

THE REFUGEE

September 2010, Issue No. 001

from the heart of Dadaab Refugee Camp

This newsletter has been published by refugee youth under FilmAid's Participatory Video Project in Dadaab Refugee Camp. Its a result of a short Journalism training that was facilitated by Ibrahim Hirsi, a former refugee who is currently a Journalism student in Minnesota where he resettled.

Conflict in Dadaab refugee camp leaves hundreds homeless



Remains of what once used to house a Sudanese family in Hagadera Camp. Houses were set ablaze and some were destroyed completely forcing UNHCR to move the Sudanese to Ifo Camp.

Bizzare murder of 13-year-old Somali boy leaves hundreds of Sudanese homeless in Hagadera

Somali and Sudanese communities blame each other for the brutal murder that saw a serious conflict marred by counter accusation as to which community was responsible. A faction of the Somali community attacked the minority Sudanese forcing UNHCR to evacuate them to safety.

By Peter Oman, the Refugee team

The mysterious murder of a 13-year-old Somali boy whose body was found in a Sudanese neighborhood in Hagadera Camp, resulted in a conflict between the two communities that left hundreds of Sudanese refugees homeless last month. Abullahi Osman's body was

found on a path along Block K1 which is occupied by Sudanese refugees in Hagadera camp. The body was discovered by neighbours in the early morning of July 13th, brutally butchered and parts of the intestines out. It is reported that Osman who was a new arrival in the

Dadaab Camp left his home where he was staying with his uncle and aunt to go to the mosque for prayers and said he was going to come back, according to Safia Abdi, Osman's aunt. "I waited for him all that night until I saw crowds running by my house, talking about

a murdered boy." Abdi said she followed the crowds to the scene to make sure whom exactly the dead body was. She was shocked to find out that it was Osman.

Violence between Somali and Sudanese communities erupted before the police picked up the body from the scene.

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Early marriage amongst the Somali community

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The Focus Film Festival, a pilot Festival for refugee youth in dadaab

'Refugee 'of the Month...pg 7



A former refugee who has made a reasonable impact on his community

inspiring stories, articles and information from the heart of Dadaab Refugee Camp.

THE TEAM....

Moulid Hujale



Twenty-two-year-old Vice-Secretary for Ifo Refugee Youth Consortium, Moulid Hujale, has been involved in journalism for some time. Hujale was a member of a press club during his high school years. He is currently the editor-in-chief of Dawn — an Ifo newsletter published twice a year. This experience makes Hujale one of the few people whose journalism work have been published.

Hujale was appointed the Managing Editor of *The Refugee*.

Obang Didomo



A survivor of the Ethiopian led war against minority Anywaks that inhabit in the western part of Ethiopia, Obang Didomo, 27, came to Dadaab in 2008 for peace and tranquility. Life in Ifo Camp has been overwhelming for Didomo that he was not able to complete high school. However, Didomo said FlimAid played a crucial role in shaping his future by providing him with journalism workshops

and skills in using cameras. As a member of Participatory of Video Projects, Didomo said he has increased English writing skills and feels comfortable handling cameras. Didomo hopes that his dream of becoming a journalist will come true.

Didomo is a Staff Reporter for *The Refugee*.

Peter Oman

Peter Oman, 23, has been living in Ifo Camp for the past 7 years, after he fled from Ethiopian where he was born and raised. Oman became a member of Participatory Video Project in 2009. Since then, Oman said he grew love for journalism. Though he didn't have English writing experience, Oman said he is eager to continue writing for *The Refugee*.



where he is now a staff reporter.

Liban Rashid



Liban Rashid, 23, was born and raised in Somalia. Because of the civil war, he evacuated from Somali in 1991, and has been an Ifo Camp resident since then. Rashid who joined FlimAid in 2009 is the current Participatory Video Project facilitator. Rashid, the most skillful camera man among his peers, has shot and produced

many documentary about life in the camps, including *Black Smith and Khat*.

Rashid was appointed the new photographer of *The Refugee*.

Abdi Abdullahi

The former English teacher of Midnimo Primary School in Ifo, Abdi Abdullahi, 27, fled from Somali where he was born and raised, and resettled in Ifo Camp in 1991 in search for a better life. Mohamed who joined the Participatory Video Project last year is considered to be one of the best story writers among the participants. He has documented many stories about life in the camps, including *The Betrayed Sector*, *Mysterious Love*, *Swelling Wallets* and many more.



Abdi was appointed the Editor-in-Chief for *The Refugee*.

Akune Atale

Akune Atale, 22, was born and raised in Ethiopia. He completed his middle and elementary school in Ethiopia. Due to instability in his homeland, Atale sought refuge in Dadaab where he completed his middle and high school.

Atale then joined FilmAid in 2009 in search for better skills on camera operations. He has developed skills on photography and video production. There is nothing that Atale is more comfortable with than being the man behind the lens, thanks to FlimAid International. Atale is quick to say that he wants to become a journalist, though he has always aspired to be a lawyer before he joined Participatory Video Project last year.

Atale was appointed the new News Production Coordinator for *The Refugee*.



Hussein Hassan

He is only a from-two student in Community Secondary School in Hagardera, but Hussein Hassan, 22, has a dream of bringing peace and tranquility to his war torn Somalia through journalism: a dream that is not common for many Somali men. He fled from Somalia in 1992 and resettled in Ifo Camp. Hassan who joined Participatory Video Project last October, said he cannot thank FlimAid enough for the role they played in his life. Hassan said that he has learnt how to use cameras really well during the six months he has been with FlimAid.



Hassan is a staff reporter for *The Refugee*.



The Team poses for a group photo

EDITORIAL

Ifo Journalism Workshop Participants

By Ibrahim Hirsi

Eight refugees from Ifo camp participated in a week-long journalism workshop that was aimed to provide them with the basic journalism skills necessary for any news reporter. Some have had writing experience, while others have never written anything in English language. However, one thing that they all had in common was that they didn't know what it takes to write a traditional news story (that is accurate, balanced, sourced, well-organized, highly readable and concise) either for a print or online media.



During the first few sessions of the workshop, the participants developed newspaper reading habits where they paid attention to the reporters' journalistic works, and didn't necessarily read for information. They also developed interviewing skills where they actually interviewed themselves and developed a small biography on each other.

Likewise, participants learned about ethics of journalism. Even though ethics of journalism is broad, and it's not something that can be covered in a session or two, they learned enough that would help them develop news stories and most importantly, maintain a newsletter on their own in the future.

The objective of the workshop was for each participant to write a traditional news story for this newsletter. After days of hard-

“THEY PROMISED ME THEY WOULD USE THE SKILLS THEY HAVE ACQUIRED DURING THE JOURNALISM WORKSHOP AND MAINTAIN A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THEIR OWN”

working, they were all able to pull out great story ideas that are relevant to Dadaab refugee camps, and submit the wonderful news story that make up our newsletter.

During the last day of the workshop, the participants and I discussed the future of our newsletter. They promised me that they will use the skills they acquired during the journalism workshop, and maintain a monthly newsletter on their own.

As a journalism student, I have participated in many journalism workshops and worked with different people from all walks of life, but I have never encountered people as ambitious, motivated and talented as the participants of Ifo Journalism Workshop. Thank you very much for being part of this newsletter. I'm honoured to have the privilege to work with you all.

THE TEAM

Editor-in-chief:

Abdi Abdullahi

Managing editor:

Moulid Hujale

News Production Coordinator:

Akune Obang Atale

Photographer:

Liban Rashid

Staff Reporters:

Hussein Hassan , Obang Adhom Didumo,

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RIPE FOR MARRIAGE?

Early marriage

among the Somali Community

BY ABDI

EARLY MARRIAGE is a vice that is deeply rooted in the Somali community and which many perceive as a harmful traditional practice and a violation of human rights, despite the fact that there is an overwhelming majority that supports it. Poor families may regard young girls as an economic burden and her marriage as a necessary survival strategy for her family.

“**GIRLS** are a means of survival for most Somali families,” said Amina Abdullahi, a mother of seven. Abdullahi said choosing to marry off their daughters at an early age may protect them from engaging in bad deeds such as sleeping with other men.

“**THIS** is the strategy we use to avoid our young girls becoming pregnant outside marriage,” she said. Even though it is difficult to figure out the many traumatic incidents unfolding deep inside the community, there are agencies like Save the Children which work hard to discourage the practice.

“**CHILDREN WHO** go against the wishes of their parents are often punished,” said a Child Protection Officer, in Ifo camp. According to him the perpetrators of early and forced marriages are normally referred to the UN refugee agency and the Kenya police. ‘Anybody found to be marrying off girls who are less than 18 years are punishable by law.’

HOWEVER, ISLAM is an antithesis of the agency’s call and human rights organization. The objective is to maximize the chances of child bearing. “Girls may be married young to ensure obedience and subservience within their husband’s household,” said, Imam Abdirahman. He added that there are myths and mis-



conceptions about early marriage by non-Islam states and other secular authorities. Even medical doctors discourage the early marriage practice. This results in health complications that include premature

pregnancies which cause higher rates of maternal and infants mortality.

“This is the strategy we use to avoid young girls becoming pregnant outside marriage.”

SIGNIFICANTLY, TEENAGE girls state that the practice is traditional, yet harmful and a violation to human rights.” It generates psychological and emotional stress,” Nasra Abdi said. “once married, girls tend not to go to school.” On the one hand, many argue that teenagers should not be put in the centre of a poor practice

and on the other, a considerable number of people believe it is a breach of faith and unacceptable to let girls grow beyond the age of teenage. Many would see it as a better option if the tide against these innocent children is reversed and advise the vast majority of the people to uphold respect for the Islamic practice and do away with the secular one that despised the legal practice as a malpractice and treatment. Osman Farah, a Somali community leader said, “I would opt for if there could be a debating floor where early marriage could top the agenda.”

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Hundreds homeless after conflict between two communities

Accusations and counter accusations followed with factions from the Somali Community purporting that the Sudanese had killed the boy with the intentions of making use of some body parts.

The Sudanese claimed that the body had been killed elsewhere and dumped there. Crowds gathered and before the police could move in a faction of Somalis moved in to attack the minority Sudanese. The angry Somali crowds attacked, looted, and burned the Sudanese houses to the ground, said LWF Camp Management Officer Joseph Kiai.

UNHCR and partner agencies in conjunction with the police had to move in swiftly, police were deployed to take charge of the situation while UNHCR and other implementing partners came in to move the minority Sudanese community to safety. they were taken to the Ifo Transit Centre. At the Transit centre UNHCR had to provide tents and other essentials making life a little bit more uncomfort-

able for the refugees. Nyaruach Nyak, a mother of two who said she shares a tent with another family, was quick to say that she leads a life 10 times worse than that in Hagadera. “The tent is too small, too hot to say during daytime and too cold to sleep at nights,” said Nyak. “I cannot afford milk for my infant.

“The tent is too small, too hot to stay during the daytime and too cold to sleep at nights.”

They have to share food cooked for the whole camp once a day.”

It has been a devastating experience considering that the refugees fled their home countries as a result of war.

At the moment Care is providing guidance and counselling services to help the victim handle the trauma while LWF and UNHCR continue providing the basic essentials to the victims and try make life in the transit a little bit more bearable. FilmAid through its Participatory Video Program is working with a few youth in Video Production as

a means of engaging them to ease the tension and spend their time in a more responsible way considering that they are not allowed to go outside the fenced transit centre.

The Sudanese refugee continue to live at the transit as they await a durable solution. In the meanwhile investigations are underway and we hope that justice shall be served and an acceptable and durable solution shall be reached.



One of the house that was destroyed in Hagadera

A YOUNG UNACCOMPANIED BOY

According to the UNHCR Registration-Osman had not yet been registered considering he was still a new arrival and the registration process takes a while. Osman who was staying in Hagadera camp with his aunt and uncle had spent the last three months of his life traveling by all by himself according to sources.

Its alleged that Osman who hailed from the country side in Somali moved to Mogadishu leaving his mother there and staying in Mogadishu with one of his aunts.

After leaving Mogadishu its purported he went and stayed in Moyale for a month before finding his way to Hagadera.

It is in Hagadera where Osman met his death. He was brutally murdered by unknown persons and his body found along a path next to the Sudanese community.

If the allegations are anything to go by, his movements leave a lot to be desired. Meanwhile the police are looking into the matter

THE EVENT THAT WAS.... THE FOCUS FILM FESTIVAL



The PVP Members posed for a group photo after getting their awards. The closing ceremony was held in Ifo Camp at the Ethiopian Block.



Hassan, a PVP member celebrates after getting his certificate

THE FOCUS FILM FESTIVAL - A DADAAB PILOT 2010.

On the 3rd of August the the PVP team screened their first film as part of the Focus Film Festival. The Focus film festival was created to provide a platform for refugee youth under Filmaid's participatory video project. This first edition was a pilot that took place in Ifo camp, one of the camps that make up the larger Dadaab refugee camp. The PVP program has been in existence since February last year.

The first screening was done at the Ethiopian block which was also host to the main screening venue. The mobile screen moved to Bosnia market where crowds were entertained to a wide variety of films that have been made by refugees in Dadaab. The films screened were the Khat, My Beautiful Dress, The Shopkeeper, The Golden Opportunity, Buufis, Tumale (The Blacksmith) and Make the Right Choice.

The PVP team was well received in most of the places and one of the key issues addressed was 'Buufis' as the Somalis refer to resettlement. Two films, a Golden Opportunity that features a refugee who has already been resettled and Buufis a film featuring a refugees quest to get re-settled were screened. This was followed by public barazas which involved the UNHCR resettlement team which responded to queries from the community.

The festival was not as easy and the shortage of vehicles to facilitate the mobile screenings was a great setback. This could have been attributed to the ongoing referendum in Kenya where many people had gone to cast their votes with some afraid of the eruption of violence. This brought about a shortage of some services amongst them car hire. The mobile screenings saw large

turnouts from the community with many appreciating the activity. Khu-liye Abukar a form 4 candidate could not hide the excitement and promised to join the PVP during the next recruitment. The screenings moved around various areas of the camp and managed to reach hundreds of refugees. Abdi Abdullahi one of the PVP members described it as being educa-



UNHCR Staff respond to questions at a screening in Ifo Camp

tive, informative and to some extent entertaining. The festival went on for a period of three days with the fourth day dedicated to the closing ceremony and giving awards to the members who had done a fantastic job.

At the main festival venue at the Ethiopian Block people kept streaming in and the team kept the films playing. Away from my Homeland, a film from the Kakuma PVP team was also shared with the Dadaab audience and was well received. Abdi Rage a PVP member from Dagahaley said "the film festival was very good and was an event that was new to the refugee camps. The films were of educative programs and are very useful in the communities,"

The Closing Ceremony was held on Friday and saw large numbers come to witness this event which was just

a pilot. The young refugees got their certificates. A total of 13 refugees were awarded certificates based on merit. Some who had done a commendable job during the program got recognised for their effort. Liban Rashid scooped the best cameraman and director while Abdi Abdullahi made away with the best scriptwriter. Other notable awards were given to Abakuro Owar and Hassan Aden for best actress and actor respectively.

The ceremony came ended on a high note with a community members from the Ethiopian Block describing the process as having brought some positive attention to the Ethiopian block.

But the festival was not just over yet. The film critique night at UNHCR saw large numbers of staff turn up for the event. where some of the works by the refugee filmmakers was subjected to open criticism. A panel of three judges positively critiqued the works of the filmmakers. The crowd was also involved in the critique session that saw the three best critiques of the night walk away with a Focus Festival T-Shirt and Compilation DVD of the PVP films. A staff from Oxfam expressed his dissatisfaction with African films which he blames for poor subtitling which has seen important information being left out. It was something he had witnessed in the PVP films as well. This being a pilot project for the Dadaab refugee Camp the sky can never be a limit.

We hoping a better and bigger festival next year.



The closing ceremony underway in Ifo at the Ethiopian block



The PVP members set up the Focus banner at a venue in Ifo



A PVP film shows during the critique night at the UNHCR compound

SPOT IT! SNAP IT!



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.

1. It's business as usual in Dagahaley Camp
2. Liban Rashid of FilmAid poses for a shot with Caroline Baron the founder of FilmAid in Dadaab
3. Kids at the transit centre engage in a board game courtesy of Save the Children
4. A stage in Hagadera camp
5. Miraa(Khat) traders in Dagahaley market. Its one of the most commonly used drug among the Somalis.

“While every refugee’s story is different and their anguish personal, they all share a common thread of uncommon courage – the courage not only to survive, but to persevere and rebuild their shattered lives.

- Antonio Guterres, U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, 2005-.”

HOPE FOR REFUGEE YOUTH

By Moulid Iftin

More than half of Dadaab refugee population are young people who have limited or no opportunities in vocational training, skill enhancement, higher education and employment, according to UNHCR data released last April.

To overcome these youth related problems, UNHCR empowers young refugees with programs that help them develop employment skills. Agencies under UNHCR recruit young people and they work with Community Development Services Units in the three camps — Ifo, Dagahley and Hagardera. The purpose is to develop a strategy of youth engagement in a youth governance initia-

tive within the camps, as well as to develop concept notes and proposals focusing on the needs and opportunities of the youths in the camps.

They are given basic training on community based organization formation and management. All youth groups carry out various activities in the camps and work together with the implementing agencies. To strengthen the cohesion among the youth groups and other agencies, there is one youth organization that represents all the youth organizations from the three camps. The most important projects

that Ifo youth are engaged in is cleaning and renovating the local access roads. This was the outcome of a meeting which the youth executive committees had with Ifo business leaders.

Bishar Kadiye, Ifo youth secretary said

“We have to support these talented youth such that they reach their destination and become the future of tomorrow.”

that they are well-connected with agencies and seek advice from them.

A long side their planned projects, the youth carry out other activities such as monthly awareness campaigns and fund raising.

UNHCR, community services provided the youth umbrella office with stationeries and trained the youth representatives on basic skills in office management. They were also donated with sports kits to help them start their first project.

There are many smart young people in the camps, but their talents are under utilised. This leads to some youth engaging in drugs and crime,” said Ali Haleys Abdi, Ifo youth chairman.

Ifo Camp Chairman Deck Kadiye said “We have to support these talented youths such that they reach their destination and become the future of tomorrow.”

The Dadaab youth have a great potential but it has to be nurtured in the right direction to ensure the skills are utilised for the right purposes and the benefit of the community.

FLOOD ZONE

Dangerous IFO floods

By Hussein Hassan

During the heavy rainy seasons which always occur at the end of summer, refugees in Dadaab camps are badly affected by floods that destroy their houses and kill livestock.

About a decade ago, after heavy rainy seasons took place, floods started causing months of devastation. People could not evacuate from their houses, because they were scared that they might sink in a hole that are common around the camps. “We had nowhere to run, and almost all our belongings were destroyed. This flood came when the refugees were about to get healed from the devastation caused by the 1997 floods.

This reoccurring floods have resulted in the establishment of a new place: IFO Section N. This new space has a high-level ground where the floods of bricks usually collapsed leaving many dead.

Thunderstorms killed some individuals. “It was like another civil war where we had to evacuate,” Hassan Mohamed said.

cannot pile up to form channels of water.

Old people, disabled and children are most affected by the floods. In many cases, houses made of bricks usually collapsed leaving many dead.

Thunderstorms killed some individuals. “It was like another civil war where we had to evacuate,” Hassan Mohamed said.



Young Sudanese refugees at the Ifo Transit Centre.



Ifo residents try to wade through the floods in the flooded Ifo camp.

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REFUGEE OF THE MONTH

IBRAHIM HIRSI was a refugee who was resettled to the United States. His was an act of love and compassion to just come back to Dadaab and give back to the thousands who still await durable solutions

I was born in 1986 in Mogadishu, but my childhood years scatter in different countries — this refuses me to have a place I can call home. It saddens me when I am asked where I grew up. The ugly truth is that there isn't a place I lived permanently because my journey that began two decades ago, when the civil war erupted in Somalia in 1991, is everlasting.

Just like many refugees, I floated with a wave that uplifted me from the war-torn Somalia and then swept me to Kenya and finally to Minnesota, USA.

Each move I made had its own challenges. I struggled for an identity wherever I lived. It is a struggle that still continues for two decades now. Life as a refugee was horrible. Many did not see refugees as human beings who have the desire to live a better life, deserve respect, love and full rights. Instead, I was dehumanized, isolated and sometimes hated. "Refugee." That was the name I was first called before they even called me by my name. It was a name of despise and degrading that I loved to hate.

Five years ago, I was resettled in Minnesota where I completed my high school. A journalism workshop that I attended 2006 when I was a

junior at Wellstone International High School in Minnesota led me to devote myself to journalism for the past four years. After this workshop, I founded and worked for my high school newspaper as the

"I was dehumanized, isolated and sometimes hated. 'Refugee' that was the name I was first called before they even called me by my name."



Ibrahim Hirsi, left, during a journalism training in Ifo camp.

editor-in-chief. At the same time I used to write for the *Wedge Neighborhood* as a columnist. I also contributed many articles to local Minnesota newspapers, including *The StarTribune*, Minnesota's largest newspaper.

I'm currently a third-year journalism student at the University of Minnesota.

I wrote for *The Minnesota Daily* as a staff reporter for a year and covered many high profile stories that led me to win a second place news reporters award. I was also a 2009 news fellow for the Minnesota Public Radio.

During the five years I lived in Minnesota, I dreamed of coming to Africa and giving back to my people. My long-awaited dream was made possible by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC.) The organization sponsors a student from the US every year, and this year CDC gave me the privilege to return back to Dadaab, Kenya as a summer intern.

It's CDC that introduced me to FlimAid where I perform multiple tasks that are related to journalism, as an intern. I'm currently working on a documentary on the conflict between Somalis and Sudanese refugees in Hagadera Camp. On behalf of FlimAid, I organize a journalism workshop and trained 8 young men from Ifo Camp on the basic journalism skills and helped them produce *The Refugee*, which they will continue even after I go back to Minnesota later this month.

BUSINESS WISE

From shoeshiner to a proud restaurant owner.

'Businesswise' focuses on an Ifo business owner who is using TV to earn his daily bread.

By Obang Didumo

Ogut Ojulu 24, had always wanted to be an independent person and live on his earnings. Unlike many other refugees who dropped out of school, Ojulu pursued his education, and at the same time worked as a shoe shiner in Ifo camp until he received his secondary school certificate.

Ojulu was ambitious and saw beyond shoe shining. His dream became reality when he opened a restaurant that he calls the "best" in Ifo. This was after completing his high school education at Dadaab Secondary School in 2008.

Since then, Ojulu has been involved in a number of businesses.

Ojulu's restaurant provides a variety of goods needed in the camp.

"Ojulu was ambitious and saw beyond shoe shining"

For instance, he sells soda, water, tea, and beer amongst other goods for prices that are convenient to most of the refugees.

According to him the secret has been offering competitive prices to the customers, something that has worked for him since he established his business a year ago. Besides offering competitive prices he has a TV screen in his restaurant where people come to watch TV.



Ojulu inside his restaurant in Ifo camp

Odol Adhom, a customer at Didumo's restaurant, said he often comes to this restaurant because the goods are much cheaper as compared to other shops.

Every month he takes home an average of Sh. 7000 which makes him prefer business rather than employment.

Anywaks on the run!

By Akune Obang Atale

Anywaks are the River Lake nilotic group who are indigenous people living along the four major rivers in Gambella Regional State in the western part of Ethiopia.

International border demarcation divided Anywaks into two nations — some live in the southern Sudan, while the majority of the clan live in the western part of Ethiopia.

The Ethiopian government does not consider the Anywaks as citizens, Okalaka Bam said "They call us Senegalese, Nigerian or Sudanese because of our skin color."

It was Dec. 2003 when Ethiopian government launched a war that took 450 lives against Anywaks. "The Ethiopian army and the highlander settlers in Gambella went from door to door with a prepared list of Anywaks civil servants, teachers, businesspersons and clerics," said Okech Agid, Gambella community leader in Ifo. They murdered all these people, and caused a mass destruction of properties. Community Leader Okech Agid said, "Our houses were set on fire." He could



Akune Obang Atale

not believe why the government he would fight for and work for killed his people and distorted his property.

Due to the incident of Dec. 2003, a number of Anywark people scattered throughout the world, in search for a security and a better life. But the majority remain in the neighboring countries.

For those who evacuated to Kenya, it was not an easy trip. They have gone through difficulties as they crossed the border.

Amed Opodhi said, "I came to Kenya through Busia. My child and I were imprisoned for almost 15 days until UNHCR took us to Dadaab camp."

A total of 2,260 Anywaks live in Dadaab, according to statistics carried out by community leaders.

"I have never seen a dead body killed by soldiers and I never heard a gun shot since I arrived in Kenya. Really this is a good country," Opodhi said.

THE REFUGEE

The Refugee exists not exploit nor to embarrass, it seeks to tell their stories and at the same time observe ethics of journalism as well as the Sphere standards. This is not harmful but useful and should be embraced by all.

By Solomon Mwendwa

THE REFUGEE newsletter has been prepared by refugees under FilmAid's Participatory Video Project. its main objective is to give the refugees a voice, to address issues in their own communities in manner that is acceptable and understood by all.

THIS NEWSLETTER has been written by people whose countries have known war for decades. Democracy is not a word in their vocabulary, most do not know the power the media poses nor the advantages of a free and fair media.

THE REFUGEE wants to equip these young men to be efficient users of the media because if their countries gets peace today who will write for the newspapers, who will produce the news?The Refugee is not about FilmAid but rather the community at large and the key players who include

agencies working in Dadaab as well as the Government and stakeholders.

THE REFUGEE'S main objective is to tackle issues and give the youth a platform to express share and inform. This newsletter does not seek to exploit but rather inform and empower the protracted refugee population.

THE EDITORIAL team is made up of refugees and correspondents across the camps who have been given basic journalism training. The refugee is in a bid to promote citizen journalism that will ensure there is proper and accurate flow of information so as to dispel rumours that may be going round at any given point. FilmAid will seek to the best of its ability to ensure that the editorial team upholds the ethics of journalism. This newsletter is open to persons from all nationalities and all backgrounds with the main target population being the refugees in Dadaab. The refugee is welcome to any col-

laborations that will seek to take this newsletter to another level.

THIS INITIATIVE requires your input and support to help the refugees tell their stories. This publication is not here to cause harm but is here to promote peaceful co-existence. The Refugee would be happy if the agencies would support their quest, for instance if one of the reporters is doing a story on FGM in Dadaab and wants an interview with an agency it will be unfair to ask the same person who is a refugee to seek authorisation from Nairobi. This is not the usual newspaper you see on the street, these people are not the normal journalists you see on TV but they are members of a protracted refugee community trying to be agents of change in their own communities. They endeavor to tell stories that empower and promote a just and united society.

THE OBJECTIVE is to train them to be refined journalists who can be trusted. Its our request that support be granted to all the staff that represent the newsletter at various levels. When they come knocking give them the support because tomorrow they will be in Somalia or Sudan reporting and we will all be proud of them.

THE REFUGEE will endeavour seek to uphold the highest standards and is working to develop an editorial policy guidelines and objective. It also welcomes any media practitioner who would want to volunteer their skills
PREPARED ON behalf of the editorial team.

FOR MORE information visit our page on www.the-refugeeonline.wordpress.com

TO GET in touch send a mail to: therefugee.dadaab@gmail.com

FROM MINNESOTA, TO EUROPE, DADAAB TO MOGADISHU, CAPE TOWN TO PAKISTAN, THE REFUGEE WELCOMES YOU TO BE PART OF THE NEXT ISSUE BY SENDING IN YOUR ARTICLES, ANALYSIS, QUERIES, OPINIONS AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE REFUGEE SEEKS TO TELL STORIES OF REFUGEES IN DADAAB AND OTHER REFUGEE CAMPS AND BRING STORIES FROM THE REST OF THE GLOBE TO THE REFUGEES IN THE CAMPS OF DADAAB AT THE FLIP OF A PAGE.

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE HIGHLY APPRECIATED.

therefugee.dadaab@gmail.com

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FilmAid Participatory Video Project (PVP) is a filmmaking program for refugee youth in Dadaab and one of the main objective of this newsletter is to help them improve on their writing and reporting skills and which will see an improved capacity in term of writing for film as well.

www.filmaid.org
www.filmaid.blogspot.com