



Violence prevention and mediation

Working together towards peaceful coexistence for refugees
and local people in northern Kenya

Life in and around Camp Kakuma

People at the Kakuma Refugee Camp in north-western Kenya have been seeking refuge from war, persecution, hunger and poverty since 1992. Every year, tens of thousands are forced to flee their homes as a result of long-running violent conflicts in countries that border Kenya.

Originally conceived for around 40,000 refugees, the camp is currently home to nearly 165,000 people of various ethnic, social and cultural backgrounds. They include refugees from South Sudan, Somalia, Burundi, Ethiopia, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The lives of people in Kakuma and surrounding communities are defined by a shortage of resources, malnutrition and poor provision of healthcare, water and energy. Over 90% of the local population live below the poverty line, which is why support for refugees is often seen as unjust.

Conflicts arise inside the camp, particularly among the approximately 100,000 children and young people. Seemingly trivial everyday conflicts can lead to violent group confrontations. In addition, conflicts from the refugees' countries of origin are often continued within the camp. Young people are therefore key stakeholders in efforts to strengthen the dialogue between conflicting parties and resolve conflict by non-violent means.

Promoting peaceful coexistence

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH works on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) to improve living conditions for people inside and outside the camp. The focus is on peaceful coexistence for all – both refugees and host communities.

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| Projects involved | Support to Refugees, especially Voluntary Returnees and Host Communities in Kenya (Special Initiative on Displacement – SIF); 'Sport for Development in Africa' (S4DA) Regional Project |
| Commissioned by | German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) |
| Implementing organisation | Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH |
| Common project areas | North-western Kenya, Kakuma Refugee Camp and the administrative district of Turkana West |
| National partners | Refugee Affairs Secretariat (RAS), Government institutions for the administrative districts of Turkana and Turkana West, Football Kenya Federation (FKF) |
| Overall term | SIF: 2015 – 2020 S4DA: 2014 – 2018 |



Sport unites: coaches and young people from the refugee camp and surrounding communities

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As part of the Special Initiative 'Tackling the Root Causes of Displacement, Stabilising Host Regions, Supporting Refugees', the project 'Support to Refugees, especially Voluntary Returnees and Host Communities in Kenya' aims to improve food security, infrastructure, and the provision of healthcare, water and sanitation, as well as employment prospects for refugees and local people in the region. Peaceful coexistence has been successfully strengthened, for example, by organising dialogue forums and school-based activities to promote encounters and exchanges between local people and refugees. People from both groups who are already informally active as mediators in their communities are trained as mediation coaches. They then organise workshops in which young people learn how to resolve conflict by non-violent means.

The 'Sport for Development in Africa' (S4DA) Regional Project establishes sport as a means for achieving development objectives in selected African countries. When applied correctly, educational sports activities provide participation that transcends ethnic boundaries and promote social skills such as fairness, respect, tolerance, team spirit and the ability to deal with defeat and conflict constructively. In Kakuma, coaches and teachers from the camp and surrounding communities are taught how to use sport to foster violence prevention. Sports camps provide space for shared, positive experiences between refugees and local people.

Greater impact through synergies

The two projects are closely coordinated to exploit their synergies.

- Harmonised concepts for training courses and workshops combine violence prevention through sport with non-violent conflict resolution through mediation. Mediation trainers combine existing knowledge with learning experiences on how to deal peacefully with conflict resolution.
- Through sporting activities such as football and volleyball, measures implemented by the 'Sport for Development in Africa' Regional Project reach out in particular to young people both in and out of school.

- Employment measures of the Cash for Work programme geared to renovating existing sports grounds or building new ones are one of the few earning opportunities for refugees. But for local people in need, too, they offer an additional source of income and help with improving living conditions in the region.
- Sports grounds serve as spaces for peaceful interaction with others and violence prevention. The programme works with partners to develop sustainable utilisation concepts. These ensure that sports grounds are maintained in the long term and that sports activities aimed at building peace are implemented on a regular basis.

Working together for peaceful conflict resolution

'Training to become a mediation coach taught me a set of new skills that has positively changed my life,' says Bernard Kalimapus. He comes from one of the host communities in Kakuma and is a trained mediation coach for young people. 'I now deal very differently with everyone, from my family to the young people I am currently coaching in these methods. I'm very grateful for the excellent working relationship I have with my co-coach, who comes from the refugee camp, and for having the opportunity to undergo this great training programme.'



Picture caption: Young people at the refugee camp test the difference between competition and cooperation

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