

Travel report April 2018

Pieter and I make this journey together. We have never really been together in Uganda, there was always someone with us and as much fun as that was, so together is also very nice.

Paul, husband of board member Hetty, brings us to Schiphol in the early hours of 24 April. We check in our suitcases ourselves at ease and get through customs smoothly. After a quiet flight we land around half past eleven in the evening local time, in Entebbe. Isma picks us up and is happy to see us again; always nice to see acquaintances! We spend the night at the Colonial Residence bed & Breakfast of Claire.

Wednesday we will be awakened by the rain. How unfortunate this is. Today we would travel to Kampala and meet Lisette there. We have a suitcase full of relief goods for her. She would share with us her work in the slums of Kampala, but if it continues to rain like this, it will not be him today.

After breakfast we drive with Andrew to Kampala and we pick up Lisette on the way and before we are well and truly at her project, the air has cleared and it is in any case dry.



We hand out some stuff at school. The terrain looks very well cared for and we are currently working the exams because the end of Term 1 is in sight. So we can't look everywhere unfortunately.

The kindergarten classes are already empty and the teachers are checking the exams. Because the preschoolers also take a test here at the end of a Term.

Too bad they have already gone home, because we wanted to hand out some dolls here.

In the meantime, the sun has started to shine and everything looks a bit happier again.

Then we drive to the slums. Lisette also tries to do her bit here; let children go to school and try to make the best of it with social workers. What we see is pitiful. We walk behind Lisette through the narrow, blubbery alleys and one house is even more shabby than the other. And yet people can still smile kindly at us as we walk by.... Sometimes you don't

understand how they still see a chance to live in such a hopeless existence.



We walk further between smouldering fires on which we cook. We have seen quite a few things in poverty and misery in Lwengo, but this is a lot worse. The small houses are leaning crookedly against each other. If you were to pull one corrugated sheet away from here, the whole thing would collapse like a house of cards, it seems. Children run barefoot in front of

us; we follow a little more carefully on our sturdy shoes!



Somewhere between all these corrugated sheets on an open place you, under a roof, we empty the rest of the suitcase. Dolls and clothes. Most women and children are patiently



waiting for them to get something and also help each other with fitting and passing on. The children hang around us like a burdock. Notso crazy when you have such a large suitcase with beautiful things with you! But Miss Lisette keeps a close eye on everything and she knows exactly who gets what.

At two o'clock we say goodbye to Lisette. She has to go to her normal work and we first have lunch and then we shop in the small souvenir shops stuff that we can sell in the Netherlands at the various fairs. Pieter orders 50 aprons and oven mitts for a sponsor that we pick up on the way back. Andrew continues to drag plastic bags to the car, which fortunately is not far away. The ladies who sell their stuff here have a good customer to us and so the knife cuts both ways: the ladies earn some extras, we sell their stuff with love here in the Netherlands and the profit is again for Lwengo Kids Foundation. We can't make it any more fun!

We spend the night at the New City Annex Hotel in Kampala, a super basic, cheap, but good hotel. Thursday we continue to Masaka Backpackers, our home base for this trip, where a warm welcome awaits us again by Joseph and his ladies!

<http://masakahostel.business.site/>



On Friday we met with Anthony. He comes to pick us up on time and the three of us drive to Lwengo, where it has rained heavily. The red dirt road has turned into a blubbery mass with huge puddles. But Anthony knows the way and safely we reach the school, where the children are of course all ready to greet us.



And then it's hard work. This morning we want to see all the children we visited at home in October. That's 51 and therefore quite a job.

All children are in the classroom and we are outside on a wall. On demand of the "teacher", the children from the first group come out one by one. I write down the details and any details and Pieter takes pictures. Then they go back to class and make a drawing or write a letter for the sponsor.

The 20 new children fill in a question card. And with the sweat on our backs, we work our list. But it is going fantastic and how nice is it that we now really see the difference since our visit in October! Terrific!

After this lovely, busy morning, we return to Anthony's house, where Jane prepared lunch for us. Excellent. In the afternoon we drive with Anthony to Masaka and discuss a large number of things while enjoying a drink at Plot99. A great restaurant where the internet sometimes wants to work well.

Saturday we planned a day for ourselves and Joseph suggested to drive ostrich. He knows a park just past Rakai where they can and where they also have horses and donkeys. Well that seems like pieter something! Fine, he drives but ohstrich, I'll take the pictures! For fun, we also take Viola, a niece of Joseph, who lives with Joseph due to family circumstances.



It is quite a drive and with the sun in the car it is getting quite hot. But then we turn off the main road and enter a narrow sandy path. And a little later we are standing in front of a closed gate.... The park is therefore closed, as well as the restaurant where we would have lunch. We are allowed to walk around the vast park and indeed see the ostriches, horses and donkeys. Also beautiful flowers and plants that you



only see in the windowsill with us ...

Unscathed, we return home. On the way back we buy school shoes for Viola that she is completely happy with. All in all , it's quite a fun day!



We use Sunday to process all our information from the children. It's raining, so we organize the "office" on the porch.

At the end of the day, all 51 children are neatly in their files and we can prepare for the visits to the new group of children.

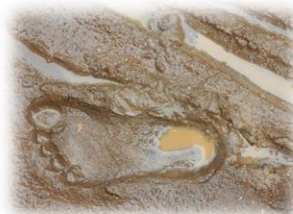
Monday morning the sun shines and we go early towards Lwengo. Today we visit the children who live close to school. We see a lot of poverty again. We come to a family where there is really nothing, but mother laughs and keeps laughing. I ask her if she is a bit happy under these circumstances and with a smile she whispers that she is not happy at all. That makes you quiet again.... It

is wonderful that we can see all the children, have an idea of how they live and can monitor them together with Anthony in the sponsorship process.



On Tuesday we visit only four children. Four children who live 40 km apart and.... it rains, not a little but at 7.00 am it comes out of the sky with buckets.

Fortunately, it becomes less after an hour and Anthony wants to take a chance on it. Well, we've known that... red roads, had suddenly become brown rivers and at the risk of our own lives we were able to reach all four children. And also here a lot of poverty and in the rain it all looks even worse .



In the blubbery paths we see traces of large shabby houses. reach the nothing has sponsor child is



shoes, small shoes, but also bare feet ...that lead to After fifteen minutes of walking on a blubbery path, we house of Brenda and her family. Nothing, but then also this mother where only children keep coming. This at Boarding School because she lives so far away. The deaf girl looks at us seriously, as if to say: do you see how I live?" Gelukkig the holiday only lasts a few weeks and she can go back to school With Anthony I discuss how we can change something here. "Educating mothers and providing condoms, that is important, so that there are not more children coming", is his answer.

At nine o'clock Anthony started the car and started this harsh journey. A quarter to four Anthony stopped the car at his house and we let out a deep sigh. Job done!

After a very late lunch we went to school to say goodbye to the teaching staff and to experience a joy dance of the children left behind. Then our task is done and we go back to Masaka where we go to bed on time this evening!

Wednesday we get up early again and we have an appointment with Sister Maria from the Kitovu Hospital in Masaka. A Catholic hospital that looks neat.



Then we visited a mother of one of our sponsor children and a project by Kabisa Pius. A young enthusiastic man who tries to build a school in the middle of the slums of Masaka with some money that he gets from passers-by, like us.



and he succeeds quite well! He found us on Facebook and that's how we are now here, with this enthusiastic man! We also meet the pastor and they have made a beautiful portrait of me for me. I'm honored, but at the same time I feel a little guilty. I've been clear to him and we can't do more than we're giving to him now. Our focus is on Lwengo and there is still so much to do there. It's fine for the locals to roll up their sleeves and for a local pastor to get involved. And then we reward Pius again with a few shillings. He thanks us profusely and I'm sure I'll soon read on Facebook what he did with it.



Then we drive to Nazareth, a shelter for children in Masaka. A retired nun of 72 years holds sway here. We are shown around by Andrew; he was found by the zuster and grew up with her and is now a social worker. More than 30 children who have been found on the street, who no longer have a home, live here... we bring there a large full bag with clothes that is more than welcome. Andrew is very proud of "his" children who do so well here. Impressed we say goodbye and here too we give some shillings, just because it is possible.

In the afternoon we relax in Masaka and pack our bags further.

The work is done and on Thursday we leave on time for Entebbe. It's a hot, hot, long drive back. In Kampala we pick up the remaining schorten for Pieter and then we drive the last part to Entebbe. We stay there the last hours in a new residence for us: Airport Guesthouse. Great stay where we will definitely come more often. The manager came to have a chat with us and when he heard what we were in Uganda for, he spontaneously gave us a 10% discount. Super, right? We had a delicious meal in the beautiful garden with many beautiful birds, flowers and plants. Om half past nine worden we brought to the airport. After a quiet flight and a night full of thoughts, we landed at half past seven in the morning back on Dutch soil where Paul is waiting for us.

A good, intensive trip with new impressions and ideas, ligt behind us. Now let's get to work, to link all these good and not so good things back to our sponsors and prepare for the next trip to Uganda which will be in September. Wehope to bring a few sponsors or other interested parties with us.

We already have one new sponsor child....





We had to work hard to get the necessary information about the children, but we did it with a lot of love and care.

In the meantime, all sponsor parents have received the photos and a story of their child and we hope to have contributed to a warm bond between sponsor and sponsor child.