats. But, it was a beautiful flight! We flew low enough that you could really see the landscape and villages of Africa. It was breathtaking! We landed safely on a dirt runway (complete with a few goats) and checked in to the Yei Airport - a small concrete building smaller than most bedrooms. From there, we traveled through the little city of Yei. It's filled with tiny shanty shops and huts with thatched roofs.

We arrived at base camp and settled into our home away from home. Clint and Chris are sharing a room, and we ladies are next door. We were pleasantly surprised to hear that they have newly renovated latrines (thank you JESUS!) but even more exciting are the many improvements that Pastor Stanley has been able to make to the school here in town in the last year. We mingled with the kids at the school and met the teachers and other staff.

Next, we took a walk into Yei to retrieve some supplies (peanut butter and honey!). Along the way, we were met with a lot of strange looks by the locals who were no doubt wondering what this strange group of white people were doing in their city. There is some political tension currently in Sudan so there is some suspicion and apprehension about visitors. Walking through the busy city streets we felt

more than a little out of place.

After our jaunt into town, we loaded into the back of the dumptruck and headed to the New Generation Dreamland Children's Orphanage. As soon as the truck pulled in, we were swarmed. Every kid wanted to shake hands with us, and while they know little English, they definitely made us feel welcome. There were so many... kids everywhere you looked. One hundred children all without mothers or fathers. In tattered clothes and broken sandals. With the most amazing smiles you have ever seen. We spent some time loving on them. Maria, Rose and Chris took pictures. I think Lisa hugged EVERY child there. They showed us the new classroom building , which is a work of art compared to the old building made of sticks. It's such an achievement... but it was so empty... No tables or chairs or desks, no school books or posters or color. Their dining hall is an empty brick building with a slab floor. Their dorms are rooms with bunk beds and mattresses... and little else.

But right as we were leaving, we heard them singing. They had filled the empty dining hall for an impromptu performance with dancing, singing, and even a drum band. These kids do have joy. And a home. And those are two really, really, beautiful things.

Tomorrow we go back to the orphanage. Thanks for your prayers and keep it up!! There are 100 children in Sudan who need them!

*Tara Wallace*