



**HOPE OF CHILDREN AND WOMEN
VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE**

Supporting the Mental Health of Urban Refugees in Uganda

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Kampala, Uganda

- Ndejje: small village 15 km south of Kampala with an integration of local Ugandans and a refugee community
- Currently ~77,000 urban refugees in Kampala and surrounding communities.
- Most refugees from:
South Sudan,
The Democratic Republic of
Congo, Rwanda, Burundi,
& Somalia



Hope of Children and Women Victims of Violence (HOCW)

- founded in 2010 by refugees and has served over 4,000 refugees and local Ugandans
- language classes, computer courses, mental health counseling, child care, hairdressing, tailoring, mushroom growing, crafting, and business collectives.
- Mission: to eliminate all forms of violence against women and children and bring hope to victims for a better life.

Special Studies Project & Outcomes

- Learn how refugee mental health is talked about and viewed
- Consider ways in which refugee resettlement organization in the U.S. can better serve the needs of refugees
- Essential to build a trusting and confidential relationship between client and *peer* counsellor
- “It’s not that there is something wrong with you. It’s that you can’t keep your story inside of you, you cannot stay alone with it forever.” -staff
- “You have to teach people the importance of healing their hearts.” -staff

Advice

- Utilize existing connections & take time to get to know people
- Trust your instinct and say “yes” to opportunities outside of your comfort zone.
- Take time to get to know the community. Don’t feel rushed to get to the “real work.” The real work is building relationships.

Skills Utilized/Developed

- Developed grant writing skills
- Learned to work collaboratively across cultures
- Advocated for social and economic justice for refugees
- Practiced interpersonal skills with adults & children
- Learned about integrating western mental health methods with traditional practices

Relevant Classes

- SW521: basic interpersonal practice skills
- SW560: grant writing & non-profit management
- SW697: entering communities & building communities
- SW504: PODS



Career Connections

During my global social work experience, I learned skills that will help me to be a more effective, knowledgeable, and culturally humble social worker. I also made professional connections with colleagues doing refugee work in Uganda and the surrounding region.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to the following groups for funding my study: SSW Office of Global Activities, U-M International Institute, SSW Board of Governors

Thank you to Dr. Cristina Bares for academic support & guidance.

Huge thank you to HOCW staff & clients for welcoming me with open arms & open hearts, for treating me like family, for telling me stories and walking with me every step of the way.

