

**An update from our team mission partner, Azaria's blog....**

<https://www.streetkidsdirect.org.uk/index.php/blogs/staff-blogs/azaria-spencer>

Warm greetings from Guatemala.  
I just want to wish you all a very Happy New Year!!!

### **Fire at the dump**



I woke up to the news that there had been a fire at the rubbish dump in La Terminal.

Once at work I quickly found out that thankfully no one had died or been hurt. Along with three of my colleagues we decided to visit the dump and the families affected by the fire.

We greeted people that we knew as we approached the dump. The fire had destroyed four small homes constructed with wooden planks and sheets of corrugated iron. Everything inside was burnt and ruined, the make-shift walls and roofs fallen, in truth an absolute mess. It was sad to see. Although we haven't directly worked with or known the families affected before it was still difficult. I can imagine that they did not have much to start with and now they are left with practically nothing at all.



Among the rubble we could see the metal springs that used to be a mattress and what were once plastic storage boxes and a few other still distinguishable items. Surprisingly some of the wood although burnt was still standing tall.

Saddened by the situation this left these families in, we made plans to help in whatever ways possible, looking for new accommodation, donations of beds, clothes and basic household items

However, seeing the fire damaged homes was not the most difficult thing for me this morning.

The thing that I found hardest to see was something else entirely. When we were close to the entrance of the dump, talking with an 'old' friend I noticed two small children stood close by. The girl approximately 8 years old and a younger boy. The girl was systematically rummaging in a bag, pulling out a can and crushing it beneath her foot. She did this over and over again. As I looked and smiled, she smiled back at me. Clearly shy of this strange white lady before her. Every chance she got she would look at me again, curiosity and intrigue in her young eyes



The reality of our location hit me all over again, that although we were there to help after a fire, we were there on a dump. A dump where people live and work, and not just adults.

I looked around and saw that many people were continuing life and work as normal. People carried on with their daily tasks and chores, including this little girl. And of course carrying on life as normal is all good and well but what isn't is that normal life for some children, for this little girl, is working on a rubbish dump.



**With love and blessings  
Azaria**