



# The Linda Project

**A child has the right to be a child!**

## Newsletter nr.2 – 2014

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Here we are again, with the latest news from Lira, Northern-Uganda.

Finally the children could go back to secondary school, somewhere late February and on the 15<sup>th</sup> of April they were back already for their May vacation. It was a very short term, to say the least. On May 19 second term started and on the 8<sup>th</sup> of August everybody will be home again for their August vacation.

The students who joined S5 didn't go to school until 31 March. After 2 weeks vacation Betty and **Violet (photo right)** went back to school to make up for lost time. Betty reads "sciences" and Violet "food and nutrition".



We also found a solution for the further studies of the boys who sat for their O levels in November 2013. The government promotes "Skilling Uganda" and is very active in trying to persuade schools and teachers that it is better to use practical education instead of just theory, but it is proving to be an enormous task. We found a school not far from House of Grace where they have joined for 1 year to learn "electrical technician" (2) and "plumbing" (1). First they didn't want to go, as it is being looked down upon, but now that they are there they are really enjoying it. Finally they are learning something!



In the meantime it was actually good that they were home, since one of them, **Morrison (photo left)**, had to be in the hospital for over a month. And when you are in a Ugandan hospital you need an attendant, someone who stays with you day and night to assist the patient, bring food and what all. We organised a rota, where one boy would bring breakfast, stayed all day and was relieved by number two, who brought supper and stayed the night. Number three brought lunch. The attendant had to sleep on the floor. Luckily Morrison had a room to himself, because he had a large open wound and couldn't stay in the, dirty, ward because of the danger of infection. Of course the fact that we could pay for this had a lot to do with it.

What has happened? Morrison developed a swollen right shank. I took him to the doctor in the nearby hospital. The medical assistant had taken him, without informing me (I came with 3 other kids that needed medical attention). He had cut the leg so the pus could get out. Wonderful! Cleaning and dressing we could then do ourselves. Not! A few days later there were numerous wounds, the pus kept coming and so I went back. Straight to the official General Practitioner, dr. Andrew. He was appaled and Morrison was admitted straight away. That same day he underwent surgery, they feared for his leg. After a month they performed a skin transplant and 2 weeks later he was discharged. Finally! On 1 Augustus he has started his further education, " procurement and logistics". This will take one year. Racheal Adur is going to the same school and will do "guidance and counseling" Also for 1 year. After that year they will get a certificate and then continue with the 2 year diploma course. We're lucky, because another organization has given them a scholarship, so we do not have to pay the fees. Only all the other costs, which is still quite some amount! But without these scholarships they couldn't have joined.

Then the **car**, apparently that is not allowed. We had just fixed the car after the last accident and what do you know: a motor cyclist collides with the back of the car. I was waiting to branch to the driveway of House of Grace. It was very busy with motor cyclist boda boda's who were transporting students from the boarding schools to their homes. Then suddenly: bang! He just banged into the rear of the car, never saw me. There was more than enough space to pass me. The driver got up and vanished immediately. All the children had seen it happen and were quite shaken up as you can imagine. We were able to get a plastic rear window screen, they have panel beaten the rear. All we have to find now is a rear left light. Oh well. Here they tell me I have to sell that car, it is bewitched!



During the May vacation we have started with **the construction of a real school, made of bricks**. The foundation is now finished. Everybody worked real hard and the parents worked for free. The Romney shed that houses our school now is near collapsing. During a storm an aluminum canopy broke off and the termites are eating steadily at the doors and walls. Now we are praying in anticipation of the money needed to finish the building. Can u help? Maybe you can organize a function to generate the urgently needed funds. Or maybe you have a generous employer?

The foundation for 5 class rooms has cost € 1,200. (£ 950; USD 1,600).

**We estimate that we need another € 6,000 (£4,760; \$ 8,015) to finish this part, if the parents keep on working for free.** Then we will have 5 good classrooms. Primary 1 and 2 will still be in the Romney shed, until we can construct their building. But that is ok.

**We were able to welcome three new children into House of Grace.**

**Sara** ( 12 ) attends Linda Primary and Ken Kaunda, the director, noticed that something wasn't right. He visited her home and found out that she was a cousin, had no parents and wasn't really welcome. She was given food and shelter, and that was it. She had to work hard, was allowed to go to school, but didn't receive school fees, a uniform, books or anything. She was often beaten for no good reason, in all, she had a terrible life.



**David** (11) one day stood in front of the gate and asked if he could come in. It appeared that he had walked from Gulu to Dokolo (over 140 km) and then back to Lira (60 km).



He noticed our children's home and thought: maybe I can live here. We took him to the child protection office and found out he had run away from his aunt and uncle in Gulu, where he lived. These people told us he was always running away, didn't listen, didn't go to school, in short: a problem case.

**Kizito** (9) was found in a police cell by our social worker when he was there with David (the child protection unit is on the police premises). After inquiring they said that they didn't know what to do with this child.



Nobody knew where he came from and they had no place for him anywhere, so the police cell was the only option.

In cooperation with Child Protection they are now with us and they are very happy. No wrong behaviour, on the contrary. The social worker is spending a lot of time with them to find out what has really happened and to help them to overcome their traumas, to rehabilitate them.



Every year they celebrate **the day of the African child in Uganda (photo left)**. It is quite a function and this year we were also allowed to participate.

It starts at 09.00 in the morning with a parade through the town. First the music, then the police and then the schools with their children march through the streets. We were number 3, right after the police. We had made a banner and the children all got a T-shirt to wear. After the parade everybody assembles at the golf course, where all kinds of dignitaries have arrived in the meantime. Then there are speeches, games, music and dance.

We had arranged for a pick up truck to transport **our children (photo right)** to the venue and the driver enjoyed it so much, he drove them home for free at 14.00. We had bought cookies, candy and soda's. All in all it was a very succesfull day, worth repeating!



**The team** in Lira is getting of the ground.

Little boys grow up! Everybody has grown up in House of Grace and has finished their respective educations.

The day to day management is done by Patrick Opiio.

Isaac Obura is the bookkeeper, receptionist en general

office assistant and works under Patrick. Charles Ebonga is the social worker and manages House of Grace. Under his supervision are Peter (father) and Mary (mother) and Ketty the cook. ( they are personnel) Tonny Ayina is the development officer. Kenneth Kaunda is the director of the school.

You may wonder: what about the girls? Well, that is another story. These ladies disappear after their education, because they want baby's! There is still a great work to be done, to convince these girls that they should first concern themselves with a future, before starting a family. 57% of the new born baby's have mothers under the age of 18! The girls that are now in school say that they realise that they have to study first, get a job and organise their lives before starting to have baby's. Let's hope so.

The financial and social report (annual report) 2013 is available on the website. If you would like to receive the more elaborate financial report, please contact the secretariat in The Netherlands.

On behalf of the children, the teams in The Netherlands, Northern-Ireland and Uganda I wish you a great summer. Until next time.

Best wishes from Jozina van Eerdenburg,  
chairperson

## **The LindA Project: Care and education for orphans in Northern Uganda**

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