

# LWENGO KIDS FOUNDATION



## From the board

A special word of welcome to André Drok, who has joined our board. Last October, André traveled with us to Lwengo together with his wife Carola and he is eager to make a meaningful contribution to our wonderful work in Uganda. Later in this newsletter, he will introduce himself to you.

The tickets for our new monitoring trip have now been booked. We will depart at the end of September and decided to book early in order to partly stay ahead of further price increases due to the unstable situation in the Middle East.

### Fire in one of the dormitories

On Saturday, April 18, we were shocked by reports from Lwengo. A fire had broken out in one of the two dormitories at our primary school. The fire started at 8:00 p.m. and was brought under control by 8:30 p.m. thanks to the efforts of the staff, members of the local community, and a fire brigade team from Masaka.

Two sections of the dormitory — which is divided into compartments, each containing 10 bunk beds — were the most severely affected. Although the fire was extinguished quickly, the damage is unfortunately considerable. In particular, the children lost their few personal belongings, including their limited clothing, school uniforms, and storage trunks. In addition, several bunk beds, mattresses, and items of bedding were destroyed.

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Fortunately, no one was injured or worse. When the fire broke out, all of the children were outside the building. The smoke detectors proved their value, and the fire could be tackled quickly using the available fire extinguishers.

The initial damage amounts to €1,200. We have already transferred this amount so that the children can quickly have their personal belongings replaced and once again have a proper bed and mattress. Due to these unexpected expenses, a number of other projects and activities will unfortunately have to be postponed for the time being.

### Looking for a new sponsors for Pius

We are looking for a new sponsor for Kabakyenga Pius starting from January 1, 2027. We began sponsoring Pius in 2020. At that time, he was living with his grandmother because he was being neglected by his own parents. We also placed Pius in boarding in order to relieve his elderly grandmother of his daily care.

Pius is now in Primary 6 and, if all goes well, he will move on to the final year of Primary School — Primary 7 — in 2027. The costs for sponsoring him in 2027 will be €275. After that, he will continue to Secondary School, where the annual costs will rise to €450 per year.

Perhaps there is someone among your friends or family who would be willing to take on the financial support of Pius?

### Introducing André Drok

In 2014, I spent a month getting to know the wonderful people in Lwengo and the inspiring projects that contribute to improving living conditions there. From the very beginning, one thing became clear to me: I might be able to leave Uganda, but Uganda would never leave me.

Since then, my wife and I have supported a sponsored child through Lwengo Kids Foundation, and we always hoped to return someday. That opportunity came last year. Together with a small group of sponsors, as well as Marga and Pieter, we visited Lwengo once again.



Small box with burned items



Pius Kabakyenga

It was wonderful to see how many tangible results are being achieved thanks to LKF and the close cooperation with the local community. That experience inspired me to become actively involved with the foundation.

With a legal background, I worked for many years as branch manager of a large trade association, which left little time for other activities. I now work as a board advisor, and our three children have all left home some time ago. I look forward to contributing, together with the other board members, volunteers, and sponsors, to the valuable work of Lwengo Kids Foundation.

### **New ambition: Special Home Project**

*"We see children with disabilities who are being neglected and abandoned by their family members and parents — sometimes out of despair. We recognize that these children deserve a better and more dignified life, with proper care and facilities, enabling them to live meaningful lives and create success stories among these vulnerable children with disabilities.*

*These children often live in extremely poor conditions. They are confined to small spaces and receive insufficient food, no medication, little or no clothing, and a lack of loving care. This project will therefore help restore hope and provide a meaningful life for these children within the community."*

With these words, Anthony, on behalf of the Lwerudeso Primary School, brought a new project to our attention — and it truly made us reflect. The idea is to establish a "Special Home" for children with disabilities who do not have a suitable home environment. It is a wonderful ambition, but one that also comes with many questions and challenges.

In the meantime, we have formed a project team both in Lwengo and within Lwengo Kids Foundation. Six sponsors who work professionally with this target group have offered to contribute their expertise and ideas to the project, something we are extremely grateful for. On behalf of the board, Marga and André are directly involved.



André Drok

At present, we are in discussions with the project team in Uganda to further define the outlines of the project. After the summer, we will begin working on it more intensively. How wonderful it would be if, together, we could improve the lives of this vulnerable group of children.

### The story of Jamadah

*"President Trump needed only one signature. A signature with which he instantly cut life-saving healthcare funding and signed the death warrant of countless people living with HIV around the world. Fortunately, the fate of people living with HIV is not only in his hands, but also in ours."*

The quote above was taken from the website of the Dutch Aidsfonds. Especially the last sentence rings so true. Here in Lwengo, we also support children who are living with the virus and who receive medication thanks to our sponsorship program and your support. And it is deeply shocking — truly deeply shocking — when that care can be undone by a single signature. For years we have fought for this cause, developing programs, providing education and awareness, and ensuring proper care. And then suddenly, it feels as though everything is taken away overnight.

Fortunately, together with many other foundations and organizations, we are still able to continue providing education, developing programs, and making medication available to those who depend on it.

Jamadah Mugerwa, one of our sponsored children, recently sent us a message saying that he was worried: "How can I continue without my medication?" I asked him to write his story for this newsletter:

I am Jamadah Mugerwa from Lwengo, and Marga asked me to share something about myself. But first of all, I would like to thank Lwengo Kids Foundation from the bottom of my heart for the support you gave me when I needed it most. That was when my father left me alone with my mother, who no longer knew how to cope with a child who is HIV-positive. There was not even enough money to buy food, let alone HIV medication.



Project Special Home

Then I was selected for the sponsorship program of Lwengo Kids Foundation, and thanks to your support I was able to:

1. continue going to school, and this year I enrolled at university to study to become a teacher. I promise that I will make good use of this opportunity so that, after my studies, I can help my community in the same way you have helped me.
2. continue taking my medication. Thanks to you, I have never missed my HIV medication or my clinic appointments. My doctor says that my health remains stable because of the medication.
3. survive a very difficult period. When the withdrawal of support by the United States also affected us, we became afraid that we would no longer receive our medication. But Marga promised that this must never happen and that Lwengo Kids would do everything possible to prevent it.

I do not know much about politics, but I do know what it feels like when support disappears. I also know what it feels like when someone is there to help and support wherever possible, and that is what I see in Lwengo Kids, my hope for the future. You gave me education, hope, and medication at a time when the future looked uncertain.

May God bless you for seeing and saving my future.

— Jamadah Mugerwa

We, Lwengo Kids Foundation, will continue this important work and will keep supporting our children and youth living with HIV, no matter what, wherever we can and whenever it is needed.

### **Ebola virus**

We are closely monitoring the news regarding the Ebola virus and remain in close contact with our people in Uganda. If necessary, we will take appropriate measures, but so far there is no cause for concern.



Jamadah Mugerwa

## Ongoing projects

In the previous newsletter, we mentioned that we would like to provide an update on the restart of the vegetable garden project, the pig and goat project, and the new school bus. Below we share more information about these developments.

### Vegetable gardens

At the end of last year, we made funds available, received from a donor, to revive the vegetable garden project. The aim is to train and support the community in growing a greater variety of vegetables for both personal use and for trade. One of the teachers provided training to approx. one hundred residents of the village. After the training, participants received gardening tools to work the land, as well as seeds and tools to grow their own small gardens. In addition, seeds were pre-grown and later distributed. On a large plot of unused land of approximately one hectare next to the school, a model garden was established. Here, various vegetables are cultivated that can be used for school meals and also sold.

The project has been very successful. The residents are grateful for the training and the provided tools, seeds, and plants. The first harvest from the model garden has been outstanding.

### Pigs and goats project

In 2018, we launched the so-called pigs and goats project. The aim was to provide all families of sponsored children with either a piglet or a goat. To facilitate this, we built two stables behind the volunteer house of Anthony, and we purchased breeding sows and a boar. After birth and the initial period with the mother, the young pigs were given to families to care for and to help them start small-scale farming activities. The goats were purchased and distributed to Muslim families.



Vegetable gardens



Pigs project

During the COVID period, we paused the project, as the local population had barely enough food for themselves and therefore no food (scraps) available for the animals. Until that point, around fifty families had received a pig or a goat.

At the end of 2025, we restarted the project because not all families of sponsored children (now 290 children/youth) had yet received an animal. Meanwhile, the first piglets have been born, and we have provided Anthony with a contribution to purchase feed and ensure access to veterinary care.

### School bus

The wish to have a school bus in Lwerudeso was fulfilled at the end of last year. The necessary funds became available through a legacy that was generously bequeathed to us. The bus is used primarily to transport younger children, to pick up students who live far from the school, and to provide transport for students with disabilities.



Small children at Lwerudeso on the school bus

## Finally

We would like to thank you once again for reading this newsletter, and we wish you a wonderful summer. You will receive the next newsletter again in September.

On behalf of the board of the Lwengo Kids Foundation,

Marliz Schouten

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