



HANDS-ON

EXPLORING ALTERNATIVES FOR JOB CREATION

Hope through vocational training

Female refugees from South Sudan living in Ufua I Refugee Camp have a chance at living decently through vocational skills.

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Eighteen-year-old Deborah Moriba arrived at Ufua I Refugee Camp in Arua District in October last year. The mother to a five-year-old child was escaping war from her village in Goja, South Sudan.

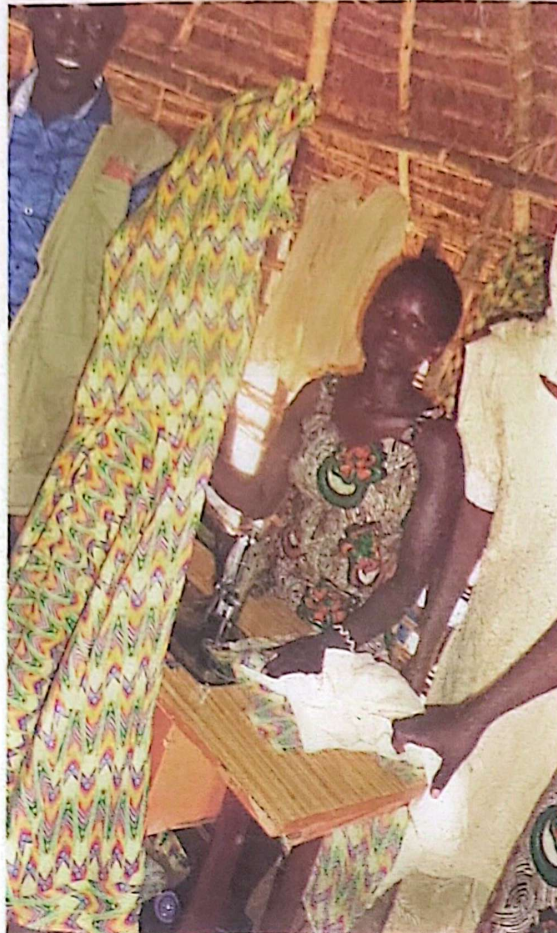
"At the beginning, the situation was tough because I was very idle. One day, a team of community workers moving from one hut to another sensitising the youth about the importance of vocational training, came to our hut and I immediately registered. We started the training in February 2017," Moriba says. She can now sew different clothes and designs including dresses, skirts, blouses and shirts including *bitenge*. The young mother of one says she sells each of her products at Shs3,000 and *bitenge* at Shs5,000.

Because of this training, Moriba is self-reliant and her child is now in Primary One. She is able to pay the Shs40,000 for school fees every term.

Moriba says most girls who desisted the initiative are now admiring how her life has changed.

Hopelessness

A visit to the camp indicates that most of the population are teenagers and children who are the most vulnerable, especially the girls. However, development partners such as Danish Refugee Council (DRC) have



Deborah Moriba (centre), a refugee from South Sudan, displays one of the dresses she made at the vocational training facility in Ufua I Refugee Camp in Arua District.
PHOTOS BY LOMINDA AFEDRARU

girl with a hearing impairment, residing in the same camp. Her mother died and she is living with her 70-year-old father aged. Before the war, she was a tailor back home though her training was not sufficient.

From her business in Yei, South Sudan, Singa was able to save \$500 (about Shs1.3 million) which she left behind with her brother when the war intensified and has never recovered it.

A bright future

When life became difficult at the camp, Singa attempted suicide but was rescued. In November 2017, she was enrolled as a beneficiary in the social and economic empowerment network.

With the awareness and vocational training, she has hopes for a better future and no longer has suicidal thoughts.

With Singa's previous knowledge in tailoring, she is now a co-trainer and mentor to the girls at the vocational training facility.

Vivian Kaku, 18, another beneficiary from Lanya village in South Sudan, specialises in making school uniforms for children, which she sells at Shs5,000.

The project team is in the process of developing business plans for the girls where they will purchase sewing machines for them so that they can put the acquired skills to use and

ABOUT THE INITIATIVE

The Social Economic Development Network initiative is designed to rehabilitate refugee adolescent youth, mainly girls.

- In life skills such as craft and tailoring
- Prevention of early marriages
- Observing reproductive health, which includes proper sanitary during menstrual periods, avoiding premarital sex
- Avoidance of HIV challenges through unprotected sex

This initiative is in refugee settlements in camps of Ufua 1, 2, 3, and Ariwa in Arua District.

3,000

THE AMOUNT IN SHILLINGS
A TAILORED CLOTH COSTS IN
THE REFUGEE CAMP.

embarked on equipping the girls with life skills. One particular group of girls is being trained in tailoring which they can take up as a business venture to earn a living.

Isaac Khamis, a refugee from South Sudan, also the in charge of the life skills initiative explains that this project started in October 2016 with

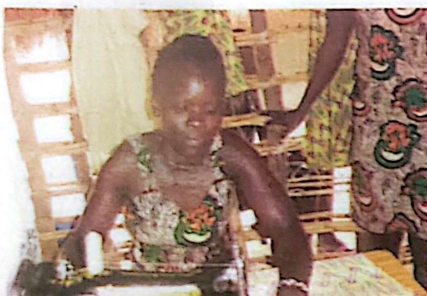
recruitment of 19 girls all adolescents aged between 15 and 18 years.

"The main aim is to keep the girls busy and reduce the rate of early marriage which is common amongst the refugee population. Trainees are given used bed sheets as materials for training," Khamis said.

Florence Singa, 18, is an adolescent

VITAL VOICES

Skills can rehabilitate refugees



start working. Actually, they do not want to go back to their home places and if you call them refugees, they get offended. I believe the aspect of giving

"We empowered trainers to train refugees in Kinyadogo Camp on short programmes of three months in courses such as brick laying, wood working, metal fabrication, tailoring and cookery. After getting the skills, they are absorbed into the community and



just criminals who are fleeing their countries and taking advantage of our unsecured borders.

"We do not need to skill the refugees but rather control their influx. There is no pride for any country is being easily accessible through uncontrolled borders. There are no major wars taking place in the countries surrounding us. Most of the refugees here are

LIFE SKILLS

More than a cobbler

After losing his job in Juba in 1998, John Odra moved to Uganda. When efforts to secure a job proved futile, he settled for repairing shoes.



BY DERRICK WANDERA
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"When I returned to Uganda in 1998, I tried to look for a job but luck was not on my side. I had been working with Medecins Sans Frontieres, a Non-Governmental Organisation, in South Sudan, as a driver. I had been considering self-employment, therefore, starting work as a cobbler did not take me long. It has now been now 17 years of mending people's shoes.

My wife left me in 1997, with four children but being self-employed without pressure from a boss has made it possible. I have managed to educate them to secondary level. On a good day, I make about Shs30,000.

"I couple mending shoes with shoe-polishing to make me more relevant."

But I know this can increase if I can make more friends who can recommend me to customers."

Unlike other cobblers, Odrah couples the mending job with shoe-polishing to make his business more relevant. He is also willing to go for more training on his job to become better and more versatile.

"To get more customers in a day I polish people's shoes because if someone is not coming for mending, they come to polish their shoes. I acquired this skill from my primary school and I have always had the zeal for this kind of work. I have the art of designing shoes and I want to enroll for a three-month course to learn how to make shoes. I enjoy this job although I am a trained mechanic. I also train some youths who want to