

## MPH Student Connects His Music to The Mission

MPH student Evan Stout spent his internship in Africa blending two of things he loves; music and public health.

Evan worked with Sole Hope, an NGO that works to fight against the parasite commonly known as "jiggers." Sole Hope is based in Jinja, Uganda (*The home of the source of the Nile River*). Sole Hope's mission statement is: *Offering HOPE, healthier lives, and freedom from foot-related diseases through education, jobs, and medical relief.* Sole Hope uses "up-cycled" denim from donors all over the world, and tires that are locally sourced in Uganda, to create shoes that help prevent jiggers infestation. These shoes are given out, along with education, to people all over the country to help prevent jiggers.

Here is Evan's account of his experience:

My internship focused on both the music video, "Tundula," and creating evaluation measures. After spending two weeks learning about every facet of the program, and just exactly how I was to create and implement evaluation measures, I met with Sole Hope's Country Director, Ian Palkovitz. Ian asked me to head up a music video project. Because of my experience as a professional musician, Ian thought I would be a perfect person to run the creation of the song and music video, "Tundula." "Tundula," in the local language of Luganda, means "Remove it." The video's purpose is to educate Ugandans about the parasite that is impacting their country, to reduce stigma surrounding jiggers, and to teach about hygiene and techniques to live a jigger free life.

Based on what I learned in my Public Health courses, I knew a culturally competent and relevant approach was the only way that people would enjoy and learn from the video. We worked with some great Ugandan artists, film makers, and soccer players to make this video happen. Maro, AKA, *the king of R&B in Uganda*, was graciously willing to lend his many talents to the project. This project would not have been completed if not for the hard work and creativity of Maro. (He is currently on tour in the USA).

Jiggers are a sand flea that burrow into the skin of the host and expands in size and can lay hundreds of eggs. This usually occurs on the feet, but can also happen on the lips, buttocks, hands, or genitals of the host. Once embedded, jiggers can lay hundreds of eggs that can cause reinfection in the host, or others in close proximity. Having jiggers makes it hard to walk and focus on school or work. Each jigger creates a lesion that is susceptible to secondary infections. Jiggers live in the dirt and because most of Uganda's road are dirt, and many of the houses have dirt floors, Jiggers are extremely prevalent. Along with the physical pain, jiggers carry with them stigma. There are many misconceptions about jiggers that the music video and Sole Hope's education team seek to address.

Sole Hope and Maro took "Tundula" on a country wide marketing campaign. The song and video were spread to the people through online articles, TV and internet interviews, and playing the song in clubs and bars all over Uganda. Thousands of people have seen the music video in Uganda and the hope is that thousands more will see and be impacted by it as well.

Tundula Video: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=tVSyeFoDinw>

To learn more about Sole Hope and the fight against jiggers: <http://solehope.org/>

## Tundula English Lyrics

Am free, to catch my dreams  
Am jiggers free, catch my dreams  
I will catch 'em to the end.  
Marooo with a message to the youths out there,  
Be clean, keep clean. Jiggers free..

### \*CHORUS\*

Very small sweet itching thing  
(Remove it, remove it)  
Itchy as it keeps digging deep.  
(Remove it, Remove it)  
Itching sweet  
(Remove it, Remove it)  
The more sweet the more it makes me sick.  
(Clean up)  
The more sweet the more it destroys  
(Clean up)

I remember my times in the village, I was young though I looked sharp,  
Dad was poor and penny less,  
Torn shorts were my shorts,  
Dad was a drunk because of the situation, there was no time to enforce any behavioral discipline onto me,  
I Bath when I bath, I change clothes after I have seen a Sunday, I slept with all my animals just like the "kadingos"(careless)  
Bridge: I felt itching sweet things, little did I know that it was the Jiggers, People started to call me creepy feet because of these jiggers...

I said to myself, why do they curse me, I realized that it was this poor hygiene and carelessness, Not bathing is an embarrassment ( an embarrassment)  
And the you attract parasites ( the parasite / is excited )  
I started cleaning up, cleaned my room, I clean my animals,  
I went to Jinja town with shoes, everyone was amazed by my cleanliness. The soccer ball I used to chase with fear, I can now chase, you see now I play number 9 , 9 , 9,