

Africa Blogs #4: Malawi

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Children on the streets of the camp

This is Ethan checking in from America. After 36 hours of flights from Malawi to Ethiopia to Rome then to Washington DC and finally arrived back in California March 14th.

There have been so many amazing experiences in Malawi It's difficult to truly explain everything we did or everything we gained but I'd like to share one of the most powerful experiences for our team and myself personally at a refugee camp.

During our last week in Malawi we had the opportunity to visit Daleka Refugee Camp to do a motivational presentation. Daleka is a village for refugees of war. People from surrounding countries such as the Congo and other war-torn countries fled their homes and eventually made their way to this small village. When we arrived I could feel the pain of these people. I could see it in their eyes. I could feel it in the air. These people have suffered so much that I can't even comprehend what their lives are like. One story in particular struck me.



Us giving our presentation on hope

Allen was the pastor from the Congo at the church we presented. He was only 23 but his life is truly remarkable. Allen's father was a soldier in the army. When the president was assassinated he was accused and killed by government troops. Allen's family was imprisoned for two years until a human rights group

came made sure that he and his family were offered a fair trial. The government had no evidence that Allen had anything to do with the president's death so he was released. However, the government didn't trust him and banished him from the Congo. He had to flee and leave his family when he was only 17. He eventually found his way to Daleka where he became a pastor of one of the village churches. Allen is now receiving scholarships to go to America to pursue engineering. Allen's story is just one example of the tragic and painful experiences these people have been through.

Our presentation at the refugee was on hope. At first we felt very unqualified to give hope to the people in Daleka. Some of them are truly hopeless. If we were going to make an impact with our presentation we had to step up and embody hope in ourselves. When we spoke, it was like we were challenging some higher conscious . We weren't speaking from our intellect but from the depth of our being. Our words reached out and grasped the hearts of the audience. We were able to give hope to the people of Daleka despite their limited opportunities and painful pasts. Nam-mi, Mie and I came alive and stepped up to this epic challenge.

In addition to having a presentation we also donated the guitar our team bought before Africa to a gifted guitarist at the church. He is going to teach other people in the village how to play guitar and spread the gift of music throughout Daleka. We weren't even planning to donate our guitar there but when I heard the guitarist at the church play I was inspired by his ability. I could see how much he enjoyed playing music for people.



Proudly donating the guitar

Our visit to Daleka was our highlight of our entire Africa trip. We felt how powerful each one of us is, how much we can impact other people no matter how different their lives are from ours.

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