

## Travel report October 2017

Our travel companions are three sponsor parents who have accepted our invitation to travel with us and to see their own sponsor child.

In the early morning we left for Schiphol on 12 October. Pieter struggled to take the car to the parking lot, but soon he joined us to check in with all ten pieces of luggage and go through customs. Everything went well and after a quiet flight we landed around half past eleven local time, in Entebbe.

After Andrew had parked all 10 suitcases in and on the bus and a helper had received a hefty tip from Pieter, we drove to the New City Annex Hotel in Kampala. When we were just inside, the rain came pouring out of the sky. After all, it is rainy season in Uganda.

The next morning, Friday 13 October, we had breakfast at ease and met Lisette who lives in Kampala and volunteers in the slum of Kampala. Respect for her and their work there. We definitely want to include a visit to her work in the trip next time.

We visit the Women's market. A market where most women sell everything to souvenirs and buy the necessary for sale in the Netherlands, but also for ourselves. Finally, I really can't resist a beautiful, colorful, fabric bag with large beads! And how nice is it, if in our eyes it all costs little? And how happy are the sellers when they can sell something?

Later in the day we drive to our base camp in Masaka, Masaka Backpackers, where as usual we are welcomed by the entire team led by Joseph.



Saturday 14 October we take it easy. It is cloudy weather and at first it rains a bit. But in the afternoon we drive to Lake Nabugabo and have a pleasant afternoon there. After waiting a long time for lunch, the sun is still shining. In the afternoon we drive back to Masaka and arrange airtime and airline for my Ugandan phone. After a long wait and 3 passport photos further, it's done. In the evening we have dinner at Plot 99 and return to Joseph.

Sunday we go to church. Just like 3 years ago, the building is still under construction and not much seems to have been done during that period. But we have a roof over our heads and that is at least a pleasant side effect in this rainy season. It was an impressive service, with unfortunately little singing.

In the afternoon we get a workshop making dishes from the ladies who make the "paper dishes" at Joseph. One person succeeds and the other does not. Nice to know how these handy dishes are made. I also sell them in the webshop.

Around five o'clock Anthony and Jjingo enter the grounds and we have a warm meeting. I have a lot of contact with Anthony throughout the year regarding the chins. It is a good and familiar reunion for us.

After a joint meal, a dance group comes to show his skills. A pleasant evening.



Mday Anthony comes to pick us up to go to Lwengo. Refuel halfway and then the tank appears to leak. It is repaired on the spot. That too is Africa!

In Lwengo we go to school first and that is as usual a very hot shower. All the children are waiting outside and sing their "visitorssong" with great conviction.



After the tour of the school grounds, we will work with the 51 sponsor children in a separate room for the sponsor parents. All children fill in a question card made by me. A lot of help from the teachers and masters is needed, because many children cannot yet write. Everyone is enthusiastic, but for the second activity I had planned there was no more time, but especially no more energy with the children! And maybe not with the adults .....



In the afternoon we visit the children of our travel companions and ourselves. A party apart, for everyone!

At the beginning of the evening we drive to our overnight address in Kabalungi. It is already dark and we are tired of all the impressions. The accommodation is a bit disappointing for our travel companions. It is also very basic here.... For us, too, this is a journey with learning points.

After a pretty good night we visit some of the sponsor children together with Anthony on Tuesday. I become a lot wiser again from the fun and good conversations I have with him on the way in the car to the children. In the afternoon, despite some rain, there is a sports afternoon with all the children. With the brought shirts, balls, etc. it will be a pleasant, but wet afternoon.



Tuesday evening our travel companions leave back to Masaka. The other day they go with Andrew to "National Park Queen Elisabeth". Pieter and I are going to visit the 35 remaining children.

We get up early. First we visit a number of children living in the neighborhood and then Pieter and Anthony go by car to the further houses. I'm going to visit the children at Jjingo on the back of the boda between the banana plantations. A big big shopper with presents is well tied on the back. For me, this is the most beautiful day of this trip! Great to be able to visit so many children.... A dream come true...



In the last photo you can see a "boda gas station". The petrol is in the

yellow jerry can, next to it is an empty liter bottle of cola. They pour the gasoline from the jerry can into the coke bottle for the size. Then they pour the coke bottle empty into the boda. If the jerry can is flat, the petrol is sold out ..... You just have to know!

At the end of the day we are exhausted, but very satisfied we drive back to Masaka with Anthony at the beginning of the evening, where we enjoy a good meal together in Plot 99. And yes, then there is also time for us to say goodbye. That remains a difficult thing for me .... While I know that I will be here again in six months.

Thursday we take it easy, Pieter and I really need to recover from the home visits of the previous day. Also processing a few things in the head and on the computer, so that I will not forget important information for the sponsor parents in the Netherlands.

In the afternoon we walk into Masaka, have lunch at Plot 99 and do some shopping. In the evening our fellow travelers come back from Queen Elisabeth and we have a lot to tell each other.



On Friday, after a warm farewell to Joseph and his team, we travel back to Kampala.



There we visit some souvenir shops and have lunch in the city. In the afternoon we drive on to Entebbe and spend the night with Claire and her little son Paultje. Here's the recuperation of all the impressions we've gained this week.



Saturday we walk at our leisure to the botanical garden and sit there extensively on Lake Victoria. Late in the afternoon we have lunch in Victoria Mall and then the moment has come that all suitcases are hermetically closed again for the return trip to the Netherlands.

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 I hope to contribute to a warm bond between sponsor and sponsor child.

Until next time!

