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For Immediate Release:

Local Students to Walk a "Barefoot Mile"

In an effort to get involved with and to better understand the experience of students in other parts of the world, [insert name of school, address here] is partnering with The Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project in a "Barefoot Mile" event. Believing that "No child should ever have to walk alone" this is a student-led event where participating students will walk one mile barefoot [insert location here (i.e. - track or football field)] to represent one of the upwards of 7 miles the students of Nyaka and Kutamba walk each and every day in order to attend school. Schools in Korea, New Zealand, and across the United States will participate in this world-wide event.

[Insert name of school] will be hosting their Barefoot Mile on [insert date selected here]. Founder and Executive Director Twesigye Jackson Kaguri explains, "We wanted to have an event that engages the hearts and minds of students around the world to understand some of the hardships the students of The Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project and others around the developing world experience while obtaining a basic education. It is our hope that students will demonstrate an increased understanding of the efforts children in developing countries have to make in order to attend school. We also have asked students to use this as a fundraiser for our students as well as an opportunity to raise awareness using video, photographs, and social media. We hope this will become an annual event."

The Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project (NAOP) is working on behalf of HIV/AIDS orphans in rural Uganda to end systemic deprivation, poverty, and hunger through a holistic approach to community development, education, and healthcare. NAOP operates two primary schools that are educating 465 children this year, including 60 preschool aged children. NAOP is also paying for 191 students to attend secondary school. NAOP is educating 656 students in 2014! A very unique aspect of the organization is that the schools are completely free to attend and children are guaranteed an education through high school from the moment they are enrolled. The NAOP believes that this creates buy-in from the students to perform at their highest potential. It is working - In addition to providing a quality education in a nurturing environment, NAOP includes two meals per day, uniforms, books, medical care, and supplies to the students.

Out of a population of approximately 34 million, Uganda's HIV/AIDS pandemic has resulted in over 2.2 million orphaned children who have lost one or both parents. In addition to the trauma of losing a parent, orphans go without many of the basic human needs: food, shelter, clothing, healthcare, and education. While the African extended family has traditionally stepped in to support orphans, the devastating impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic has overburdened this traditional safety net. The Nyaka AIDS Orphans Project was born out of this crisis.