

## **LBE 2009 – Migration**

### **Episode 10: A German in Uganda**

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**Translator:**

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#### **1 Narrator**

**3 Voice-overs:** - **Roberta Wagner**, female, 31 yrs

- **Sarah Nagire**, female

- **Peter Mubanda**, male

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#### **Intro**

Hello and welcome to our Learning by Ear series about migration between Africa and Europe. Today we introduce to you someone who has migrated the other way round, meaning not from Africa to Europe but from Europe to Africa.

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#### **1. Narrator:**

People from overseas who come to Africa are not called migrants, but expatriates. Most of them come for a specific job and then go. But some of them stay, like Roberta Wagner.

She left Germany nine years ago to live in Uganda, a land-locked country in Eastern Africa. And she has no intention, for the time being, of going back to live in Germany.

Roberta has a great job as director of the Ugandan German Cultural Society. Today she is organizing a concert with a local band. But, as it often happens in Kampala, when the concert was about to begin, there was a power cut.

## 2. SFX Sound of generator

### 3. Roberta Wagner

What can I say! It's a power cut! And it is usually unusual in Nakasero, but very usual in Uganda. We have to pray now that power comes back, otherwise we will have an unplugged concert, because our generator is no big enough for the sound system.

## 4. SFX Steps

### 5. Narrator:

Roberta Wagner walks into the dark towards the room where the artists are waiting.

### *Dialogue Roberta and Sarah Nagire*

#### 6. Roberta:

"So can we...If we take the lights in pots in front of the stage, can we do it unplugged?"

#### 7. Sarah Nagire:

"No, because we have not planned for that. We can't. And we don't have a generator. There is nothing we can do. Because I don't have any money left on me to hire one. I don't have".

#### 8. Roberta:

"No, no... I mean, if we can do it unplugged ?"

#### 9. Sarah: "uh uh"

#### 10. Roberta:

"I don't know then...Let's pray. Can you pray?"

#### 11. Sarah:

"I prayed and the rain went. And now I'm still praying for the power to come...That's terrible!"

**12. Narrator:**

Some fifteen minutes later, the electricity comes back on at last, and the artists come on stage. Roberta Wagner, greatly relieved, gives a little welcome speech.

**13. Roberta Wagner**

We invited Sarah Nagire tonight because she is a very, very powerful woman and she is singing about peace, freedom and human rights. So I'm sure you will have a very enjoyable evening. And I hope you will like the music. I hope that you will like the mixture of traditional and world music. I'm very excited that we can start now. I'm excited that we have power and I hope it will stay like that. And please, if there is a power cut, don't blame the Germans. I hope you will enjoy and please clap for Sarah Nagire and band.

**14. SFX Applause** (from archive)

**15. Sarah Nagire**

Next, ladies and gentlemen, we come to a beautiful song, that is the title track of my second album. And this particular song explains why I sing and why many of us that are here tonight do sing. Whether they enjoy the track. ???

**16. MUSIC**

**17. Narrator:**

The next morning, Roberta Wagner, a bit exhausted, is back in her office, in the centre of Kampala. She shares the place with the French cultural centre.

**18. SFX Roberta walking. She opens her door.**

**19. Roberta Wagner**

That's my office, my day-to-day environment where I can come up with all my creative ideas. Ya...And I have a poster of Barack Obama and that reminds me of – every day, when I come to office and I look at it, It reminds me of how much the world is changing right now - .

**20. Narrator:**

Roberta Wagner sees Barack Obama's victory a little bit as a victory of her own as well.

**21. Roberta Wagner**

I grew up in a family which is very multicultural, so my step dad is a black American and I think that for a black American to move into the white house is a very big achievement, and I think... Like my dad called me on the day when Obama was elected, crying. And he said, "I could have never imagined a black man walking into the white house". Because it's just...I mean the way he grew up it was just impossible. And for people who have experienced racism, it's a change. And it's a very big change. Of course he has a lot of challenges now because he is now known as the man who has to change the world, and that's a lot to carry, I think. So people will be disappointed because he will not be able to achieve all the things people project into him. But, at least, for a black person to be the president of America...I think the next president will probably be a woman. So, the world is changing.

**22. Narrator:**

When Roberta Wagner arrived in Uganda it was the first time she came to Africa. In fact, it was love that took her here.

**23. Roberta Wagner**

When I came to Uganda I was very young. It is already 10 or 9 years ago, so I was 21 and I was still doing my studies in Germany. And I met a man in Germany. He was also a student at my university, and he got a job offer in Uganda. And he asked me to join him.

**24. Narrator:**

In Uganda Roberta married her German boyfriend, and soon after she had a son.

**25. SFX a spoon in a cup of coffee**

**26. Roberta Wagner**

“Hi hi, the coffee”

**27. Roberta Wagner**

When we first came to Uganda, we went to Fort Portal. That's on the border to Congo, and we stayed there for two years and then we moved to Kampala and Kampala became such an exciting place for me as I became a board member of the Ugandan-German Cultural Society. I studied dance at Makerere University. So I got very involved in the cultural scene. And I discovered that it was that what I wanted to do. And I felt I can make a very big change or I could help to make a change. I can support the art scene. And then, when I started working for the German Cultural Centre in Kampala I knew I would not easily go anywhere else. I'm very engaged in Uganda. I've a boyfriend; I have a kid, I have a family, I have a job. There is really no reason to go anywhere else.

**28. Narrator:**

Roberta Wagner's life in Uganda has not always been a bed of roses. Fort Portal was a bare place. Then she divorced her German husband. Now she lives with a Ugandan, but not the ordinary Ugandan. Her boyfriend, Peter Mubanda, was born and has grown up in New York, and he decided, late in his life, to go back to his country of origin.

**29. Peter Mubanda**

*(transcription not literal but trying to bring out the meaning of what he says)*

Roberta is not the first German I have dated, so I am familiar with the Germans. Personality issues...cultural issues...all these things...It is probably difficult here in Africa...Because of... maybe, the socio-economic environment, the perception by the native Ugandans and you know, the issue of black and white people. This type of thing...But the interesting thing is that she has probably spent more time in my own country than I have...So, yes, she has probably seen more of my own country than I have...So that probably makes her more Ugandan than me... *(stuttering)*

**30. Narrator:**

Roberta Wagner seems to be really happy with her new life in Africa and with the new love she found there. But every once in a while she remembers her old life in Germany and becomes a bit melancholic.

**31. Roberta Wagner**

I miss my family and the food. That is something I really miss a lot. And that is particularly bread and good Salami. That is something I do miss. But I also miss culture. I miss going to a nice concert, going to a nice art exhibition... and my friends. There are many things I miss, that is for sure. I mean Germany is still home and it is my identity and I am still a German however much I may change. But still these are my roots and you will never forget your roots. That's who I am.

**32. Narrator:**

Despite all those things that Roberta Wagner misses about her German home, she finds it more and more difficult to comprehend her identity in terms of nationality.

### **33. Roberta Wagner**

Sometimes, I realise that I'm already more Ugandan than I am a German, because if I get visitors from Germany and they ask me so many questions. Why is it like this in Uganda? Then I realise that for me it's not strange anymore. It's stranger, if I go to Germany and I see that you have to make appointments to see people. I mean there are so many things that are so different in Germany. So for me, I really feel I'm part of the society right now.

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#### **Outro:**

And that's all for today's Learning by Ear programme on migration. It was written by **Henri Leenhardt**. If you would like to find out more about this or any other Learning by Ear programmes, or if you just like to listen to this program again, go to our website at [www.dw-world.de/lbe](http://www.dw-world.de/lbe)

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