

Visit to Sango Bay Resettlement Camp

Jo Wright, rscj



On November 17th, 2015, I joined the group of six staff members and three pupils from Sacred Heart Primary School, Kyamusansala, on a visit to Sango Bay Resettlement Camp. Thanks to Sister Nankusu Anamaria, the head teacher of Sacred Heart Primary School, for organizing this journey to the Sango Bay Camp.

We left in three pick up vehicles loaded with food, clothing, text books, exercise books and pencils for the people of Sango Bay Camp.



Sango Bay Camp is located in Kakuuto Sub-County, Rakai District, Central Uganda, close to the border with Tanzania. It was set up in 2013 to receive people who were expelled from Tanzania as they had illegally settled there. The great grandparents, grandparents and parents of these people had gone to Tanzania as far back as the 1940's, 1950's, and 1960's in search of land on which they could settle and cultivate. They were happily settled in Tanzania when in 2013 the Tanzania Government made the decision to expel illegal immigrants from its country. According to those living in the Sango Bay Resettlement Camp they were not given the opportunity to carry their things or to try and sell their homes, they were put on lorries and brought across the border into Uganda.





Sister Nankusu Anamaria addressing the school children.

The deputy camp commander (the camp has police protection), told us that over 5000 arrived in October of 2013. These Ugandans are mainly from Kabale area and speak Lukiga and Kiswahili. There are more than a thousand children. Within the camp, villages have been set up with leaders for management control.

The people live in small huts which they built from soil and covered with grass.



Most of the huts are covered with polythene sheets given by UNHCR to protect the huts from being destroyed by rain.



The main problem facing the camp at this time are the lack of food and need of more latrines. There has been no food allocation from the Government since March of this year. The little food received has come from UNICEF and other well-wishers like the Sacred Heart Primary School, Kyamusansala. The few sack of maize and other commodities that the school was able to provide is little among so many. We appeal to well-wishers everywhere to come to the aid of these brothers and sisters of ours.

They are not allowed to dig or grow food at the camp. Those who are able go to nearby villages to dig and so receive some food or money in exchange for their labour. The people are presently living on one meal a day. When donations of food are given, these are shared with the most vulnerable – pregnant women and the elderly who are too old to dig.

We asked the deputy camp commander what the future is for these people and were told that the Government plans to relocate them. The paper work has been done but up to now there is no word when they will be resettled on land they can cultivate.

As Pope Francis said in his recent encyclical, *Laudato Si*, “We need to strengthen the conviction that we are one single human family. There are no frontiers or barriers, political or social, behind which we can hide, still less is there room for the globalization of indifference”

It is the hope of this article on the UGK Website might make people more aware of the plight of these people and so take what action they can whether to speak to people in the government or to share their resources with the people of Sango Bay Camp.

The articles on the following pages are written by the three pupils, two of the teachers and an accountant at Sacred Heart Primary School with whom we visited the Sango Bay Camp on November 17th. 2015.



The following is from Primary 6 pupil *Nakiwolo Martha Nkoyoyo*, (the taller one of the pupils in this photo)

I live at Kampala at Kawempe District. I write to the whole country about the refugee camp in Sango Bay which is located in Rakai District, where we found many people suffering due to different conditions. In my own impression, there are many people in Sango Bay who need your help. Children lack well-trained and enough teachers. They also lack houses to sleep in and classrooms to study from.

Most of the children in Sango Bay Camp study from UNICEF tents, some of which are torn. In most cases when it rains their books get wet and water enters into the tents.



In addition, they lack basic needs like clothes and food plus other facilities.

It was my first time to reach Sango Bay Camp and I was so surprised to see such houses and classrooms of that type where children sit down on torn mats to study.

In the same refugee camp, they need health care; there are few medical workers and very many sick people. They also lack medical equipment and some lack mosquito nets which leads to the spread of malaria.

Please people, the refugees really need your help. Let's join together and help the refugees of Sango Bay. For God and My Country, Nakiwolo Martha Nkoyoyo, Sacred Heart Primary School Kyamusansala.

Sango Bay Refugee Camp



Article by Primary 5 pupil, ***Nakasango Sharitah*** (seen in the photo addressing the school children of the camp).

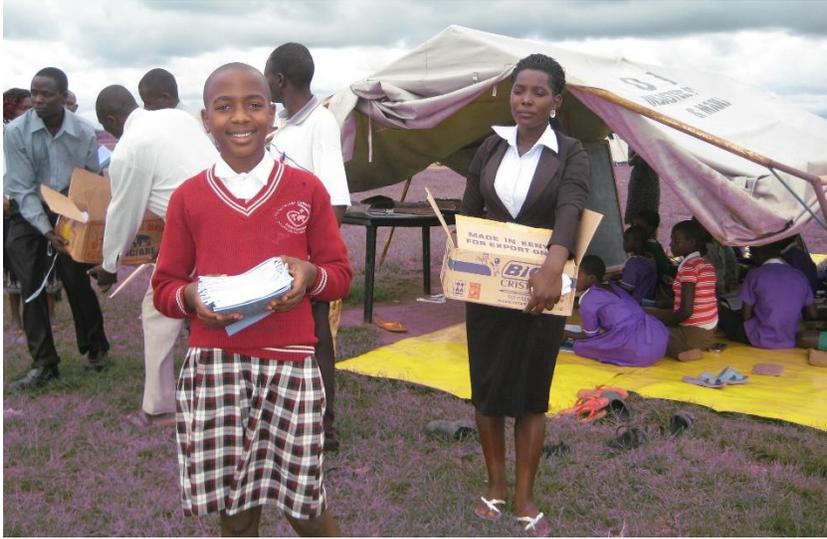
Living in a refugee camp is something one should not admire. However, our brothers and sisters in Sango Bay are forced to be in this hardship which is not admirable at all.

People are nearly close to death as they face harsh and unfavorable conditions. It is because of UNICEF and well-wishers of the Refugee Camp that our friends are still alive.

Donating for the refugees has been somehow easy because of the love for the people of the Sango Bay Refugee Camp. This time we have taken bags of maize flour, cassava, sugar, soap, vaseline, clothes, exercise books and text books.

We distributed the exercise books and some were kept for the nursery school children who are to join school next year.





A Story Worthy to Remember

by

Bwengombe Prisca,
Primary 4 pupil,
Sacred Heart Primary School,
Kyamusansala.

On Tuesday 17th November 2015, I happened to visit Sango Bay Refugee Camp. This Refugee Camp is within the outskirts of Rakai near Mutukula Border. We reached the camp at 10.30 a.m.

The camp is in the poorest state that I can't tell the trend people in the camp are taking. Below is a summary of what I observed there.

Health Status.

The situation is worrying whereby there is an outbreak of several diseases among the people in the camp. So, I call for a combined effort from all the people in the world to intervene and save the situation.

Education System.

The education system needs to be looked at simply because it does not make sense having all classes under one roof and being manned by one person. More still, the system needs to be facilitated with enough scholastic materials.



Basic Needs. On the side of basic needs, people lack a lot whereby they don't have almost all the necessities an individual must have in life i.e. shelter, clothes, water, food to mention would wish to but a few. They are only the privileged who have – so my dear friends, I kindly send in my humble appeal to every individual to render a hand so as to save the situation that is alarming.

In nut shells, I wish to end here and I kindly ask the Almighty to send his Holy Spirit to the people so that they can help people in the camp to overcome all the hardships they are going through.

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HUMBLE APPEAL

by
Katerega Saul - teacher,
at Sacred Heart Primary School,
Kyamusansala, Uganda.

This goes to responsible and caring people of the entire nation to come and help the suffering people of Sango Bay Camp. Whatever happened that brought these people to such a sad situation, I ask you to think of them and do what you can especially for the future of the children .We appreciate all the organizations like UNICEF that have helped and are continuing to help the refugees in Sango Bay. We thank the schools, like Sacred Heart Primary School, Kyamusansala, which are helping these people. Thank you for the good spirit, keep it up.

We thank the Government of Uganda for the help given to these people. Thank you so much.

I hereby call upon everyone around the world. May whoever is able PLEASE come and donate to the people of Sango Bay Camp. They need every material assistance that can be afforded them like food, clothes, shelter but most of all that they soon have a place where they can be settled and earn their living.

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU
“Let us make the world a better place to live in.”





LET GOD COME TO THEIR RESCUE

by
Namazzi Anna Maria, an alumna of
Sacred Heart Primary School, Kyamusansala,
and now a teacher at the school.

The people in Sango Bay Camp are people who were chased from Tanzania. They are very many in number and I noticed that children take the largest population.

In the first place, I take the opportunity to thank Sister Nankusu Anamaria and other Sacred Heart Sisters for the love and care they have rendered to these people.

On arrival, I was very shocked by seeing the conditions which these people are experiencing. That forced me to have a talk with some of the members. From the sharing, I came to know that these people lack a lot and also need prayers.

I had a sharing with a teacher who informed that the process of teaching and learning is challenging due to lack of enough facilities.

They have six classes and each class has one teacher to teach all subjects which is very tiring.

The teachers improvise with old tents which work as classrooms. Having only one teacher encouraged me to have a lesson in primary three for at least 30 minutes.





When I shared with some of the parents, they had a lot of problems within their families because they lack all basic needs. They sleep in poor houses which affects them in the rainy season. These people have few latrines which has increased the rate of diseases causing many to die.

Let me stop here as there is a lot to share due to the situation these people are living in. They need our support and prayers.



My Visit to Sango Bay Camp

Miss Tumuheirwe Scovia

Assistant Bursar, Sacred Heart Primary School, Kyamusansala.,

(Pictured here in the left hand photo on the left corner and in the right hand photo 2nd to the right)

It was the 17th November 2015 when we left Sacred Heart Primary School, Kyamusansala, for Sango Bay Camp to visit the refugees. The staff was led by Sister Anamaria Nankusu, the headmistress. Sister Jo Wright, Sister Immaculate Ssiddamwebyo, three teachers and three from the support staff and three pupils, represented the school. The journey to the camp was very successful.

The dream for the visit was initiated and inspired by Sr. Anamaria in February 2014 when we visited the camp for the first time. We took clothes, sugar, salt, maize flour and soap. The refugees welcomed us very well. We distributed the above items equally among the refugees but they still expressed that they are totally in need as they are suffering without adequate shelter, food and clothes and that the Government of Uganda is not helping them to meet their human needs.



The 17th November 2015 marked the third visit to the camp. Again we took clothing and food and in addition exercise books and textbooks to facilitate learning in Sango Bay Learning Centre. The refugees appreciated very much and thanked Sr. Anamaria for giving them a hand and for always praying for them so that they don't curse their way of living and live with the hope that in the future they will be great men and women.

In interviewing some of the refugees, I learned that they were former settlers of Tanzania who were forcefully chased away by the Government of Tanzania in October 2013. They came from Tanzania empty handed and had to settle themselves in Sango Bay and start a new life.

The challenges faced by these people in the camp are very many but the most challenging is that they don't have food to eat. The Uganda Government used to provide maize flour and each would get 3 kg for three months. One member from the camp said that since March 2015, the Government has not provided them with food. As a solution to the food problem, some go to neighboring villages like Mutukula, Kyotera and Kakuuto work for some food.



A pupil of Primary Five by names of Ayesiga Tracy said that they only have supper and that they can't get satisfied because there are many children in a single family.

I greatly thank UNICEF, a non-governmental organization, which has given help to the refugees in the camp. This organization has donated food like beans and maize flour, provided educational facilities so that now there is a school for the refugees from Nursery up to Primary Six. The School is called Sango Bay Learning Centre. This organization pays salaries to the teachers who do good work in teaching and bringing up the children of the camp. UNICEF has also facilitated and donated health and medical supplies to the refugees. This has been done by collaborating with Kakuuto Health Centre III where the refugees are treated. In this visit to Sango Bay, we found medical experts from the UK and Ireland who had come for three weeks offering medical treatment and immunization to the refugees.

In conclusion, may whoever reads this story get inspired to freely give a hand to these people because they were also born like you. There are over four thousand people and most of the population are children. Give them assistance and attention so they may live in this motherland of Uganda freely and peacefully. Thank you very much and God will reward you!!



“All powerful God, you are present in the whole universe ... You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace that we may live as brothers and sisters... O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes.” *Laudato Si – On Care for our Common Home*, encyclical of Pope Francis.