

Marko Kuol

Age: 25

Region: Upper Nile

I was seven years old when my village was bombed. We had no weapons to defend ourselves. We walked to the border of Ethiopia. When I was too tired to walk my older nephew carried me. The U.N. gave us food and tools to construct a building to live in.

After a year we walked to Kampala, Uganada where we stayed for six months before continuing our walk to the Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya. The hardest part about this time was that I was so young and I missed all of my family so much and for so long.

Living in the camp was difficult because there were so many different tribes with different languages. We had no real protection and some people robbed and killed other at night. Even the security was corrupt. The best thing was that I went to high school I lived with my cousin, Bishop. One relative came to Kakuma to search for family members and she found me.

I did not return with her because I felt a responsibility to stay with my age mates and help take care of them. Later, I spoke on the telephone with my Mom and Dad. My mom was sad, but also overjoyed that I was alive and said they had sacrificed a goat for me.

Before arriving in the U.S. in March, 2001, I put my faith in God. I don't have any power without God, so I believe God blessed where I was going. My first day here, I met a man in a public bathroom who tried to help me and asked: "Where are you from?" I said "Sudan, Africa," and he said, "Oh, you're one of the Lost Boys," before, I never heard being referred to as Lost Boy.

Now, I live with my cousin here and I'm working at American Woodwork. I also attend Phoenix College. I want to help people who need medical care in Kenya. Here, I can complete my education and become better equipped for my future life. God willing, I will meet my family again.