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Launch of The Turkana West University Campus

UNHCR Country Representative Mr, Raouf Mazou speaking at the ground-breaking event.

Launch of The Turkana West University Campus

Executive Director of WIK Dr. Marangu Njogu giving his remarks during the Ceremony.

Disability is not inability: deaf student in Kenya national music festival competition

Jan-April, 2018
Transitioning from secondary schools to universities remains an ever growing problem for refugees in the Kakuma Refugee Camp. Few refugees are lucky to get scholarships to study in higher institutes of learning thus leaving a greater majority of students who graduate from secondary schools each year out of school. Recently, the transition rate from secondary schools to universities is estimated at only 1%.

To address this challenge, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in partnership with different local and international universities, the TurKana County Government and key NGOs working on education launched the TurKana West University Hub on the 26th February 2018. The university is expected to serve as a host to different universities from Kenya and abroad. These universities will be expected to establish different departments ranging from accounting, engineering, nursing etc in Turkana University hub. Beneficiaries will be refugees and the host community.

Attending the ground breaking event were representatives from several universities such as: Moi University Kenya, University of Geneva/IZONE, Teachers College University Columbia University, HU HOGESCHOOL Utrecht, Jesuit Worldwide Learning, ICEFIL, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST). Also in attendance were key partners from NGOs such as Windle International Kenya (WIK), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) and The Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

Executive Director of WIK Dr.
Marangu Njogu giving his remarks during the Ceremony

It is expected that once the university goes operational, the number of students transiting to higher institute of learning will increase as the courses will be offered at very affordable rates. So far, the Turkana County Government has donated a 100 acres piece of land for the construction of the university hub. Speaking at the events, the Deputy Governor, urged partners to offer courses such as petroleum Engineering, Mining, Nursing and Entrepreneurship that will adequately prepare graduates for the job market.

Compiled by: Suwun Rita Beri
Disability is not inability: deaf student in Kenya national music festival competition

Kafiya Saney Noor, a hearing-impaired form one female student at Gianchere Friends Special School in Kisii made it to the national finals in public speaking category. She was the best overall at provincial level with 92%. She had the opportunity of presenting her masterpiece public speaking article before President Uhuru Kenyatta during the National Music Festival held at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology in Kakamega from 10th to 22nd July, 2017.

According to her mum, Kafiya only started communicating at the age of 10. Now the 16-year-old Gianchere Friends student is among the top achievers in public speaking. Kafiya was one of the 150,000 students who performed under the theme of “Enhancing National Unity, Cohesion and Integration”. She won the Kenya sign language story telling category and cannot wait to be involved again next year. "I’m looking forward to the event next year," Kafiya says. "I like being competitive," she adds.

The sign language teacher at Gianchere, Ms. Saida Bashir explained that the competition was stiff and keeps growing stiffer. She admitted that the deaf students’ performances have been amazing and could not believe Kafiya was the best at Provincial level with such a high score to enable her perform before the head of state.

In deed this is a success story and Kafiya has made it crystal clear that disability is not inability. The event made Kafiya so motivated that she promised to be a role model in the deaf and hearing community. We should encourage the same in the camp to prepare SNE students for the future and is also great for their confidence. Windle International Kenya is currently supporting 19 Special Needs Education students with funds from UNHCR.

Of this, 15 are hearing impaired, 2 visually impaired and 2 physically impaired. Kafiya Saney Noor has indeed demonstrated that, disability is not inability.

Compiled by: Stanley Kasembeli
Return out of school children to school project (ROCS) improving school attendance in Turkana north

The ROCs is a project funded by UNICEF and implemented by Windle International Kenya at the host communities at Turkana and Garissa Counties with an aim of bringing 17,000 out of school children to school by 2018. The program work closely with key stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education, Teachers Service Commission, County Government and Local Communities to ensure sustainability of supported measures. The program launched in September 2016 has brought remarkable improvements in school enrollment and performance in TurKana.

Namuga Echapan one of the beneficiaries currently enrolled at Kamudei Primary School. She dropped out of school because her parents were unable to buy her school needs. When she heard of the ROCs project she was motivated to return to school because she could have access to free writing materials.

“If I did not receive this kit, I would be at home because my parents did not have money to purchase them” says Echapan

Pupils Receive Kits at Kamudei Primary School in Turkana North
When she returned to school in term 2 2017, she was admitted in class 2. The kits helped her to study well and she was later promoted to class 3.

Returning to school did not come without challenges. She has been mocked by other girls who think she is too old for primary school and they urge her to better remain at home like them. However, she has not been discouraged by this and she tries to convince them to see the importance of education and join her in school. Through this, she has been able to convince her friend who has enrolled in another primary school in Turkana.

Echapan now 16yrs old hopes to be a doctor or police officer in future

According to the head Teacher of Kamudei Primary School, since the inception of the ROCs project, there has been a remarkable increase in the number of pupils enrolling in Primary school in Turkana:

“Now that the ROCs project provide free study material, parents are now willing to release their kids to come to school” she said

She also noted that they have witnessed some improvement in performance. “¾ of the students that received the kit were able to graduate with good grades and the junior students scored very high marks in exams”

However, the challenge remains transiting these students to secondary school. She regrets the fact that nearly all who graduated were unable to get to secondary school due to lack of funds. She thinks there is need for scholarships that will help the graduates to move to higher institutes of learning instead of going back to the idle life style in their communities.

Windle International Kenya welcomes scholarship programs allowing refugee young people to build on their existing qualification/skills so that their future prospects are not limited by conflict.

Compiled by: Suwun Rita Beri

ROMOTING A READING CULTURE IN KAKUMA REFUGEE CAMP: WINDLE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Millions of people displaced by conflict around the world often constitute of various heterogeneous groups hailing from various countries with diverse languages and cultural backgrounds. These set of persons, whether Refugees or Internally Displaced persons
need more than food and shelter. They also want to study; work for their future and to find a sense of purpose thus setting up libraries in refugee camps can be device to facilitate access to information and knowledge which can help the refugees achieve their future objectives.

This is the case in Kakuma Refugee Camp, where Windle International Kenya in partnership with the French Embassy in Kenya and Book Aid International set up a Community Library in 2014 with the aim of promoting a reading habit amongst community members and facilitate access to information. The library was constructed by the French Embassy in 2013. Reading materials are provided by Book Aid International and other voluntary donations. The library is stocked with both French and English books that target different users from primary schools, secondary schools, University Students, teachers and researchers.

The library hosts the INS program which focuses on mobile learning through the use of tablets and the Kindle readers. The Tablets and the Kindle Readers are loaded with different apps. They are also connected to the internet which facilitates online studies; research and help teachers prepare their lesson notes.

Through the INS tablets, students can easily apply for scholarships and revise past question papers for the KCPE Exams Nanfuka Rajibah Chirumira a class 8 Pupil at Chapel Primary school. She says the Kindle has exposed her to online studies and has helped her to improve on her grades. In class 7, she scored 274 marks and in class 8 she improved by scoring 320 marks. She says she was able to perform well in the exams thanks to the books she got from the library and the Kindle through which she was able get revision papers.

The essential condition are put in place to ensure that the library can be used for individual and collective learning complimented by dictionaries, language learning books, story books, and practical lessons for science subjects like Chemistry. Text books are installed in the World Wide Reader which students can easily access even when they are offline.

The library has provided a learning hub to the community members. According to the library Coach, they receive more than 100 users every day. The library users find it very useful as many students report that they have been able to improve on their performance after using books from the library. To some users, it provides a very conducive environment for reading and has helped some refugees coming from French speaking countries to learn the English language.

However, there is still need for more books especially on science subject such as Geography, Mathematics and life skills for secondary school learners. Also, some apps that can facilitate access to more information on the internet are still missing from the tablets and kindle.

“Using the Kindle, I was able to revise past revision papers and read books that I could not find in the school Library. I also learnt more about composition writing and read many story books to strengthen my grammar” She says

Compiled by: Suwun Rita Beri
In northern Kenya, access to quality education is scarce; In Turkana, schools are very few and the community is deeply engaged in traditional norms. Boys look after cattle and girls are married off as young as 10 years. As a result, many boys and girls are out of school. Windle International Kenya is implementing ROC’s\(^1\) (Return Out of school Children) program in partnership with UNICEF which has seen 10,459 children return to school out of the possible 17,000 out of school\(^2\).

The major UNICEF projects are; Child to Child Tracking, Incorporation of ICT in education-Eneza programme, classroom rehabilitation, water and sanitation support. The project works closely with key stakeholders such as Ministry of Education, Teachers Service Commission, County Governments and Local Communities to ensure sustainability of supported measures\(^3\).

Eneza programme is a phone-based virtual tutor and teacher’s assistant; it provides both teachers and students with access to valuable courses and assessment while interacting with live instructors through low-cost mobile. Eneza programme is implemented by Key partners like Windle International Kenya, Xavier project with funds from UNICEF. Eneza is currently operating only in Makutanu primary school. The main purpose is improving academic performance of ROC’s beneficiaries.

Shealtiel Nakinu is a 13-year-old boy who dropped out of school in standard 2 to look after goats. Although he was out of school, \(\text{Eneza programme Empowering students like Shealtiel Nakinu to excel in school}\)

\(^{1}\) ROCS – Return Out of School Children  
\(^{2}\) Figures taken from Windle International Kenya diary 2018  
\(^{3}\) International Kenya diary 2017
his quest for education was alive. He used to learn reading and writing from his peers who had returned to school under ROC project. His local mates encouraged him of a better job after education than looking after goats. However, Shealtiel Nakinu was still hesitant to join school.

The burning desire arose after a tragic death of all his parents. The goats which were his only source of hope were sold off by his elder brothers. He was left with nothing to keep him moving. It was then that he decided to join his peers in Makutanu primary school, 139 kilometres away from his village Lokitaung.

For a boy like Shealtiel who has lost his parents and livestock, education means everything. He has embraced education with high gear making use of all available opportunities to catch up with his age mates far ahead of him. Shealtiel is among the few pupils using Eneza programme to excel academically. Eneza programme means equipping learners with knowledge. It is a technology that uses mobile phones short messages (SMS).

The phones are loaded with examinable academic materials and general knowledge for children in class 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. For example, it covers English, Geography, social studies, science, Mathematics, Religious Education and Kiswahili. The subject contents in the phone is approved by Kenyan Primary curriculum. The learners are able to use the phones for mini lessons, tutorials on topic of their choice and also engage in short assessments. Students are able to ask live academic questions to Eneza online teachers and get feedback via SMS. Additionally, parents and

available in school. Being a very disciplined boy, he is able to borrow the phone from his teacher and read over time from home. His hard work, discipline and maturity has earned him not only good grades but accelerated learning. As an outstanding student, he was promoted from class 2 to 4. He has been elected as deputy school president. Additionally, as a needy and bright student, his teachers always support him with personal items like school uniforms, extra clothes and accommodation. ROC’s on other hand is helping more and more students stay in school by giving them scholastics such as back bags, pens and books which otherwise they could not afford hence dropping out of school.

The Eneza programme is strongly empowering students like Shealtiel never to give up and dream big in education. His teacher by names Abraham mentioned that, “To the people using it [Eneza programme] correctly, there have been an improvement.”

Delivery of quality education with the use of ICT invention in emergency areas would not have been possible; if not for key partners like Windle International Kenya, UNICEF and Xavier project.

Compiled by Sandra Okello