

Dear members, partners and friends of the
Vuga community — by Jelena

It has been quite some time. But we are back with a Newsletter! This issue contains an input from our partner organization Kiima Foods – we thank you for your contribution.

In this Newsletter you will find detailed reports from our current volunteers Lara and Nils. In the last issue we were able to inform about the arrival of the volunteers and their first few months. This time, already half a year in Uganda has passed for them and they are able to tell us about many projects and experiences. Please be aware that this Newsletter only contains snippets from their monthly reports and will not cover all of their activities and stories.

In March, the midterm seminar took place in Entebbe. It was organized by Trina and Lexi. We thank you and any participating party for your efforts and your input. Lexi will provide us with more insights of the seminar in this Newsletter.

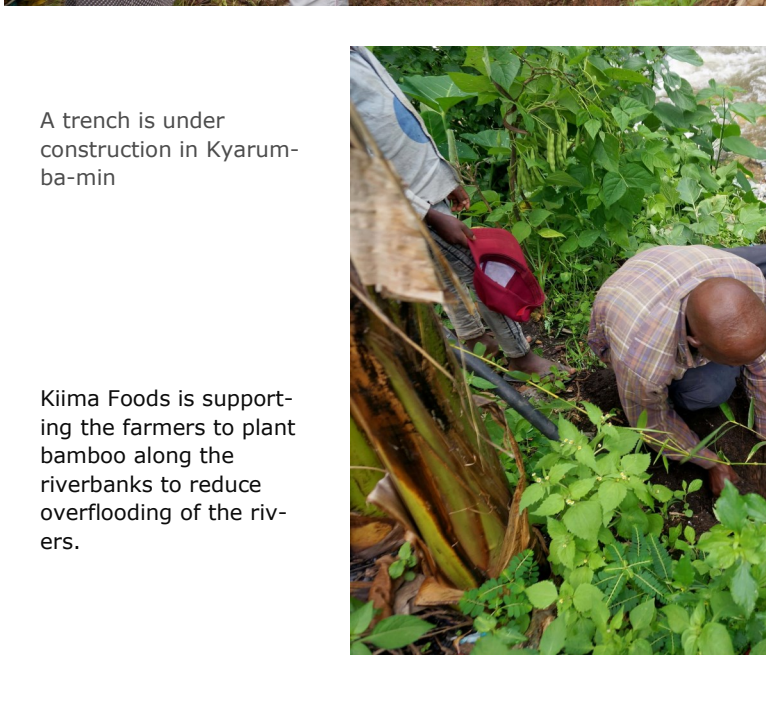
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Enjoy reading this Newsletter and have a good day!

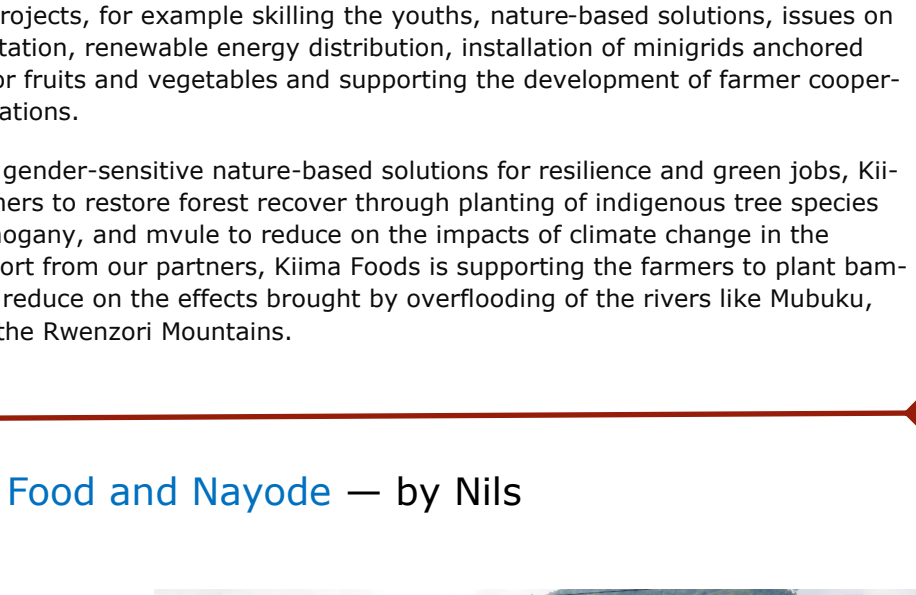
(For further questions or interest in contributing to this newsletter, please do not hesitate to contact me: jelli.lena.tv@gmail.com)

Nature based solutions — by Partner Organization Kiima Foods



A trench is under construction in Kyarumba-min

Kiima Foods is supporting the farmers to plant bamboo along the riverbanks to reduce overflowing of the rivers.



Kiima Foods, founded 1995, operates especially in the rural poor communities, partners with development organizations, government and social networks that are determined to ensure all people are equal and live in dignity. Kiima Foods directly benefits 2,200 individual farmers in nine districts of Western Uganda.

Kiima Foods puts its main focus on mobilizing and strengthening poor peoples' capabilities, participation, and collective voice, especially in the areas of the natural environment,

livelihoods, and technical skills education. The organization works in close partnership with her development partners, such as Vuga. Vuga sends volunteers to Kiima Foods to learn and support in implementation of Kiima Foods' projects, for example skilling the youths, nature-based solutions, issues on climate mitigation and adaptation, renewable energy distribution, installation of minigrids anchored with cold storage facilities for fruits and vegetables and supporting the development of farmer cooperatives and marketing associations.

Through the innovative and gender-sensitive nature-based solutions for resilience and green jobs, Kiima Foods is supporting farmers to restore forest recover through planting of indigenous tree species like prunus, terminalia, mahogany, and mvule to reduce on the impacts of climate change in the Rwenzori Region. With support from our partners, Kiima Foods is supporting the farmers to plant bamboo along the riverbanks to reduce on the effects brought by overflowing of the rivers like Mubuku, Kabiri, Nyamgasana etc. in the Rwenzori Mountains.

Working at Kiima Food and Nayode — by Nils

January

The new year has started slowly. We are still waiting for the budget planning of the coordinating organization of our main project (the Nature-Based Solutions project). However, I was able to participate in interesting internal meetings to evaluate and plan the revision of the organizational and management structure of Kiima Foods. This allowed me to better understand the organization and learn about the organizational structures of Ugandan NGOs in general. Since our main project is currently moving slowly, I had time to look at another department. My colleague Peter took me to a Kiima Foods project where the team is building a cold storage facility in a village.

Life in my host family is still pleasant. I continue to make small trips with Moris in Kasese district and occasionally play with the neighbours' children.



The local community from Bikone Village plants Bamboo along to prevent soil erosion during floods.

This is part of a multi-year "nature-based solutions"

February

Since we are still waiting for this year's scheduling of the Nature-Based Solutions project by Kiima Foods' partner, I am currently more involved in internal work. The tasks are rather small, but sometimes I can even apply expertise from my studies. My supervisor and I have started creating a new website for Kiima Foods.

March

Unfortunately, we have not yet started this year's field trips of the NbS project. I hope that we will start visiting the local communities again in April. In March, my supervisor and I were busy creating the new Kiima Foods website, which is now online.

Work at Nayode: The nursing of the bamboo is continuing, and I was again barely involved in the project in March – focusing more on Kiima Foods' work instead.

Life in the Host Family: Only a few hours after my birthday, we got a new family member. This led to a busy month with many family members visiting us at home.

Further Life in Kasese: We celebrated my birthday in the mountains in Kilembe with a barbecue. Some friends – including Moris – surprised me with a visit to a safari lodge in Queen Elizabeth National Park. Moris and I visited Lara and Nico in Fort Portal and they visited us in Kasese, where we went on game drives and a boat trip in Queen Elizabeth National Park.

April

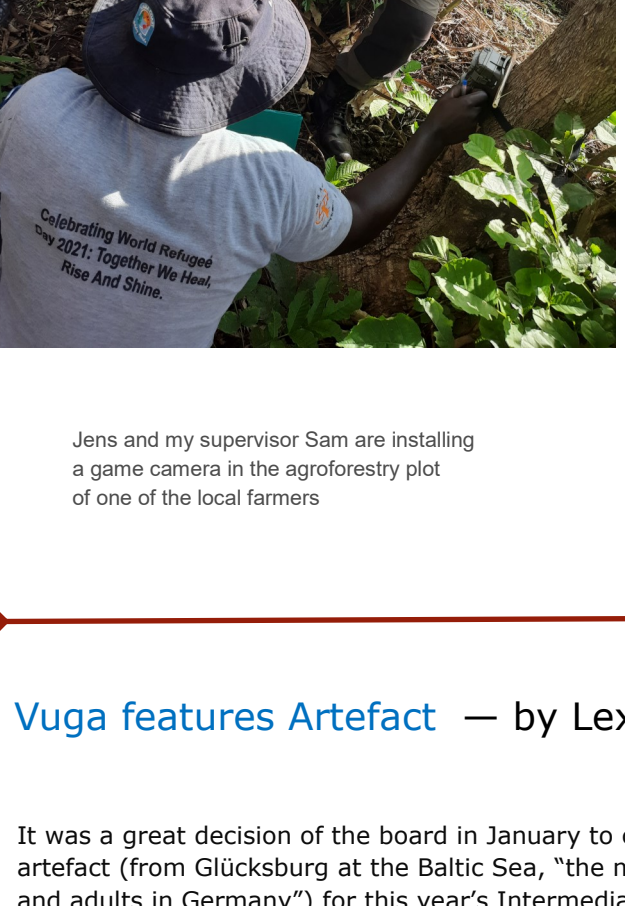
After waiting several months to start field visits, we are finally back to field work. Field visits will likely continue over the next few months. Our field work is now a good mix of organizational work and manual work – like bamboo and tree planting.

Working at Jese — by Lara

January

The new year started with fewer tasks under Skill Up; it gave me some time to rest and catch up on tasks. We also did an advocacy evaluation through interviews with different development partners in the region, it was very interesting to hear their opinions on the Skill Up program.

What is Skill Up? "It Aims at contributing to a better socio-economic status of vulnerable youth ages 18-30 by providing them with technical, business and life skills in different trades". For more information visit the Jese website: jese.org/service/the-skill-up-project

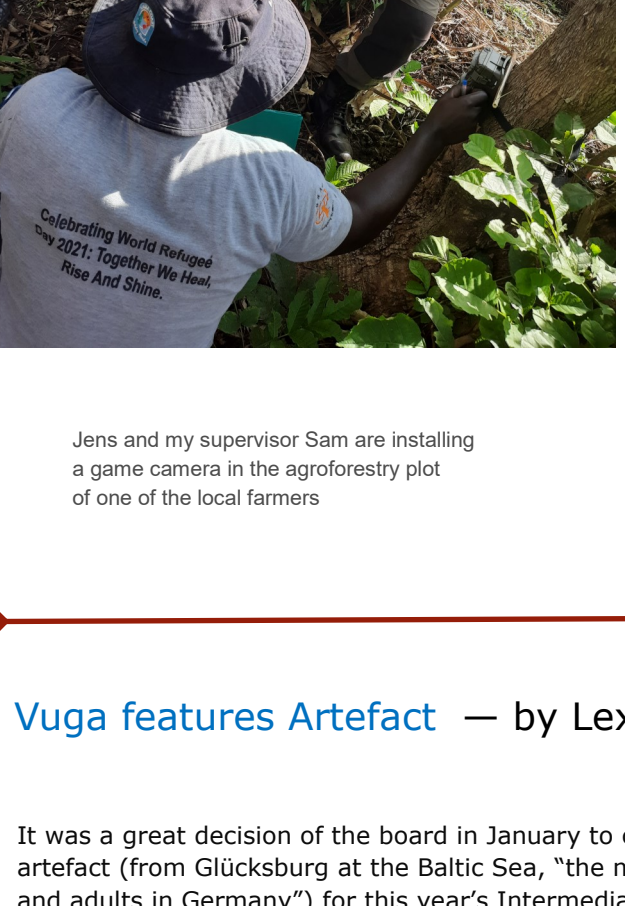


Our Danish colleague Jens from "Forests of the World" explains biomass measurement to Gabriel and Edward

February

I am now officially under the Natural Resource Department, but I haven't had any tasks there since I left Skill Up. At the moment, I can really use the time that changing departments at Jese left me with, because there is a lot of work to do on the project in cooperation with Huvucso. We have set our deadline for the English proposal and budget on the 3rd of March, after I will translate them into German.

What is Huvucso? Huvucso is a partnering organisation of Jese. It is a non-profit community based organisation, which is "dedicated to ensure that children and women rights are protected; reducing the highest prevalence rate of HIV/Aids in Kabarole district and ensuring that all orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC) are accessing scholastic materials, school fees and good nutrition is our concern to the children." huvucso.org/who-we-are



Jens and my supervisor Sam are installing a game camera in the agroforestry plot of one of the local farmers

I have spent a lot of time with my host sister this month. We went to town, watched a live band for a while, ate ice cream, played cards, went to hotels that have a playground and bought movies and snacks. In the last weekend of February, we had a lot of guests over. It was a cultural gathering, where a lot of food was gifted to my host parents.

March

In March, I only worked in the first two weeks of the month before my leave started. I got the chance to visit some of the agroforestry systems that farmers are developing in cooperation with Jese and its Danish partner organization "Forests of the World". Under instruction of one of the Danish colleagues, we measured the biomass in sample areas, which will later be used to find out how much carbon the agroforestry systems can store and how that amount increases over certain periods of time. In addition to that, we installed a camera that is triggered by movement to document wildlife, as well as a rain gage to measure the rainfall in



Gabriel, Jens and Edward are testing a rain gage with one of the local farmers

the project area. I think those two field visits were my favourite working experience at Jese so far. In April, I want to work on the communication with my new colleagues, which can still be improved. But I know now that I made the right decision, and that I am on the right track.

The work under Huvucso was really challenging this month, because there was a lot to do in a very short period of time. I am left with one more task: hoping that the proposal will be accepted!

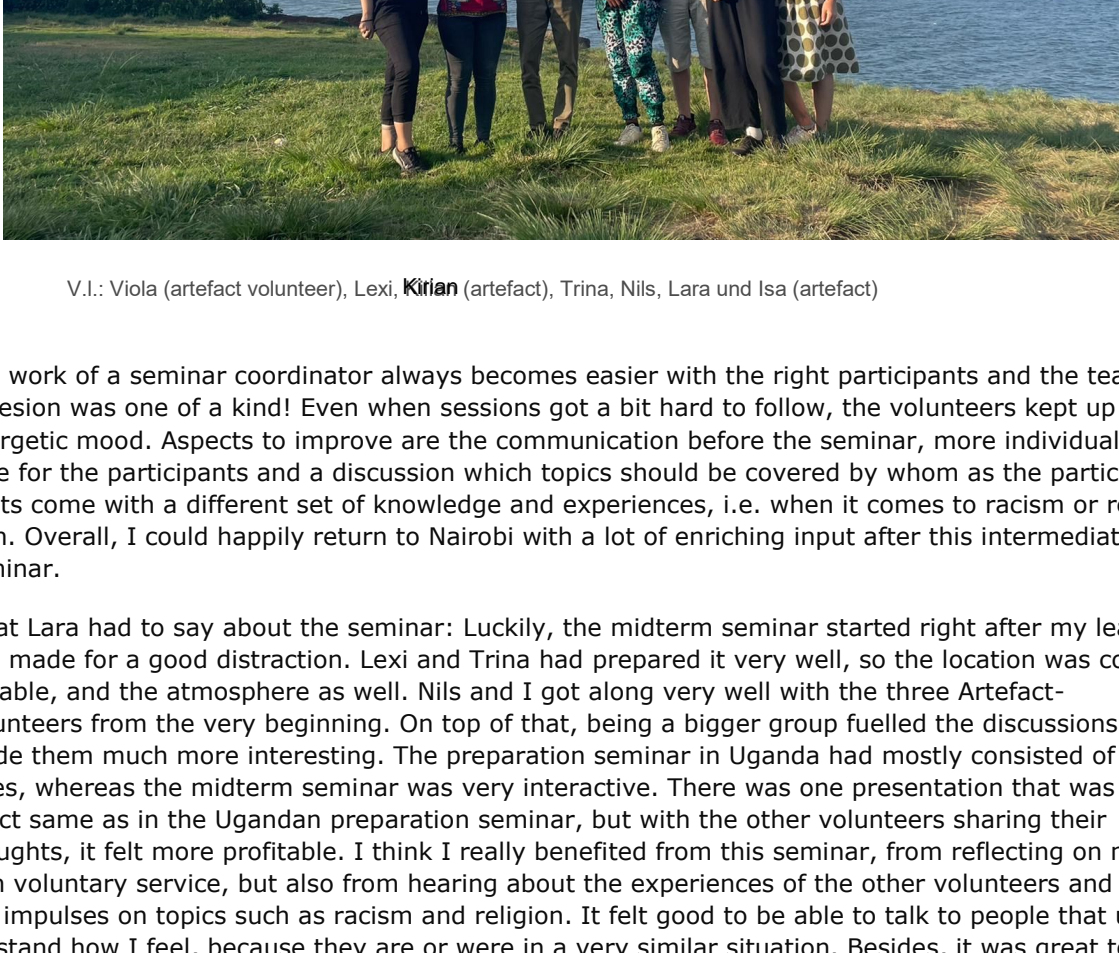
April

This month, my main focus was on working under the Natural Resource Department. On one day, I got to attend a workshop on inclusion of people with disabilities, which was very interesting. I got to attend a meeting with "Kifeca", a farmer's association that Jese works with in implementing agroforestry systems, as well as meetings with district staff. I learned that project sustainability can be ensured through cooperation with other farmers, associations, or the government. The proposal for Huvucso was successfully submitted, both by mail and by post.

Vuga features Artefact — by Lexi

It was a great decision of the board in January to cooperate with the weltwärts sending organization artefact (from Glücksburg at the Baltic Sea, "the most Northern education centre for children, youth and adults in Germany") for this year's Intermediate Seminar. Everyone benefitted from the exchange: our two Vuga volunteers Lara and Nils, the three artefact volunteers who live in Kampala and Bushenyi, the seminar coordinators Lexi and Trina and all the partners and friends who joined the discussions during the five days. We stayed at a nice guest house with a garden in Kisubi with very supportive hosts. Moses Matovu from Huysclidi opened the seminar on Thursday with an interactive talk about communication within NGOs. The following day was dedicated to the volunteers themselves: We identified the different roles one takes up during their year in Uganda and later mapped out the different interests and stakeholders of the programme weltwärts.

This workshop set the foundation for a live podcast we recorded two days later where in a role play, two volunteers and a moderator debated about the effectiveness of weltwärts. Stay tuned for the first episode of "Global Perspectives"! On Saturday, Daniel Kabonge from Potter's Heart presented the topics of racism, nature & travel as well as culture. A strongly requested topic that the German volunteers usually are passionate about is religion as faith is so deeply rooted in the Ugandan society. For this talk, we were joined by Rose Mutimba, the Ugandan weltwärts coordinator for visa and security. Trina presented on the roles of women and girls in Uganda, and we spent Monday afternoon at Entebbe Botanicals for a reflection of the volunteers' work journey throughout the last six months.



V.I.: Viola (artefact volunteer), Lexi, Kirian (artefact), Trina, Nils, Lara und Isa (artefact)

The work of a seminar coordinator always becomes easier with the right participants and the team cohesion was one of a kind! Even when sessions got a bit hard to follow, the volunteers kept up an energetic mood. Aspects to improve are the communication before the seminar, more individual free time for the participants and a discussion which topics should be covered by whom as the participants come with a different set of knowledge and experiences, i.e. when it comes to racism or religion. Overall, I could happily return to Nairobi with a lot of enriching input after this intermediate seminar.

What Lara had to say about the seminar: Luckily, the midterm seminar started right after my leave and made for a good distraction. Lexi and Trina had prepared it very well, so the location was comfortable, and the atmosphere as well. Nils and I got along very well with the three Artefact-volunteers from the very beginning. On top of that, being a bigger group fuelled the discussions and made them much more interesting. The preparation seminar in Uganda had mostly consisted of lectures, whereas the midterm seminar was very interactive. There was one presentation that was the exact same as in the Ugandan preparation seminar, but with the other volunteers sharing their thoughts, it felt more profitable. I think I really benefited from this seminar, from reflecting on my own voluntary service, but also from hearing about the experiences of the other volunteers and from the impulses on topics such as racism and religion. It felt good to be able to talk to people that understand how I feel, because they are or were in a very similar situation. Besides, it was great to make new friends.

Snippets from Ugandan Press – by Philip

The rising fuel prices in Uganda forced the Taxi operators, to ask the Uganda Tax Operator Federation (UTOF) for permission to increase the transport fares.

The chairperson of the UTOF (Rashid Ssekindi) sympathized with them, yet he still asked them to not raise the fares. He said the passengers are mainly traders who use taxi as means of transportation, don't have the financial muscle since they are equally affected by the high standards of living.

Source: newvision.co.ug

Police bans children from the front seats of vehicles. According to the spokesperson of traffic police (Farida Nampijima) the ban is for children from 5 to 12 years. Also wearing a seatbelt for children from 5 to 12 years is a must. This rule shall be strictly observed by traffic police officers.

Source: newvision.co.ug

Turkey is set to establish an industrial park and trade center in Nakasongola Uganda.

According to the state minister for investment Evelyn Anite, this launch of the Center will be part of the activities to mark the Uganda-Turkey Summit on Investment, Trade and Tourism. The summit is scheduled to take place at Speke Resort Munyonyo and the theme "Accelerating Investment, Trade, Industry & Tourism between Uganda and Turkey in the post Covid era."

Source: newvision.co.ug