



Federal Ministry  
for Economic Cooperation  
and Development

# Shaping the future together

Refugees and host communities in Kenya benefit from opportunities and better living conditions



<b>Title</b>	Support for refugees, especially voluntary returnees and host communities in Kenya
<b>Commissioned by</b>	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
<b>Implementing organisation</b>	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
<b>Project area</b>	Kakuma and Dadaab Refugee Camp and the host communities in their surrounding areas
<b>Lead executing agency</b>	Refugee Affairs Secretariat (RAS)
<b>National and international partners</b>	UNHCR, county administrations, elected community representatives in Kakuma and Dadaab, refugee committees, non-governmental organisations
<b>Overall term</b>	January 2015 to December 2020
<b>Budget</b>	10 million euros

## A place of refuge in East Africa

Kenya is providing shelter for hundreds of thousands of refugees from neighbouring crisis states. According to the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), approximately 500,000 refugees were living in the East African country at the start of 2017, having fled from war and violent conflicts, drought, hunger and poverty in their countries of origin. More than 163,000 of them live in Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya's northwest – a facility which was subsequently extended according to the needs. More than half of the refugees there are from South Sudan. The others come from Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Another refugee camp set up in the early

1990s in Dadaab in Kenya's eastern county of Garissa mostly houses Somalian refugees. Just like Kakuma, the camp in Dadaab is hopelessly overcrowded. Originally built to accommodate 90,000 refugees, it is now occupied by around 280,000 people.

Kenyan law forbids refugees from working outside the camps. Consequently, they are usually dependent on aid inputs. But it is not just the refugees that are having to cope with malnutrition, endemic poverty and a lack of medical care – these are all things that people in the host communities struggle with on a daily basis, too. With the local population competing with the refugees for essential basic resources, such as fuel, water, land, as well as for training and income-earning opportunities, conflicts arise. In particular, children, young people, mothers and people with disabilities suffer under these harsh living conditions and lack of prospects.

## Creating prospects, mitigating conflicts

On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is working to improve conditions for people in and around the camps. Access to farmland and water promotes self-sufficiency by enabling refugees and the local population to keep livestock and grow food crops. To get them started, the project has introduced them to new farming techniques and provided seeds and tools. School children now plant vegetables in kitchen gardens to secure a more well-balanced diet. To ensure that water and sanitation services keep running,





water kiosks are being built, wells rehabilitated and wastewater treatment plants installed. By organising training courses in information and communication technology – professional fields that will be in demand in future – young people are being assisted.

Health care is another major issue, especially for children, new mothers or pregnant women, which is why health care staff in and around Kakuma are now specially trained to treat acute malnutrition with drugs and food supplements.

To defuse tensions, refugees and the locals are given the opportunity to come together and interact through dialogue fora and sports activities. Several hundred young people are being trained in mediation techniques and campaigns are under way to raise awareness of topics such as gender-based violence.

## Progress in and around Camp Kakuma

The project has provided essential medical equipment and hygiene products for health centres in the host communities in Turkana West Sub County, which has a population of approximately 210,000. Within 15 months, around 141 health workers were trained to treat undernourishment and malnutrition in children, pregnant women and nursing mothers. More than 30,000 locals received mobile health services over a two-year period while another 5,500 refugees and locals with serious health problems have benefited from monthly visits by specialist doctors to the camp and to Kakuma Mission Hospital. In addition to measures in the health care sector, workers have undergone workshop-based training, enabling them to produce energy-saving stoves. Requiring less firewood, the new stoves are helping to generate income,

protect woodland and ease the burden on household budgets. In all, some 4,200 stoves have been manufactured and delivered to the needy – particularly women. Women with the energy-saving stoves do not have to make difficult, dangerous journeys so often to collect firewood. Around 27,500 household members are now benefiting from using of these new stoves. Furthermore, 619 people, including 364 women, have been able to earn additional income in schemes targeting the construction of drainage channels to prevent the camp market from flooding during the rainy season, the installation of solar-powered street lights and the clearance of shrubs and bushes to make way for land for farming and horticulture.



## Lighting up the camp

*'It makes a huge difference,'* says John, 23, looking at the street lights next to his shop in a vibrant market street in Kakuma IV. John is one of the many people benefiting from the 99 solar street lights positioned strategically throughout the camp and Kakuma town.

*'They illuminate the whole neighbourhood,'* he says. *'Security has improved, people stay out later, and that's better for business in the evening.'* This not only benefits shops like his. John is convinced that it has also enhanced quality of life in the camp and local communities. For John, originally from Kenya, the camp offers an opportunity to become a successful entrepreneur.

This project is part of the BMZ Special Initiative 'Tackling the Root Causes of Displacement, Reintegrating Refugees.' In the short term, this initiative provides equal support to refugees and their host communities. In the long term, sustainable measures aim to reduce the structural causes of displacement, such as food insecurity, social inequality or lack of prospects. This project contributes to food security, provision of health care, water, sanitation trainings for returning refugees.

### Published by

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### Addresses of the BMZ offices

BMZ Berlin   Im Europahaus Stresemannstraße 94 10963 Berlin, Germany T +49 (0)30 18 535-0 F +49 (0)30 18 535-2501	BMZ Bonn Dahlmannstraße 4 53113 Bonn, Germany T +49 (0)228 99 535-0 F +49 (0)228 99 535-3500
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poststelle@bmz.bund.de  
www.bmz.de

### Editor

Deutsche Gesellschaft für  
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

### Division

Eastern Africa, Mozambique, Angola

### Registered offices

in Bonn and Eschborn

Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1-5  
65760 Eschborn, Germany  
T +49 61 96 79-11 75  
F +49 61 96 79-11 15  
www.giz.de

### Author

Sofia Shabafrouz,  
Steffi Nölting

### Layout

creative republic,  
Frankfurt, Germany

### Photos

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