

THE Refugee

MAGAZINE
DADAAB EDITION
ISSUE #7



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FOCUS ON

YOUTH INCLUSION: SIMAMA TV SHOW

Youth In Daadab Refugee Camp [Simama!](#) To Voice Their Concerns

IN BRIEF...

■ **SIMAMA! ACCEPT ME AS I AM** Youth inclusion Campaign

In December 2015, FilmAid undertook a pioneering television production in the Dadaab refugee camp. Simama - ACCEPT ME AS I AM identified 50 young people from different demographics and assembled them for a constructive discussion.

Simama, Kiswahili translation for Arise Or Stand Up, is calling on the young refugees and the Dadaab community in general to identify, speak up and construct a sustainable future for religious and cultural acceptance.

■ **Refugee Education: Mass School Enrolment**

The mass enrolment campaign run every year. It particularly aims at those who have not taken advantage of the opportunities for free education delivered by partners like Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

■ **16 Days of Activism**

The 16 Days of Action run from 25th November-10th December. The campaign spans these 16 Days in order to highlight the link between violence against women and human rights.

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EDITORIAL

Dear ardent readers, it is our joy that just as we bid farewell to 2015 with the 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM SPECIAL EDITION of The Refugee Magazine, we are here yet again to usher in 2016 with this 7th Edition telling interesting and inspiring stories from the Dadaab complex. We also capture the landmark production of a Television show focusing on Youth Inclusion that was produced here in Dadaab by UNHCR in collaboration with FilmAid.

In this edition we relive the Activities leading to and part of the 16 Days of Activism whose culmination coincided with the graduation ceremony of FilmAid trained Journalism Trainees .

FilmAid recruits and conducts annual training of youths in Film Making and Journalism equipping them with the skills to be able to tell their own stories in creative ways across print and film media. The 16 Days of Action run from 25th November-10th December. The campaign spans these 16 Days in order to highlight the link between violence against women and human rights.

Read true untold stories at the heart of the world's largest Refugee Camp, Dadaab Refugee Camp, as told by Refugees themselves. These are inspirational stories that tell the uncertainty of the journey that is life.

From this edition consequently, we will feature creative artists and their works be it poetry, fictional writing, painting etc. We look to give a platform to the talent harboured within the Dadaab refugee complex. We are also exploring avenues of working closely with High School Writers' and Journalism Clubs for exchange of knowledge and skills

As a publication of FilmAid Kenya, we remain true to our duty of Informing, Educating and entertaining you. It is therefore our hope, prayer and wish that to each of us it be a rewarding year.

Enjoy your read!

Editor in Chief



Projecting hope. Changing lives.

This magazine was written by refugees living in Dadaab Refugee camps. It is produced by FilmAid with support from PRM

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SCHOOL MASS ENROLMENT DRIVE

Thirst for education awakens in Kambioos



YOUTH INCLUSION: SIMAMA TV PRODUCTION

Youths in Dadaab refugee camp voice their concerns on available opportunities and inclusion



FILMAID INTERNATIONAL MANAGING DIRECTOR'S ITINERARY WITH HEADS OF AGENCIES IN DADAAB REFUGEE CAMP.

Filmaid International Managing Director meets other Agency Heads in Dadaab Refugee Camp



POET'S LOUNGE

Topical poems by refugees:

I will cry for my land
More than my skin



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KAMBIOOS MASS SCHOOL ENROLMENT



Umoja primary school girls during the mass enrolment campaign in Kambioos

By Jimale Mohamed

In a refugee camp, there are very few opportunities for young people to further their education. Without access to education, there are limited options available for the youth to create meaningful lives in their future. Education opens doors that seemed closed and enable limbs reach distances that seemed impossible.

UNHCR in collaboration with education partners

operating in Dadaab refugee camp complex came together to encourage young boys and girls to enrol into schools to take advantage of the opportunities that education brings.

The mass enrolment campaign run every year, particularly targeting those who have not taken advantage of the opportunities provided by Humanitarian agencies such as Lutheran World

Federation (LWF).

The march started at Kambioos' Furaha Primary school, and on through the town, with different groups carrying placards and posters in support of girl child education. It was all songs of support and conviction that it is the power of the ink on paper that truly frees a confined mind.

The resonating message during the campaign being that all children, regardless of gender, deserved an opportunity to get education. It is a right to education as enshrined in the Kenyan constitution, that the numerous calls were directed towards the community to accept and support the initiatives geared toward providing education to children.

LWF's Education Officer, Noor Hussein, emphasised the benefits of education saying that, "Education lives as long as you live on earth." He advised the students that the best time they could be educated is when they are still young and energetic and can focus solely on books. He added that, "The depth of education determines the strength of a person's foundation."

Muktar Osman, Assistant Education Officer in Kambioos urged both the young school going children and the uneducated adults to take advantage of opportunities available in education such as adult education which caters to the needs of adult students, the special needs program which caters for the disabled and

affirmative programmes, which try to advocate for equity in opportunities.

He added that, "The choice of girl child education enrolment is in the interest of the beneficiary and not a burden of the education sector agencies; it lies predominantly with the learners and their parents."

Girls enrolling others

The enrolment of students from the streets of Kambioos into the classrooms has taken varied depths and breadths. These include outdoor campaigns, door-to-door campaigns to subtle recruitment processes. There is another active campaign set up by a group of girls, members a Girl Club at umoja primary school, aiming at enrolling their fellow girls into school.

The girls have put all their efforts towards ensuring that their fellow girls are empowered and educated; their practical and noble idea has been greatly hailed.

Other clubs established in Kambioos include Learners' Government, Learners' Council and Child protection Clubs all focusing their resources on the betterment and provision of education opportunities for Kambioos children.

The UNHCR Protection Officer, Mr Dananyaya Bhatarai, was also the guest of honor and he also had encouraging words for the students. He told them to concentrate all their energies and

abilities on learning, and to look for ways of overcoming the challenges that may seem to be the barriers towards their quest for education.

"Earn money, it can be lost, learn something and it cannot be taken from you" Mr Bhatarai advised. He added that the refugee status is only but temporary and thus being educated will open up opportunities for the students when they go back to their countries, because education can never leave the educated.

He further urged the education partner agencies to involve the parents in the clamor for education for the children, because most times decisions about children's education is made by the parents.

"The choice of girl child education enrolment is in the interest of the beneficiary and not a burden of the education sector agencies; it lies predominantly with the learners and their parents."

Muktar Osman, Assistant Education Officer

YOUTH INCLUSION: GIVING OPPORTUNITY TO YOUTHS

TV SHOW

By Isaac Onyango & Naomi O'Callaghan



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Youths in Daadab Refugee Camp during the filming of Simama Talk show. They voiced their concerns on available opportunities and their inclusion in the making of decisions that affect their lives

About 100km from the border of Somalia, in the deserts of Kenya's north-eastern province, lies Dadaab Refugee Camp. Hosting a cumulative population of over 300,000 people spread over five camps; Dadaab is currently the world's largest refugee camp (according to UNHCR November 2015 reports).

Originally inhabited by nomadic herders who traversed through Kenya's desert and the Somalia border in search of pasture and water, the vast, dry and dusty land became inhabited when civil unrest broke in Somalia. The United Nations began building the camp to shelter refugees fleeing civil war across the border.

Over the past three decades, the camp has been rapidly expanding. Other than being situated in one of the most inhospitable areas of Kenya; there are bigger issues that call for immediate attention to improve the socio economic conditions that the refugees are facing. Above all the issues that affect Dadaab inhabitants, the refugees have raised strong concerns about the height of exclusion.

The refugees have criticized inadequate humanitarian assistance in the camps and a collapse of law and order, leading to attacks and insecurity in the camps. They feel that there is a lack of appropriate education and skills development opportunities to improve transferable skills and open up employment opportunities for the refugee youth.

■ ■ Youth Inclusion Program.

The Youth Inclusion Program began

as part of UNHCR and partnering agencies' strategy to deal with youth radicalization. It is aimed at understanding the issues that affect young people in the refugee community and covers issues that might expose them to crime and extremism.

UNHCR held a two-day workshop for men, women, young adults and interfaith groups with the objective of advocating for religious tolerance and amicable coexistence among various community groups. They focused on establishing harmonious foundations and nurturing peoples' skills for future programs. The program was broken up into five events and spread across the five camps in Dadaab, to respond to the needs of the younger generation of refugees.

These events and workshops involved advocacy meetings with youth, theatre groups, interfaith and youth leaders and covered topics on radicalization, it's causes and effects and ways to promote peace. The program also looked into ways of encouraging and involving the participation of all young people in the camps in constructive project activities.

In December 2015, FilmAid Kenya undertook a pioneering television production in the Dadaab Refugee Camp.

Simama - [ACCEPT ME AS I AM](#) identified 50 young people from different demographics and assembled them for a constructive discussion.

Simama, Kiswahili translation for Arise Or Stand Up, is calling on young refugees and the Dadaab communities in general to speak up, identify and construct a sustainable future for religious and cultural acceptance. In addition to focusing on acceptance, the production also sought to identify weaknesses in the system that put the youth at risk of joining extremist groups.

The program covered one of a number of responses by UNHCR to the youth's feedback for opportunities that would improve the outcome of their future. It responded to ways of harnessing the undiscovered talents and skills of the youth as well as crime prevention.

Simama, Kiswahili translation for Arise Or Stand Up, is calling on the young refugees and the whole community to speak up, identify and construct a sustainable future for religious and cultural acceptance. In addition to focussing on acceptance, the production also sought to identify weaknesses in the system that put the youth at risk of joining extremist groups.

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Simama, moderated by the journalist John Sibi Okumu, hosted a panel of revered religious leaders and humanitarian stakeholders. These included, Abbas Haidoebaigi from

SIMAMA SHOW



The Simama show panel from right to left Haidoebaigi from UNHCR, Rex Mlotha, youth officer at UNHCR, John Sibi Okumu, Abdi Badhi Hussein, from the DRA and religious leaders from Dadaab.

UNHCR, Rex Mlotha, Youth Officer at UNHCR, Abdi Badhi Hussein from the DRA and Issa Harun Muhumed a religious leader.

Simama became a neutral forum to amplify the voices of Dadaab's youth on pertinent issues affecting their lives in the camp.

From the onset of the show it was evident that the issues being discussed stemmed from the disillusionment of the refugee youth. They criticized the systems' discriminatory nature that they believe condemned them to the confines of the camp. This prevented opportunities to join institutions of higher learning to further their education and acquire new skills.

"They (UNHCR) say they have done their best for primary and secondary (education) and we are not disagreeing but the problem comes with higher education... (young) refugees here have a lot of diplomas, but they do not have opportunities to get degrees. My question to UNHCR is, do refugees have that right to a degree and a higher education?"

The youth also raised concerns of the lack of

employment opportunities within Dadaab upon completion of their secondary education. They claimed that there are few opportunities and that even when opportunities present themselves, there is a wide gap in skills needed for the position.

There is a growing uncertainty over their future due to a volatile situation in their home country and given the unforgiving environment where they live currently. The youth are therefore susceptible to radical indoctrination for financial gains among other reasons.

Understanding and breaking the barriers to Youth Inclusion provides an appreciation of the socioeconomic, political, and cultural barriers that this young refugee population face in their day-to-day lives. It enables policymakers to identify the root causes of the widespread levels of youth inactivity and exclusion.

Instituted by UNHCR in Daadab it provided an analysis of the multiple factors that contribute to youth exclusion whilst providing a framework for assessing both the barriers and opportunities for youth inclusion. Overall it highlighted the importance of active youth participation in any society.

MARKING 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

FILMAID JOURNALISM TRAINEES GRADUATE



Journalism Training graduands holding their certificates during the graduation ceremony at the Juba Girls Centre. The ceremony coincided with the 16 days of activism celebrations

By Mohamed Jimale

Dadaab Refugee Camp like the rest of the world was not left behind during the 2015 16-days of Activism campaign between 25th November and 10th December. FilmAid in collaboration with Care Kenya organised a Main event to mark the end of the campaign at the Dagahaley Juba Girls Centre.

The event was graced by partner agencies like Save the Children, Lutheran World Federation and the Refugee Consortium of

Kenya among other partners, representing a voice of concern at the violation of human rights solely on the basis of their gender.

Amongst activities of the day was FilmAid's Daytime screening of Films based on Gender empowerment and gender violence. There were dance and song performances, and skits on topical issues that affect the social structures of the society.

According to statistics, one in three women worldwide face abuse,

violence and rape every day. There is no country in the world where women are free from the fear that they may be sexually violated or subjected to physical harm. The statistics indicate an estimated 35 per cent of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual violence at some point in their lives.

It is at with this backdrop that organisations and nations all around the globe pool together their resources and speak out in one voice about violence against women. These voices highlight

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

the nature and prevalence of violence against women and raise awareness of violence against women as a human rights issue. It is also an opportunity for strengthening local work to tackle violence against women.

The 16 Days Campaign provides community groups, students and violence crisis centres with the opportunity to break the silence surrounding domestic violence. By organising events in our local communities that highlight the issue of domestic violence and promote the services available to victims of gender-based violence; we make the issue visible, we are able to give hope to women who are suffering and hold perpetrators of abuse to account.

FilmAid's Journalism Students graduate

During the event, FilmAid's Journalism Trainees graduated in a ceremony graced by FilmAid Kenya country Director Stella Suge. She emphasised the importance of skills development for the youth as a foundation for their future. She urged the community to support the Trained graduates to enable them tell the stories wholesomely and grow professionally. She said, "as FilmAid, we value the importance of the youth as the building blocks of the society. As these young people graduate having been trained well, welcome them and provide them the necessary support to enable them practice their craft in telling their untold stories."

FilmAid provides journalism training to young adults in the camp, in an effort to help them tell their own stories professionally and become the agents of change within their communities through the power of print media.

Explaining the 16 Days Campaign

The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence is marked every year internationally. The campaign originated from the first Women's Global Leadership Institute, sponsored by the Centre for Women's Global Leadership in 1991. Participants settled on the November 25th as the International Day Against Violence Against Women and December 10th as the International Human Rights Day; in order to symbolically link violence against women and human rights. This is to emphasize that such violence is a violation of human rights.

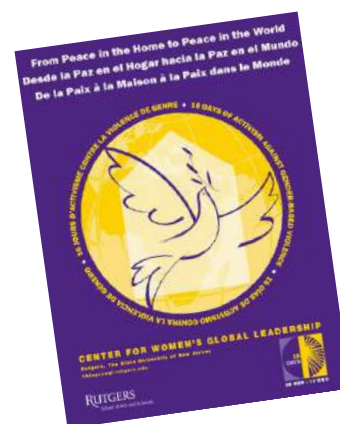
The 16 Days Campaign aims at amplifying individuals and group efforts around the world to call for the elimination of all forms of violence against women. According to an article on the [UN WOMEN](#) website titled **Facts and Figures: Ending Violence against Women**, at least 119 countries have passed laws on domestic violence, 125 have laws on sexual harassment and 52 have laws on marital rape. However, even in the existent of these laws, compliance to the statutes of international standards and recommendations is not promised.

In the majority of countries with available data, less than 40 per cent of the women who experience violence seek help of any sort. Among women who do, most turn to family and friends and very few seek help from formal institutions and existing mechanisms such as the police and health services.

- See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures#sthash.jyxKACoN.dpuf>

"As FilmAid, we value the importance of the youth as the building blocks of the society. As these young people graduate having been trained well, welcome them and provide them the necessary support to enable them practice their craft in telling their untold stories."

Stella Suge





DADAAB CHILDREN'S ASSEMBLY LAUNCHED

By Caleb Odhiambo

It is no longer true that children should 'be seen and not heard'. There is absolutely no doubt that through the past decade, the meaning of childhood and its role in society has changed dramatically.

The key changes to people's childhoods has been through laws and legal frameworks surrounding the education system, the welfare regulations and protection for children by the governments in place.

The voice of the Dadaab Refugee camp child in this regard, has been

amplified by the launch of the Dadaab Children's Assembly. The launch took place in November 2015 and was graced by the Dadaab Sub Country Children's Officer Mr. Guyo Golicha.

40 children were chosen from the 5 camps, Kambioos, Hagadera, Ifo main, Ifo 2 and Dagahaley along with others from the host communities. Together with their 5 chaperones they were taken through a knowledge training process prior to the launch of the Children's assembly in order to equip them with the understanding of Children's rights

and protection issues. To build on their capacity to prevent abuse and help them create a protective environment for all the children in Dadaab Refugee camp.

Lead up to 20th November

The launch marked one of the key build up activities to the 20th November; globally commemorated each year to mark the 1959 UN General Assembly adoption of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. Universal Children's day celebrates the achievements made in raising the voices of children across the globe. It is also the date in 1989 when the

We

Save the
Children



Will you?

Objectives of the training

The objectives of the training and the launch were in line with those of the Kenya Children's Assembly which pursuant to Article 1 of the KCA charter indicates that it shall act in accordance with the following principles;

- *Non-discrimination
- *Best interests of the child
- *Inclusiveness
- *Child friendliness
- *Equitable representation
- *Children for children

The children also took time to develop messages that they will seek to take out to their peers in schools and within community. The resonant message the children are saying without a doubt is that... "Anything for us without us in not ours, make us part of the solution since we have the answers and know what we want".

// This launch makes it easier for you children to speak out in one voice to the community and to reach my office for faster action.

UN General assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Since 1990, Universal Children's Day has marked the anniversary of the date that the UN General Assembly adopted both the declaration and the convention on children's rights.

Mr Guyo challenged the children to be good ambassadors in the camps and within the host community, reaching out to their peers who could be undergoing various forms of abuses. "This launch makes it easier for you to speak out in one voice to the community and to reach my office for faster action," he emphasised.

The children on their part affirmed that they will be more vigilant both in the schools and the camps to highlight all forms of abuse that inhibit their growth and attainment of goals in life.



A young boy holds a placard on Child Rights during the launch of Children Assembly

A DIVORCEE AT 15, I LOST ALL HOPE...

...But now I am pursuing my Education dreams abroad.



PHOTO BY ISAAC ONYANGO

Above: School girls following the proceedings at an educational event held at Ifo camp

By Josephine Pony

Backward cultural practices such as early forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM) and child labour have deprived girls of education and opportunities that come with it.

Barwaqo, a mother of five (two sons and three daughters), arrived in Dadaab ten years ago. Unremorsefully, she believes that it is only her sons that attend school. Her three daughters were not allowed to go to school. She kept the girls busy with house chores "these are already enough lessons as they learn how to keep a family." Says Barwaqo while preparing dough for anjera (a Somali pancake).

Her eldest daughter, Iqra, was forced to drop out of school owing to the view that her education was not import to either her family or the community. She was then married off to an old man. "I was shocked, I had

no choice, the decision had been made for me to marry a very old man," she said. "I wanted to stay at school and learn like the boys, I cried so much." She says in a pain-filled voice. "I managed to escape from my parents and went to my uncle to ask for help. He was not able to dissuade them against forcing me to drop out of school."

She was forcefully married off to the old man and shortly after she conceived her first child at 14. Her worst pain would soon come during her delivery. She felt searing pain all over her body, her legs grew numb, and she was sweating and wailing. It was very difficult for her to deliver of her child, as she was not mature and her body was not ready, as a result she had a stillbirth. Her husband accused her of negligence during delivery with a deliberate intent of killing the baby.

Bereaved and Divorced at 15

The loss brought upon her another shocker. She hadn't even fully recuperated when she received her divorce sermon. She was now 15, bereaved and a divorcee.

However much these tragedies of life almost broke her down to pieces, she was able to stand turbulences that came her way. A once optimistic girl, depression crept in and she resigned to fate allowing it to take its course on her life. "I was very disappointed, my life was at risk, I felt the whole world crumbling down on me."

Just as her inner energies and convictions faded, hope shone on her face. One day while she was fetching water she was approached by a humanitarian aid worker from Psychology Counseling Unit (PSU), and she had a conversation with the aid worker. Sparing no details, she narrated her ordeal to the aid worker who then advised her to approach CARE psychology unit for counseling sessions.

The following morning, Iqra visited the psychology office and met the counselor. Her hope was renewed as she was then linked to Windle Trust Kenya, which is responsible for running high schools in the Dadaab Refugee

Iqra, a bright and hardworking girl, she graduated from Illeys Primary school and obtained admission to Dagahaley High school. She once again proved her diligence as she performed well in her final form four Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examinations (KCSE) obtaining a B plain grade. For her great achievements, she was awarded a scholarship by World university of Canada scholarship programme (WUSC).

Camps.

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She is now a student at the Ontario University of Canada pursuing a degree in Education. She is now able to even financially support her family back in the Dadaab camp.



AFTER 23 YEARS GROWING IN THE DADAAB CAMP, IT IS THE ONLY HOME I KNOW

FEATURE

By Simon Bol

// I have lived in Daadab for over 23 years now. It has not been a walk in the park. We have faced so many challenges each and every day, especially for a large family like mine, consisting of six siblings and our parents.

For a long time our only shelter was a plastic sheet which would heat up during the unforgiving, scorching, midday sun. There was food shortages as we all depended on the rations provided by WFP. There was not enough clean water and worse still, no latrines. So many people suffered from cholera and water borne diseases. I even lost a brother, but it is the only home I know," says Mohamed Bare

Since 1991 when the civil war broke out in Somalia thousands of Somalis have crossed the borders into Kenya seeking refuge from the hostilities they faced back home. It is over two and a half decades and this has seen a set of generational



PHOTO: New York Times

growth.

Having narrowly escaped a clan attack that targeted his own father, he says, "In 1992, gun men from a nearby clan attacked our stead in Barawe, a coastal town in central Somalia. They were looking for my father whom they alleged belonged to one of the clans clamoring for power. Luckily he was not home and we were even

luckier to have been spared." When his father came back home later in the evening, fear was written all over his face as he narrated how their clansmen and women had been killed and their property looted, it was evident the old man was in utter panic. "We had to flee. We had to cross the border and that is how my family and I found ourselves here in Dadaab."

"I was just four years old when all this happened. We took about seven days to get to Amume town in northern Kenya near the Somali border. We got registered by UNHCR and they brought us to Dadaab camps where we have lived ever since." He is quick to tell me that he was too young to remember what happened and wouldn't have known had it not been told to him by his parents.

Idling in the camps playing dice

"Back in the day there were not so many agencies in the camps which meant there were no job opportunities. We would wake up and waste an entire day playing traditional games like jar. Life was so hard and demeaning" he says. He gets teary when he narrates how his mother passed away in 1999. She died of cholera.

In 2000 when I started primary school not many people valued the importance of education, explains Mohamed. The enrolment was poor and girls were seldom in class.

I completed my primary school examinations, Kenya Certificate of Primary Education, but I did not attain high grades. However, I managed 260 out of possible 500 and joined Hagadera High School. Upon my completion of high school, I got a job as a clerk at Care's Distribution Centre. This opportunity changed my life and that of my entire family as I could afford the little things that we needed.

Not safe to grow up in

Mohamed narrates that Dadaab camps was not the safest place for

a child to grow up in as there were frequent attacks and kidnappings. As a result, humanitarian activities kept being interrupted which trickled down to the refugees who are the sole beneficiaries.

Although the government of Kenya, the Somali government and the UNHCR have embarked on voluntary repatriation he feels he is not ready to go back. He says, "There is no stable government in Somalia that can protect us".

Dadaab is now a home to an estimated three hundred thousand refugees who fled the civil war and poverty in Somalia. For most, this is the only home they have ever known. With the voluntary repatriation ongoing, those who do not feel ready to go back, like Mohamed, fear that their stay here in Dadaab refugee camp, the only place they know as home, is under threat with rumours of mass repatriation filling the air.



A refugee man feeding with his family.

As of June 2014, the number of people around the world forced by conflict to flee their homes, had soared past 51 million, the highest number since World War II, The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported



Risks associated with skin bleaching.

By Mohamed Awil

Some people argue that beauty is skin deep, whilst others strongly deny this statement. Opinions range from saying lighter is beautiful to a glowing black is the peak of beauty. If darker skin is considered a beautiful asset then why would African women rank amongst the world's biggest users of skin lightening agents in the world? Despite the health warnings on the effects of sustained use of bleaching agents.

Bleaching, as it is widely known, has been in use for quite some time and its usage stimulated by celebrities touting lighter skin tones. Despite growing concern over the chemicals they contain and the risk of skin cancer, most women have continued to use the products as a way to gain greater acceptance. Men have not been excluded either, with growing numbers of men starting to use the treatment.

It has grown to be a major public health issue as the continued use of the chemicals contained in those products is adversely damaging to the skin and puts the user at risk of serious diseases such as skin cancer.

Need for beauty

A high number of women in the refugee camps use skin lightening agents in their quest for beauty. Halima Hassan, 24, washes her face, legs and arms and scrubs her whole body in cream. She has been treating her skin with lightening agents for the past 9 years, believing that fairer skin could be the key to attaining a rich man and a better life. In total she spends more than \$30 a month buying bleaching agents.

The effects of the agents are evident. She states that her new skin makes her more beautiful. "Bleaching makes me feel special", she told *The Refugee*. "I am not seeking to be totally white, I only want to look beautiful and I cannot stop using lightening agents."

She is not the only one. Most young girls are using the agents but would not fully admit it. Maryann Abdi is just 17 and in form 3 in Hagadera High school. She says that the only reason she uses bleaching agents is to look beautiful. Adding that, "Light skinned women are more beautiful and are likely to be courted and married by men."

It is the discrimination of men that have pushed some dark skinned women to resort to bleaching in order to attract male suitors who apparently prefer light skinned women. "Black women are seldom courted, they are viewed as inferior" Omar Basher, a Hagadera resident explains.

In Hagadera, lightening cream businesses have boomed in recent years. Plastic powders and ointments can be seen stacked along sidewalks of Hagadera's Small Bakara. "My clients come in groups and some come as individuals seeking consultation on the best products available and usage," says Anab, a cosmetic shop owner.

Khalif Muse Samatar is a Somali poet who thinks that the society has changed to glorify what is not hers and look down upon what is his. "We are looking down on our colour and culture and we are looking for what other races have".

What is required is a change in perception. Young women and men should be encouraged to accept themselves as they are and consumers need access to information on the dangers of skin-lightening products.



FILMAID INTERNATIONAL MANAGING DIRECTOR'S ITINERARY WITH HEADS OF AGENCIES IN DADAAB REFUGEE CAMP.

Filmaid International Managing Director Keefe Murren Meets Partner Agencies' Heads In Dadaab Refugee Camp and affirms progressive working relationships.



PHOTO BY ISAAC ONYANGO

It is about 8 o'clock on the morning, patches of clouds glide across the pale blue sky and the vibrant sun rays have begun to warm the rural desert morning. The humanitarian plane carrying FilmAid's Managing Director, Keefe Murren, drones at the Daadab Airstrip.

This is the first visit by the New York based Director to the Dadaab refugee camps to meet and strengthen the working relationships with partner agencies such as WFP, UNHCR, UNICEF, and TDH. This was also an opportunity for the newly appointed Director to touch base with the FilmAid field programmes and staff.

He made his first stop of the field programmes at IFO's Daytime screening in IFO block and then proceeded to 'Be the Leader' workshop that focuses on cholera and WASH. He also visited Dagahaley's 'Mothers and Leaders:

women in health group' workshop and Hagadera's 'Men Aspire' workshop.

Meeting with other Heads of agencies

UNICEF Meeting

First on his itinerary was a working breakfast meeting with the UNICEF Acting area Manager Pauline Akinyi where the meeting centred on upcoming projects on peace building and education which FilmAid has been commissioned to undertake by UNICEF in Daadab Primary school. Another program in discussion was the 'Out of School Children Cholera Information' campaigns.

They also discussed ways of fostering future engagements including capacity building of FilmAid staff by UNICEF Communication for Development (C4D) department.

WFP Roundtable discussion

Next was a roundtable meeting with World Food Programme Head of Sub Office Louise Sowe and other programme staff. Keefe was informed of the ongoing outreach activities and the existing challenges facing the Bamba Chakula information campaign. The meeting sought mitigation strategies to strengthen future activities.

Keefe welcomed the existing partnership collaboration and expressed FilmAid's utmost willingness to a continued partnership.

UNHCR Simama review

A UNHCR meeting followed, where UNHCR's Head of Sub Office Baba Fall, Head of Community service Sadia Raka and other Community service Unit staffers were present.

Central during the discussion was the ongoing programmes run jointly by the Community Service



FilmAid International MD having a meeting with the Dadaab Main Office Staff

Unit and FilmAid. Among them the upcoming Malala Project, dealing with girl's education, empowerment and mentorship, and the 'Out of School Children' Unicef funded information campaign.

The UNHCR meeting focused on the review of the Simama Project undertaken by FilmAid in December 2015. The discussions were around the success of the project and ways of circumventing visible gaps observed during the production.

The meeting also discussed ways of scaling up the project in the future to give it a good lead time to production and dissemination.

In support of the Refugee participants at the coming Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Keefe requested the exploration of partnership and sponsorship avenues to enable screening of the games in the camps. This would connect the refugees with the rest of the world and enable them to support their own. It would also act as a psycho-social deviation from their routine lives.

Terres De Homes's children protection matters

Keefe wound up his three day meetings with a courtesy call at TDH. The two agencies having had a long standing memorandum of on child protection information dissemination in Hagadera and Kambioos refugee camp. The conversations revolved around ways of furthering the established operations for greater efficiency for both partners.

Over time TDH has offered training to FilmAid field staff on child protection issues. Understanding FilmAid Programs FilmAid's programs in Kenya are extensive.

Working in Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps as well as informal urban settlements in Nairobi, to support and empower marginalized communities. FilmAid works with partners, sponsors, volunteers, and full-time staff to deliver life-saving information to those who need it most.



Keefe speaking to the Dagahaley Team Leader Gelle Moulid at the Dagahaley offices



Keefe meeting with FilmAid IFO Team leader Abulony Okello at FAI IFO offices



From Left to Right: Mordecai Odera, FA Programmes Director, Dennis Munene, Film Trainer, Keefe Murren and Film Training alumni Akune Danze, Liban Rashid and Osman Alim at the IFO studio



Keefe Murren with the FA Hagadera staff. Far right is FA Dadaab Field Manager Charity Kola and Hagadera Team Leader Aden Bare (in a white cap)

ADIEU SAVE THE CHILDREN... BIENVENUE TERRE DE HOMMES

By Caleb Odhiambo

Save the Children (SC) officially paved the way for Terre des hommes (Tdh) who will continue supporting children in Hagadera Refugee camp as of 31st December, 2015. SC rolled up its activities after being in the camp since May 2007.

The transition process which commenced in October 2015 when it was launched by the Country Directors from Save the Children and Terre des hommes was finalized when the two partners met with a cross section of the camp and section leaders, the staff and the host community, UNHCR, DRA and other partners to inform them of the move and prepare them of the change in the coming period.

UNHCR Protection Associate Ms Virginia Njoroge was present to witness the transition process and the transfer of Caseload which captures children's data ensuring that all cases dealt with are recorded and clearly accounted for.

SC lauded the Hagadera community for their support in putting together the community structures that will ensure the children are protected and they have a place for recreation through the Child education and Welfare Centres (CEWC).

Poet's Lounge

MORE THAN MY SKIN

Although to your eyes am a black eyed pea
I am more than my skin
Everywhere I go you say do not fit
No smiles, EVEN our eyes wouldn't meet,
This long we both belong to a piece longing for peace
Who created you, was He not the one who created me?
Am I my creator?

I am bound by sorrows, the scorn I go through
My brain and bones are scattered by you.
You pickle my soul, rapture my veins
Is it because my head is not veiled?
Am tortured by your words, and am lost in this world
Does anyone have power to create themselves?
Am I my creator?

Where would I hide my face?
Your eyes sear through me more than the thorns of the desert,
Untill when? Until the sharp rocks char all the sole on my feet?
Or till I walk back and have my throat get slit?
Take a walk in our shoes for a day
So that you'd taste the pain of tears
Are we our own creators?

Which is the perfect place for me?
Yours eyes are like scorching desert sun on my feeble flesh
In my presence you cover your noses
Is it because of the dark pigmentation on my skin
Can anyone choose the colour of their skin?
If it be my sins, For my skin tone I atone,
Am not my skin

Dark as I maybe, like a sun tanneslave
I am a poet and my words I won't mince
What happened to the love we once had?
You now say am not fit for henna
I walk head high, acting brave but am in fear
Fear of being pelted with sneers
Can you create yourself?

I WILL CRY FOR MY LAND

When will I stop weeping?
Shedding tears for my country
I'm in a sea of grief crying for my land
Dark days won't move
And dawn won't break
The agony in my heart last for years
I get beaten and I am broken
I will cry for my land

They say words don't break bones
But lack of peaceful words have broken too many souls
As dark clouds collect, vile men too collect
The skies won't open its doors, not a single rain drop on my soil
But the ground sips innocent men's blood
Did this soil not bear a true sons of the land to stand firm on guard?
Until when will we weep?
I need peace, you need peace, we all need peace
I will cry for my land

We killed our past and now we are busy in killing our future
We aborted the great mission, strayed away from the path
Lost truth along the way, took war instead of peace
We lost our identity of peace, identity of love
The pain of such loss is too much to bear
Cleansing each other for no reason leaves us in tears
I will cry for my land

My tears don't stop when I see
Mothers' breasts dry of milk
Babies don't last a week
Men die every day, young and strong get hang on sticks
This is the land of my forefathers
Their souls cry for peace, that we may trade back hoes for the blood shed
I will cry for this soil,

"O" Allah grant us understanding, safeguard our people and our nation.



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