

First newspaper in Kenya refugee camp created by youth

The Hagadera refugee camp in Kenya is one of the largest in the world. Home to 100,000 people, many from Somalia, there is no media and few opportunities for many of the youth living there. On 3 April 2009, the first newspaper was sold in the camp by 26 youth who have spent the past couple of months creating the publication, called *Newsletter Hagadera*.

The Norwegian Refugee Council's training program, Youth Education Pack (YEP), supervised the project as part of a larger skills training program that offers classes to youth who have missed school due to conflicts and displacement.

"The youth, aged 15 to 20, have learned the basics in newspaper production - all parts from editorial, distribution, management, and how to make and get ads," said Jan Vincens Steen, Norway's Newspaper in Education (NIE) Director, who is spearheading the project with Pål Stensaas of Norske Skog, to RAP 21.

The newspaper will be distributed monthly and will report on water needs, health issues, the local football league, and stories of reunited families in the refugee camp.

"These young are very eager to learn, and to start their own business," said Steen. Four other courses are offered to youth refugees, including carpentry and hairdressing.

The media production course carries an exceptional weight: "Every third person has a mobile phone, but no televisions, radio, or newspapers exist in the camp of 100,000 people," said Steen. There is also a real probability that the newsletter could become a sustainable, professional newspaper - the region has an economy that could sustain advertising, and there is a great need for information.

Article published courtesy of RAP21.org