

Continued Learning despite COVID19

LWF Kenya Djibouti Somalia is giving children in Kakuma refugee camp access to continued learning opportunities in the midst of COVID –19 pandemic and schools closure.



Nyarouch and Khormach follow a Mathematics lesson on a local FM station – Atta Na Yeche All photos: LWF Kenya/P.Kwamboka

When the Government of Kenya directed all learning institutions to close in mid-March in 2020 as prevention and control of spread of COVID-19 among learners in schools, learning in Kakuma refugee camp and Kalobeyei settlement and the surrounding host community schools stopped pushing over 100,000 children out of school and into the communities. In response to the indefinite closure of schools, the Ministry of Education through Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) encouraged use of upgraded online learning platforms such as radio (Kenya Broadcasting Corporation) and TV (Education TV) broadcasts as means of reaching out to the millions of children in pre-primary, primary and secondary schools to sustain out-of-classroom learning.

Unfortunately, learners in Kakuma refugee camp, Kalobeyei settlements and entire Turkana West Sub County could not benefit from these Government of Kenya led initiatives due to lack of radio and television signals from the broadcasting radio and televisions coupled with limited access to radio and phones at the households in the camps. Limited access to internet connectivity further cut off children in the refugee camp from accessing other digital platforms for education content.

To ensure children in the refugee camp and the surrounding host community access KICD education content and other educational material through radio, the Lutheran World Federation with funding from PRM and in partnership with the Sub County Director of Education in Turkana and UNHCR rolled out education radio broadcast lessons from a local FM station; Atta Na Yeche based in Kakuma.



The station will broadcast KICD pre-loaded education lessons each of 20 minutes, 5 times a week; Monday through Friday for 5 weeks. In addition, the station will also air lessons developed by LWF education team 4 times a week for 5 weeks. There will also be call-in sessions where teachers will take and respond to questions from learners in the community

Education Officer M.r Hassan Ngeri on air during the launch of the radio program on 11th May 2020

Radios used by learners in Kakuma refugee camps were initially distributed to block leaders by the Gift of the United states.

Sustained community sensitization on the availability of the radio platform is ongoing through community-based mobilization structures and WhatsApp communication platform for teachers. Learners are encouraged to listen to radio broadcasts at household level. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to allow children access radios and also to supervise and support the children to avoid cases of distraction. Through this program, it is estimated over 60,000 learners including those with disabilities from the Kakuma refugee camp, Kalobeyei settlements and host communities of Turkana West Sub-County will be reached.

In addition to the radio program, the use of WhatsApp as an online learning platform has been embraced to support continued learning. Using the platform, teachers at household and block levels share learning content on WhatsApp with parents, who pass it over to their children. Through structured learning management system, a set of learners are assigned a teacher who supervises and guides their learning. According to a survey conducted in Kakuma between 21st and 24th April, 2020, which sampled 20,467 out of the total enrollment of 43,003 learners in Kakuma Refugee Camp primary schools will be reached via mobile phone

For children who have run away from armed conflict, forced displaced, climate change and other crises, access to education is a lifesaving opportunity and a way to find peace and build resilience.

The COVID-19 pandemic worsened the existing challenges of limited access to quality and inclusive education for children in the refugee camps. With most of them depending on school for protection, feeding and care, the closure of the school exposed them to higher risks of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence.

LWF has re-organized its programmatic, content, design and management to respond to COVID-19 in line with government guidelines to mitigate effects of the pandemic for children in refugee camps. This is possible with the support of the Gift of the United States, UNHCR and the county government of Turkana West. Other efforts include improving water and sanitation conditions in schools, supporting dissemination of key messages on COVID-19 and supporting the community to prevent and control the spread of the virus in the camp.

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LWF is the lead implementing partner for UNHCR in basic education for refugees in [Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps in Kenya](#). In Kakuma, LWF manages programs in Primary and Preschool Education with more than **56,661** learners enrolled.