

Dec. 2018 | 'November' letter to friends of UPLIFT

Dear friends far away!

Please know that there are many who value your/our supportive role as Friends of UPLIFT! In a recent greeting Dr. Hizzaya referred to the quarterly full gathering three weeks ago of UPLIFT mentors, coordinators and board members: *"They often make a very loving and warm mention of the friends of UPLIFT!"*



'Classroom' demonstration

November has, as usual, been one of the most intensive months during the 'UPLIFT year': Exam papers were printed in the first week, the refresher gathering took place in Nebbi at mid-month, the learners sat for examination on the 17th, after which the Board held its meeting. At this time of writing, while the exams are being assessed, a number of village clusters have started preparations for the great UPLIFT graduation ceremony in January – only five weeks away.

Just as usual, a few privileged supporters at this latitude have booked 'ringside seats'. This year we'll be five from up North who can't let go of this continual African experience. ("Same procedure as last year, Miss Sophie?" comes to mind). Oddly, this time (November) UPLIFT has asked us (the FUP Board) if we would like to suggest ideas for a variation of the graduation programme! Some mentors, it seems, are finding the ceremonies too much the same from one year to the next.

We have met the challenge and indicated an 'alternative' to the accolades of the sometimes wordy speeches by local politicians.

One suggestion is to prompt the candidates to prepare *in writing* precise question notes for the local authorities. The representatives will be called out as a group (– 'from under the canvas'? –) and each will draw a note out of a basket and be limited 2 or 3 minutes (a challenge!) to make a concrete comment.

Another idea is for the learners to perform a sketch scenario of their village, ten years from now. Serious or satirical or both – drama and role play is something they're good at!



Treating malaria: By witch doctors?

– or by boiling leaves of the Neem Tree?



UPLIFT has shared with us a budget proposal for 2019. There is a need for documentation of method as well as results, as these have developed through the period after the end of the Norad collaboration (in 2007-10). Our FUP Women's Committee, formed a year ago,

have sent a letter to UPLIFT, suggesting issues and examples to be included in a survey and/or analysis for documentation:

- Experience sharing in groups of learners
- Demonstrated ability to assist children with their school work
- Initiated and running employment activity
- Appointment to committees or election to local government (LC3)
- Change to a healthier, overall family diet
- Further indicators that women, families, and villages have been empowered to uplift themselves out of the most dire conditions of poverty.

This effort of evaluation and documentation has been included and shown up in the 2019 budget proposal, which will be considered in a joint meeting of the UPLIFT and Friends of UPLIFT Boards in January. The bottom line: UPLIFT suggests that the budget, which in the past 3 or 4 years has fluctuated between 13.000 \$ and 12.300 \$ (in 2018), be increased to 14.000 USD. We'll return to the full budget and other details in our February Letter.

Let us end on a very optimistic note and inform you that in early November a transfer of \$ 2.500 to the UPLIFT account has brought our 2018 contributions up to \$ 9.700 – only 1.300 \$ short of the annual target of 11.000 \$ With substantial contributions also received by Ugandan friends of UPLIFT, the remainder will be safely achieved by the end of the year. By the time of admitting 1.500 new learners to the literacy course in 2019, sufficient funds for books, transport and small allowances will be in place from day one. A 'first', in fact, since the formation of Friends of UPLIFT in 2012.

Needless to say, on UPLIFT's behalf, a huge THANK YOU for your support, monetary or morally, and your steadfast belief in UPLIFT.

Warmest regards to all, from the Board of Friends of UPLIFT (Norway)



Empowerment, through acquired skills and self-esteem