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"All inclusive" - once different

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Everything started with a circular mail to the TAZ-comrades, sent by Klaus Schwerdtfeger. Uganda by bike, game drives in national parks and in addition chimpanzees and gorillas trekking. The revenues of the trip will go towards the financing of a photovoltaic system of the Mpora Rural Family, a privately managed national aid project, which was also the starting point of our trip.

Our decision fell quickly, we book. I've been in the tourism industry for over 40 years, and Klaus instructs me to book our flights. At a preliminary meeting with Klaus, our TOP (Tour Operator), 7 out of 8 participants take part. Good idea to meet before. The chemistry seems to be right. Does Klaus really know what he's getting into?

Klaus and Inge have collected diligently, and about 150 kg of relief supplies come in the form of laptops, scanners, printers, children's things, etc., which can be given to the orphanage and the school of the Mpora Rural Family. Turkish Airlines allows us to do it all for free. Inge has already done a logistical masterpiece to pack all these boxes "airworthy", to transport them to the airport and to bring them to the check-in.

So far from the beginning of our journey. Now we have been back home for 3 weeks and are raving about our friends and acquaintances from Uganda. The cheerfulness of the children, who flocked together and shouted "How are you" when we cycled through the villages with our bicycles, and in general from the friendliness of the Ugandans. Women who made hot water for us on a charcoal fire so that we Muzungus could wash with hot water.

Very informative were our visits to other aid projects, those that are not promoted internationally, but were launched by local people. In Bigodi we were led by a KAFRED employee through the village, saw where the villagers got clean drinking water, pisciculture ponds and schools. We were happy to buy there in the souvenir shop, because each product was supplied with the name of the person who made it. So everyone gets the share of the product produced by him / her. For widows (whether the man died or left his wife), one of the few ways to make money. We were particularly warmly welcomed in the Nyundo Valley Hill Links project, and after Herbert, the leader, explained his project and ideas to us competently and impressively, we were sorry that we had little opportunity to look any further.

We have seen a lot of the country, people and animals, even though we only traveled to the western part of Uganda. Watching animals in their habitat that are otherwise only seen in the zoo, watching elephants with cubs, hippos in the Kazinga Channel, watching lions eating and sleeping in the tree, buffalo herds, and fighting Uganda cobs. And many birds: big marabou, white-tailed eagle, various kingfishers, the weaver birds weaving the elaborate nests, crowned cranes, many colorful nectar birds and, and, and. In the pouring rain we were almost run over by the chimpanzees in the middle of the forest and after a strenuous walk we were close to a gorilla family for one hour. We were in the savannah at sunrise, where the candelabra and acacia trees grow, in the dense rainforest, in papyrus swamps and have seen the Virunga Mountains and of course taken a picture of us and our bikes on the equator.

The accommodations were often very simple; Shower and toilet in the room, or in the Banda, the exception. Hot water for showers was a luxury, as was a toilet with flushing and electricity. The flashlight was in the evening always on the woman or man. Somehow, there was always a way to recharge the batteries of the cameras and cell phones. Since we were often at 2,000m and higher, we have learned that you can freeze at the equator. At night it was already 14 ° and an anorak for

breakfast or dinner was appropriate. Rain clothes were very important, because the rainforest does not bear his name for nothing. There were almost no mosquitoes, and fewer pests than feared.

Only the main roads in Uganda are paved. Usually you drive on slopes, which in the mountains and the national parks, especially in rain our driver demanded a lot of skill. Thanks William!

Logistical problems can always be solved in Uganda. As soon as we arrived at the airport, it did not seem that we, our luggage and the relief supplies had space together in the Toyota minibus. Also on our return from Lake Bunyoni to Entebbe we managed to stow 9 people and our luggage in a car for 8 people. Adversity in the form of bicycle breakdowns, not very clean accommodations, absolutely bad weather, a day's waiting time, because the car did not arrive on time, we were succinctly commented on with "This is Africa".

Traveling with our group was just fun. Helpfulness and camaraderie were a matter of course and have contributed significantly to the success of this trip. Kudos to Klaus, who has taken the risk and responsibility to be the tour operator for the first time in his life. "All inclusive" means for me in this case, you not only booked accommodation and food for us, you have infected us with your enthusiasm for Uganda, and also the many small and larger obstacles fixed, so that we could enjoy our trip.