

THE Refugee

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KAKUMA EDITION



NATNAEL GASHAW

**THINK
OUTSIDE
BOTTLES**



16 POLITICAL TURMOIL IN AFRICA'S NEWEST STATE CAUSING MASS EXODUS



2 WATER CRISIS LOOMS IN KAKUMA



4 KEEPING KAKUMA ON THE MOVE

9 SCREENING FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL RELIEF

20 FROM CAMP TO CAMPUS

5 BIODEGRADATION TECHNOLOGY

6 SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFUGEES

16 THE REPATRIATION NIGHTMARE

10 THINKING OUTSIDE BOTTLES

18 MY PASSION FOR ART

EDITORIAL

From the city and its outskirts, people only tend to imagine what Kakuma looks and feels like. They try to relate to the situation refugee camp from the little insight they collect from the T.V stations on the national news and maybe a few documentaries here and there. It's hard to even begin to expound on life on this side of the country with some situations better than they seem and others worse. It's a hustle to be a refugee, but still, people find a way to collect the pieces and remodel a new design of what they used to be in the countries they called home. They learn to adjust and learn to survive. They acquire tactics that see them maneuver and come out alive, like breaking out of a shell and learning to make use of the light.

We, as The Refugee Magazine, therefore bring you into the lives of the refugees from the Kakuma refugee camp and give a vivid picture of how it's like to be here. We solemnly dedicate this magazine to the refugees and their hustle and bustle, their sweat and its outcome and their struggles in establishing a new life in a place so far from home. We have transformed from a newsletter to a magazine in order to bring you more human interest stories so as to motivate, inspire and bring hope to the people of the Kakuma refugee camp. The magazine will also serve as a light into all the fields people consider dark and are afraid to venture into thus serving as an insight into not only the people within the camp but also the people outside of it. In this edition we have covered a story of Natnael Gashaw, an executive interior designer, entrepreneur and journalist, who is dedicating his time to change the image of the camp while preserving the environment by using plastic bottles to construct houses and decorate some. Read this and other stories inside.

It is our hope that you will enjoy reading the first issue of the refugee magazine and continue reading the many more after this. Also feel free to share with us your views, comments, feelings and stories. Let us know what you would like to read in our next publication through the contacts below;

ABOUT KAKUMA

Kakuma Refugee Camp, located 746 KM from Kenya's capital, Nairobi, was established in 1992 to serve Sudanese refugees and has since expanded to serve refugees from Somalia, Ethiopia, Burundi, DRC, Eritrea, Uganda, and Rwanda. The camp has since then provided refuge to over 100,000 refugees from 15 nationalities. It is a multi-cultural centre with the majority coming from Sudan and especially Africa's newest state of South Sudan and Somalia.

He camp has several humanitarian agencies providing the basic services and is administered by the Department of Refugee Affairs, the DRA.

With the ongoing war in South Sudan, the camp is currently experiencing an influx of refugees fleeing the war. It is reported that since the war broke out late last year, the UNHCR has received close to 30,000 refugees who have entered Kenya through the Nadapal border.

We have highlighted stories from Kakuma that will help you get a clear mental image of the camp. Enjoy your read!

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Gashaw, an Ethiopian refugee who is determined to change the image of his area through interior design

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WATER CRISIS LOOMS IN KAKUMA

Long queues of Refugees at water points is the new face of Kakuma 4, the new arrival area. The water crisis created by the influx of new arrivals is threatening to go out of hands

BY ACHAYO REBECCA



PHOTO: Boy sips water to quench thirst from a water tanker delivering water at Kakuma 4

Reports from the UN agency for refugees (UNHCR) indicate that, over 30,000 people, most of them women and children have fled south Sudan warfare into kakuma refugees' camp in the past couple of months giving kakuma a total population of 147,773 people.

The influx effects are slowly being felt by those who had been settled in previously as basic commodities and services become stretched beyond limits. Water is one of the most affected of the commodities with refugees and host having to cope with little or no water access in a day. According to the UN body for refugees, the UNHCR, refugees need a minimum of 7 litres per person per day, just to survive. In the arid regions where many of the displaced are forced to seek shelter, they need more. To ensure minimum standards of health and sanitation, they need 20 litres of water per

person each day. This however, has not been the case in Kakuma refugee camp as occasioned by the influx of new arrivals from Southern Sudan.

Kakuma Refugee Camp is located in Turkana District of the northwestern region of Kenya, 120 kilometers from Lodwar District Headquarters and 95 kilometers from Lokichogio near the Kenya-Sudan border. The arid area is characterized by high temperatures, warm dusty winds and very little rainfall.

Kakuma refugee camp is supplied with water from boreholes that are drilled and managed by NGOs working in Kakuma. The water supply, as the refugee came to find out, is not enough for the number of families living in the blocks. Despite there being a few number of water distribution points, water is still being rationed. According to the LWF Water department, water is supplied with tankers three times

a day. In the morning, the mid morning, and sometimes twice in the afternoon. With the number of people queuing for this precious commodity and the amount of time allowed for water to run, those families who do not make it to the queue on time to be among the first to fetch water miss out. According to block leaders, some families have to go for a day or two without water.

Women and Children are the most affected.

The water crisis effect is mostly bared by women and children especially in block 3 and in Kakuma 4, the new arrival area. This is evident as more women and children are seen walking long distances to other zones and blocks in search of water. This may also in a great way affect the children's education. According to Yashir Mustafar, from new arrival area, each family in the block may fetch 40 litres of water per day regardless of the family's size forcing more women and children to walk long distances to fetch water from zone 1, block 2. Vulnerable groups such as lactating mothers, expectant women, and persons living with disability are finding it difficult for them to maintain their hygiene.

Water shortage in some zones has created a gap in the community. This gap has in turn been seen as a business opportunity for some few individuals. The vendors fetch water from other camps and transport it on bicycles and motor cycles to the most affected areas and sell it to those families who can afford the service. However, this information has not been confirmed by the LWF, water department.

Some families are moving from other zones into Kakuma 1 where it is perceived to have a more regular water supply system. This may in turn bring the same problems to the zone as the supply there may become stretched also. Kakuma refugee camp depends on water boreholes. The initial capacity of the camp when it was started was 100,000 people only and this has over the years been stretched and more so the most recent war in the Southern Sudan state has caused a massive influx of refugees into the camp, pushing the population into an all time high of 150,000 refugees.

Speaking to The Refugee, Uche, a refugee living in Kakuma 1 and a Social Media

journalist, confirmed that there is a family in Kakuma-one having 34 people sharing two small houses that are barely enough for such a huge number of people. Most of them are forced to sleep outside on dusty ground oblivious of the snakes and scorpions crawling at night. Uche says, most of them have arrived recently from South Sudan and have moved in to settle with relatives.

'Fights and related cases are accelerating everywhere in the camps and especially in kakuma 2 and 3 due to the persistent water shortage. People in my area move everywhere searching for water, the areas affected most are the new arrival areas. The environment is harsh with no trees, limited supply of water and occasional dust storms. These have forced many of the new arrivals to relocate to Kakuma 1 to live with relatives hence increasing conflict arising from shared resources such as water points, and sometimes even plots of land.' Mr. Hurust, Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Peace building case worker.

'According to Sphere standards of water rationing for the refugees, each refugee should get at least 20 litres of water per a day. The water pumps here run for approximately 1 hour which is not enough to meet the minimum requirement based on the population of people being served by a single pump. In my block, we fetch water after every five days.' Said Mr. Said Abdi Salat, Zonal Chairperson. He added that, given the increase in water consumption, LWF's timetable has changed, there is no specific time when the community receives water and also the water volume is very low hence the time that the water is running should be

increased so as to supply a larger number of people.

Speaking to the refugee magazine, Mr. Dominic Gachanja, LWF Water coordinator told the refugee that they (LWF) are within the recommended sphere in terms of delivering water. 'We deliver water to the camps at least four times in a day, but sometimes do more,' says Dominic. 'The water that we deliver to the camp is within the recommended sphere with a range of between 9-13 litres of water per person per day.' He continued.

However, the Water coordinator admits that the water ferried to the camps is affected by various factors including breakdown of vehicles and the accessibility of roads. On the 22nd of March 2014, the tankers supplied 523,000 litres of water to Kakuma 4, on the 24th of the same month 221,000 litres was supplied and on the 24th March 2014 369,800 litres of water was supplied. On a good day, 400,000 litres of water is ferried to the new arrival area.

However, there are efforts to try and contain the situation. 'The new arrivals have been sharing water boreholes with the previous refugees, and we often take water from Kakuma 1 using water trucks to fill the five allocated water storage in the new area. We allocated the water storage based on the population; some blocks have three, while others share one,' says Mr. Oleng Obang, water field quality monitor for LWF.

The crisis however is far from over as more and more refugees and asylum seekers trickle into the camps. The solution to this is yet to be found.



WET SUNSHINE

BY Charity Nzomo

Yesterday I woke up to a brand new day. By brand I mean totally different, something I had never experienced before. The warm, almost hot morning sun rays had been replaced by fresh chilly streaks of a chilly breeze. For a moment I thought I was in a totally new location because it was all so new to me, the kind of new you would never complain about; it was so refreshing. Nature could already predict what was coming as trees swerved from left to right jubilantly with the leaves already looking green and lively as if anticipating something. In a parallel universe those would be little children waiting for their mother to get home with goodies in the evening.

When I got to the office, I barely had my seat when the rain started pouring, then I finally got it; the rainy season was here and I seemed to be the only one excited about it. Too eager to ask why I was the only jubilant one about the rains, I stepped out of the office and walked back to the house to wear a sweater (my, had I missed wearing one!) When I decided to come back to my office my unasked question was silently answered by the streets of compound one; muddy grounds with puddles of water.

I learned that lagas were flooded in Kakuma 3 and movement within the camp and to other places in the camp was very limited. It touches down for one hour, and experienced for the next couple of days. The lagas were flooded not from the downpour in Kakuma but were filled with water from Moroto hills, in Uganda. Here is how the lagas looked like for the people of kakuma 3.

I learned then that down here, people prefer it dry than wet and paralyzed. Funny enough by around one o'clock the sun was up and the ground was drying up. In this context I concluded it the day of wet sunshine.



BY DAWIT EJIGU

BIODEGRADATION

A new technology to manage waste disposal in kakuma refugee camp

Kakuma is facing continued problems at the waste disposal sites due to mismanagement of waste, and business premises are the most affected. The Refugee spoke to different residents across the camp and revealed that the location of the dumpsite is creating serious health hazards that are threatening to affect livelihoods. However, according to information from the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), a new agency taking over Hygiene and Sanitation work in Kakuma Refugee Camp, the problem is going to be resolved with the introduction of a new biodegradation technology which will soon be implemented in Kakuma.

One refugee whom The Refugee spoke to, together with her four family members who live very near to one of the dangerous rubbish dumps, spoke of her concern "People and hotels (...) bring their domestic refuse and dispose them here, and when they do so it creates a good environment for flies and other insects. They breed and invade my compound and cause many problems. The mosquitos also breed over here and attack us". She added "Our children enter the dumpsite when they play football and get exposed to

different diseases including diarrhea and lung problems".

Directly identifying, Kakuma One Zone 1 and 2, especially the densely populated blocks of Somali and Ethiopian Community, and Kakuma One Zone 4 (Hong Kong) business areas are the places where dumps sites are located. In addition, the disposal of used plastic sheets is an ongoing issue. Every business in Kakuma is tied with plastic sheets, including hotels, cafeterias, shops, and even the take-away cups used for tea and coffee use plastics. These plastics are then thrown out as waste, and since plastic never completely breaks down, they stay in/on the ground contributing to environmental pollution by prohibiting the rainwater entering the ground, amongst other side effects.

In addition, we also received complaints about the dump site locations from other blocks in K1 Z1. One local resident who lives near St. Stephen Church explained that because of the lack of concern about dumpsites, his brothers and he are now trying to administrate the dumpsite near his residence themselves. In order to relocate the dumpsite they informed IRC Sanitation office but are yet to

receive a response. Throughout Kakuma Refugee Camp, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) has been running the sanitation services but in September 2013 the responsibility was handed over to the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). The NRC is employing Vector Control which includes treating stagnant waters, spraying houses to control diseases like malaria, sanitation works like construction of latrines, management of dumpsites, hygiene promotion works like providing beneficiaries with latrine cleaning materials, and health education which involves PHAST (Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation) for adults and CHAST (Children Hygiene and Sanitation Training) for children. NRC is also on the way to fund Health Clubs at the school level in order to promote the awareness of hygiene and sanitation, which NRC says is a serious concern in Kakuma.

"To remove this waste we are now working with different communities and we have already recruited sanitary workers from different locations throughout the camp. They collect rubbish and waste from every corner and remove them. We also have a group that we are training to address this matter for the communities," says Lorian Alex(NRC).

With the arrival of the new asylum seekers, the land set aside for waste disposal is bound to get overwhelmed with the increase in the number of families living in the camps. The NRC is contemplating other means of waste management including using biodegradation technology. This simple yet effective technology will involve separating all waste into degradable and those that cannot be broken down. The biodegradation technology uses microorganisms to break down organic waste. The previous methods that were being used included burning which also posed health risks to plants and animals in the area. The technology will be useful to the community as the by-product of the process will include compost manure and biogas. In preparation for this, the NRC is in the process of providing waste management training for 20 people from different communities in Kakuma.

KEEPING KAKUMA ON THE MOVE

The presence of boda boda operators in Kakuma is not only a relief for commuters, but for small garage owners.

BY DAWIT EJIGU

With a population of almost 150,000 people in an environment where the average day temperature is 33 degrees Celsius, a reliable transport system is vital. The boda boda has become the most preferred if not the only available means of transport within the camps. The boda bodas both bicycles and motorbikes are mostly operated by young men and they ferry passengers, mostly women and children across the camps. These bikes however need to be maintained, creating jobs for other young people.

As they shared their story to us concerning their garage business, now, they are on track of reshaping their life and generating incomes privately. As The Refugee Magazine realized from owners of those garages, most of them are graduates from Don Bosco Motor and Vehicle Mechanics Engineering Department, Kakuma; but there are also others who run this work by experience too.

Peter Kamau is one of them; he owns a Boda Boda garage on the street of Baghdad, Kakuma. Together with his seven colleagues, he is busy all the day. Mr. Kamau got himself in to this job because of his passion for mechanics and he has spent almost more than 20 years being a mechanic. Before coming to Kakuma, he had the same job in Kisumu, Nakuru and Kitale.

While sharing with us his experience in Kakuma he says, "I came to Kakuma five



PHOTO: Man repairs bicycles at Kakuma 1

years back; and is so nice and this is what I had been looking for. Together with my co-workers, we generate incomes and support our life. I also support my family with this job. I am the head of this Garage and I have seven workers who support me on this duty. When the market is perfect we will generate up to KSH 500 per individual and this is good for us."

Poor road infrastructure and rocky terrains called 'Algarov' are some of the factors that make his business boom. Abdul Aringoma is a 'boda boda' rider of Congolese nationality. He is a regular customer in Kamau's garage. He, like many others, has hired his motorbike from someone else and has to pay a daily fee to the owner and whatever sum remains, he takes home as his pay. "I operate from as far as Clinic 6 to Kakuma 1 getting my customers along this route. The road is rocky and in poor state so we rely on the presence of these mechanics to keep our bikes in good and safe conditions," says Aringoma.

Hong Kong (Kakuma 1 Zone 4), Kakuma 1, Kakuma 2 and Kakuma 3 are key Boda Boda routes in addition to Kakuma Town where main Garages are located while smaller garages are spread along the roads connecting these places.

Nkengurutse Protais is studying Motor Vehicle Mechanics at Don Bosco. We met him in his Garage located in Kakuma 1,

Hong Kong area. Protais studies during the morning and in the afternoon, he works in his Garage with his four friends. "I work harder to ensure that all my customers get quality service and that they are satisfied. I am enrolled at Don Bosco studying mechanics so as to increase my knowledge and expertise," says Protais. "The major challenge that we face is lack of spare parts," he added. Protais also offers training to the youth who are interested in learning his trade.

Waithaka Samuel is Motor and Vehicle Engineering Instructor at Don Bosco Vocational Training. He is currently training 35 students. "Recently our department received 35 students who are attending theoretical and practical lessons at Don Bosco. Most of our graduates are successful; the small private garages across the camp are theirs. I feel proud when I see my students succeed. However, they face the challenge of lack of equipment and would like to appeal to anyone or organization that can assist them to urgently come to their aid," says Waithaka Samuel.

The tools and spares used by these young entrepreneurs are bought miles away in Kitale town as there are no spare shops in Kakuma town. Most of these businesses survive on tire repair and change which can earn them up to KSH 600 per day.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFUGEES

By CHELIA Rose

For most students living in refugee camps, learning can be a challenge. With limited resources and opportunities available to further their education, most of the students do not get a chance to attain post-secondary education and therefore they lack professional training and technical skills to enable them get employment or start income generating ventures.

With only a handful of educational facilities and the increasing number of refugees in Kakuma, getting a good education as one advances may prove difficult to many. Kakuma has 18 Primary schools (with the latest addition being HOPE primary in the new arrival area) and 3 Secondary Schools that are run by the LWF. The secondary schools cannot accommodate everyone who finishes primary school hence a lot of pupils drop out of school to join other facilities and trainings while a good number of those who join the secondary schools also do not make it to the finish line. There are numerous challenges that students face but for those who put an extra effort in their education stand to reap from the many opportunities made possible by the presence of the NGOs operating in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

To help improve the situation, Windle Trust (WTK) in partnership with Canadian government and the World University Service of Canada (WUSC) through its Student Refugee Program are giving high performing students from the refugee communities a chance to not only pursue post secondary education in Canadian Universities and colleges in Canada but also become permanent residents in Canada.

Since it was launched in 1978, the Student Refugee Program has been helping young people from poor backgrounds achieve their dreams in life, providing hope, resources and access to post-secondary

education at Canadian Universities and Colleges. The program is an initiative of a group of students in Canadian Universities to help the young people from war-torn countries to pursue higher education in Canada.

According to Grace Molly, Scholarship Instructor at Windle Trust, 752 students from Kakuma refugees' camp have been admitted to Canadian Universities and Colleges since the program was launched in 1993.

"Every year we admit between 25-30 students into the program" she added.

Application Process

As Grace explains, adverts for available scholarships are put up on various notice boards around the camp for prospective students to apply. Shortlisted candidates go through two interview processes -written and oral in either English or French Languages.

The Canadian consulate in Kenya together with the United Nations Agency for Refugees verifies the documents to ascertain that the applicants are actually refugees before a final list is released.

"We announce our scholarships every July, and it takes about one year to complete the whole process" She added.

Initially the scholarship was limited to refugee students from Kenya, Malawi and Thailand; however, over the years, the list has expanded to include Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan, South Sudan, Burma and Afghanistan.

According to Windle Trust, in 2012/2013 academic years, a total of 45 students from Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps received scholarships to pursue post-secondary education in Canada. Considering the challenging learning

environment in refugee camps, Windle Trust and WUSC have set the minimum qualifications at B+ for boys and C+ for girls. Perhaps to ensure a good number of students, especially girls be admitted into the program.

Nonetheless, the boys get most of the slots. "Out of 25 students, awarded WUSC scholarships this year, only 3 are girls" Said Grace. The selection process is very competitive and with limited number of spaces, a majority of the students miss out the opportunity to advance their studies.

Beneficiaries

Yai Lual, 22, from South Sudan is among the 25 students set to join the rest of other beneficiaries in Canada in August. For her, it is a lifetime opportunity to achieve her dreams of becoming a doctor and get a chance to help her families who have lived in the camp for 15 years. "Life in the camp is very hard, I hope to get a good job when I complete my studies so that I can support my family to have a decent life" said Lual.

According to the Scholarship Instructor, Grace Molly, Windle Trust issues at least 10 scholarships to high performing girls both from the host and refugee communities in Kakuma to attend school in the local institutions. In this particular scholarship, Windle Trust supports the girls fully in their first, second and third year. In the fourth year, the parents are required to contribute half of the school fees, while Windle Trust pays the other half.

Unfortunately, as Grace explains, even with such arrangements, most parents are still not able to raise school fees for their daughters when they get to their final year. Perhaps because most of them do not have any sources of income, and this has resulted to a high drop out rate of girls from school in their final year of study.

LIFE AFTER FORM FOUR

BY DAWIT EJIGU

For many of the youths living in Kakuma, education is an opportunity and a window to a brighter future. There are a lot of scholarship opportunities that are available to them from different educational agencies, ranging from scholarships to study in local institutions or if you are lucky enough you might get an opportunity for further studies abroad. However these opportunities are never fully utilized by the youths as a large number of them drop out of school due to different reasons. Those who fail to secure scholarships settle for incentive jobs in the agencies working with refugees in Kakuma while others join trainings offered by humanitarian agencies working in the camps.

It seems like yesterday when the 2013 form fours met at Kakuma Secondary in October last year for prayers and blessings from the community as they started their journey to complete the 8-4-4 education system. Just recently, the Kenya National Examination Council, through the Ministry of Education released the long awaited KCSE results, setting the direction for the next step in life that these fresh learners will take.

Adud Chongo, is one of the school leavers. Chongo arrived in Kakuma in

the year 2008 and began his educational journey from class 7. His journey, a story shared by many refugees, has faced many challenges. "It was such a good time for me but also very challenging. I was so lonely first. Later my step mother came and joined me in the camp. I did not have someone to support me and found it almost impossible to generate income to support mother and I (sic), says Adud. 'Getting reference books also proved a challenge but I pressed on and attained what I had been working towards' added

2115
THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS
IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Adud.

Most of the school leavers in Kakuma begun their education here in the camps. The enrolment in primary schools is usually higher compared to enrolment in the secondary schools. This difference in figures is attributed to the high numbers of dropouts that are still being experienced in this camp and other places in the third world countries. The LWF, Education Department Head, Mr. Joseph Mutamba told the Refugee Magazine that in the year 2013 a there was a total of 27,000

students in the 17 primary (Hope Primary in the new arrival area not included) schools that are found within the camp while the secondary schools had a total of 2115 students only.

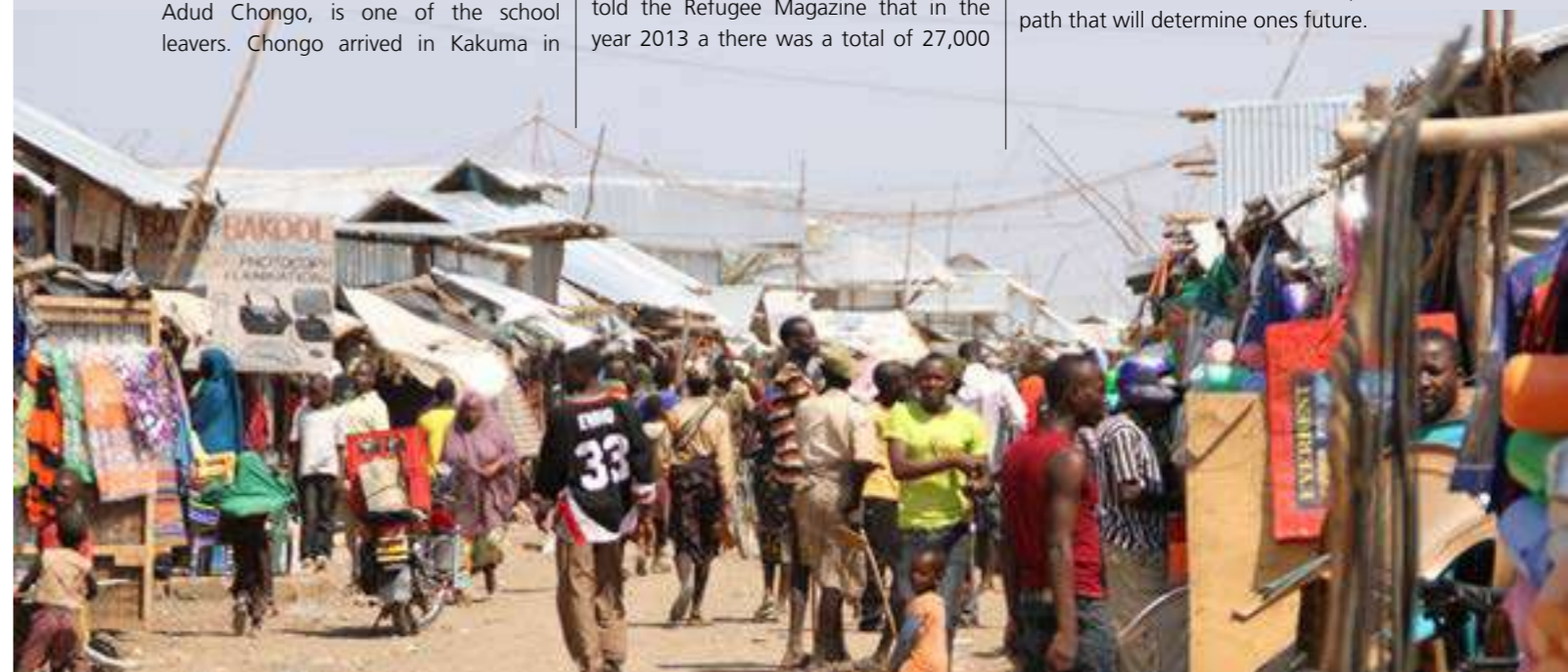
The camp offers many opportunities for those who perform exceptionally in their final exams, the KCSE. According to LWF, close to 100 students are recruited as teachers in different schools to tutor in the subjects which they performed best. The others who do not make it to get these jobs and scholarships offered by NGOs may opt for trainings offered by agencies which may later lead to employment and or even self-employment. FilmAid is an example of agencies that offers training. Through its FTP (Filmmaker Training Programme) FilmAid offers trainings in film production and Journalism among others. Other youths may choose to use their talents to make ends meet and may join theatre groups or any other that they feel comfortable with.

Jacob Deng Ngor is one of the lucky few who have secured a job with LWF as a Teacher. He teaches in Jebel Mara Boys primary. Jacob began his education here in Kakuma at Fuji Primary in Kakuma II. He says getting education without fee is a big chance for him and his friends to architect their tomorrow. Ngor now lives with his brother, he scored C- and got a chance of teaching at Jebel Mara Boys Primary through LWF Education Department.

This is the time to choose ones path, a path that will determine ones future.



PHOTO: A girls boarding school in Kakuma



JASON BELL HELPS CHILDREN BUILD NEW FUTURES IN THIRD COUNTRIES

Written by Jason Bell with editing from Caitlin Hannahan

ETHIOPIA, 26 February 2014 (ICMC) - Although I have been working at the Mai Aini camp in Ethiopia for the past year, I never ceased to be amazed by the sight of hundreds of children running around, playing games, washing clothes and cooking meals with hardly any adults in the sight.

Placed within the hot and dusty hills of Ethiopia's northern Tigray region, The Mai Aini camp offers quite a contrast of the Iowa farmland of my youth. Despite a devastating border conflict with Eritrea from 1998-2000, Ethiopia now hosts tens of thousands of persons fleeing the very country it once fought against; approximately 1,000 of them are unaccompanied children.

The children flee Eritrea for various reasons: including mandatory and possibly indefinite military service upon turning 18 (or earlier, should they drop out of school or fail their exams), the threat of forced marriage, family struggles, and a lack of access to education or medical services.

The children and teenagers make their way across the heavily-militarized border between Ethiopia and Eritrea on



foot, and despite ending up only a few hundred kilometres from their homes, find themselves worlds apart from their families and friends in Eritrea. Regardless of what initially brought them to Ethiopia, returning to their home country is not possible due to a "shoot to kill" policy maintained by the Eritrean army along the Ethiopia-Eritrea border, the risk of arrest for having fled the country, or indefinite military service. There is no telephone network between the two countries, making any communication with their families nearly impossible. Further complicating matters, opportunities for family tracing or reunification with relatives in Eritrea are extremely limited, as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other organizations are restricted from operating in the areas of Eritrea where most of the children come from.

Once in Ethiopia, most unaccompanied boys and girls are placed into a group care arrangement in Mai Aini camp; groups of eight children of a similar age and gender typically share a small, one-room house. The children are visited daily by a designated social worker who provides them with informal counseling, monitors their school attendance and performance, and distributes necessities such as clothing and shoes. The children are given injera, a flat bread which serves as a staple food for most Ethiopians and Eritrean, but are responsible for preparing their own meals, washing their clothes, and most other household responsibilities. In addition to primary and secondary schools, there are many outlets available for the children to keep themselves engaged including child-friendly spaces with age-appropriate games, an activity centre offering basketball, football, and volleyball games, as well as a library, and music, dance, and acting classes provided by the UN refugee

agency (UNHCR) and their implementing partners.

Nonetheless, unaccompanied children in Mai Aini and other camps often find themselves isolated and at times hopeless. Due to the sheer number of children and a limited number of available foster families to be found in a predominantly single male population, they reside unsupervised during the nights and weekends while their social workers are off duty.

Children unable to trace or contact their families express feelings of loneliness and worry about the future, often with a sense of desperation to be able to build a life anywhere outside of the camps.

In my role as a deployee, I conduct Best Interest Determinations (BIDs), a process where I interview unaccompanied and separated children, relatives, and others close to the child in order to identify short and long-term care arrangements based on the principle of ensuring the best interest of the child. The process can yield various results for each child depending on their individual circumstances, but efforts are made to prioritize the most vulnerable children, whether because they are orphaned, have protection or medical concerns, or have spent many years as an unaccompanied child with no prospects of family reunification.

My work took on a new meaning in December 2013, while en route to the United States to visit my family. While checking in at the airport in Addis Ababa, I unexpectedly met 5 children who I had conducted BID's for when I first started working at Mai Aini. They were on their way to the U.S. to be resettled through the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Foster Care program, which is administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement. As it turned out, we were on the same

flight, which gave me several hours to provide an impromptu cultural orientation to life in the U.S. The children had many questions, such as "How far will I have to walk to my school?" and "Is Boston close to Fargo?"

Yet beyond their intense curiosity, they had a sense of excitement and optimism regarding their futures that I had never seen in my earlier conversations with them in Mai Aini. They spoke of their aspirations

in completing their education and having the opportunity to trace their families. And personally, being able to see some of the children I first spoke to in their group care homes beginning a new journey has helped provide me with a renewed sense of motivation and fulfillment that I will carry with me throughout my work.

Jason Bell got his start working with refugees as a resettlement case manager for Lutheran Social Services in Minneapolis

and Duluth, Minnesota. His later field experience with both UNHCR in Kenya and the Jesuit Refugee Service in Malawi left him well prepared for a position with ICMC. He began working for ICMC's Resettlement Deployment Scheme in November 2011, first as a Resettlement Expert in Kakuma refugee camp, Kenya and currently as a Best Interest Determination (BID) Specialist in Shire, Ethiopia.

DEALING WITH TRAUMA

BY SALESA RUKIYA

Everyday day, the Waldorf team reach out and spend valuable time with children from refugee communities in Kakuma. Through different therapy sessions, they interact and understand the different situations children experience in the camp. Through their programs, the Crises Intervention Team helps reduce trauma and create a friendly environment for children. Waldorf came to Kakuma in 2012 and currently have a base established at the reception center in Kakuma 3, with a team of 8 national and 21 incentive staff (mostly from refugee communities). Waldorf is helping to put a smile on every kids' face.

Different from other learning institutions, the team uses three systematic steps: the head, heart and hands. This invokes the use of thinking and feelings in the children's learning process. Drawing, painting, speech work and molding are some of the activities completed by these children under the guidance of their teachers.

The strategy is, every morning teachers create a "train" that is going around the reception center singing from door



to door and the children join in the singing and follow the teachers. When a considerable number of children join the train, the team from Waldorf joins them on the playground and begins their activities, categorizing them into three teams from age 1-7; with two teachers' heading the 7-14 and 14-21 groups.

Valerian Mbandi, a Coordinator at Kakuma 3, says teachers can easily identify traumatized children and those who need special attention through their paintings, moldings and drawing. During such sessions, children are given all the necessary items to help them settle down calmly drawing, painting or moldings images of their liking.

"Severally, children recall incidents that occurred back in their home countries and most express them through art works," said Michael Edward a Waldorf teacher. He also mentioned that during such sessions some children draw houses on fire, soldiers holding guns, dead bodies and other images from their

experiences. For such instances teachers point them out and these children are assessed and referred to agencies like Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS) and Child Protection Unit in LWF.

For Michael Edward he will not forget seeing a three year-old child mould a gun out of clay "That was shocking," He said.

Waldorf began the school program in both Horseed and Polataka Primary School and in the same year they started working with students in Kakuma from classes one to three. They also have a program in Songot pre-school, and their teachers conduct all these programs.

The team faces challenges but tries to curb the demand with the available teachers and resources. The language barrier is the major challenge, though with time children are able to catch up and come to understand the activities. Waldorf is looking at the possibilities of expanding their programs and secure funds for more activities.

THINKING OUTSIDE the BOTTLE

For many, plastic bottles may seem to be of no use, but for one man in Kakuma 1, plastic bottles have become a source of income. Using them to change the landscape of his area, the young interior decorator tells us his story.

BY RUKIYA SALESSA

Kakuma — first glance at an empty plastic bottle and you could think it has limited or no use at all. It is difficult to think of a plastic bottle as a brick. However when filled with mud, a plastic bottle is stronger and more durable than a brick and whatever you can do with a brick; you can do with a bottle too.

Natnael Gashaw, 26, an entrepreneur and journalist from Ethiopia, now a refugee in Kakuma has been collecting plastic bottles in the camp and using them to construct plastic houses and in decorating peoples' homes and hotels.

In his small compound, at the Ethiopian community in Kakuma, he has designed and built a sizeable plastic bottle house, 2m by 2m in dimension. A model admired by many. Inside is a single bed, enough to fit one side of the room, a small bench for the visitors and also used as reading table. He removed his old looking novel-The Secret and as I sat he said "This book helps me get inspiration and purpose for life". His is the only design of its kind in Kakuma.

When Natnael arrived in Kakuma in October, last year, he was put in a tent like any other new arrival. The irritating-whistling wind was always the first thing that would disrupt his sleep every morning. The constant buffeting from the wind made the canvas walls shake, weakening the structure further. Other than the wind is the heat and dust was unbearable.

Hot and Dusty

The climate in Kakuma are generally characterized as insanely dusty and hot weather. During the dry season, temperatures soar above 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit) and after enough dry weather, the dust arrives -- a brownish powder that works its way into every crack and

makes it hard to breathe. When the wind blows hard, most parts of Kakuma are covered in dust.

In the soaring sun, tents are exposed to the hot wind which becomes unbearable to stay in. Deforestation for firewood and construction has further worsened the situation for the refugees. There are no trees to provide shade during the day; hence most people spread their sleeping mats outside the tents. According to Natnael Gashaw, the harsh weather condition was his biggest motivation to start the project. "I wanted to design and build a house that is cool and comfortable inside to withstand the hot sun and dust in Kakuma," he said.

Construction

In his innovation, plastic bottles are filled with sand and then linked together at the neck by an elaborate grid of strings. The bottles are then strategically laid and filled with mud or cement, creating a building material that

Natnael asserts is stronger than a brick. "To have a faultless bottle house, one needs to collect bottles preferably of the same size and height, which are then filled with soil leaving no provision for air space. Using bottles that do not fit perfectly will cause the building to crumble down or rather produce a lopsided structure" Natnael explained.

Wondering how the house can be kept cool in hot weather in Kakuma? According to Natnael the bottles must be well filled with soil and the perimeter wall should be wide enough. "A wider perimeter wall will absorb much of the heat from outside and keep the house cooler inside" he said. Adding that, a well build-plastic bottle house is cooler than a brick house.

"One of the reasons behind filling the bottles with soil is to maintain the house in a cool way throughout even in time of hot weather," he added.



PHOTO: A bar counter made from whiskey glass bottle

NATNAEL GASHAW

Creative Interior designer, Entrepreneur and Journalist





PHOTO: Portraits, Flags, and Organization logos displayed at the VIP section of Africana Hotel

The technology is cheaper as cement can be alternated by mud or clay and bottles which are the largest input can be sourced free of charge,

According to Natnael, his model plastic bottle house used 1250 bottles and cost \$60 to complete. Despite availability of the raw materials, his main challenge is collecting the bottles. "I get most of the bottles from hotels and shops in the camp but sometimes they are not enough especially when it's a big project. I have to pay people to collect the bottles around the camp but it is too costly for me" he said.

He shows me a little section in his house that has been finished using mud-sacks. "I did not have enough bottles and was forced to use mud-filled sacks to complete it," he said.

Today, Natnael together with a number of youth earn their daily bread from this artistic work. He has decorated a number of hotels, shops and homes using the plastic bottles and other naturally available materials, creating very beautiful and inviting designs that bring life in the rooms.

His latest project was interior decoration at Africana Hotel in Kakuma, where he received KSH. 5,000 as payment. According to Abdi Mohammed, a manager at Africana Hotel in Kakuma, customers have been giving positive remarks about the artwork as they go about having their delicious meals and the magical Ethiopian coffee and he hopes that his customers will keep increasing.

Advantages of plastic bottle houses

In most city centers' and busy towns, the use of bottled water is very common since tap water is deemed unsafe for drinking. "Bottles can

be collected around conferences, parties, and gatherings. A small house can use as many as 10,000 bottles, waste that would otherwise be deposited in a landfill or burned. Any public event can turn into a collection campaign," Gashaw explained.

Unlike "traditional" bricks, bottle bricks are not baked, a process that uses much firewood and contributes to deforestation, which renders the technology environment friendly.

Building with bottles is typically less expensive than building with bricks as the main construction material is waste. In many areas, individuals earn money by salvaging used bottles and reselling them on street-corners for use in transporting honey, oil, and other products.

"Purchasing bottles from such vendors is still significantly less expensive than purchasing bricks and essentially funds a grassroots recycling campaign in the absence of a government instituted waste management system," he added. It should be remembered that the plastic coating of "bottle bricks" makes them more flexible than baked bricks. Bottle construction has greater shock resistance and is well suited for earthquake prone areas.

It is estimated that it takes a plastic bottle approximately 300 years to decompose. The use of plastic bottles for construction does not only provide a solution to the bulk waste from mineral water and soda among other beverages,

but provides shelter and conserves the environment.

Packing sand into plastic bottles is a technique that started nine years ago in India, South and Central America. Named "bottle brick" technology, the compacted sand inside the bottles is almost 20 times stronger than bricks.

"The technology is cheaper as cement can be replaced by mud or clay and bottles which are the largest input can be sourced free of charge," he explained.

"My hope is that this shelter innovation can be adopted by more people as a lasting shelter solution especially for residents of Kakuma.

From Ethiopia to Kakuma

For over 10 years, as an experienced investigative journalist and entrepreneur, dedicated to uncover hidden corrupt trades in the government, Natnael Gashaw knew that he was operating on dangerous grounds as his reporting mostly involving the high and mighty in the corridors of power. For years he knew people he alleges were from the government were following him. During this time he also received numerous threat messages on his life and the family. He was arrested two times while in Ethiopia.

"My father died while in prison after serving over a decade because of political problems in Ethiopia" Natnael said.

At the time of his father's death, Natnael was in Malakal, South Sudan as an asylum seeker because the government wanted to arrest him. "Because of what happened, I never got to bury my father" he added.

Early 2013, Natnael together with his colleague, published a dossier detailing a scandal in the office of the Prime Minister. "Because of the sensitivity of the information, the story would not be aired on state owned media firms; therefore I decided to publish and broadcast it in my company- TRAPA Capital PLC- a media company based in Ethiopia. When the story broke out, unknown people broke into my office and confiscated all the materials and equipment" he said. That is when Natnael and his colleague decided to run away for safety.

According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), many journalists have gone into exile fearing imprisonment and torture, citing Eritrea, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Somalia among the infamous countries with a huge exodus of journalists. Natnael points out that if you are a journalist, you are either a protest or pro-government and that Journalists, who are pro-government, are well treated with good salary.

"Unlike Ethiopia, kenyan journalists have the freedom to write and publish anything about the president and the scandals in government. If you did that in Ethiopia,

you risk being killed," he said.

In Ethiopia, you are not allowed to draw and publish a cartoon of the Prime Minister in the newspaper, noting that these restrictions have made a lot of journalists opt to settle in other countries. Even after leaving his home to start a new life in Kakuma refugee camp, Natnael doesn't feel safe. He claims that people pretending to be refugees from Ethiopia are trailing him in the camp wanting to know what he is up to.

"Since I started the plastic bottle house projects, a lot of people now know me especially those from my community and because of this I fear for my life as I do not know who is a spy," he said.

However Natnael says he is not ready to go back to his country soon not unless the political situation improves. "I'd rather stay in this harsh condition but with peace and freedom to do my work without any external interference," he added.

After the interview, Natnael hands me a visitors book which I graciously sign. The book reminds him of every visitor, both local and foreign, who has visited his projects and from it, it's evident that his work has attracted many people.



PHOTO: The main entrance of Africana Hotel

PARENTS SHOULD EDUCATE CHILDREN, STAKEHOLDERS

BY PASCAL ZIGASHANE @ZIGASHANE

The universal children's day remains an opportunity for most of the people living in Kakuma refugee camp as it gives the multi-cultured community an opportunity to come to share their ideas, opinions and views on the rights of their children as well as celebrate the gains made so far.

"Stop Violence against Children" was the theme of the day which consummated the mood in the very hot and dusty Kakuma refugee camp, where the youth had gathered in large numbers to mark the universal children's day.

The children's department in the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) organized the event in conjunction with FilmAid International that is working with several youth groups to improve their talents for art, music, film and journalism.

Several children's groups and individuals made various performances such as; poems, traditional and contemporary dances, dramas and traditional music.

In their performances, the children expressed their concerns to their parents and community leaders on upholding their rights as Children, more especially access to education.

Speaking at the event, Lallo Hosman,



a Child Counselor at Lutheran World Federation, outlined children rights to include; right to education, the right to clothing, the right to good health, the right to worship, right to information and expression among others.

He urged parents to allow their children to participate in various activities organized for them by the various NGOs to enable them grow socially so that they develop their talents and become better people in future.

Lallo said they (LWF) work with several other NGOs to identify cases of child abuse in the communities and advice parents accordingly on the importance of educating both genders and the penalties involved if found guilty of abusing children.

The Lutheran World Federation senior protection officer, Martin Juma said that children's rights are fully supported and the structure is well advocated as their incentive staff work within communities to raise awareness and keep the office informed about any child rights violation.

Several activities, awareness campaigns and forums are provided to help children know their rights.

Darfurians Celebrate 2013 KCSE results

BY PASCAL ZIGASHANE @ZIGASHANE

The Darfurian communities living in Kakuma refugees' camp are a happy lot as 30 of their own sat for Kenya Certificate of Primary Education and Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in various institutions in the camp. This is the first time, in decades for such a high number of Darfurians to reach such levels of in their academics. "We are not celebrating because of the good marks but to encourage the rest of us in lower classes to work even harder to reach class eight and proceed to secondary school", said Asha Yahway, a student.

She noted that such events would motivate many students to work hard; especially those in class eight and form four and also prevent them from early marriages. Five of the students who sat their KCPE were girls. She revealed that most of the girls get married between 13-15. Speaker after speaker, urged the parents to educate all their children irrespective of their gender. Parents and students were challenged to take advantage of the services offered by the humanitarian NGOs in the camp.

"If boys can do it, girls can do it too. We attend same lessons and read from the same books every day, therefore there's nothing that should stop us from performing better as well" Asha Yahway challenged his fellow girls.

The group leaders of Sabuni Yahya, congratulated the students for their exemplary performances in the last year's national exams. Despite them being a minority community in Kakuma, the leaders said that this was a very a great start and hope for many more students to sit for their national exams in 2014.

In appreciation of the students' performances, the Darfur Academic Association (DAA) gave the students various awards including books and other stationery materials.

PROJECTING HOPE

SCREENINGS FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL RELIEF

BY S. OLUMOLA

FilmAid is working in full speed in Kakuma Refugee Camp in the north west of Kenya in order to provide life saving information and psychological relief to thousands of refugees fleeing the war-torn South Sudan.

The war between government troops and the militia men allied to former Vice President, Riek Machar has displaced more than half a million people and 130,400 people have fled to neighboring countries.

According to the UNHCR, Kakuma, about 30,000 refugees have been registered since war broke out in December in Africa's youngest state. In the first month, about 400-600 refugees were being ferried everyday from Nadapal into Kakuma. However, latest statistics have showed a reduction in numbers to 200-300 people per day. This came after the signing of cease-fire agreement between the President Kiir's Dinka-government and the Nuer-militia groups led by Machar.

UNOCHA reports estimate 743,400 people have been displaced and over 1,000 killed inside South Sudan. 87% of those displaced are women and children; most of them have been left widows and orphans because of the war.

The crisis in South Sudan is the worst in the country's short history. Five out of South Sudan's ten states are heavily affected by armed violence. One of them is Jonglei State that borders the Western Ethiopia's Gambella District. Gambella is a hard to reach area with serious security issues and its larger parts of the region have no power. Many local communities are already living on a minimum subsistence level and the many refugees from South Sudan put additional pressure on the already limited resources.

From the first day when thousands of South Sudanese started fleeing warfare in Africa's youngest state into Kakuma

DO GOOD, FEEL GOOD EVENT

BY RUKIYA SALESSA

The highly anticipated day was here; a gigantic crowd gathered at the Deng Luol Basketball court for the Do Good Feel Good event.

The event hosted by FilmAid, aimed at passing on the simple message that when you do good things you ultimately end up feeling good. Excitement and anticipation could be felt from the audience as they patiently waited for the event to start. The atmosphere was electric as hip hop music filled the air. "Music is my passion and I love to educate the masses through my songs," said BDM who was the second artist to perform. He challenged the audience with his heart-breaking song of a child born and left to fend for himself.

The audience was treated to laughter as the Faith Art Group presented a skit on why abortion should be discouraged. The young thespians used humor tastefully to address the weighty subject. According to Shambane, the head of Faith Art Group, the drama was intended to send the message that abortion is harmful and should not be tolerated. "It is shameful that boys trick girls into sexual relationships and run away from responsibilities when they get pregnant. Young people should

abstain or assume parental care rather than encouraging abortion." He added with a serious tone.

The Miss Malakal segment of the event was undoubtedly the most anticipated, with deafening applause filling the air as the contestants took to the stage. "These are real cultural beauties," John Chuol one of the admirers intoned. "Africa is truly blessed. Few of the world's ladies can match the African beauty," V.King, Chuol's friend agreed.

Although many of those who attended the event were satisfied, some felt dissatisfied. Emmanuel, a youth living in Kakuma felt that the event should have been inclusive of all the nationalities living in the camps in the performances. "I have learnt a lot today." Said Chol Deng –a youth from Kakuma one (1) present at the show. "Some issues presented on the stage particularly about abortion and rape need serious reflection" he concluded.

Eddy Musoke, FilmAid Outreach Facilitator, explained that the aim of the event was to instill some values to the society and that the messages passed through the performances should be embraced.

refugee camp, our teams continue to work tirelessly, burning the mid-night oil in order to provide the refugees with necessary information. Access to information is a fundamental human right and in such humanitarian situations, information is a powerful commodity for the victims. Everyday FilmAid is screening films during daytime and evening in the new settlements in Kakuma 4.

"Welcome to Kakuma" is 20-minute documentary film that talks about general life in the camp, highlighting some of

the key processes and services offered by various humanitarian agencies.

In addition, FilmAid is also screening psychosocial or child friendly films mostly targeting children and the youth to help them forget the traumatic situations that resulted from warfare in South Sudan.

FilmAid have been working in Kakuma since 2001, providing the much needed hope and changing lives of refugees from Somalia, South Sudan, Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and Ethiopia.



POLITICAL TURMOIL IN AFRICA'S NEWEST STATE CAUSING MASS EXODUS

BY SAMMY OLUMOLA

PHOTO/Otieno Samuel-FilmAid

Kakuma — About 30,000 South Sudanese people, most of them women and children have fled their country and settled in Kenya's Kakuma refugee camp following the violent clashes that broke out last December due to a political struggle between President Salva Kiir and sacked former Vice President Riek Machar in Juba. The duos political differences led to violent clashes between the South Sudanese army and army defectors throughout the country, fuelled by ethnic differences. The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) reports indicate up to 600 individuals arrive each day from south Sudan, majority being women and children. By 11th February 2014, 16,462 asylum seekers had been sheltered in Kakuma refugee camp awaiting registration for their manifest documentation with 87% of them being women and children. Currently, a total of 250 people arrive daily from south Sudan. Reports from UNHCR in South Sudan claim that there are over 700,000 IDPs in different places in South Sudan, t other neighboring countries such as Uganda

and Ethiopia have 65,500 and 28,400 number of refugees from Southern Sudan respectively.

Mandelina Wilson, 28, recounts his predicaments when the war started. "It was early in the morning around 4.00 am when I heard my neighbor crying and shouting for help. I ran out with two children, but one is missing" she said.

"I witnessed people being killed in cold blood, dead bodies littered along the road side, houses being torched among other cruel activities," Mandelina added.

The Department of Refugees Affairs (DRA) registers all the asylum seekers and thereafter, the UNHCR transports them to the Reception Centre in Kakuma Refugee camp. Speaking to the Refugee Magazine, after arriving in Kakuma from Nadapal, Mandelina said that thousands of people have taken refuge in the United Nations Missions of South Sudan (UNMISS) compound where they are provided with foods, shelter and medical care.

Most of them, like Karkuet Jiekmier had to walk over 50km to the Kenya-South Sudan boarder in Nadapal for assistance.

70,423
The number of people vaccinated against measles

At 58, Karkuet narrates; the situation in her country was so dire that she couldn't afford to stay. "My granddaughter and I walked nearly 50 KM to get to Nadapal before we were brought here by UNHCR." She said.

John Aler, says he is not even sure whether his parents are safe, his home was burnt down by men he suspect were from the militia side.

The refugees are registered as immigrants in Nadapal then screened by the Medical San Frontiers doctors M.S.F. Those found to have contagious diseases like measles are isolated and taken Lopiding sub-district hospital. Unconfirmed sources indicate as many as 10,000 people may have died and close to 800,000 displaced from their homes.

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) estimated on 23 January that around 15,000 refugees had arrived in Sudan's

Border States since clashes erupted. According to BBC report on 18 February, nearly 860,000 people have been displaced from the war-torn Africa's youngest state.

At a coordination meeting held on Wednesday 12th Feb 2014 with all the agencies working in Kakuma, Negotiations between the DRA, the UNHCR and the community on finding land for camp extension are ongoing though it is a lengthy process.

The influx has also resulted to spread of communicable diseases including measles, cholera, and typhoid. Since the beginning of the influx, the International Rescue Committee in Kakuma reported about 123 cases of measles among the new arrivals. This is despite of the medical screenings for malnutrition, polio, guinea worm and meningitis measles, and yellow fever being done to all asylum seekers entering Kakuma through Nadapal. A mass measles vaccination campaign, organized by the IRC kicked off 12th February of targeting over 60,000 children residing in Kakuma. All the 123 cases that had initially tested positive have been treated and discharged no new cases reported since. The vaccination campaign however ended up reaching slightly over 70,400 people living in Kakuma refugee camp.

The influx of refugees has strained the available resources initially put in place for 100,000 people. The most affected is water. A crisis is looming especially in the new arrival area where people have to queue for hours to get just a 20 litre jerrican of water. A number of new arrivals have shifted from their assigned location at Kakuma four to stay with relatives who came to the camp years back. This situation has caused an increase in population in my area which has resulted to reduced water rations.

With the Government of Kenya's directive to move all urban refugees back to the camps, more refugees are expected back to the camp, increasing the already overgrown population.

The question that remains unanswered is how prepared are the humanitarian agencies for the influx?

The Kakuma camp was established in 1992 to serve Sudanese refugees. It now hosts people who have fled emergencies or conflict in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan and

THE REPATRIATION NIGHTMARE

BY SALESSA RUKIYA

"No place on earth is as good as ones place of birth, your own soil where no one else can claim but when it's not safe one has to let go and bare the loss," Ibrahim Abdullah Fuji an elder and a peace facilitator since 1994.

The message of repatriation took many Somalis by surprise, with the majority claiming to have been shocked by the sudden agreement. Most of the elderly refugees spend most of their times listening to radio. They believe it's one of the most reliable sources of information that would keep them updated on the situation back in Somalia.

Fear within the Somali refugees within the camp continues to rise most claiming that lives are still being lost in Somalia each new day. For the likes of Lul Ahmed and many others there is nothing to go back to "I have nothing left in Somalia not a single property, land or a living soul," says Lul.

Lul Ahmed is a single Somalia mother living in Kakuma1. She is a mother of ten children, 7 boys and 3 girls. She bitterly weeps the loss of her husband and 7 children back in Somalia. ' I try hard to cope with life without them though it's quite hard to forget,' she says as emotions run high in her. According to her, Kakuma is quite good to her. Here, she has found what she lacked most...

Peace. She later lost one of her daughters from the remaining three. The injuries that she had sustained back in Somalia got worse and she passed away in Kakuma hospital. Lul Ahmed now takes care of her 5 grandchildren and her two children.

Many Somalis believe that Somalia is still insecure and unstable. 'I not only fear for myself but also for my 11 children who have never seen Somalia,' says Ahmed Bulle living in Kakuma 1 Z1.

I try hard to cope with life without them though it's quite hard to forget

Abdi Mohamed an elder in block 2 Kakuma 1 gets frustrated each day after he heard of the signing of the tripartite agreement. He first stepped In Kenya in 1992 and says he has not heard of peace back in Somalia to date. He complains of his health that continues to deteriorate due to depression and stress of unsafe Somalia.

'We believe Somalia is still unsafe and if the process takes off then we are being taken to a war zone,' Abdul Aadir Abshir, chairman of block 7 Kakuma1. He adds that many within the camp are still confused. He lights on his concern for the elderly and the single mothers who at one point of life had their belongings and families, they have now lost all and have no thoughts of turning back. He fears the fate of the orphans and unaccompanied minors who have either lost their parents or have even lost hope of finding them.



INTERACT
With Us On Facebook

The Refugee Magazine Kakuma/facebook page

FINE ART

MY PASSION FOR ART

BY RUKIYA SALESA

Meet Tsegaye Siregu Abebe well known as Cuba. His office sits in Kakuma1 behind the food distribution center one. In his well-organized small room, beautiful art works have been arranged on walls. On one side, are his tools of trade, a drawer of art equipment and shelves of art books and papers.

Tsegaye is a professional artist from Ethiopia. He came to Kakuma in 1993 from Walda camp. His friends and him were settled in their respective communities based on their nationalities. Being Ethiopian, he was settled in the Ethiopian community. The United Nations Agency for Refugees (UNHCR) gave him a food ratio card, which is also his identification document. Different from present system, food was given to the communities' leaders for distribution.

Tsegaye is a skilled and talented man. Apart from teaching artwork and giving support to his community, his guitarist friend (Tillo) and him, entertain the community with traditional music and dances.

"Art is part of me and as soon as I entered Kakuma I started thinking of ways to do art classes", says Tsegaye. He recounts having started his first art classes under a tree having only one student at that time. In the beginning, he depended on naturally available items-such as charcoal for paint and river wood to conduct his classes.

He tells me his art classes target mostly youths from different nationalities to

protect them from engaging in drugs abuse and other vices in the society. Today, Tsegaye's art project has attracted support from the Lutheran World Federation and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which provides him with necessary tools and materials for teaching art.

His passion for art and improving the lives of people in the refugee community earned him a ticket to Nairobi to exhibit his artworks at the Nairobi Art Gallery in 1996. "Most of the people did not know about Kakuma, but through my drawing and paintings people understood about life in Kakuma refugee camp" said Tsegaye.

In 1997, he was invited by Kate Company to an art workshop in Lokichogio and later got an opportunity to teach art in a girls secondary school and as solo arts teacher at the Kifuli Centre in Nairobi's Kawangware Estate where he trained street boys how to draw and paint to enable them express themselves and keep them away from using drugs.

Tsegaye revisited the center five years later and says there has been a lot of changes, including increased number of students and teachers.

Having trained more than 800 students Tsegaye believes that teaching is more like investigating; he had to distinguish his student's weakness and abilities. He branded them into different categories. He still runs several classes such as paper recycling, shoe and belt

making .He began paper recycling in 2010. Using waste paper from offices and water he created images. Creative students good in drawing had the upper hand.

He came up with the shoe making class after LWF provided him with old tires. Interested students from both host and the refugee communities joined the class. He taught designing using available materials and later shoe polishing. His students who went to different institutions for further art classes perform well as he believes he gave them enough basic skills

"A good number of my students, who have now been repatriated or resettled are now professional artists in their current countries" He added. His former students are very appreciative of the skills he gave them.

"I am proud of my work, even though I do not provide financial support to my students, the skills I have imparted on them is enough source of livelihood to enable them become better people in the society'. Through the support of LWF and UNHCR Tsegaye has been able to touch and change lives of many youths. He does not only teach but also motivates and empowers his students.

Having grown up as an orphan, Tsegaye has come to appreciate little things in life such as love and humility. He understands that nothing comes easy. He has been stuck in the camp for the better part of his life, if at all he gets out he will do wonders through art and peace.

ESCAPE FROM BOR

BY KALAMO ROWLAND AND S. OLUMOLA



PHOTO: Barek poses for a photo outside his tent in the new arrival area

Walking through the dusty roads across the new settlement areas for the new arrivals most of them from South Sudan (Kakuma 4), I and my journalist friend, Rowland Kalamo, a refugee from Congo, noticed a young man standing outside a tent, he looked like he was in deep thoughts. In front of his newly built tent, was the traditional three stone-cooking place, he was boiling water.

As we approach his tent, he notices us and starts to smile. As if we were the only people who had visited his tent ever since he fled his home. Indeed, we were. I was holding my camera, so Rowland extended his hand first to greet him.

"Hi my name is Rowland Kalamu" after which he introduced me and went ahead to tell him where we had come from. "We work for FilmAid and we visit the camps every night to screen films" he added. He shook his head, confirming that he understood what Rowland was talking about. All this time, no word had come out of his mouth.

Using sign language he pointed to our screening track, which was parked about 100 meters from his tent. It is at this point that Rowland and I decided to take a keen interest on this young man. "Why not get his story?" We asked ourselves.

At this point my colleague and I were not sure where to start. We did not understand a thing from his sign language. Then he went inside his tent and brought us a small piece of paper and a pen. Perhaps the only thing that he managed to salvage from his

war-torn country. Most of the spaces, filled up with e-mail addresses and contacts of his relatives and humanitarian workers.

Q. What is your name? writes Rowland. "Barek Clifford Naimana" he replied the same way, squeezing his letters through the remaining lines. He tells us that he arrived in Kakuma two weeks ago after war broke out in his town of Bor.

Q. Tell us about your family?

I am a first born in a family of three, my two young sisters Elmy and Naisula and I. My late father passed away in 2009. He was a Sudanese while my mother, Rot Adong was from Mbarara, Uganda. I was born in Darfur in Sudan, but went to school in Uganda because of the continuous war in Sudan at the time.

Q. Would you like to share with us what happened in Bor?

(We noticed his hesitance to respond, his hands and fingers too weak too to hold the pen. The mood was changing to somber. He wipes his watery eyes, with his Ugandan T-shirt, perhaps to recollect his confidence again. But on a closer look, his watery eyes still gave him up. We notice his yellow T-shirt, on the front it's written "Uganda" and pair of shorts that looked like an outfit for the national football team of Uganda, Rowland and I decided to change the topic to allow him regain his composure.)

Q. Do you play football?

"Yes, sometimes I go to play with the other refugees in one of the open grounds here"

However, using his hands, he demonstrates that his favorite sport is volleyball and athletics. "I played volley ball in our village in Bor with friends" he wrote.

Clifford writes that in 2009, he represented his school in the Eastern Africa games in Rwanda and won the 800m, 400m and 200m races. "The temperatures in Kakuma are very hot and this hinders me from exercising. However, I run every morning and evening when the sun is not hot", writes Clifford.

"When war broke out in Jonglei State of South Sudan, I was with my mother and two sister; Elmy and Naisula. Our house was burnt down so we had to run away into the forest. My mother and sisters left first as I remained behind to carry the little possession left from our house after the arsonists brought it down."

We stayed in the forest for a few days, with little food and no water. It was a very sad experience for us" he explained.

"After a few days in the forest, the soldiers discovered our hideout so we had to run away, again, and that's when they caught and killed my mother and two sisters in cold blood." He wrote.

"I had to run away to Nadapal, in Turkana near the border with the Eastern Equatorial state of South Sudan before we were brought here by UNHCR" he added.

How do you like it here?

He smiles and crosses his hands on his chest to mean it is calm and peaceful. "Despite the dusty roads and the heat, I think Kakuma is much better than being in Juba" he added. Rowland and I got curious to know if he has found some friends in the camp. He tells us he's found some new friends who he plays football with, unfortunately none of them has visited him in his tent. "I do not know any of my immediate neighbors and most of the time I am a lone in my tent. Sometimes it gets very lonely here," he wrote.

By this time, the sun was setting in the west horizon; the conversation with Clifford had filled more than five pages in the notebook with questions and answers. It was time for us to leave and join the rest of the outreach team for the evening screening on one of the open grounds in the new areas settlement.

We were screening "Welcome to Kakuma" a 20-minute documentary that talks about general life in the camp and the services being offered by the agencies. "I asked, Clifford whether he would like to join us during this session but he insisted that he had to undertake his daily training to maintain his fitness. We parted ways knowing we had met a great man.

FROM CAMP TO CAMPUS

Former Refugee Magazine Journalist, now resettled, tells us about his life in Canada
BY PASCAL ZINGASHANE

Q. When did you arrive in Kakuma?

I arrived in Kakuma Refugee Camp, if I can clearly remember, 21st of July, 2012

Q. What are the circumstances that led you to fled your home?

Well, my parents fled the Democratic Republic of Congo due to the war that rekindled in 1996/1997 in the Congo.

Q. Describe life in Kakuma?

Life in Kakuma was as simple as it could get. It was among the few places that I had a stress-free life for a good period of time. As hard as the life was, with time the body and mind gets used to the hardship and before time you become 'numb' from all those adversities to the extent that you feel no pain or stress at all. I worked though, and was able to impact some 2-4 lives...and I also did editing for the Refugee Magazine, which was a powerful and edifying experience.

Q. Did you go to school study in Kakuma? How did you perform in the KCSE exams?

I have lived and studied in Nairobi, and I went

to Jamuhuri Boys High School, and managed to get impressive results that allowed me to apply for the WUSC Scholarship

Q. What do you miss most?

Well, in the Camp, I miss Anjera, and my friends most. The times we spent playing soccer, writing articles with fellow journalists, gosh!!! And not to forget my mentor when I was in the Camp –Paul Odongo Frank- a Man who showed me how great potential I have. It's not easy to say what I miss most, I may as well say I miss Kakuma most.

Q. What was the feeling like when you got the news of leaving Kakuma?

Well, as usual the news was ecstatic, exhilarating, and all vocabulary that can be used to mean 'awesome'. It always feels great.

Q. What was going through your mind when you were in plane to Canada?

Many things were roaming to and from my mind. Notably, I pondered on how I would

be in a position to help many people now that I was going to rise to greater heights.

Q. How is life in Canada? Was it what you expected?

Sincerely speaking, I would say in terms of development and infrastructure, it has met my expectations. However, it has changed little or nothing on who I am. In fact, I lament how I had aspired so much to be this 'great', but now that I am here, I am not as comfortable as such.

Q. Do you wish to go back home after your studies?

Definitely. I will go back to Africa after all is done. Home is where the heart is. And moreover, as Africans we cannot back down now. Not with so much work to be done, not with a continent to heal. No! We have to go back and heal our land

Q. Which university are you studying at, taking which course?

I am studying at the University of Waterloo, and am in Philosophy and Legal Studies. I am set to go to Law School after my first degree (in Canada you need to have a first degree in order to do Law, Medicine, and Engineering).

Q. How did you get to Canada, through which program?

I got to Canada via the WUSC Program, which basically is a Canadian organization that sponsors refugees to come study in Canadian universities.

Q. How do you support yourself? Do you have a job already?

Currently I do not need a job, because everything is being paid for. The food, monthly allowance, etc. So I really don't need any job.

Q. What do you wish to become in future?

I wish to be a Lawyer, but I would stretch my wings far to Presidency some time in future.

Q. Do you wish to pursue journalism as a career, and how did FilmAid help you in this?

Well, I wish to pursue Law. I think part of it entails two things that are highly valued in both Law and Journalism: search for truth, and search for witnesses. This helped me a lot to prepare me for this 'after-life'.

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Poetry

The Nation We Need

We need a place to call home,
A home to call a nation,
A nation to be our destiny,
A destiny of freedom,
And that is the nation we need.

We are obliged to serve our families,
An obligation to serve our people,
To serve our nation is our priority,
We have to serve our world,
And that is the planet that we need.

We need a nation to grant us our religious rights,
The right to democracy and economic development,
Social rights are all we need,
We need our political right,
And that is the nation we need.
By Malok Mading

NEXT READ

A special feature on the meanings behind Kakuma zone names

Photo Speak



Boy sits under a Tarach bridge in Kakuma Town



Youth play a game of chess in Hong Khong



Silhouette of crew setting up for evening screening

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Donate Blood Today and help save lives

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In Just four days, FilmAid and IRC received

Day 1	16 Units/Pints
Day 2	7 Units
Day 3	4 Units
Day 4	12 Units

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The IRC Main Hospital, Kakuma CR, at the FilmAid Community events

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Kakuma 2014

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