Refugee Students in Kenya benefit from private sector scholarships

All smiles! Cynthia Uwamahoro (Burundi), Cyiza Yvette Mutoni (Congo), Reech Deng Maketh (South Sudan), Alith Duany Alith (South Sudan), Gieu Ayiik Ajak (South Sudan) and Chani Osman Kocha (Sudan) after admission at the MPESA Foundation Academy. Photo by Modesta Ndubi /UNHCR
Refugee Students in Kenya benefit from private sector scholarships

Bursting with dreams of becoming successful doctors and lawyers, six refugee students from Sudan, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi reported for their first day in secondary school, at the M-Pesa Foundation Academy in Thika, Kenya.

The charitable Academy, which is owned by the leading telecoms and mobile phone service provider in Kenya, Safaricom, opened in 2016. It’s a state of the art school teaching Kenya’s national curriculum, entrepreneurship, technology and innovation to young bright students. Up until now, places were only available for Kenyan students. This is the first time refugees are being allowed to join.

16-year old Reech Deng Maketh, a refugee from South Sudan is one of them. In 2013 his parents were killed in the ongoing war in South Sudan. He fled with his three siblings to Kakuma refugee camp in northwestern Kenya, where, as the first born, he is responsible for his siblings.

But Deng didn’t let this stop him from pursuing his education. He attended the Shambe Primary School in Kakuma refugee camp. In 2017 he was among 5,000 students who sat for the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) exams, scoring 312 out of 500 marks.

Deng applied to join the M-Pesa Foundation Academy, and was among the 190 selected this year.

“After four years at Kakuma I expect to change my life because I will work hard and go to University. I would like to become a doctor and go back to help people in South Sudan because back home people die from all sorts of ailments.” Deng says.

A few weeks prior to the admission of the five students at M-Pesa Foundation Academy, three other refugee students had just been awarded the coveted Wings to Fly scholarship by Equity Group and MasterCard Foundations. The Equity Bank Foundation programme gives scholarships to high-achieving but vulnerable children, such as refugees, orphans, the poor and those living in serious difficult circumstances.

This was the first time that refugees were selected as beneficiaries since the scholarship was launched in 2011.

“It’s not a mean fete to earn the scholarship,” says Mohamed Hure, UNHCR Assistant Education Officer in Kakuma. “The three had the best grades among the applicants in Turkana West County and they did a commendable job. The challenges of limited resources and overcrowding in schools did not deter them.” Hure adds.

UNHCR’s Assistant Education Officer, Margaret Njayakio emphasised that, “Such partnerships create opportunities for vulnerable refugee children. We hope that many more opportunities will be made available and more institutions will take in refugees.”
International Day for Women and Girls in Science

UNESCO Regional Office for Eastern Africa along with the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE-Africa) and Microsoft Africa, convened a celebration of the International Day of Women and Girls in Science, on Monday 12 February 2018, at the UN Compound in Nairobi, Kenya.

The gathering, originally established by the United Nations, intended to provide visibility to women scientists who have made a difference in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields and to encourage young and upcoming female scientists as well as girls in secondary schools to look beyond the gender stereotypes and embrace STEM careers.

Alice Ochanda, Programme Officer for Gender and Science, UNESCO Regional Office for Eastern Africa said “We cannot achieve Sustainable Development without gender equality in Science. Science needs the sixth sense that only women are endowed with”.

UNESCO runs a comprehensive STEM programme in the form of Scientific Camps of Excellence. The programme, introduced in 2014, focuses on mentorship for girls in STEM to fulfil the need of bringing science closer to secondary school students. The implementation is done in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MoE), the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) and the Kenya National Commission for UNESCO. Other partners include universities, Safaricom, CISCO Systems, FAWE Regional office, Women in Aviation (WIA-Kenya Chapter) and industries. The programme aims to inspire girls to embrace science and engineering.

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BMS Receives 30 Computers to Enhance Border Operations

“We cannot achieve Sustainable Development without gender equality in Science. Science needs the sixth sense that only women are endowed with”, Alice Ochanda, Programme Officer for Gender and Science, UNESCO Regional Office for Eastern Africa.

Courses and to nurture them as future professionals in STEM.

The theme, “Equality and Parity in Science for Peace and Development”, set the tone for an agenda that included mentorships talks, role modeling and sharing of experiences (highs and lows) by successful women scientists working in a male dominated field.

The ceremony brought together student scientists from secondary and tertiary institutions, practicing women scientists, as well as teachers and lecturers who contribute to making the difference in girls’ participation in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). These audiences shared best practices through exhibitions and demonstrations of successful Science and Technology Innovations by upcoming female scientists, students and practicing women scientists.

IOM Kenya Chief of Mission, Mr. Michael Pillinger, hands over one of the laptop computer to Head of BMS, Dr. Ahmed Omar. The computers are delivered to 25 border points across the country as part of ongoing comprehensive support to the Government of Kenya (GoK) through National Coordination Mechanism on Migration (NCM), of which the BMS is a member to address migration challenges in Kenya. Photo by Joseph Habitu, IOM Kenya
On 24 January, IOM, the UN Migration Agency, provided 25 desktop and five laptop computers to Kenya’s Border Management Secretariat (BMS) as part of the Better Migration Management programme (BMM).

The computers are delivered to 25 border points across the country as part of ongoing comprehensive support to the Government of Kenya (GoK) through National Coordination Mechanism on Migration (NCM), of which the BMS is a member to address migration challenges in Kenya.

The provision will support Border Management Committees (BMC) operations at the border points of Nadapal, Suam, Muhuru Bay, Moyale, Namanga, Loitoktok and Mandera and other border points as well as the BMS headquarter in Nairobi.

The BMS has a mandate of coordinating operations of border management agencies across the country which includes the Department of Immigration Services, Kenya Revenue Authority, Port Health, and Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Services among others.

BMS was formed under the Border Control and Operation Coordination Committee in the Ministry of Interior and Co-ordination of National Government comprising of heads of ten agencies.

Dr. Omar thanked IOM for the contribution, saying that since the inception of the Secretariat, BMS has made significant achievements due to BMM’s support.

He said that the donation will improve efficiency and enhance service delivery. "The computers and laptops will expedite information sharing among co-workers working within the country’s border points," he said.

Mr. Pillinger said that BMM is committed to supporting the Government of Kenya in improving its strategic and operational efficiency.

"We are looking forward to supporting the needs of the Government, as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen the border management in the country," he said.

The BMM Programme is a regional, multi-year and multi-partner programme funded by the EU Trust Fund for Africa and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), coordinated by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

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**WHO to support MOH in the Universal Health Coverage initiative**

The Ministry of Health has begun work to implement the universal health coverage initiative in Kenya with support from WHO and health partners, following productive meetings between WHO Director-General Dr Tedros and President Kenyatta in January.

The meeting with the President focused on implementing Universal Health Coverage and the President’s four priority areas of government delivery (Big Four) which include affordable healthcare, food security, affordable housing and manufacturing.

The DG said he was greatly impressed by President Kenyatta’s commitment and choice of four priority areas which would directly impact healthcare. “I am very
impressed by these priority areas and the President's commitment because these will all contribute to better health of the people.” Better housing contributes to better health and so does manufacturing and food security, he added.

Dr Ghebreyesus expressed WHO commitment and support to enable the government to attain its identified priorities both in the short term and in the future. He emphasized that Kenya was an important partner in the region.

“Universal health coverage is my top priority and WHO pledges full support to the Government to help make Kenya’s health system one of the best in the region,” he said.

Universal health coverage means that all individuals and communities receive the health services they need without suffering financial hardship. This includes essential, quality health services, from health promotion to prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care.

“I am very impressed by these priority areas and the President's commitment because these will all contribute to better health of the people.”

Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus, Director-General, WHO
Dr Ghebreyesus emphasized a strengthened preventive health approach for the region and called for a focus on health promotion adding that it was key to achieving primary health care among communities.

“We would like to offer our own support and help mobilize further support based on the government priorities,” he added.

Dr Rudi Eggers, WHO Representative in Kenya, and his team have already begun working with the new administration to support the transformation of the health system.

“We will bring our expertise to assist in the development of a model that will be efficient and effective in providing affordable essential health services to all Kenyans,” he says.

At least half of the world’s population still does not have access to essential health services, such as having a skilled birth attendant, vaccinations for children or treatment for HIV. And when they do have access to services, almost 100 million people are pushed into extreme poverty every year because they have to pay for them out of their own pockets.

The National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF), which enables people to access health services, is only accessed by 7.1 million of Kenya’s 45 million population. These are mostly civil servants and salaried working people who can afford it. Majority of those without access have no regular income or work in the informal sector. NHIF has intensified its services since 2015 offering in-patient and outpatient coverage and various packages as per its agreement with various private hospitals and clinics. It is targeting 22 people million by 2022.

“We will bring our expertise to assist in the development of a model that will be efficient and effective in providing affordable essential health services to all Kenyans,” Dr Rudi Eggers, WHO Representative in Kenya.
UNIC Nairobi involve students in Holocaust Remembrance

The International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust Day was held today, 26 January 2018 at the United Nations Headquarters Complex in Gigiri. The theme of this year’s observance is “Holocaust Remembrance and Education: Our Shared Responsibility”.

The event organized by UN Information Centre, Nairobi (UNIC Nairobi) was presided over by UNON Director of Administration Services, Mr. Chris Kirkcaldy on behalf of UNON Director-General, Sahle-Work Zewde. A film on the children of the

Israel Ambassador to Kenya, Mr. Norah Gal Gendler addressing guests during the Holocaust Commemoration Day at UNON_26 Jan 2018. Photo by UNIC Nairobi

Israel Deputy Ambassador Mr. Michael Baror engaging students on a discussion, 26 January 2018. Photo by UNIC Nairobi

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Holocaust was screened, wreaths of flowers were laid in honour of the victims of the Holocaust and later students engaged the Israel Deputy Ambassador in lively discussion on the impacts and lessons learnt.

UN Information Centre (UNIC) Director Mr. Nasser Ega-Musa was the master of ceremony. Representatives of the Kenya Government, State of Israel, Federal Republic of Germany, Students from local universities, Hebrew Congregation and members of the diplomatic community in Kenya attended.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust-26 January 2018

Israel Ambassador to Kenya, Mr. Norah Gal Gendler addressing guests during the Holocaust Commemoration

Some of the invited Diplomats laying wreaths of flowers

UNIC Director Nasser Ega-Musa and UNON Administrative Services Director follow the proceedings during the commemoration

One of the students engaging in a discussion

Kenya Government Representative addressing invited guests during the Holocaust commemoration Day

Students watching the film Children of the Holocaust at UNON

German Ambassador after laying the wreath of flowers
International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation marked in Nairobi - 06 February 2018

A 12 year old girl ready to receive her FGM award in recognition of her brave effort in overcoming ordeals of forced circumcision.

Some of the participants who attended the event.

Some of the artists who entertained the guests.

One of the artist entertaining the guests.

Delegates follow proceedings of the event at KICD.

Anti-FGM Board Chairperson addressing participants.

UNIC Deputy Director, Newton Kanhema and Philip Ogola at the event.

One of the Anti-FGM Campaigner narrating her story.
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17 Sustainable Development Goals to Transform our World by 2030

This Newsletter is compiled by the UN Communications Group in Kenya (UNCG) designed and edited by the United Nations Information Centre, Nairobi.
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