



## **The Role of Windle Trust Kenya in Promotion of Education in Dadaab Camp, Kenya**

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### **Abstract**

*Education not only empowers individuals to live a better quality life, it also makes an enormous contribution to the development of a society. It is, however, very challenging to provide quality education to communities afflicted by conflict, particularly refugees. The study examined the role of Non-Governmental Organizations in the provision of education in conflicted societies. Specifically, the study analysed the role played by **Windle Trust-Kenya** in the provision of education among the refugees' communities in Dadaab refugee Camps in Kenya. The study interrogated not only the strategies used by the Organization to promote education among the refugees, but also the challenges encountered in the provision of education in the specific refugee camps in Dadaab. The study employed a descriptive research design in order to probe into the efforts of the Organization towards supporting refugee education. Programme managers who have worked for Windle Trust Kenya, teachers employed by the Organization in Dadaab and academics who have served in Dadaab Refugee camp were interviewed using an interview schedule. Document analysis was also conducted from the different humanitarian organizations operating in Dadaab and from Kenyatta University Post Modern Library. These included journals, theses and text books. The research established that **Windle Trust-Kenya** has supported not only secondary and primary education in Dadaab but also tertiary education, through collaboration with different universities. Girls were found to be experiencing more challenges in pursuing education due to gender based violence and cultural beliefs among most of the refugees. Conclusively, the study established that education to refugees benefit both refugees and the host community as refugees who excel in education also give back to the host community.*  
**Key words:** Education, Refugees, Dadaab, Non-Governmental Organizations

### **Introduction**

Humanitarian organisations have since the First World War played a critical role in promotion of education among the marginalised communities especially those afflicted by wars and other disasters. As World Bank (2005) has observed, the over two decades of economic decline, political chaos and war in Congo have created extremely difficult conditions for education in the country and humanitarian efforts have been critical in supporting education given the difficult situation. Kenya is one of the countries that have hosted refugees from different African countries in the Great Lakes region since independence in the 1960s. Since refugees mainly live in camps with few facilities, provision of education facilities in such an environment is a daunting task and presents

unique challenges to the host government, international humanitarian agencies and the Non-Governmental Organizations. After the collapse of Siad Barre's government in Somalia in 1991, Kenya hosted over 400,000 refugees who fled from Somalia at the Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps (Milner, 2009). The Kenyan government's refugee policy was in favour of encampment of asylum seekers in camps located in semi-arid areas of Northern Kenya, away from main urban centres (Kagwanja & Montclos, 2000). Given the enormous resources required to support such a huge population of refugees in such circumstances, the international community and Non-Governmental organizations had to work hand in hand with the Kenyan government to support this fragile population.

Indeed, education in conflicted societies has been recognized as critical. Dupoy (2008) observes that within such contexts provision of education can make a great difference to the society by empowering individuals to improve opportunities for economic and social improvement. This in turn may contribute to conflict prevention and long-term peace building. It is for this reason that education is a basic human right as reflected in several key international instruments, including the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child of 1989 (Wright, 2010). This implies that society is expected to support the child's talents including mental and physical abilities (OCHA, 1989). Education is an enabler as it tackles illiteracy and poverty and this has a positive impact on nutrition, health, quality of labour force and the quality of governance (World Bank, 2005).

## **Methodology**

The study focussed on the role played by **Windle Trust-Kenya** in the provision of secondary education among the refugee communities in Dadaab refugee Camp in Kenya. Dadaab is located in a semi-arid climate near the Kenya-Somalia border and experiences severe weather, from a hot climate in the dry season, to extensive flooding in the rainy season (UNHCR 2007). These living conditions create an extremely precarious situation for both refugees and local Kenyan-Somali peoples. This environment, characterized by lack of basic resources such as arable land, firewood, and fresh water, combined with poor road infrastructure makes the cost of running the camps extremely high (Wright, 2010). By 2014, in the five camps (Dagahaley, Ifo, Ifo 2, Hagadera and Kambioos), there were 34 primary schools, 7 secondary schools, 4 vocational learning centres commonly known as Youth Education Packs, 3 adult literacy centres, and three libraries. (UNHCR, Education Progress report, October, 2014). Since then there have been new dynamics that have reduced the population of refugees in Dadaab.

The researcher used oral interviews of teachers, education officers and managers working for **Windle Trust-Kenya**, as the central method of data collection. Six informants were interviewed on diverse dates using an interview schedule. While three interviews took place in Nairobi, the other four took place in Dadaab. The interviews took place between 2013 and 2017. The methodological benefits of this approach included the fact that data was in-depth and helped to comprehend some of the subtler issues involving the education efforts by the Organization. Another important methodology used by the researcher was to observe, through visits, the situation of education facilities in Dadaab refugee camps, particularly the primary and secondary schools through visits. Three of the interviewees are teachers who have taught in Dadaab, while two are former programme officers of Windle Trust Kenya. Two respondents are academics from Kenyatta University. (Kindly see the interview schedule attached in the appendices as well as the list of informants). Only one

respondent who is a senior manager has been named because he gave authorization for his name to be mentioned in the research. Secondary data for the study was collected from the internet, books and journals.

### **Humanitarian organizations and Support for Refugee Education in Kenya**

Promotion of education in conflict areas has often been dominated by the actions of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and United Nations (UN) agencies (World Bank, 2005). As we have already observed, many humanitarian organisations have come to the aid of refugees and other displaced communities in different parts of Africa. In Kenya, there is a host of humanitarian organisations that work closely with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and the government of Kenya to support refugees in both Kakuma and Dadaab, where most of the refugees are based. The humanitarian organizations involved in the promotion of education include: **Association of Volunteers in International Service (AVSI)**, **Care International**, **Lutheran World Federation**, **Danish Relief Services** as well as **Windle Trust-Kenya**, which focuses on the provision of both primary and secondary education to refugees (Njogu, 2015). UNICEF and other non-Governmental organizations all work hand in hand to support education efforts in Dadaab. For instance, UNICEF has supported Sports for peace games (Respondent -001 Dadaab, 2017). Sporting activities provide a conducive environment for peaceful interaction between teachers, students, parents and the community.

Conflict displaces populations and restricts access to education. It is estimated that up to 90 per cent of internally displaced persons (IDPs) have no access to education. Children living in areas affected by conflict often fail to start school or, if they do enrol, drop out early (RCK, 2012). In fragile contexts, delivering education may provide an entry point for many other benefits to the affected society. For instance, provision of education in such contexts enables humanitarian support to address many political and governance issues beyond the immediate lack of basic necessities. In addition, The Dakar Framework for Action, adopted by the Dakar World Education Forum in 2000, which explicitly focuses on the rights of children in emergencies, stresses the importance of education (UNESCO, 2000). It further calls for national Education for All (EFA). In Kenya, UNHCR has played a positive role in furtherance of this call, in collaboration with other agencies such as **Windle Trust-Kenya** and the government of Kenya.

In order to examine the role of **Windle Trust-Kenya** in promoting refugee education in Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya, it is very important to interrogate the background events that led to the influx of refugees into Kenya in the early 1990s. Handyman observes that Kenya is noted to be in unenviable geopolitical location by virtue of sharing boundaries with five countries, four of which are so much involved in civil war to the extent of creating an influx of refugees and asylum seekers into Kenya (Handyman, 1999 p.44). Political instability in Somalia during the regime of Siad Barre precipitated an influx of Somali refugees into Kenya from the early 1990s. Siad Barre took power in Somalia through a bloodless military coup in October 1969, only a decade after Somalia gained political independence from Britain and Italy. He remained in power until 1991 when he was ousted by a united coalition of opposition groups (Murunga, 2005; Kiruthu, 2014). The opposition had accused Barre's government of crimes against the Somali people, ranging from clannism, poor governance and dictatorial rule.

Soon after Barre's government was ousted from power, the coalition of forces that toppled his regime experienced fractious divisions. This could explain why soon after, a new spate of conflict began (Murunga, 2005). In the course of time, Somalia became a divided country with war lords taking over power in different parts of the country. This state of affairs therefore led to a continuous outflow of a population that was fleeing in search of refuge in safer countries (Lindley, 2011). Kenya was among one of the most favoured safe havens for Somali refugees although some refugees fled to other neighbouring countries including Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda and Egypt, where refugee camps were also established to accommodate them. As we have already observed, some refugees sought refuge in developed countries such as Norway, Canada, Sweden and the USA among other countries.

Murray & Ochieng' (2011) observe that after the collapse of Northern Somalia and further breakdown of the social systems following the civil war in 1991, United States of America and Canada experienced a great influx of Somali immigrants as Somali nationals fled political unrest in their country. The immigration into North America and different parts of Europe always presented great difficulty for these refugees. They often had to take a circuitous route through a number of neighbouring states such as Kenya, Ethiopia and Tanzania, (which "host" Somalis in several refugee camps), before making their way to Western Europe and the USA (Murunga, 2005; Murray & Ochieng' 2011).

Among the factors that made Kenya one of the favoured destinations for Somali refugees, is the fact that Kenyan Somalis are closely related to Somali nationals by virtue of belonging to the same extended family, friendship, clan and business networks (Murunga, 2005). Indeed, many of the later refugee immigrants were assisted to settle down in Kenya through such networks. This could explain why a large number of Somali refugees ended up not only in the north eastern part of Kenya, but also in different urban centres in Kenya particularly in Eastleigh Estate, Nairobi, known in Swahili language as "Mogadishu ndogo", which means "small Mogadishu" (Murunga, 2005). Nevertheless, life of refugees whether in camps or in urban areas is difficult. As Crips (1999) observes, refugees face a myriad of challenges including threats of sexual abuse, detention and financial exploitation often by the administrators of the host countries.

### **The Origins of Windle Trust (Kenya)**

It was against the backdrop of conflict in the Horn of Africa that led to an influx of Ethiopian and Eritrean refugees into Kenya that in 1977, Hugh Windle Pilkington set up the Windle Charitable Trust in Kenya to support needy refugee students residing in Kenya (O.I Marangu Njogu, January 2015). Hugh was born in Canada and valued education highly. He believed that good education was key to promoting positive change in Africa. He became increasingly concerned with the plight of African refugees arriving in Kenya from the Great Lakes region from the late 1970s. It is instructive to note that a large number of refugee influx into Kenya at this time originated from Uganda, Ethiopia, Sudan and Eritrea. Consequently, he opened his home in Nairobi to refugees and subsequently financed their education in Universities in the United Kingdom, North America and as far abroad as Fiji (Njogu, 2015). In his conviction that good education could equip the people of Africa to meet the challenges they face not only during their lives as refugees but also in stabilizing the continent, he immersed himself fully into this venture. His ideas were in tandem with Dupoy (2008), who observed that education can help produce the benefits of inclusive and constructive integration of individuals and communities.

In 1986, Hugh died in road accident in Canada. Before his death, he had already organized for his estate to become an endowment foundation to promote the education of refugees. Consequently, in 1988 the **Hugh Pilkington Charitable Trust (HPCT)** was established in the UK and in 2002 **Windle Trust International (WTI)** was formed to manage the programmes as a charitable entity (Njogu 2015). WTI and HPCT have continued to pursue these efforts through establishing offices in Kenya at first, before opening other offices in Sudan, Uganda and South Sudan.

**Windle Trust International** promotes and invests in the education and training of refugees, the displaced and other communities emerging from conflict, in order to promote peaceful long-term development of East Africa (The Refugee Issue No.9 2013). The Organization operates as a registered charity and company limited by guarantee with offices currently in Oxford, UK, Juba (South Sudan) and Khartoum (Sudan) (Oral Respondent 002- Dadaab (2016)). It works closely with the independent, associate **Windle Trusts in Kenya** and in Uganda. Collectively, they constitute part of **Windle Trust International**, which receives a yearly grant from **Hugh Pilkington Charitable Trust**. Nevertheless, **Windle Trust International** also fundraises a lot in order to fund the bulk of its programme work. This means it seeks the financial support of different organizations and individuals in order to support refugee work (Respondent 004-Dadaab, 2015).

The work of **Windle Trust International** has been crucial to the support of refugee education in Kenya, which is the second-largest host of refugees in Africa. Kenya follows a policy of refugee encampment as opposed to neighbouring Uganda where refugees are integrated with local communities in Kyadondo where they also participate in agriculture. Refugees in the camps and outside camps experience severe violations to human rights and live in poverty, with limited access to basic needs, including education (Ferris, 2008). Consequently, the support provided by Windle Trust to refugees in order to access education is therefore crucial.

Among the educational support provided by **Windle Trust Kenya (WTK)** to refugees includes the provision of English as a Second Language (ESL) (Wright 1999). This is provided to refugees with a view to helping in satisfying the needs of some specific target groups including vulnerable women, community leaders, teachers and out of school youth. The host population is also supported by Windle Trust Kenya as a way of alleviating their situation.

By 2014, there were 32 public primary schools, seven secondary schools and four vocational centres serving the Dadaab children and youth. Education in Dadaab is supported by two agencies, **CARE Kenya** and **Windle Trust Kenya** in conjunction with UNHCR (Muriungi, 2010). The Education partners in Dadaab under the joint leadership of UNHCR and UNICEF came together in 2012 to formulate the Joint Dadaab Education Strategy (2012-2015) for a more harmonized response to the education challenges in the refugee camps and the host community (The Refugee Issue No.9 2013).

Since the 1990s, the refugees' population in Dadaab has been very high and the education facilities in the area significantly stretched. Consequently, UNHCR has been unable to meet the needs resulting from the rapid increase in the number of children, including lack of space to build additional schools. According to the UNHCR, other challenges, which need to be tackled, include lack of qualified teachers, high teacher attrition, lack of tertiary education opportunities and general

apathy towards education by some parents (UNHCR, 2007).

In 2010, the pupil - teacher ratio at the primary school for instance was 1:56 and 1:143 at ECDE level (The Refugee Issue No.9 2013). This high pupil-teacher ratio affects teacher effectiveness as one teacher has to handle so many children, leaving little time for individualized attention, compromises the quality of education. This could explain why in the 2012 KCPE examination; the mean score was 163 out of 500 marks; which is quite low as compared to performance in other parts of the country. The main challenge for UNICEF, UNHCR and their partners such as **Windle Trust Kenya**, has been the need to improve quality of education in Dadaab refugee camps as well as the quality of education offered among the host community (The Refugee Issue No.9 2013).

### **The Role of Windle Trust (K) in the Promotion of Primary Education**

According to Njogu (2015), up to 1995 the policy of UNHCR was initially restricted to support refugee education in terms of promoting basic literacy and vocational education. However, in 1997, **CARE International** held a meeting with UNHCR and the refugee community in Dadaab with a view to discussing how a formal curriculum could be introduced in refugee education. However, this effort encountered challenges on two fronts. First, The Somali community was apprehensive due to the view that formal education was synonymous with Christianization of education. On the other hand, the development partners were uneasy with the curriculum offered, which they felt was inadequate. The problem was solved mainly due to the focus Dr. Njogu Marangu gave to the quest for education among the refugees. According to (Respondent 004-Dadaab, 2013):

*Dr. Marangu held several meetings with Somali elders and convinced them of the importance of sending children to school. So passionate was he to this crusade to the extent that he won their trust and was given recognition as a Somali elder himself.*

These initial challenges could explain why the pioneer Kenya certificate of Primary Examinations class in Dadaab had only 10 candidates. In 2000, UNHCR provided facilities to accommodate one school for each camp in Dadaab. By 2003, there were more children wishing to enroll in school than the space could allow. This therefore became a big challenge for **Windle Trust International**. According to Njogu (2015), WTK was a small organization by 2003 and was mainly focusing on ESL. Up to 2005, it had only 20 employees (Oral Interview, Respondent 003 January, 2015). In the meantime, in the course of 2003, WTK entered a Memorandum of Understanding with CARE International with a view to having WTK assist CARE with teachers of English. It is in this way that gradually responsibilities for teaching came to be handed over by CARE International to WTK in 2010 (Njogu, 2015). It is noteworthy that parents were given an opportunity to choose representatives in the Parents –Teachers Associations in the schools so as to work closely with teachers. This was useful in winning their confidence in the work of WTK.

### **Windle Trust Kenya and Provision of Secondary Education in Dadaab**

Through the Inter-Agency Education Working Group, great success has been achieved in promoting education in Dadaab over the years. The overall enrolment across all education levels was 86,510 (40% female) with 1353 teachers by 2013 (The Refugee Issue No.9 2013). Between November 2011 and February 2013, the Gross Enrolment Rates (GER) at Primary level increased from 34%

to 45.2% while at the ECDE level it increased from 20% to 49.5% (The Refugee Issue No.9 2013). However, the secondary school Gross Enrollment Rate has stagnated at 8% which can be attributed to the slow pace of expanding secondary schools in the camps due to financial constraints (ibid). Some challenges still abound in Dadaab such as the high number of children out of school estimated to be 130,000 by 2015, majority of them girls. This can mainly be attributed to the cultural beliefs in some communities that discourage girl-child education. It is important to note that this challenge is particularly serious among the refugee populations as well as with communities occupying northern part of Kenya in general.

As we have already seen, in 2010, WTK was appointed by the UNHCR to implement secondary education in Dadaab. Through this support, by 2011 there were 6 secondary schools in Dadaab with a total of 2,692 students 23% of whom girls (WTK, strategic Plan, 2011-2015). In addition, there were 112 teachers, 50 % of whom were qualified and the other 50% comprising untrained teachers. Each of the three camps (Dagahaley, IFO and Hagadera) had two schools. The 6 secondary schools acted as feeders from 19 primary schools in the camps. Out of the 2,414 students who completed primary education and sat for the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) in November 2009, only 28% (678) students got admission into secondary schools (WTK, strategic Plan, 2011-2015). In addition, the number of girls admitted to form one was 114, constituting only 17% of the total admissions to form one and out of 112 teachers in Dadaab, only 13 were female (WTK, strategic Plan, 2011-2015).

It is worth noting that the 6 secondary schools established in Dadaab by 2015 were not started together. Three schools were started in 2000 with only 119 students (Njogu, 2015). In 2008, through refugee community initiative, a further three schools were established to increase access to secondary school by primary school graduates. The refugee community did not want their children to graduate into the idle camp life which could potentially lure them into antisocial activities. This growth from one secondary school in each camp with only one class to 6 secondary schools across the five camps, with all four streams able to accommodate a large number of the ever growing youth population, has been seen by the refugee population as one of the most significant achievements in Dadaab refugee camps (The Refugee Issue No.9 2013). **Windle Trust Kenya** has been the lead organization in the establishment of these schools, staffing and supervision of quality standards (O.I. Respondent 004, January, 2015).

In addition to supporting education among the refugees, WTK has also significantly contributed to advancing education among the host communities, who constitute some of the most marginalized communities in Kenya. For instance, the organization supported tuition fees payment for 145 students in Migori and Kuria regions in Western Kenya between 2011 and 2015 (WTK, strategic Plan, 2011-2015).

As already noted, the refugee community has been concerned about the great population of youthful population with few educational opportunities in Dadaab. This explains why in 2008, the refugee community established three secondary schools to absorb qualified primary school graduates who could not make it into UNHCR funded secondary schools. The schools host 800 students in form one and two which is 38% of the total students in UNHCR sponsored secondary schools (WTK, strategic Plan, 2011-2015).

## **WTK and Promotion of Girl Child Education**

Another notable development in secondary schools supporting refugee education is the increase in the numbers of female students enrolling for classes. Girl-child education has been heavily undermined by cultural beliefs especially among the Somali community and other refugee communities present in Dadaab. This could explain why from the very onset of secondary schooling in Dadaab refugee camps, there was low enrollment of girls in schools as many fell out of the way at the lowest grades and only about 38 percent managed to attend schooling consistently (WTK, strategic Plan, 2011-2015).

According to the UN Refugee Agency, the proportion of girls in the camps' primary and secondary schools is between 38 and 27 percent, respectively. While a third of younger girls aged between 5 and 13 in Dabaab go to school. Only 1 in 20 girls aged between 14 to 17 years, was enrolled in school by 2015 (WTK, strategic Plan, 2011-2015). According to a respondent, one of the factors that complicate the situation of girl-child education in Dadaab, is lack of female role models such as female teachers who can motivate the girls to work hard. For instance, by 2015, there were only 5 female teachers out of 21 teachers in Hagadera and Waberi secondary schools (Respondent 005, Nairobi, 2017).

One of the contributions of WTK is that it has been providing remedial and extra classes to girls in their final primary school year in both Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps. By 2013, a total of 480 girls had benefitted from this assistance with a view to increasing their opportunities for access to secondary education (WTK, strategic Plan, 2011-2015; The Refugee Issue No.9 2013).

WTK has also sponsors 30 students from the camp per year to attend Kenyan secondary schools, solely based on academic achievement. This an important indicator that some of the refugee students are academically competent just like other students in the Kenyan society. In a bid to support girl-child education, WTK targets more girls for selection for secondary school education sponsorship. Students in this category of sponsorship attend girls-only schools, are given milk to take home, supplied with uniforms, in addition to textbooks, as incentives based on attendance (WTK, strategic Plan, 2011-2015). Consequently, girls who benefit from special incentives including attendance of remedial classes tend to advance better in education as compared to girls who miss out on such opportunities (Wright, 2010).

## **Windle Trust Kenya and Support for Tertiary Education for Refugees**

Refugees in Dadaab benefit from tertiary education through the collaboration of UNHCR, WTK and other Non-Governmental Organizations. This means refugees get access to education scholarships both inside and outside the country depending on one's academic performance. WTK collaborates to establish partnerships with local Kenyan universities, allowing some refugees to pay domestic tuition rather than the expensive international fees (O.I, Marangu Njogu, January, 2015). By 2018 agreements had been signed with over four Kenyan universities. Through this collaborative effort, WTK, the UNHCR and other international partners were able to provide over one hundred in-country scholarships for students to attend local universities. Between 2005 and 2010, WTK supported 293 refugee students with scholarships at Kenyan universities and middle level colleges

in various disciplines (WTK, strategic Plan, 2011-2015).

Collaboration between WTK and different universities has also led to sponsorship of over thirty students per year to complete graduate studies at universities in the United Kingdom (Njogu, 2015). Among some of the most popular scholarships accessible to the refugees are the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI) and World University Service of Canada (WUSC) scholarships. The WUSC scholarship is given to those students who perform well, specifically those who score B (Plain) for boys and C+ for girls. These students are given a chance to join universities in Canada to pursue their dream courses.

The WUSC program has been in Dadaab since 2007. At least 10 students benefit from the WUSC scholarship every year in the region. This low number is attributed to low performances in KCSE exams largely influenced by environmental circumstances and social factors. DAFI scholarship, which was launched in 1992, benefits students who score C+ and above among the boys and C- and above among the girls. Beneficiaries tend to pursue degree and diploma courses in local universities in Kenya. Though the chances of accessing these scholarships are limited, this has raised aspirations of refugee youth in the camp. Today most of the youth in Dadaab can boast of a decent education having either completed secondary education or still continuing with post-secondary education.

Other efforts to promote education by **Windle Trust Kenya** and other partners has also yielded some positive milestones. For instance, **Windle Trust Kenya**, in collaboration with The Kenya E-learning Sector of the Kenya Institute of Education, organized a three-day workshop on e-learning and integration of ICT in education for Science teachers in Dadaab refugee camps in 2012 (The Refugee Issue No.9 2013). Windle Trust Kenya also provides English as a Second Language (ESL), to refugees in both Dadaab and Kakuma Refugee camps. This education specifically targets specific categories of refugees. These include vulnerable women, who are empowered in order to be equipped well for survival and protection in a difficult environment. Community leaders are also targeted in order to equip them with better communication skills, especially while engaging with relevant authorities. Teachers, on the other hand, are targeted for the purpose of professional development as well as language-upgrading, so as to be more efficient in their work (Wright, 2010). The importance of improving proficiency in English among the refugees in Dadaab is informed by the fact that in Somalia, children are taught in the Somali language and Arabic. It therefore becomes important to expose the refugees to English language so that they can communicate and operate more efficiently with the international community.

Among efforts made by the **Windle Trust Kenya** in regard to the promotion of tertiary education in the region includes collaboration with Kenyatta University and other partners through establishing the Borderless Education for Refugees programme (BHER). These efforts started in 2008 with the commencement of engagements between **Windle Trust Kenya**, Canadian Universities, Kenyatta University and the leadership of Lagdera Constituency (Oral Respondent 006, Nairobi, 2017). These efforts were spearheaded by among others, Dr. Josephine Gitome of Kenyatta University and Dr. Marangu Njogu of Windle Trust Kenya (Njogu, 2017). They began exploring the possibilities of acquiring land to establish a university campus. The aim was to empower the marginalized communities, particularly, the refugees, through provision of quality tertiary education.

Consequently, Kenyatta University initiated certificate, diploma and degree programmes at Dadaab Campus where the pioneer programmes commenced in 2013, using basic facilities donated by the host community through the Lagdhera Constituency Development Fund (LCDF). The University also leased conference halls within UNHCR agencies in Dadaab to teach post graduate programmes. Under the sponsorship of the Borderless Higher Education for Refugees (BHER) project. From 2013, a number of students were sponsored to undertake pre-university courses. An Open Distance and E-Learning (ODEL) mode of teaching was also integrated to support the students given the difficulties of posting permanent teaching staff in Dadaab. Unfortunately, terrorist attacks that rocked Kenya from 2013, including the West Gate Mall attack in 2013 and the Garissa University attack in 2015, led the government of Kenya to order for repatriation of Somali refugees back to Somalia. This had the effect of slowing down efforts towards expanding education for the benefit of refugees in Dadaab (Oral respondent, Nairobi, 2017). The directive was soon followed by Operation Usalama Watch, which sought to repatriate irregular migrants from the country (UNHCR, 2015).

**Table 1.0 -Beneficiaries of WTK scholarships**

1. Benjamin Goro Gimba, Director General, Office of the President, Southern Sudan
2. Wanji John, lecturer in Computer Organization and Assembly Language, Juba University
3. Anna Michael Hadjixiros, Project Officer UNICEF, Southern Sudan
4. Fatty Kalsum Acen, Education Manager, UNICEF
5. Mukhtar Ahmed Mohamed, Programme Officer, World Food Programme in Somalia
6. Abdullahi Sheikh Osman, Administration Officer, WFP Somalia programme in Somalia
7. Alred Orono Orono, Associate Legal Officer, UN ICTR, Tanzania
8. Juba, Kidaga Joseph Bonda, Primary Health Care Supervisor, Health Association (SUHA) in Kajokeji County
9. Loro Fredrick Beden, Health Coordinator, Save the Children, USA, Southern Sudan
10. Nyariel Marco Makur, Animal Health trainer with
11. Anne Kennox Akwii, operations and administrative officer, World Bank, Juba
12. Oketch Ben Taban, Kenya Commercial Bank, Juba
13. Akoy William, Relations Officer, Equity Bank, Juba
14. Sall Salamata, Citizen TV, Nairobi

Source: WTK Strategic Plan-2011-2015

**Challenges Experienced by WTK in Education Promotion in Dadaab**

Wright (2010) observes that there exists a myriad of challenges confronting promotion of education among refugees in Dadaab. First, Dadaab is located in a harsh environment close to the Kenya-Somalia border in a hot and dry area characterized by dust storms and widespread flooding in the wet season (Kirui & Mwaruvie, 2012). The situation is made more precarious due to threats of banditry by different groups as well as hostility from the host population, which often perceive refugees as pampered by Non-Governmental Organizations. Moreover, these living conditions create an extremely difficult situation for refugees as they live in poor shelters often made of plastic sheets and mud huts. Besides, they suffer serious shortage of water, latrines and other basic infrastructure, including road network and efficient transportation system given the remoteness of

the areas where these refugee camps are established. Perhaps, this is done deliberately in order to ensure that refugees cannot easily escape and integrate with the local population (RCK, 2012). This environment is clearly not conducive for children who are in school.

Wright (1999) observes that as of August 2009, the teacher-student ratio in Dadaab Refugee Camp was 1:68, and 92 per cent of these teachers were untrained. She further notes that upon graduation of students from Kenyan tertiary institutions, their permits automatically expire. Consequently, they are mandated to return to the camps, where more often than not, are unlikely to secure paying jobs except as incentive employees with refugee agencies in Dadaab. This is because there are no work permits authorized for refugees to secure employment outside refugee camps. The idle life in the camps, of such graduates, is obviously frustrating, as their diplomas and degrees do not seem to improve their lives much within the refugee camp environment (Siraji, 2010). This situation could dissuade other refugees from putting a lot of effort to acquire higher education.

Another challenge has to do with insecurity. In April 2015, the camp of WTK was attacked, leading to the injury of three guards and killing of one teacher. Such activities discourage personnel from other parts of Kenya as well as expatriate personnel from providing professional services in Dadaab. One of the respondents who taught in Dadaab since 2013 narrated to the researcher the fears of teachers in Dadaab, especially those from the other parts of the country. Insecurity stands out as the most significant threat, followed by the discomfort arising from the long distance from the camp to Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya (RCK, 2012). A respondent who taught in a secondary school in the camp indicated that apart from fear of being attacked by the Al Shabaab militia from Somalia, teachers are also scared of the insecurity incidents that take place within the camps arising from hostility between different refugee families. Girls and women in particular are in constant fear of gender based violence while collecting fire wood in the bush, or on their way to and from school. This puts their education and lives in general in great jeopardy (RCK, 2012). The efforts of **Windle Trust Kenya** and other agencies to increase opportunities for higher education are therefore likely to improve the wellbeing of women in Dadaab Refugee Camp to a great extent.

## Conclusion

Wright and Plasterer (2010) suggest that opportunities for higher and adult education in contexts of displacement can yield important “social benefits” beyond the personal gain accrued by individual refugees themselves. Such benefits include, but are not limited to: strengthening the quantity and quality of the teaching force within the camps, bolstering parental support for and engagement with their children’s education (particularly girls’ education), and promoting primary and secondary school attendance by ensuring opportunities, be they limited, to pursue higher learning.

As the **International Network on Education in Emergencies** has consistently observed, the ability of education to link to livelihoods, economic opportunities, mobility and increased standards of living is critical to avoid entrenching disparities and violence in conflicted areas. This means that by providing education opportunities to refugee children, this potentially could transform not only their own lives but also those of communities. The above sentiments are true in relation to the experience in Dadaab. Njogu (2015) has been emphatic that the efforts by Windle Trust Kenya to provide education has yielded benefits not only to the refugee communities but also to the host

communities. He gave an example of one refugee student in Dadaab who eventually earned a degree in Medicine and was deployed to serve in different parts of Kenya with dedication.

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