

Dear members and friends of the Vuga e. V.,

during the last months many things have happened. One volunteer already left Uganda, and two volunteers extended their contracts up to December. Furthermore, I received an email from WAKALIWOOD film studios Uganda informing that their new movie BAD BLACK is out. Jelena and me watched their first movie "WHO KILLED CAPTAIN ALEX" during the orientation seminar with the new generation of volunteers showing them an example of Ugandan humor. I hope, all of you can find reasons to laugh out loud every day. Laughing is the best medicine — as we say in German!

Enjoy reading, Jenny

In this issue

- Preparation seminar Leipzig
- Experiences of hostmother
- Feedback YAWE Foundation
- New friend Meike Strehl
- Umoja Women's work in Munich ... and at
- One Race... Human!-Festival in Aschaffenburg
- Internal seminar Leipzig



Preparation seminar in Leipzig – by Philipp

A few weeks ago, Finja, Pia and myself had our preparation seminar in Leipzig. It was a great week living together with the people of Vuga e.V. and the other volunteers. At first we got to know Vuga e.V., their partner organizations and the program *weltwärts* better by some lectures of the former volunteers. Then we talked about our expectations and fears of our upcoming volunteer year. We learned a lot about Uganda's history, presence and culture and living in the host family. We also discussed about critical witnesses and some critical subjects such as colonialism and post-colonialism. In my opinion that is very important.

Overall, we had a great time, got a lot of knowledge and looking positively forward to our volunteer year.

Finja, Pia and Philipp (Twekembe Development Kampala) in Action

Experiences of hostmother Nakayenga Juliet

September will be one year ever since we got our second Vuga son Ssali Jonathan. He fitted into our family and community easily. Ssali is a sportsman has taught youths in various games like boxing, football. Surprisingly he is also a religious person, whereby every morning before leaving home and evening before he goes to bed he has to read his bible and doesn't miss out going to church on Sundays.

To our surprise, after he had stayed for about six months, Ssali prepared dinner, which was very delicious and it left us smiling, because we thought he didn't know how to cook. Ssali has been friendly to children, not only to his siblings but also in the neighborhood. He goes with them to church, something that the neighbors like very much. Unfortunately, Ssali has not visited many sites in Uganda. I remember he only visited Mbarara district with his brother, which left us wondering why he isn't much interested in touring.

All in all, we have really enjoyed his stay and learnt a lot from him, as well as him learning from us during the time we've spent together. Great thanks goes to Vuga as an organization and Trina Namata for the support rendered to volunteers and host families to see that the project moves forward.



Juliet and her family: "We are looking forward to hosting another volunteer come August 2020."

Muhumuza Gilbert about Amilie's work at YAWE Foundation

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Amilie who has shown how important it is to help others without being paid. During our time working together, I got to know her as someone who is genuinely committed, passionate, and creative to what she does. She is friendly to the entire organization team and she has been very helpful working with our clients with special needs in the area of physiotherapy and occupational therapy. Physiotherapy is essential in health care and it is necessary in restoring movement and function for those recovering from illness or dealing with disability. It is essential in helping clients regain their independence as much as possible.



Amilie and the youths celebrating the new disabled clients pit latrine that was built with Amilie's support



Amilie receiving her pet name Akiki at the cultural event

Besides special needs program, Amilie has worked tirelessly to help in documentation of orphans vulnerable children alongside daily reporting on disabled clients. Furthermore, has done great in teaching the youths a number of life skills topics during their psychosocial hours every Friday. During the medical outreaches to the community she has assisted with one heart in registering clients and any other activity delegated to her. She is ever willing to learn any new skill in the medical field. Many thanks for her hard work in the wood workshop and financial support in training the youth. Amilie has connected well with Tooro people and culture by speaking the local language Rutooro. I strongly appreciate Amilie's support and assistance during her time in the organization.

New friend of Vuga: Meike Strehl – by Jenny

I would like to introduce Meike Strehl to you. She came to Vuga e.V. because she is a friend of Johannes. Since some months, she is helping Vuga e.V. with different voluntary work. She organized a questionnaire about Vuga's PR concept and took part in this year's preparation seminar through giving critical seminars. She is currently doing her PHD in post-colonialism. She already visited different countries in Africa, but not yet Uganda. Hopefully soon :) Read Meike's feedback about this year's preparation seminar:

"I've worked for several years in the coordination unit of *weltwärts* at Engagement Global and I'm quite sceptic when it comes to volunteering in the field of development. Different forms of discrimination within a program like *weltwärts* become obvious by simply asking: Who can participate in the volunteering service and who can't? Who gets Visa easily and who faces barriers? Who is payed for sending, hosting, preparing and educating volunteers and who is not? Who is involved in decisions and who is not?"



A lot of people – just like me in this moment – talk about unfair distributions within programs like *weltwärts*, but not many people are actually implementing alternatives. From my point of view, the latter is what Vuga does.

I had the immense pleasure to get to know Trina during a *weltwärts* conference, where she was one of the very few employees working for *weltwärts* in East African Countries who get payed for this work. I met her again during her stay in Germany and I learned that in terms of Vuga decisions on what volunteering and learning in Uganda looks like are made in Uganda and by Ugandans. It seems so simple and even not noteworthy, but regarding the sad reality of most partnering organizations involved in international volunteering it is rare.

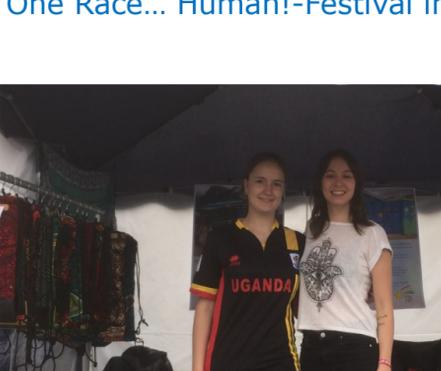
When I met former and future volunteers at the orientation seminar in July 2019 who reflected their roles as volunteers in the shape of a global development system that has been built up on colonial history and power, my good impression about Vuga was once more proved.

There is still a long way to go and not all of the questions above (and other) are solved, but Vuga has started the journey and therefore I'm happy to contribute some of my time. All the best!"

Promoting the Umoja Women's Group – by Theo

In July I took part in the Tollwo Festival in Munich to present the Umoja Women's jewelry work, a project at Little Light Kampala. It had been Annas wish to go to Munich, but unfortunately she was not able to, so I went. The people liked the project and the recycled bracelets and necklaces. I had a lot of fun talking to different people and collected 250 € for the project. Hopefully, there will be more chances to present the project on festivals or events. Thanks to Anna who organized everything!

One Race... Human!-Festival in Aschaffenburg – by Anna



Julia and Anna finished setting up the booth

Already during my participation at Little Light in 2017/18 I took it as my personal project to help selling the work of the Umoja Women's Group. The women meet four times a week to produce jewellery – and they are very creative: they use recycling paper, cut it in small strips and roll those onto toothpicks. Then they seal the paper beads with lacquer and string them into bracelets and necklaces. They also sow different bags and small purses out of vivid coloured cloth.

Back in Germany I started to sell the products via Etsy with some success. This year I wanted to try out a booth during a festival. Together with friends and helpers I organized a booth at the „One Race... Human!-Festival“ in Aschaffenburg and we stayed there from the 15th through the 18th. Unfortunately the weather was miserable almost all weekend and so less visitors than usual

came. We were able to sell enough products, though, to cover the costs and make a plus.

The festival used to be called "Afrika-Karibik-Festival" and takes places since 20 years. This year, the supporting organization "One Race Human e. V.", founded in 2001, changed the name to present their motto by it. They support social and charitable projects for humanism and exchange between nations, focussing on Africa, but also integration projects for refugees in Germany. Their top motto is „Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe“ – supporting self-support or own initiatives.



During sunny spells quite a few people bought the products and showed interest in the general work of Vuga

Internal seminar in Leipzig—by Jenny

From 2nd to 3rd of July Jelena, Jana and I met in Leipzig to do some organization work. Saskia joined us later. Unfortunately, some other Vuga members who wanted to come as well, didn't make it. We tried to find ways to evaluate the projects of the volunteers to improve the projects' qualities. Jana is currently evaluating the past projects. Furthermore, we overviewed the summary Meike made from the questionnaires about Vuga's PR work concerning the projects. We realized that before making any decisions, the partners must be asked also. So we are now working on a questionnaire for the partners. Besides that, I overtook Vuga's accounting documentation. Johannes helps me with that. Jelena has managed all communication to the new volunteers. She will continue also during the next semester which she will spend in Russia. I appreciate all the work Vuga members are doing voluntary, even though their volunteer year has ended.