

Dear sponsor,

we want to thank you for your faithful support of our children in Uganda. Your support has made a giant impact in the lives of all our children and we want to give you some updates on what has happened in the last few months.

First, we have to share some very sad news. We sadly lost one of our Suubi kids. Her name was Ruth. She was 17 years old. She was hit by a car in Kampala in a hit-and-run accident. Ruth died from her injuries 4 days later. This is so tragic. She was going to be in her final year of high school. She was not so good at English or math but did well in Physics and Biology. And she loved going to school. Her sponsorship families gave her the opportunity to learn. It's really tragic she lived such a short life, but education made it a good life and she loved it.



This September we had received some confusing reports from Uganda. There were allegations that the kids were not getting all the funds we sent for school fees. We spent a lot of time investigating and Amy personally went to Uganda in November to investigate the rumors and accusations. But because we were not sure we needed to put our school fee program on hold for the Fall term. Most of our kids did not go to school this term. Only the upper-class students attended school this fall. We learned a small number of moms had removed their children from the very good schools we had paid for and put their kids in cheaper schools. They generally used the extra funds to send a child from relatives to school. Because it is quite a privilege to be able to go to school, the pressure from their families is great. And since none of them has had an education, they think all schools are the same. Why spend 600,000 shillings on a school when you can pay 300,000 shillings? This sort of thing happened about 6 times.

Concerning the allegations, we looked at how fees were paid the past 4 terms (1.5 years) and found no underpayment of fees by our staff. We are happy to report that our staff was proven to be honest and trustworthy and has paid everything for schools and tutoring in full as directed.

We then sought expert help to redesign our program to make it safer and easier to manage. We have decided to limit the number of schools we send our kids to. We will only pay fees directly to the schools and we will get reports directly from them. We will have an agreement with the schools not to give refunds to mothers. And we are going to find cheaper schools so there is no incentive to move the kids. This means the majority of our kids will need only one sponsor in the future, and not two. But a small number will still need two sponsors when they are in higher grades. We want you to know all our children have been going to school in the last years. All the fees you have sent have gone towards education. Even the 6 kids that got relocated by their moms received an education. The problems happened only once in this summer term.

So what are the consequences? For some children, we might be contacting some of you to switch your support to an unsponsored child. For the older kids that are in high school we would ask you to continue to support your child with double sponsorship. We want to keep the kids in high school at their schools because it would be stressful for them to be moved to new schools in their final years of school. We hope this is not too confusing and we will contact you individually if there is any change concerning your sponsor child. What is important is this:

1. The Suubi staff has not misused your school fees.
2. We want to limit the schools we partner with to better control the process.

3. We will limit the amount of fees we give to most but not all of our kids so that one sponsorship will be enough for most children.
4. We have unsponsored children. We want to move sponsorship from some kids that have two sponsors, to kids that have none.
5. If you want us to apply your Fall school fees to the spring term, we can do this, or if you allow it, we will use the funds for other needs at Suubi. Please let us know how we can use your support.

Finally, we can close the year with some good news. Suubi held a vacation Bible School at the Suubi center this week. There were 120 kids enjoying a week of games, crafts and learning about Jesus. This was a great way to end this year. We have added some pictures below.

We hope you have a wonderful Christmas season. For donors in Germany, you can expect a tax receipt around end of January, American donors who supported us via Global Giving will get the tax receipt from Global Giving. We thank you for your faithful support of our program. We want to assure you that we are doing everything we can to increase the transparency and integrity in our program. We know many of you give because you trust us and we take this trust very seriously.

Again, if you want to have your school fee donations applied to the spring term, let us know. If we can use your gift for other projects at Suubi please tell us this too.

Thank you,

Amy and Juergen Heymann





