

Yearly Report of UECD Switzerland 2013

Dear Readers,

we have had five Board meetings in this year.

Thanks to Robert Okware and Ronald, we have once again been able to accept two new students:

Greetings and welcome to **Florence Mpriiwe**. She was born in 1989, (now 23), in Kitoke on Lake Victoria, the youngest of ten children. Two of these children died. The parents and the family are farmers and belong to the ethnic group of Munyankore. In this culture, girls have little chance to be educated. Education is less important than marriage. Once they are married, they become slaves to their husbands, can not divorce, not even if the husband uses force or causes an irretrievable breakdown of the marriage. The woman has the role of one who makes babies and cares for these children, always following the will of her husband.

Today her father is 93 and can no longer generate income for the family. An aunt and a friend of the father helped her to attend school. Her mother, who helped her struggle against the formidable circumstances that she faced, died of cancer while Florence was still in school. This mother had always given Florence hope. The pressure to marry after two years of working at home only let up thanks to a friend who kept the tide from going out completely. This relative financed her University study in 2011. Why she desired to study the science of Human Development, with all the challenges she faced in life, is something you can read about in her biography: www.uecd.ch.

And we greet **Susan Aboth** as well. She was born in 1991, (now 22) in Malawa, East-Uganda, near Tororo, and is the sixth of ten children. When she was sixteen, her father died. Thanks to a program of World Vision Uganda, Susan was able to finish Middle School. World Vision does not finance career training. However, through one of her teachers who knew Robert Okware, she discovered UECD. UECD Uganda accepted Susan in its last meeting. More you can read about Susan on our website.

Both of these students have had a hard path to get where they are, and have fought for the chance of an education. They fulfill our conditions for acceptance, and we are delighted that we can help support them. Then too, we have reached our goal of taking on two new students.

Concerning the students and their studies: **Obed** has to take his attorney exam a third time in September 2013. Addah, with support from Maja Plenge, will begin her Bachelor degree in Computer Science. **Patricia** is in the middle of her Master's program in Human Resource Management. **Fiona** is about to begin her Master's study. **Robert Nangoli** is finished with his Bachelor degree and is beginning his Master's in Commerce. **Jane** has begun her Bachelor work in Business and Administration (B&A).

Robert Okware is in the second year of his Master Program at ACCA. **Elisabeth** received her Diploma in Tourism and Travel Management. **Jimmy** is in the first year of Telecommunication Engineering. **Florence** is starting the Science of Human Development. **Susan** will begin her studies in High School teaching in August/September 2013.

We now have, in 2013, seven women and four men in our program.

We have a **new Sponsor** from Winterthur, **Gianni Guidon**. As I spoke to Gianni about UECD, he was immediately taken with our small administration, and the direct support we are able to give. It was a fast decision to take up financial support of Beat Richner's Project...("He doesn't need me any more!") and to transmit the money to our account. Not only that: he also made his own website, www.geniesse.ch available to us as an editorial platform for UECD. An act which may well result in gleaning more interested people to join our work. Click under www.sonne-sein.ch. Our heartfelt welcome, Gianni, and thank you so much for your support.

Gloria Seruwagi is our new Board Member in UECD Uganda. Gloria is heartily welcomed in November by the Board of UECD Uganda. We first met her as a good friend of Doreen's. She had been living in London, and felt, as an Uganda citizen, pulled back to her homeland. For a period, she worked for the government in the Department of Public Health. After a while, however, she withdrew, and finished her PHD in Public Health, completed last year. She is married and has a 4 year old child: her partner is studying Electrical Engineering at Makerere University. Not only is she enthused about working with UECD, she also has invaluable qualities and abilities concerning the care and handling of relationships, the culture of respect and recognition, and most importantly, communication. Gloria, you are most welcome aboard.

Illnesses of Students ; In 2012, we were triply challenged by the illnesses of Fiona with TB, Robert Nangoli with typhus, and Jimmy with a herniated disc. With all three, we had to realize that they simply let it happen, trying to live with their problem rather than seeking help. In Fiona's case, it took on scary proportions, with a resulting loss of weight, depression, and a break in her studies . With Robert it appeared that he had little will to fight for his health, as he felt himself without resources. With Jimmy it became clear how impoverished patients are advised to quickly operate, rather than to try stabilizing alternative therapies. These are only available in larger hospitals. This experience showed us that with illness in UECD, we must begin a new chapter; how should we proceed when there are no parents with whom to consult? We do it ourselves! Fiona is now on her feet again, after receiving effective medicine we provided, which is neither free in Makerere, nor even available. Jimmy is in physiotherapy sponsored by his sponsor here . Robert is healthy once more, again with medicine paid for by his sponsor. The cost of paying for medical or other treatment is not something to be taken for granted, not integrated into the cost of a sponsorship. However, when it exceeds the financial possibilities of a sponsor, UECD can spring to help out.

The Goal to Double our Membership, a decision in the last General Yearly Meeting to double our membership, (everyone to bring in someone new) was supported by the idea to give everyone their own visiting card which they could then pass on directly to interested acquaintances. All new members, or those interested in becoming members, are invited to our next General Meeting of 2013, where they can be further informed about UECD. Please come and sign up! So far, no new members have joined us. Our goal has not been reached.

Thank you, Hannes Studer for your creative work and support for UECD with these most beautiful cards.

Adjusting our Rules and Regulations to the Bologna-Reform You can read the most recent rules on our website under “How we Choose our Students”.
Thank you Markus Boller, for your considerable efforts here.

Contract newly written : We have also rewritten the contract which a student must sign, along with the signature of a relative, a Board member from UECD Uganda, and that of a sponsor. Another product of Markus Boller, whom we thank again.

Organization UECD: The discussion has been long underway of how the organization of or NGO can be improved. Thanks to an idea from Corinne Corradi, an ingenious project has fallen into our laps. Corinne pointed out how our membership could probably be increased by making contact with the new “African Studies” Master Program at the University in Basel. There, 50 students from various disciplines are specializing in every aspect of Africa—a lovely thing indeed. The University requested from us, as an exchange, that we provide an apprenticeship for a student. We put out a notice, and two people responded. We announced an Apprenticeship for an analysis of UECD. Funny enough, Fabian Urech was one of those who responded, the man who had already written an article for the NZZ we could take over in our brochure about Robert Okware, (see under website brochures). We designed various areas to investigate, received a lot of feedback, and on the basis of a summary, Fabian Urech designed a partially structured questionnaire. This was approved by us, and Fabian has already flown to Kampala (8.3.2013) in order to begin his interviews. He will bring his first results to our General Meeting and by mid April, will have written reports in English. On the first of April, he will be working as a Journalist with the NZZ in the foreign editorship, with the emphasis on Africa. A happy stroke of luck. Thank you, Fabian, for being so flexible, between DEZA and NZZ - still able to make this analysis. This “Strength-and-Weakness” analysis will serve as the basis for a Workshop in Kampala after Ronald's wedding on 5th/6th of May 13. I will be moderating on this occasion. The question is: How can we maintain our strengths, and lessen our weaknesses? Our goal of 2013, to bring structure to the forefront, is well underway....and the way looks good!

Defining unanticipated costs In our General Meeting we came to the conclusion that one cannot define this. Each unexpected situation is new, and brings a new cultural challenge. Each novel situation requires that we judge and act using both head and heart, so that we, in UECD Uganda, can help solve whatever difficulty may arise.

Our Board: Unfortunately, Hanspeter Spalinger left the Board on the grounds of career and lack of time. We are quite sorry. Since joining us, Hanspeter has been a strong supporter and friend of UECD, as well as being a great friend of Africa. He had supported students with the longest lasting studies, financially and personally, out of which a trusting and long lasting relationship evolved. Hanspeter also took initiative with the website, and brought the brochure to completion. It was he who introduced us to Hannes Studer, our Web and Communication expert. Hanspeter will continue as Sponsor for Obed and remain an active member of the Verein. Thank you, Hanspeter, for your generous engagement both with team thinking, and team acting—making it happen! We will be electing a new Board member in the upcoming meeting. I would be most pleased if someone would like to introduce him/herself as a candidate. Maximum 5 evening meetings between 18:30 and 21:30. We meet at the Restaurant African Queen in Zürich.

Preview: In this new Verein year we plan to continue with the business of everyday, but also attempt to transform the results of analyses into useful actualities. In particular, we will be concerned with the theme of “integration in the workforce”. As students complete their education, UECD Uganda faces a real challenge: how to network in Uganda so that the chance of finding employment is increased.

Now as ever, we wish to increase our membership. We are looking for ideas! We would be glad to also find young Swiss men and women, Germans, Austrians, anyone who desires to have mail and skype contact with students....without necessarily becoming a sponsor. Perhaps also going for a journey with a student—surely a win-win situation for everyone.

Claude and Markus Boller will be at Afro-Pfingsten Winterthur at Gerry's Food Booth. Interested people from UECD, take note! And this year, we would like—with Hannes' help—to do a “Company-Christmas Fund-raiser“ in order to receive more donations. Thank you!

Eva Winizki

President UECD Switzerland

23.3.2013

www.uecd.ch