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World Refugee Day



Voices from Kakuma: Stories of Inclusion and Resilience

This year, Humanity & Inclusion is shining a light on those too often left in the shadows. Meet the young voices reshaping what inclusion looks like, one story at a time.

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A Moment to Reflect

World Refugee Day 2026



Each year on June 20, World Refugee Day offers us a chance to pause, to honour the strength and resilience of those forced to flee their homes, and to reflect on our shared responsibility to uphold their rights and dignity.

This year, Humanity & Inclusion turns the spotlight toward Kakuma, one of the largest refugee camps in the world, to focus on a group too often forgotten: **children with disabilities**.

Through the voices of a few young people living in Kakuma, this document offers a window into what inclusion means in practice. These aren't stories of exception, they are part of a much larger movement to ensure that every child, no matter their ability or their circumstances, can access their right to learn, to grow, and to belong.

Because inclusion begins when we choose to see.

Kakuma at a Glance



Location - Turkana County, northwestern Kenya.



Established - 1992.



Population - Over 270,000 refugees and asylum seekers.



Countries of origin - Primarily South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, DRC.



Children make up over **half the camp's population**.



Children with disabilities are among **the most excluded** from education and protection systems.



Humanity & Inclusion has been working in Kenya since 1994. The field team has 62 employees.

In the camps, HI carries out several actions to improve the dignity and living conditions of refugees, particularly for the most vulnerable people.

In Simon's shoes

The dreams and struggles of a young volunteer



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Born and raised in Kakuma refugee camp, Simon is a lively teenager who loves music, dance, and making people laugh. He also lives with albinism, a condition that affects his vision and makes him especially vulnerable to the harsh Kakuma sun.

"When I have to walk outside and I don't have a cap on, the hot Kakuma sun is really dangerous for my skin."

For years, Simon and his family lived in isolation. Misconceptions about albinism led to exclusion and stigma, not just for Simon, but also for his mother and siblings. Finding acceptance felt out of reach.

That changed when they connected with Humanity & Inclusion. HI worked with Simon's community to raise awareness about albinism and break the silence. Simon received sunscreen, protective clothing, and vision support, simple tools that make a big difference. He now studies at Fuji Inclusive Primary School, where teachers are trained to adapt the classroom to his needs.

Simon is thriving. He's a dedicated student, a passionate advocate for inclusion, and a beloved master of ceremonies at school events.



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I feel good at school. HI enrolled me in clubs, and now I want to study hard and support my family.

Saisa's New Chapter

From amputation to ambition

Saisa was just 10 when everything changed.

After being pricked by a thorn near her home in Kakuma, her foot became infected. The injury worsened quickly. Doctors had no choice: her left leg had to be amputated below the knee.

The recovery was painful, physically and emotionally. Her family didn't know how to help. Walking, playing, even going to school suddenly felt out of reach.

But slowly, things began to shift.

With Humanity & Inclusion's support, Saisa received medical care, psychosocial support, and home safety adaptations, including parallel bars to help her regain balance and mobility. A new school closer to home welcomed her, with inclusive teachers and a classmate, Ana, who walks with her each day.

Now 14, Saisa is thriving at Horseed Primary School. She has a new prosthetic leg, perfectly fitted to her size. She participates in art therapy, inclusive sports, and the school's inclusive rights club, where she's learning to speak up for herself and others.



She's cheerful, focused, and always helping her classmates.

Saisa's teacher.

Saisa dreams of becoming a pediatrician. And with each confident step, that dream feels closer.



Nasteho's Journey

Finding her place in school,
and in the world



At 8 years old, Nasteho lives in Kakuma refugee camp with her parents. For years, she lived in silence. Born with cerebral palsy, she spent her early childhood confined to her home. She couldn't sit upright, couldn't speak clearly, and had never seen the inside of a classroom. Her parents, overwhelmed and unsure how to help, feared school would never be an option.

Everything changed the day a community outreach worker from Humanity & Inclusion knocked on their door. From that moment, a new path began to unfold.

Nasteho's family received psychosocial support, while she was enrolled in a home-based education program tailored to her needs. She learned how to feed and dress herself, built strength through therapeutic play, and smiled more freely.

But her eyes always followed her siblings as they left for school. She wanted to be part of something bigger. In 2022, she joined a local inclusive preschool. Now in Grade 1, she learns alongside other children, supported by trained teachers and learner support assistants.

Today, Nasteho is thriving, not only in school, but in life.



Whether I receive
help or not, I will
support my child.

Nasteho's father



Broader Impact at a Glance

Reaching the Unseen

Inclusive education in Kakuma: a broader look

The stories you've just read offer a glimpse into something much bigger.

In Kakuma, one of the world's largest refugee camps, Humanity & Inclusion works alongside communities to make education truly inclusive. This means going door to door to identify children with disabilities, training teachers to adapt their classrooms, and supporting families as they navigate displacement, stigma, and limited resources.

It also means providing tailored solutions: home-based education when children can't attend school, financial support for transport during the rainy season, and assistive devices that make learning possible.

Across both camps, more than **16,000 children** are now part of Humanity & Inclusion's specific inclusive education project. Over **8,000 of them live with disabilities**, children who, without this program, might never have had the chance to learn.

Behind every name is a dedicated team of outreach workers, learner support assistants, and teachers, over **150 professionals trained in inclusive practices**, all working together to build environments where every child belongs.

Because inclusion isn't just an approach. **It's a commitment.** One that starts by seeing the invisible, and walking beside them.



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A world-renowned expertise



In 1996, Humanity & Inclusion received the **Nansen Refugee Award**, the most prestigious prize awarded by UNHCR (the UN Refugee Agency).

HI received this award in recognition of its efforts to alleviate the suffering of landmine victims, including the provision of prosthetic limbs to more than 150,000 amputees, **most of whom were refugees and displaced persons.**

How we make inclusion happen



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1 FIND THE UNSEEN

Through **door-to-door household visits**, outreach workers identify children with disabilities who may have been isolated, excluded, or invisible to the education system. This is how children like Nasteho, who had never attended school, were found and supported.

3 EQUIP THE ECOSYSTEM

Inclusion is only sustainable when schools and communities are ready. HI trains teachers in inclusive methods, provides learning materials, supports parent engagement, and builds peer networks. Children are welcomed into **classrooms that are ready to meet their needs, not the other way around**.

2 REMOVE THE BARRIERS

Once identified, children receive **tailored support**, mobility aids like prosthetics and crutches as with Saisa, sun protection and vision care as with Simon, or home-based education when school isn't yet possible. **These are practical tools that break down physical, social, and emotional obstacles**.

4 PROTECT & EMPOWER

Beyond education, HI strengthens **child protection systems and provides psychosocial support**. Children are enrolled in inclusive rights clubs and art therapy sessions, safe spaces where they build confidence, advocate for themselves, and support one another, just like Simon and Saisa do every day.

| Inclusive Education: Why is it important ?

Education is a fundamental and universal human right, recognized by several international declarations such as the **Convention on the Rights of the Child** and the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**.

Education is therefore a right in itself, but also **an end in itself to achieve other rights**.

Every child, including those with disabilities, should have access to an **inclusive, and quality education**.



EVERY PERSON HAS A RIGHT OF ACCESS TO QUALITY SERVICES



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