

A visitor for Nansi from Germany – September 2015

Since October 2012 I am supporting one of the girls in the „Sunrise Home of Kampala“ with a sponsorship. 50 € per month so that the kid can go to school, can stay in the Sunrise Home, gets daily food, clothes and shoes and can simply be a child. 50 €, which don't affect really someone with a fulltime job in Germany, but which change a life a few thousand kilometers further south.

I got to know about the Sunrise Home of Kampala by a friend in Munich, who told me in 2012. Jutta Sistemich founded the association „Empologoma e.V.“ and organized a house in the capital of Uganda, Kampala, in which 21 girls live today. Furthermore two „caregivers“ also stay in the house, three others are there more or less daily. The word „caregiver“ is not really the right word. The „Sunrise Home of Kampala“ is not a „home“ for girls, where also caregivers live. In fact it is house full of life and love, where simply a big family lives together.

Why did I decide to support a girl in Africa? Well, the main reasons are obvious. In my opinion it is a real privilege to be born in Germany, have been raised in an intact family, had a happy childhood and an education. Sadly we often forget that at other places of the world it is not naturally and that there are kids, especially girls, who really have a hard time. For that reason I decided, to give a piece of my privileged „wealth“ (what in my minds everyone here with a fulltime job could and should do...)

The contact with Jutta was very personal and nice from the beginning and every time, when she was in Kampala, she brought pictures and letters from my sponsor child Nansi and vice versa I also gave letters, pictures and some small gifts for Christmas and birthday. Every time I was really so happy to receive the personal words and colored letters of Nansi and I was really touched that I could cause so much thankfulness in a child with so little effort. Despite the letters and pictures I always felt some distance and strangeness. I really did not know much about Nansi. From Jutta I knew about her story and about her family, knew she is good in school and loves to dance in the dancing group, but what did I knew about herself? Is she happy in the Sunrise Home? How is she with the other girls in the house? Are 12 year old girls in Uganda at least to some degree similar to 12 year old girls in Germany? I absolutely wanted to meet Nansi and wanted to have a look at the Sunrise Home by myself!

So I decided to take my last holidays in September and booked a flight to Uganda, because Jutta also was there at this time. And although up to this point I had no idea about Africa, neither experience in handling kids, I could not wait to meet Nansi and the other girls at last!

When I finally arrived and came as a surprise guest in the Sunrise Home (we did not tell the kids), the spell was broken after the first minutes. Nansi was hugging me and flipped out completely because of happiness. Leilah, Shamim, Mai, Shakirah and Grace (the above mentioned „caregivers“) were so warmly and welcomed me from the first moment and tears came into my eyes with emotion. After the first getting to know and the unsuccessful try to remember 26 names I had become a part of the Sunrise Family quickly. The big ones showed the house and told me about the daily schedule of the girls, we played ball, did some bungles and prepared supper for all. Already at the first evening it was like I have been there for all the time – an unbelievable feeling!

Because the girls had holidays at that time, everyone (except Sandra, who is going to another school) was there the whole day and we could spend a lot of time within the short timeframe I was there.

The girls tried to teach me some words Luganda and learned some words in German. I watched the dance training and learned various ball and jump rope games. We laughed a lot and Jutta, Leilah and the other “big ones”, the girls and me were a big family for five days.

On Saturday Jutta and I took Nansi to town. We went for breakfast (also in Uganda kids love chips...), visited the market, went to the swimming hall and for ice cream (also here Ugandan kids are same like Germans). For Nansi, I think, this was a real exciting day and for me a real special one. At her age of 12 years Nansi is a real amazing kid. So curious, wants to know everything and gets everything and nothing is missed by her eyes. Like in the home, she also was really attentive in the center of Kampala and cared for others. She wants to become a stewardess, because she wants to get to know many countries. Her little sister Babiye wants to become a police officer, to protect her family and friends.

Back in the home all of us were effusively welcomed and Nansi told smiling and widely gesticulating about her special day. No sign of jealousy – this is also something which came to my attention. Things like jealousy and resentment is not existing between the girls. If someone gets a gift, everyone is happy and for sure, everything is sisterly shared. And when Nansi told about swimming and ice cream, also the others flipped out for happiness and at most hope that also their sponsor will come one day.

As short as the time has been in Kampala, it was so impressive and wonderful. What Jutta developed and what Leilah, Shamim and the other “big” girls do is really amazing. The girls do not only get food, clothes and education – they also can be simply a kid and are loved. The solidarity among the girls is great and everyone cares for the other. If you watch the girls dancing or playing and see them laughing and enjoying themselves, it's cheering your heart! Thank you so much that I could come – those were five wonderful days and I surely will come back – latest, when the new house is ready!

Who also is a sponsor to one of the girls, I only can recommend to visit the Sunrise Home and make this great experience. Uganda is a great country and the people there – especially the girls and the “big ones” are warm-hearted, open-minded and really nice people. And who is not yet a sponsor or did not hear about the “Sunrise Home of Kampala” or the association “Empologoma e.V.”, should get to know about as soon as possible, get information and contribute his part to this great project full of love!