

# ELIMU CONNECT

## *Storytelling in Action*

FilmAid Kenya  
Inform. Engage. Inspire.

MAY EDITION



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## Editorial Team

## Where Stories Take Form

This magazine is produced by FilmAid Kenya's Creative Content Team, the storytellers behind every frame, photo, and interview in these pages. Their work follows education wherever it happens: in classrooms, on film sets, in art workshops, and in everyday life across Kakuma and Kalobeyei. For this community, learning never really stops at the school gate.

Each story here reflects that belief that youth voices shouldn't just be captured, they should be shaped into stories that matter. From concept to final cut, this team represents a growing generation of storytellers using media to document, teach, and inspire.

By the Creative Content Team / FilmAid Kenya

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# STORIES ON SCREEN

## YOUTH VOICES IN MOTION

By Sam Odhiambo / FilmAid Kenya



With support from the Golden Globe Foundation and UNICEF, FilmAid Kenya's filmmaking trainees have reached the most exciting stage of their training: production.



The 2025/2026 cohort of 25 students is now shooting three films. *The Flying Chapati* is a comedy built on everyday humor. *Hawa* follows one family's displacement from Afghanistan to Kakuma. *The Reflector Jacket* takes a sharp look at exploitation. Each project carries the lived experience of its young filmmakers, pairing technical skill with honest storytelling.

Months of training in cinematography, scriptwriting, and rehearsal led to this moment. The films will premiere at FilmAid Film Festivals in Kakuma and Nairobi, events that will also mark the graduation of all 25 trainees.

By giving young people tools, mentorship, and a platform, FilmAid Kenya is proving what storytelling can do. These films aren't just creative projects they carry refugee and host community voices further than they've gone before

“ Together we can change HER STORY. ”



# Hands On Art Workshops / Learning by Doing

By: Peter Kong'or Ajak



***Through Hands On, we don't just learn art we discover our voices, share our stories, and build community through creativity.***



The Hands On m2 Gallery is a non-profit creative hub launched in 2024 to showcase student artwork from Kakuma and Kalobeyei. Located in Kakuma 1, the gallery is adapted from the original m2 Gallery in London three square windows for public viewing, rooftop solar panels keeping exhibitions lit at night.

Each year, the gallery hosts 4-6 exhibitions featuring work from 11 school art clubs. Programmes like Pattern, Colour & Design, FOOD!, and The Art of Making let young artists build skills and share ideas. In 2026, a re-staged version of FOOD! at Akai Eco Lodge took the work beyond the camp for the first time.

The initiative is led by refugee artists Peter Kong'or Ajak, Nyamal Jeremiah, and Santo Lokuju Ishmael, with support from UK-based artists Lisa Milroy and Stephanie Nebbia. Scholarships for girls and bursaries for coaches keep the doors open to more students each year.



At its core, Hands On is education through making proof that creativity can transform lives and communities.



# Schools Disaster Risk Reduction Training in Turkana County

By Vincent Mageto / IRC



Safe schools are the foundation of good learning. But in fragile regions like Turkana County, fires, floods, and disease outbreaks threaten that safety. Kenya's Safety Standards Manual (2008) calls on schools to have clear plans to protect learners and staff.

In February 2026, the International Rescue Committee's TeachWell Project ran a school safety audit across Turkana's sub-counties and found serious gaps in preparedness. In response, IRC held a Disaster Risk Reduction training from 21–24 May 2026, bringing together teachers from nine of the most at-risk schools.



The training covered hazard mapping, evacuation planning, first aid, and emergency response, with the Turkana County Fire Department demonstrating lifesaving techniques. Teachers reflected on recent tragedies including a Nairobi school fire that killed 16 students as a sobering reminder of why this work matters.

# Gender Responsive Education

## *The Rise of MILES – From Learning Circles to Community Change*

By Tito Mise / JRS



Gender-responsive education matters most during adolescence, a time when identity and self-worth are still forming. It gives girls room to lead without barriers and teaches boys to become allies, not bystanders.

What began as a youth club under the GRE project has grown into a movement across Kakuma. Teenagers gained confidence and leadership skills, then started sharing them, leading peer discussions, hosting radio conversations, and pushing change beyond the classroom.



Nyajuok William Deng's story shows what that change looks like. After joining the GRE Youth Club, she became her school president.

"Leadership is no longer something I admire from a distance, it's something I live every day," she says. "The support and skills I gained shaped my vision for other girls in my community."

Building on that momentum, seven young people, four girls, three boys founded Mothers in Learning and Empowerment Support (MILES), a safe space for young mothers and girls to keep learning, find mentorship, and rebuild their futures. Their motto: "Together we can change HER STORY."

Today MILES has 15 members, 12 girls and 3 boys, who serve as allies helping shift attitudes in the wider community. Challenges remain: many girls still face barriers returning to school, young mothers lack childcare support, and sensitive topics like mental health and gender-based violence need trained facilitators. More mentors, learning materials, and basic resources would deepen the group's reach.

**"For a long time, menstrual health was whispered in fear and shame. Now, through MILES, girls speak openly, learn the truth, and support each other with confidence."**

**- Abraham Leek, MHM Champion -**



# Between Survival and Schooling

*Elvis Ekiru's Journey*

Marvin Lukulu/LWF



Elvis Ekiru is in Form Three at Starlight Secondary School in Kakuma. Two years ago, quitting school felt like his only option. He dropped out to work at Naduat Gold Mine because his family needed money for food, fees, and basic needs, a choice many young men in the area made, trading classrooms for tunnels and daily wages of Ksh 1,500–2,000.

For the first time, Elvis felt the weight of responsibility ease. He supported his family and even saved a little. Then, in April 2026, heavy rains caused the mine to collapse. Elvis and several colleagues were trapped underground for two days before rescue teams pulled them out. He survived, and from his hospital bed, he made a decision: education was the safer path.

Then, in April 2026, heavy rains caused the mine to collapse. Elvis and several colleagues were trapped underground for two days before rescue teams pulled them out. He survived, and from his hospital bed, he made a decision: education was the safer path.

Elvis is one of many young people in Kakuma walking the line between survival and schooling, a reminder of what it costs when poverty makes the classroom feel like a privilege.

**"When the mine collapsed, Elvis escaped with his life. When he returned to school, he reclaimed his future."**



# Opening Doors to Futures

## Career Mentorship and Support for Girls

By Caroline Kuria / WIK



In a bid to inspire and guide young learners, Windle International Kenya (WIK) partnered with the Open University of Kenya (OUK) to expose students to diverse career opportunities.

The initiative included mentorship sessions for Form 3 and Form 4 students, equipping them with practical insights and encouragement as they prepare for life beyond secondary school. These sessions not only broadened horizons but also helped learners connect their classroom experiences with real-world aspirations.

Beyond mentorship, WIK extended tangible support to five host community girls' schools, Katilu Girls, Lodwar Girls, Lomil Girls, Our Lady's Girls, and Bigheart Foundation Girls. The schools received learning materials, STEM revision textbooks, laboratory reagents, community service learning items, and dignity kits for girls.

These resources strengthen academic performance, promote equity in science education, and ensure that girls can pursue their studies with dignity and confidence.

By combining mentorship with material support, WIK and OUK are helping shape a generation of empowered learners ready to embrace opportunities and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

This initiative underscores the transformative impact of collaboration in advancing education and gender equity across Turkana County.

**"Mentorship and support are opening doors for girls in Turkana to learn with dignity and dream bigger."**



# From Refugee Camp to Digital Dreams

By Richard Butoyi / Code with Us Hub



In a place often defined by displacement, a different story is being written one of innovation and hope. Founded in 2023, Code with Us Hub was built on a simple belief: that access to technology can transform lives.

The road hasn't been easy. Like most grassroots initiatives, the Hub runs on limited funding and equipment but the team has made it work, sharing learning spaces and relying on dedicated volunteers.

Today, Code with Us Hub trains young people in computer applications, graphic design, web design, and digital literacy skills that open doors to jobs and entrepreneurship. The Hub places real emphasis on gender equality, helping women and girls build confidence in fields where they're often underrepresented.

Beyond skills training, the Hub has become a meeting point where refugees and host community members learn and grow together technology as a bridge, not just a tool. The organization also runs cultural education activities, helping young people born in the camp connect with their heritage while building skills for the future.

**"Code with Us Hub is proof that when refugee and host communities learn together, technology becomes a bridge, not a barrier."**





# Where Opportunity Begins

## Tabitha Maina and the Power of Economic Inclusion

*Tabitha Maina* /JRS



In humanitarian work, economic inclusion is more than programming it's a pathway to dignity and independence. At the center of that work is Tabitha Maina, an Economic Inclusion & Livelihoods Assistant at the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS).

Tabitha works at the intersection of relationships, administration, and livelihoods helping refugees and host communities move toward self-reliance. Her role goes beyond office coordination: she builds trust, strengthens partnerships, and makes sure programs respond to what communities actually need.

What sets her apart is her focus on people. "Development work isn't just technical it's deeply human," she says. Colleagues describe her as dependable, consistently keeping programs connected to both strategy and the realities communities face on the ground.

**"Economic inclusion is not just about creating opportunities it is about restoring dignity and building pathways where people can stand on their own with confidence."**



# TRIVIA FACTS YOU WISH YOU KNEW

By Sam Odhiambo/ Filmaid Kenya



**DR Congo** – The Congo River is the deepest river in the world, plunging to depths of over 220 meters.

**Kenya** – The Great Rift Valley is visible from space and contains Lake Turkana, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

**Kakuma Refugee Camp** – Kakuma is one of the largest refugee camps in the world, hosting people from more than 20 different nationalities, making it a true mosaic of cultures.

**Water** – Hot water can freeze faster than cold water, a phenomenon known as the Mpemba effect.

**Butterflies** – Butterflies can taste with their feet, helping them detect the right plants to lay eggs on.



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# Acknowledgments



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# Next issue Preview

SHARE YOUR STORY WITH US

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