



The Linda Project

A child has the right to be a child!

Newsletter nr. 3 – December 2019

Dear friends and other interested parties,

In February 2020 it is already 20 years ago that The Linda Project was founded. How much has happened in that time.

I arrived when a terrible war was raging in northern Uganda, where the Lord's Resistance Army was going at it. Killing and plundering, abducting children to become a child soldier or sex slave, people had a hard time. I went to visit the people in their villages or in the camps, brought hope that there was someone who cared about their misery and listened to their stories. I travelled on the back of a bike, through swamps in canoes, walking along narrow paths. Aid organizations were not yet active there, that came later, when a great deal of suffering had already taken place. Many children felt lost. Parents were killed, families torn apart, where could they go. This is how House of Grace came into existence. We started in Igel, along the road to Apac. The bishop of the Elim church gave us a few houses with a large piece of land around it. Next to it was a school. That went well for a while, until the neighbours did not want to stop digging that land. They made bricks. It became too dangerous for the small children; the excavations were often full of water. That's how we ended up in Gweng Abara. There I could buy a large piece of land with various houses on it. Thanks to all kinds of donations, those houses could be refurbished, there came a kitchen, sanitary facilities, a fence.

In 2004 there was a terrible disaster, the Lord's Resistance Army attacked a camp in Ogur, about 20 km. from us. They had disguised themselves as members of the people's protection organisation. More than 200 dead! BBC World was present in the person of **Andrew Harding**, who made a report of the event. He also visited us at House of Grace. His documentary went around the world via BBC world radio. We received a lot of support, requests how they could help us. That was heart-warming. Many of you are still loyal donors. Thanks for that.

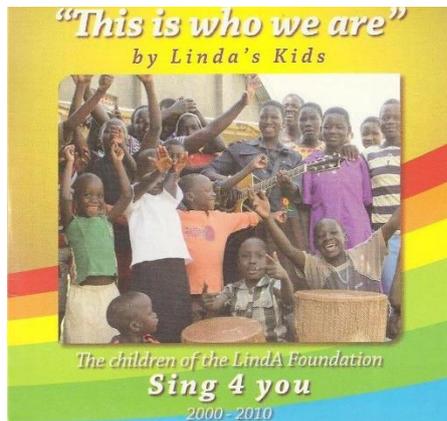


At that time there were a lot of children in House of Grace, too many for the available space. For example: a room of 3 by 4 meters contained 3 triple decker beds (3 beds above each other) for 9 children. They shared the bed, so there were 18 children in a room. There were 3 cottages, each with 2 bedrooms. The staff also shared the bedroom. We had to do something!

In 2008 we received a bakery from Bake for Life, great. We got off to a good start and everyone helped. **Wilbert Arnoldink's** commitment was enormous, he was there as a volunteer. Everyone loved our bread, but in the end, we didn't make it, we were out-competed by Indians. Very sad. We then used the bakery as the activity hall / dining room.

In 2008 the war ended and peace came. People could start rebuilding; the city, the surrounding area, their lives. Not easy, but gradually the fear disappeared.

We could start looking for relatives of the children who had sought refuge with us.



We got a bakery, we built a school, we made a CD, we renovated House of Grace, we got bicycles, we got a car, we were doing fine.

In the meantime, our SOS training program (Send an Orphan to School) was also running. We still do this.

Orphans and the disadvantaged, the abandoned and the disabled are brought to school by us.

We don't just pay the school fees, but give them all the school supplies, personal items, transport, medical care, spiritual care, in short: we are their home.

A lot changed in 2009, when I fell ill and was out of the running for more than a year. **Reinhold Hoernle (Ray)** helped us out enormously.



The real orphans and vulnerable children could stay with us, the rest went back to the, often poor, relatives. We continued to pay school fees etc. and monitored them.

In the meantime, many of those children have ended up doing very well and have built up their own lives. Thanks to the education and training they have had with us. They have families, a job, a future, and we did and do our work for that reason.

Jaap Bergsma, co-founder of the Foundation, died in 2012. That was a big loss.

We have welcomed many volunteers. The children enjoyed it.



Since 2014 we no longer accept new children, we are phasing out the program. We currently still have 17 children, 3 in primary school, 3 in high school, 8 in craft school and 3 in university.

Most of them are no longer at home during school time, but at a boarding school. I try to be there during the school holidays.

Even now I am going there again, on December 19 I am leaving. Coming back to the Netherlands in mid-February. Celebrating Christmas and New Year together. Then in January preparations start for the new school year that starts at the beginning of February.



Many have done their final exams in November. 5 children did their primary school final exams, PLE. 2 boys are now fully qualified house painters. They painted our house on the inside and I have to say: craftsmanship. Betty has a bachelor's degree in meteorology and has the official graduation on January 14. She has not found work yet. Violet has finished her studies as a dietician and works as a volunteer at the Mulago hospital in Kampala, waiting for her exam results. Gad now works as a plumber.

How long we can continue, financially speaking, is the question. Because generous loyal donors have had to drop out due to all kinds of circumstances. This requires inventiveness, recruitment of new donors, fundraising campaigns. Otherwise I fear the worst. We need your help with this!

We trust in God and His plan; everything will be fine. He will not abandon His children.

On the website you can find the financial and social annual reports for 2018.
You will find this under "publications", annual reports.

We wish you all a very blessed Christmas Season and a healthy and prosperous 2020.

Team Netherlands
Team Uganda

Team Northern Ireland
The children



The Linda Project

Care and education for orphans in Northern Uganda

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The Linda Project UK is a registered charity under no. XR918667, we are also on the SA return list, no. BAS60KG. On our website, under "contact", you can find all our details, including BIC and IBAN data.

Also, you can find the details of our Dutch banks there.