



Lwengo Kids Foundation

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On May 11th. we were allowed to travel to Lwengo again. Through this travel report we hope to take you as a reader along and share our experiences. For the sponsors there is of course also a personal email with photos of their sponsor-child (ren). Fortunately, the PCR test is no longer necessary and we can go on the road with peace of mind. After a successful trip we stay one night in Via Via (Entebbe) to visit the school and the house of our oldest sponsor youth (Axum) in Kampala the next day. He shares a space of 16 m2 with a fellow student and has it very neatly arranged. Unfortunately, this visit takes us hours in traffic, but it was worth it! . As a result, we only arrive in Masaka at 20:00 in the pitch dark. Florence and Violet, 2 new staff members of Joseph, and Harriety are waiting for us and it is as always a warm reunion!

On Monday we go to Lwengo for the first time and also a warm reunion there! Fortunately, the schools have been fully open again since January and 550 children sing to us: Welcome visitors!



The teachers and children are having a hard time because the government has decided to skip one

school year (of the 2 school years that the schools were closed due to Covid). That school year must therefore be made up because the entrance exams for Secondary School require the same level. Especially for students in P6 and P7, it is hard work. For P7 there is now also education on Saturdays and these children are included in boardingsection, so that they can have all the attention for school.

We meet an enthusiastic team of employees in Lwengo. Anthony and his team are very happy with our arrival and provide with the children a literally and figuratively warm welcome with the usual speeches and our words of thanks and greetings from you to them. We are divided over the entire period that we are in Uganda, a total of 6 days in Lwengo. On those days Anthony picks us up around 9:00 am in Masaka. On the way a small errand for lunch to arrive in Lwengo after about 40 minutes. First we see a number of children from different groups. We give them your letter, measure them, have a short chat and give the gift on behalf of Lwengo Kids Foundation, this time an orange pen with the logo in combination with .m. the 5-year lustrum. Then on the picture. This allows us to keep you as a sponsor up to date of the ups and downs of your sponsor child. It is very nice that especially the students in the higher classes already know us very well, are freer and sometimes also tell or ask something. Of course we have been seeing them for 5 years. The little ones are especially shy. We are pleasantly surprised to see how good the children look and how satisfied they appear. They also grow well. Especially the students in P7 are already really young adults. It is often suggested that Africans are all alike. Nothing could be further from the truth, though. The differences in facial expression, physique and height are enormous.



On one of the last days we meet the oldest children of the school: Primary 7.

We told them that they can all move on to

Sec next year. School, but all this does not happen automatically and they should realize that. And they do.

After our speech there was an enthusiastic applause! Thank you, dear sponsors, for making this possible!



In addition to the activity per class, we visit the students who are now at the Secondary School. They also receive your letter and the gift and have a small conversation with us. We don't measure anymore. The students attend different schools throughout the district and beyond. The reason for this is the own choice or experiences with a particular school by siblings who preceded them. For us this meant visiting 4 Secondary Schools, so a lot in the car. Unfortunately, we could not visit all the schools because they are too far away. Petrol prices are also skyrocketing in Uganda and we also have to make good use of our time. Perhaps these schools will have their turn next time.

Children who are new to sponsorship, we always visit at home the first time. This time it meant 14 home visits spread across the area. We first pick up the child in question at school. With Anthony, Francis and a number of children we set off in a crowded car. This travel is very tiring due to the condition of the roads and takes a lot of time. But seeing the living conditions always gives us the conviction of how good it is that we can offer boarding to many children. This means that they stay permanently at school and sleep in our excellent dormitories (dormitories). Only in the holidays do most of them go home. In the picture Tracy, who only has an old grandmother ...

Our oldest physically and mentally dressed sponsor boy (Henry) has been placed at a school for the disabled in Masaka. He's going to learn

for leather editing. A training of 2 years. After that period, he receives a so-called toolbox so that he himself, with possibly some guidance, can earn an income. We visited him. He is very happy with the opportunity but it is also a big transition, because except during the holidays he stays at school, so far from his familiar environment. Of course we will continue to follow him!

By a sponsor it is possible that a^{2nd} water pump is dug. Now at the Health Center. It will be an electric pump. That digging is a thing; one man has to dig a well up to 40 meters deep. The earth is brought up with buckets, those buckets go down empty again. A tried and tested system but by our standards terrifying, after all, the digger is at one point at a depth of 13 floors of an apartment building!

We also looked at the vegetable garden project we initiated. In the beginning of the rainy season there was no rain. So the start was slow. Pieter saw this in April. Now the plants are growing well and are even being harvested. New plants (cuttings) have also been delivered that also work well. Yes, it is not a vegetable garden how we would lay it, but the people who have been trained indicate that they have a lot to do with it. And that's what we do it for in the end.

During our stay here we also celebrated marga's 63rd birthday with our Ugandan friends. An evening with music, dancing, a buffet prepared by the backpackers staff and of course the necessary drinks. It was a great evening with several typical African gifts that most of them got a place in our house in Masaka.

On the first Sunday of our stay in Masaka, lightning struck very close. Unfortunately, this has caused us to have a lot of problems with the power (no more than that), that all the lamps were broken and the batteries of the solar panels also exploded. Having no power and no solar panels is especially annoying because there is no charging and also the bread in the freezer compartment is thawed up to 3 times and frozen again. Result; rusk. Not to mention the lack of a cold wine or beer. Marga considered for this trip to take the entire children's administration on the laptop to Lwengo, but because of this incident we decided to keep the paper version in honor!

In the photo, the city of Masaka without power, seen from a restaurant on a mountain. We only see very vaguely the main road that is illuminated by lampposts with solar panels. Then you have an idea what that's like!



With tears in our eyes we said goodbye and we enjoyed a delicious lunch with Anthony in a beautiful restaurant, Banda Lodge, but then we also had to say goodbye to him and that is quite a bit difficult.

Finally, we spent the necessary time preparing for the planned trip with sponsors in October. In the meantime, about 10 people have registered. If you are also interested, mail us. There will also be 2 volunteers from our region through Lwengo Kids Foundation for 6 weeks of volunteer work in Lwengo. We are not only very happy with that for Lwengo, but also proud of it.

On the last day we attended a staff meeting and all our sponsors were thanked for their contribution to this successful project. We hereby pass on the thanks to you!

On the last day, the rain comes pouring down from the sky. We pack our bags and give all the dolls, avocados, bananas, sugar cane, etc. to Florence, Violet and Henriety. They will make the neighbors happy again and KLM only allows 23 kg in that suitcase! Fortunately, we have our own little house, where the baskets, rugs and paintings get a place.



The children also made themselves heard. First the necessary dance and then each class came to say hello

separately with a song and a dance. Many children have a small thing: an avocado, bananaantjes, eggs in a bag, sugar cane, dolls of dried banana leaves, baskets, notes, and a large box full. Little things... but for us of great value!



It's always hard to say goodbye, but it was very good to be here again. Nice to be able to share our experiences with you again. With you as loyal supporters, we continue our beautiful work with great enthusiasm! Now first on to our lustrum party; October 8 from about 4 o'clock is also in your agenda, isn't it? And then the further preparation of the trip with sponsors.

But first a few weeks holiday, just in the Netherlands with the caravan. Also nice.

Best regards, Pieter and Marga Streefkerk



Finally, two ladies from Primary 7 came to bring us these flowers. The thick bud symbolized Lwengo Kids Foundation and the flowers around it should represent all children.

Touching, right?