

John Awet

Age: 27

Region: Bahr al Ghazal

When I was a young boy, I didn't expect anything in life. I used to like to play. I can't remember anything else that I liked to do. When I was ten, I had to leave my country because of war. The Khartoum government came with a helicopter and bombed the area, so my family and I ran in different directions. Pieces of the bombs hit my back and leg and hurt me. I bled a lot and my friends helped take care of me. After some days, I heard that the government had taken my parents and killed them.

I traveled with my friends to Dimma and Panyido camps in Ethiopia. We stayed in Ethiopia for three years until war broke out. We ran away from Ethiopia and back to Sudan. We traveled through Kapoeta, Narus and Lockichokis, and finally came to Kakuma.

A lot of things changed along the way. Lions ate people, a lot of people drowned in the River Gilo. There was no food and no water and other people lost their lives. We drank our own urine so you could sock your throat when your throat was dry.

I came here May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2001. There are a lot of nationalities here. In Sudan, we only saw British and Americans. I heard that America was a good place for opportunities. If you are a patient person, you will learn and get a better job. Later on, you'll be a better person.

The most difficult thing about living in the U.S. is that a lot of people don't talk the truth. I think in Sudan that people are more honest. The good thing I know about Americans is that when you don't know something and you ask, they'll tell you. They explain to me what things mean and how you pronounce things. I'm living in a good place. I have a car. I didn't have one in Africa.

It is still my dream to be an educated person. I have had eye surgery three times so I'm not going to school right now. Next year, I will go to Phoenix College. I first want to be a pharmacist, but I think I would like to become a judge. I would like it if god helps me and I can achieve my dream. It is only in my mind. I would like to be educated and be something.