

Liebe Vuga-Freunde,

In den letzten Monaten hat sich viel getan. Und entsprechend der Umstände mussten wir auch einige Entscheidungen treffen, die den Verein im nächsten Jahr prägen werden.

Im März, wie im Nachfolgenden noch von Finja und Pia selber berichtete wird, mussten beide etwas überstürzt aus Uganda zurückkehren. Die Hoffnung, ob sie nochmal zurückkehren könnten, hielt nicht sehr lange an und es wurde immer deutlicher, dass ein Ende ihres Dienstes in Uganda bedeutete.

Im Laufe der nachfolgenden Wochen haben wir uns dann entschieden dieses Jahr keine Freiwilligen zu entsenden. Es wird keine Ausreise im Sommer 2020 geben. Da die Situation sich fast wöchentlich verändert möchten wir die Ungewissheit und dem damit verbundenen Stress für die zukünftigen Freiwilligen, wie auch uns, ersparen. Hinzu kommt, dass sich durch die aktuelle Pandemie die Bewerberzahlen auch nicht verbessern. Das wird unser Ziel für die Zeit, die wir nun mehr haben: Wir möchten uns intensiv damit beschäftigen, wie wir wieder mehr Bewerbungen für die Ausreise 2021 erhalten und uns in dem Bereich wieder besser aufstellen können.

Viel Spaß beim Lesen wünscht der Vorstand!

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Einige Maßnahmen wurden daher schon getroffen, wie z.B. unser neuer Flyer oder unsere Präsenz auf Instagram.

Außerdem haben wir auch noch weitere Bereiche, auf die wir uns fokussieren möchten, wie z.B. politische Bildung oder unser langfristiges Ziel eines Süd-Nord-Austausches.

Dear members, partners and friends of Vuga,

during the past few months a lot has changed for us as well. Considering the circumstances, we were forced to make some decisions that will determine the course of Vuga in the upcoming year.

In March, as our Volunteers Pia and Finja will report later on in this newsletter, due to the global pandemic both were forced to return home on a very short notice. The hope that they would be able to return didn't last very long. As the pandemic progressed it became clearer that they wouldn't be able to finish the remaining six months of their service in Uganda.

In the following weeks we've decided to not send another group of volunteers abroad this summer. Since the situation is changing nearly weekly, we want to save our volunteers and ourselves the trouble that comes inevitably with this uncertainty. On top of that, the low numbers of applications still remain a problem. Therefore, our goal for the near future will be to acquire enough applications for the departure in summer 2021.

A few steps have already been taken: we've got a new flyer and established a new presence on Instagram. Furthermore we want to focus on other areas, like offering more political education and establishing a south-north-exchange in the future.

The Vuga board wishes you a joyful read!

Project coordinator on the outbreak of the pandemic — by Trina

The announcing of the existence of the coronavirus and covid 19 disease turned the whole world into panic. This also affected our volunteer program whereby the volunteers were called back to Germany on a short notice. The volunteers, partner organizations, host families and I got abit confused about the volunteers' departure but we all accepted that there was nothing to do except to let it be.

During this panicking state, I contacted the weltwaerts coordinator in Uganda about the departure of the volunteers who confirmed to me that my volunteers had even delayed though I had just got the communication. On 20th March, I travelled to fort portal to pick Finja. We travelled back on 21st March to Entebbe and later I dropped the volunteers at the airport which was nearly empty. The volunteers travelled with Kenya airlines. I was so worried that maybe they may catch the virus from the airline but I was so happy to hear that they had reached safely home despite the challenges they faced. I am in touch with them and they are happy to be back home.

The day the volunteers left, the president announced that the no more passenger planes should come or leave Uganda which was followed. Only cargo and UN planes to be accepted.

In Uganda, the president announced on 18th March that by 20th March, all schools should be closed which was done effectively. Many businesses have closed down, organizations and companies have down sized their staffs. Very many people have lost their jobs. At the moment, some businesses and offices are open but the following are still closed: churches, bars, entertainment, schools among others.

All students are at home and parents are tired of staying with their own children. There are many cases of domestic violence where many women have been murdered by their own husbands in the presence of their children. It is so sad.

Some of the staffs of our partner organizations have been laid off while others are working part time and paid less coz some activities are not taking place anymore.

Ministry of health is encouraging every one to follow preventive guidelines like wearing masks, washing hand or sanitizing, social distancing, avoiding hand shakes, and others but Ugandans



Pia and Finja with Trina at the airport in Entebbe. The pandemic forced them to return home on a very short notice. So far they were not able to return to Uganda.

are stubborn. Masks are only worn when there is a police officer but others are trying.

I have written this report with great sorrow in my heart for what is happening in the world at the moment and I pray it gets over soon.

Thank you Vuga e.V. for all the support.



Notice from the Editor:

Due to swift and strict action, Uganda prevented a major outbreak so far. The lockdown was lifted consecutively in the past months and the economic situation is relaxing. However, recently cases are on the rise again.

Vuga staff during the pandemic

Vuga e.V. partners networking workshop — by Trina

Finally, after a pandemic-related delay, the Partner-Workshop of the Vuga-partner organizations (POs) could take place on Saturday, 11th of July. For the first time in Vuga's history, Ugandan partners came together independent of the volunteer program to exchange their views and experiences related to the volunteer-program. As one of the POs in Kasese, National Youth Organisation for Development (NAYODE) hosted 24 representatives of all organizations and also government officials such as the Resident District Commissioner (RDC) Kasese District, LT. Joe Walusimbi. Apart from discussing about the volunteer program, a major concern was capacity building in different areas of organizational work within the partner institutions and creating synergies among partners. The visit at NAYODE also allowed all other partners to visit Kilembe mines where severe flooding has recently caused major damage to infrastructure and properties.

According to our coordinator in Uganda, Namata Triphosa, the workshop was a true success. The partners got motivated and eager to strengthen the Vuga-



At Kilembe Mines — Cheers to a collaborative and bright future!

network and use it for organizing joint projects. Hence, the idea of establishing a bamboo tree forest along the Nyamwamba river sides was born in order to prevent erosion in the future. The project is meant to be established by NAYODE, whereas other POs will be responsible for supervision. Like this, a guarantee system for the successful implementation of projects will be established through joint participation. This concept shall also be used for further future projects. Moreover, the Vuga-network has a vision of applying for hosting future regional workshops for East-African partners of the entire weltwärts-program in Uganda. To achieve this, however, partners first want to focus on strengthening the network within Uganda.

Vuga is now on Instagram — by Pia



Since June, Vuga has got an account on the social media platform Instagram, that is mainly used by youths and young adults to share pictures. Our aim by using Instagram as an organization is firstly to interest young people for our volunteer program with weltwärts in Uganda, but also to interest people in general for Vuga and to provide educational political content. As you can see, our target group are potential new volunteers as well as Youths. In contrast to this, we are continuing to use Facebook for an older target group and for Ugandans that are following our work..

The Vuga members that are responsible for the new Instagram account are Lexi, who was working on the Social Media Accounts of Vuga all along, as well as Pia, one of the volunteers of the latest generation.

In the last week we uploaded several post to introduce Vuga, the weltwärts program and our partners in Uganda, to motivate potential applicants by reporting about work and projects Vuga volunteers have done in our partner organizations by using the hashtag #ThrowbackThursday and to give some information about Uganda including the current situation due to corona.

Feel free to check out the account: [@vuga_freiwilligenverein](https://www.instagram.com/vuga_freiwilligenverein/) ?

Return of the volunteers — by Pia

For me, it was sad to return to Germany in March due to the corona virus pandemic. I was working at HUYSLINCI where we just started our first big project - a book making project - in February and I felt like I was just getting used to living in Uganda with HUYSLINCI and my host family.

With Vuga as a sending organization of weltwärts, I always felt well cared for. They organized Finja's and my flight back home well and also an Online seminar where we have spoken about the whole current situation, our time in Uganda and a lot more what was helpful after our sudden return.

It was also decided that Finja and me are continuing to work from home on some projects for Vuga Therefore, I am going to stay a weltwärts volunteer until September when my contract is ending. I have now weekly meetings with Jelena who is acting as my supervisor. So far, I was working on the creating of documents like a project evaluation template, Social Media Work, a video for the partner workshop in Uganda and other small tasks - often in cooperation with Finja or other Vuga members.

