

Hi everyone!

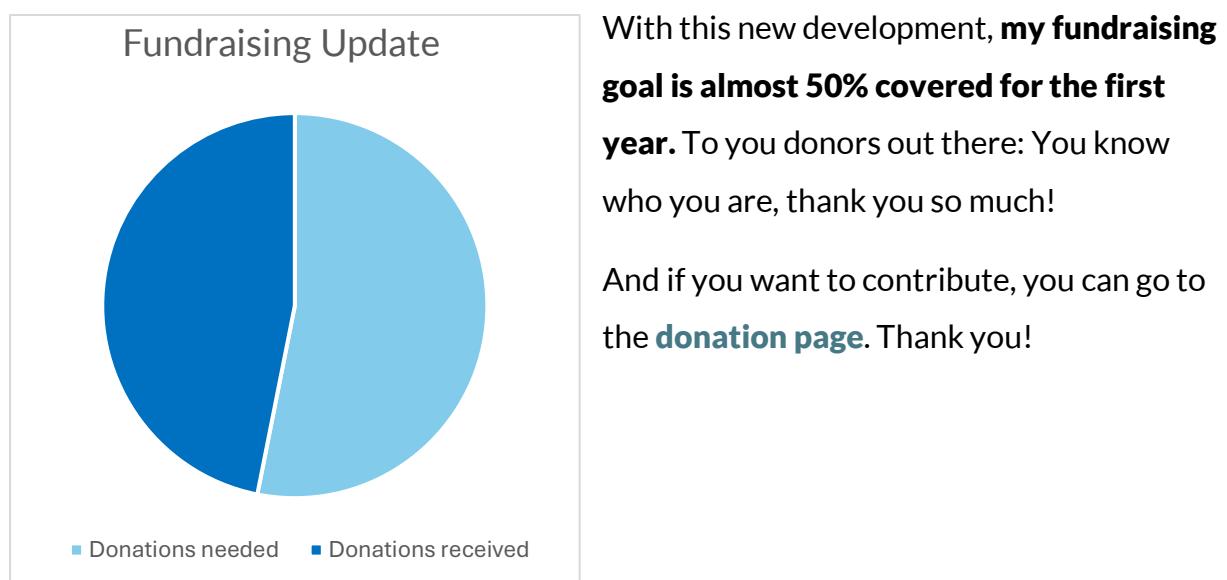
I hope you had a good start in 2026. What “motto” (or theme) would you give your year so far?

I think my motto for 2026 so far should be “unexpected”: unexpected donors, unexpected diagnosis, even an unexpected laptop remodel! All these things are part of getting ready for Uganda – more in the newsletter.

Big donations in small places

In January, I went to preach at a tiny church around 1h drive from where I live. My creative brain was like, “cool, I enjoy working with small groups”, but **my “fundraising” brain was like: “They only have 12 members. What can come from so few people...”**

Immediately, God was very clear: “Don’t underestimate the little things”. So, I treated this small church the same as if they had 1000 members. Sure enough, there happened to be people there who would support me. Not only that, **among them is a donor who now gives more per month than any other donor so far!** Moral of the story: don’t be fooled by outward appearances!



Carpal Tunnel...

A few weeks ago, I went to the neurologist: I've had pain in my wrists and fingers for a while. The diagnosis was unmistakeable: **advanced carpal tunnel syndrome on both wrists, surgery highly recommended.**

I've had carpal tunnel issues for years. But until a few weeks ago, they were more or less limited to when I was typing at the computer. Now, it's starting to really cause problems: On a bad day, I'll drop keys or have very strong tingling and pain all across the arm. If left untreated, this can cause lasting nerve damage. Not something to take to Africa with me.



Not working at the toy shop much longer: I need carpal tunnel surgery next month. Still, this job helped me gain strength physically and was a good learning experience

So, I took action: First, I handed in my resignation at work. I can officially quit at the end of February. Despite my boss being a challenging person to work with (see last newsletter), I asked God to give me grace for her. And sure enough, I have actually enjoyed my job overall. And my boss, difficult as she can be, genuinely cares about her employees. When I gave her my resignation letter, I also gave her a homemade bookmark. She now has it as a decoration on her office desk. That's nice to know.

Next, **I got an appointment for surgery the beginning of March.** That was surprisingly easy, thank God. And luckily, the surgery is covered by insurance and is supposed to be easy to recover from.

Uganda: poor yet rich

How do you determine the overall quality of life for a person in a country? The World Bank has something called the "**Human Capital Index**" (HCl), which basically measures how much a person can live out their potential compared to if they had perfect conditions. Highly developed countries like Germany have scores of around 75% (0.75 out of 1), meaning "you can unlock 75% of your potential in this country". So far, so

good. But then I looked at the numbers for Uganda, and my heart sank a little: **The HCI score for Uganda is only 38% (0.38) – an average Ugandan will only unlock 38% of their human potential.**

There are many reasons for this. But mainly, it's due to a lack of good education: kids attend an average of 6.8 years of school, but the quality of learning is only equivalent to 4.3 years (compared to 11 years in Germany). Of course, there are also very educated people in Uganda. But most people can't afford higher education. Add generational trauma and the daily struggle of poverty, and you get a population that can read and do math, but can't apply knowledge to new settings or solve problems without instructions.

But poverty is not the whole story: Ugandan people are incredibly gifted at some things that a Westerner could only dream of. For example, **most 5-year-olds in Uganda can dance better than a German or American adult. And most people in Uganda speak 3-5 languages.** The lady I'll be working with in Arua even speaks 9 languages! I speak only 3 (English, German, French) and am attempting to learn Luganda as language number 4. I guess I have some catching up to do 😊.



There are around 40-70 languages spoken in Uganda (depending on how you define "language" vs. "dialect"), so it's common for people to speak several languages. I even know someone who speaks 9 languages!

All this shows me that "intelligence" and "creativity" are everywhere. God put it inside each of us, no matter our background. And it will be part of my mission to help people in Uganda to discover and value what they have, so they can use their gifts for God's kingdom in a good way.

An old-new laptop for staff in Uganda

While I was cleaning my room, I found my old laptop. A staff member in YWAM Arua (where I'm going in Uganda) needs a laptop for the ministry, so I wondered: could I get this old computer to work again?

I'm not a tech person. But I did some research and found the right replacement parts, installed them, and reinstalled Windows. The keyboard still needs some work, and maybe I'll add a new hard drive to make the laptop load faster. But overall, I'm proud of myself: I actually got a broken laptop to run again for the first time in years, and for a fraction of the cost of a new computer. Not something I ever expected!



reinstalling Windows for dummies: consult ChatGPT, follow instructions, and let laptop run for several hours as it installs everything.

**Thanks for your prayers, for reading along, and for the donations that came so far.
God bless you,**

Nicole

Prayer Requests

Thank God for:

- Ongoing: job and language classes going well
- 50% of donations goal reached for first year
- Managing to refresh my old laptop for a staff member in Uganda

Ask God for:

- More donations for the remaining budget
- A good remaining time at the job and successful carpal tunnel surgery

Payment Information



Link to Globe International:

<https://globeintl.org/members/nicole-heymann>

this link allows US-donors to receive tax credit. If you aren't US-based, let me know, and I'll send you the link for your country.

Feel free to write to me if you have any questions or thoughts. And if you no longer want to receive the newsletter, you can also unsubscribe by sending me a short note at hello@nicole-heymann.com.