



2024 REPORT

FIREFLY WAMU E.V.

Over the past three years, *Firefly Wamu e.V.* has succeeded in fundamentally changing the way it works with the organisation in Uganda and in creating new, more autonomous structures. Following the end of our collaboration with our former project partner in 2022 (see 2022 Annual Report), a phase of renewal, rethinking and restructuring began. We are gradually dismantling the dependency of the pupils created during the Firefly Camp (2015–2021), relying increasingly on local institutions and advice. Today, the pupils are integrated into various Ugandan boarding schools and the families are once again taking on more responsibility. This fresh start has proved successful. We are aligning ourselves with existing structures and learning from local knowledge.

The central aim of our association is cooperation and exchange between our staff, the pupils in Uganda and the rest of the organisation in Germany. It is particularly important to us to dismantle the problematic narrative of ‘white saviours’ⁱ and, together with all those involved, to overcome existing one-sided dependencies.

Practical implementation and project work

We support the 14 young people on their individual educational journeys and strive to prepare them as effectively as possible for life after school. Cosmos, our on-site project manager, has now been working with *Firefly Wamu e.V.* for more than two years. He is responsible for looking after the students, providing medical care, maintaining contact with the families and providing support during

responsible for the holiday if a return journey to their own family is not possible. For his work, Cosmos receives a fair salary to ensure a sustainable and responsible partnership. To strengthen all parties involved in our cooperation, we place great importance on further training and Cosmos' involvement in the organisation's administration (including through the use of a work computer).

Firefly Wamu e.V. in Germany

The work in Germany is carried out by a core team of long-standing volunteers, new young students, and numerous other donors. We benefit from diverse perspectives and a wealth of knowledge. During video calls, we often reach appropriate and swift decisions on urgent issues relating to project work in Uganda and Germany.

Through our collaboration with the Uganda Working Group at Humboldt Gymnasium in Cologne, we are constantly gaining new committed members. Our tasks include public relations work and securing the financial basis for the projects in Uganda. In doing so, we place great emphasis on critical education and reflection in order to scrutinise the project work within the context of relations between the Global North and Southⁱⁱ and to be able to face the conflicts that arise in the process.

Education as the key to autonomy

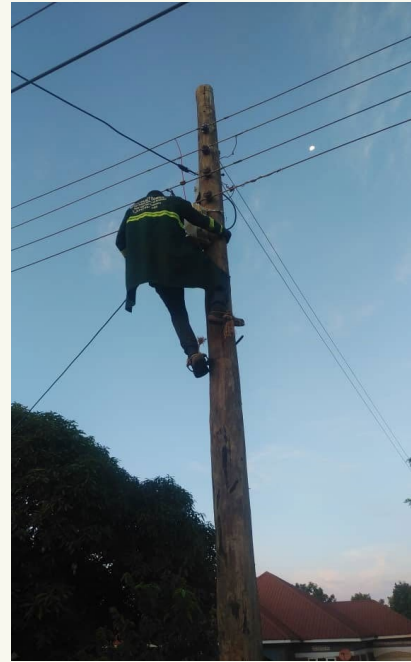
Firefly Wamu e.V. currently supports 14 pupils at six different schools, including primary schools, secondary schools and vocational schools. The pupils and the organisation work together to find the best school option, taking into account proximity to home, academic focus and budget. For example, one pupil currently attends a secondary school on the main island of Lake Victoria, Kalangala, whilst another attends a secondary school in Massaka (mainland). Seven female pupils attend *Kibanga Primary School* and are about to complete their primary education. Five pupils attend vocational schools for electrical engineering, administration or mechatronics. Through this broad range of

Through our educational focus, we aim to enable every student to achieve a personalised, interest-driven and future-oriented qualification. We have now been supporting many of the students for up to nine years and are delighted to soon be congratulating our first student, Enock, on completing his electronics technician training.

We make decisions affecting the students with the help of the experience and recommendations of local partners such as Cosmos. Cosmos's forthcoming degree in Social Work offers significant added value to the organisation by further developing his educational and organisational skills.

What happens after school? Enocka shows how it's done

Enocka now lives on his own on the mainland and manages his money and his life independently. He receives a monthly allowance from the association to cover accommodation, food and school fees. To supplement his income, he has set up a small shop where, in line with his training as an electrician, he offers computer repairs and printing services as well as selling supplies. We have supported him with two interest-free loans, which will soon be paid off. His final exams are due at the end of the year. We have made it clear to him that, upon completing his training, he will receive start-up funding from us, which will give him time to either look for a job or continue running his shop. After receiving this start-up funding, he will be entirely self-sufficient. His goal is to work independently as an electrician, taking on jobs such as wiring houses.



Firefly Wamu e.V. focuses on ensuring that decisions are made by those closest to the action. The constant exchange between members in Uganda and Germany, as well as the shared learning process, are key elements in the success of our projects.

How is Humboldt Gymnasium Cologne involved in the project?

(Text by the pupils of the Uganda Club)

The Uganda Club at Humboldt Gymnasium consists of pupils from all year groups. The club is directly linked to the association, as usually one or two pupils are also members of the association and then look after the club at Humboldt. The main tasks involve presenting the project to the pupils at Humboldt, as well as to parents, providing updates and simply raising its profile at the school.

At the start of the year, we visit the Year 7 classes (lower school) and explain to all new pupils what Firefly Wamu e.V. is all about. At the 'Open Day' and also at the summer fair, we organise a creatively designed information stand every year. We are also involved in planning the Sponsored Walk and, on the day itself, provide information to the participating pupils about our

project. The donations from the Sponsored Walk ensure the association's financial stability.

In the past, the club has carried out many different projects to provide additional support for Firefly Wamu e.V. For example, there was the 'Uganda Campaign', during which pupils from Humboldt School collected donations on Schildergasse using street art. In 2022, we sold bags and cards printed by the club itself at the Christmas market at Lutherkirche, raising funds in the process.

Last school year, the working group's project was to find a new logo for the association. To do this, we collaborated with art teachers and their classes. Year 10 pupils in particular were able to design a logo themselves as part of their art lessons and submit it in a sort of competition. In the end, we were able to select one from numerous creative logos, which now serves as the association's new logo.

Outlook

In future, we would like to focus on raising the profile of the association and the club at Humboldt and attracting more members. For this school year, in addition to our 'regular projects' such as the Open Day or the Sponsored Walk, we are trying to make the club meetings more exciting and organise themed 'special sessions', such as film nights or cooking sessions, etc. Furthermore, our aim is to ensure that everyone at the school is once again up to date with the current situation of the project in Uganda; to this end, we intend to revise the article on the website and set up a Moodle course through which pupils can receive regular updates on the project. We would also like to establish direct contact and exchange between Humboldt and the young people in Uganda, for example by restarting a pen-pal scheme or similar initiatives.

CONTACT

WWW.FIREFLY-WAMU.DE

FIREFLY WAMU E.V.
Alteburger Straße 89, 50678
Cologne kontakt@firefly-wamu.de

Contact person: Maria Lydia Monerjang, mobile +49 15736740631

ⁱ The term 'White Saviour Complex', coined by Teju Cole, describes a phenomenon whereby white people from the Global North feel called upon to carry out development, educational or aid work in countries of the Global South. However, many are unaware of the historically rooted and complex issue of white dominance and supremacy. This illusion perpetuates global power structures and inequalities that have existed for centuries and is often ultimately reinforced by such forms of engagement,

ⁱⁱ In this sense, a country of the Global South is a politically, economically or socially disadvantaged state. The countries of the Global North, by contrast, are in a privileged position in terms of prosperity, political freedom and economic development.

-to classify the countries of the world as objectively as possible according to their political and socio-economic positions within the global system.