

Gerang Bol

Age: 30

Region: South

Everyone in my family separated to hide during the war. Some people were living in trees outside of town. I have five brothers who live in Kenya and Khartoum, and two sisters living in Uganda. I left home because there was no future. I moved to Khartoum where I lived for two years. I stayed with friends while I worked and went to school.

I had to leave Khartoum because I might have been enlisted to fight in the war. I moved to Egypt where I found work in a clothing store. I made \$150 per month, but it was not enough to pay rent and buy food. I wasn't treated well by the Egyptians.

I next went to the U.N. to make an application to emigrate. I waited almost a year for approval.

I came to the U.S. before 9/11, 2001. I imagined the United States as BIG, but it was even more so. It was almost too much to take in. There was so much to look at. In Africa, there was nothing to do, but sit all day. Here, everyone is busy going to work and to school. You are always doing this or doing that, but it's not for nothing. I think the biggest difference is the technology here. I like that people respect each other and help each other.

I'm working in electronics, operating machines at a plastics company. I also go to Rio Salado College to study English and prepare to take the G.E.D. I might like to be a teacher to help other people.