

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT CASE STUDY

NAME: Kengah Randuh James

FROM: Kilifi County

PLACEMENTS: Masaku School for the Physically Handicapped and Exodus Communication Program

CYCLE 1, Machakos County, Kenya

LESSONS LEARNT:

Many believe that education is the only way to learn but that is not true. To me, experience is the best teacher, something emphasized by the VSO-ICS program. Learning is earned through different ways but whatever you learn through experiencing is more worthwhile. Initially, I did not expect to learn a wholesome of lessons from this program. Being placed at Masaku School for the Physically Handicapped was a blessing in disguise. I had never before interacted with children at a professional level, more so children with disabilities. I imagined that my time there would be difficult from the start to the end. After a number of interactions, these kids taught me more than I taught them. They gave me a totally



new notion of being abled differently. The skills that they had in making various accessories using beads still amaze me.

Their smiles and laughter despite their physical disability gives me a more meaning in life. I learnt to appreciate whatever little that I have. Far from appreciation, I learnt that one should be able to maximize fully whatever little that they have. Do not waste time waiting for a difficult moment to come and that's when you start realizing your inner potential. I further learnt that everyone has a potential to become what they want if they put enough effort and time in what they desire. The vocational students know what they want despite their disability hence every morning they would wake up knowing that they have to put effort into the accessory that they are making so as it sells.



Far from that, it was always encouraging and exciting interacting with my fellow volunteers. The 22 volunteers, both Kenyan and British that I interacted with gave me different lessons from different angles. Many, time and time again, showed me that the sky is not the limit but the point of view. They challenged me in different ways that enabled me to develop some life skills that I did not initially possess.



Before the program, I would take things lightly unless there was some form of payment at the end of it. I would only put my effort for my own personal gains. Through interactions with my fellow volunteers however, I have learnt to give my time and energy to others for their benefit. I have been shown the hard way that in life, giving out to others is more rewarding than being self-minded and self-centered. Thanks to the program this has changed me in a great way. I now have a more purpose and will to give my time and energy to others, more so to the disadvantaged. The various GCDs that we had left knowledge in me on various issues such as child rights, climate change, crime and security- issues that affect us in our day to day life. Additionally, the much facilitation that I did under Exodus gave me more lessons in life, more so in life goals, and also cemented my knowledge in ICT.

Changes:

Something that I am planning to do now that I wasn't doing before the programme is to go back home and involve myself in the development of my community. This programme has made me to appreciate various development challenges that people face. It has shown and given me the will to now place it upon my hands the desire to positively change livelihoods of others. It has given me the much needed push to initiate a couple of livelihood projects back in my community that are non-existent, no matter how small they are. It has challenged me enough and given me various skills in being creative and identifying opportunities no matter how closed the situation seems to be.

VSO-ICS has given me a reason to pursue a career in humanitarian. It has shown me in first hands the rewards of giving out your time and energy to help others. I had theoretical idea and knowledge about humanitarian interventions in solving development challenges but through this programme, I now have a more practical understanding of developmental and humanitarian issues, albeit on an international stage. Furthermore, I seek to use the experience gained to market myself as a favorite in the job market.

One memory from my experience that stands out...

I do have many memories throughout the programme that stand out but perhaps the most memorable one happened during my first class with the youths at Mwanja who I was to train and equip them with basic ICT skills. Since it was my first day, there wasn't much to teach and thus I had to spend the time talking to the guys and sharing out my life experiences and what to expect from me and my counterpart. At the end of the class, we welcomed comments from the students and one lady's comment about me stood out. She described me as one who has the heart to inspire and motivate others. She saw in me something that she rarely sees in others. In her own words "Kengah seems to be a man who can push you towards doing the right thing. He looks to be a motivator and ready to listen to any person who approaches him. Keep up the good work Kengah and keep directing us towards the right path." Considering that this was our first meeting, I felt that I had achieved something great already, and this really set the pace for many other future interactions that I had with these young people. This memory will forever motivate me and inspire me to give and share the knowledge that I have in various life aspects. The appreciation from the lady showed that I can also have an impact in someone else's life, however small it is.



Personal Quote:

"Everything is achievable as long as you have the will and determination"