

## MAHAMA REFUGEE CAMP IN RWANDA

### “It will double in 10 years”

UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi’s words were chilling. His recent interview on Radio Davos clarified what the world has been watching. There are now 114 million refugees in the world, represented by people from developing and developed countries, and he predicts that will double.

And the main cause of displacement...conflict! Certainly, no surprise there.

And the solution? Grandi calls on the world for more humanitarian aid. His position is anticipated and certainly understandable, but it’s definitely not a Biblical solution.

We who recognize the “*dismay among nations*” Luke 21:25 NASB remember Jesus spoke at length about these days with the disciples on the Mount of Olives... “*For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom*”... (Mark 13:8) and as He detailed the frightening events to come before the end, Jesus underscored the real focus for us, interrupting the long list of suffering and persecutions... *The gospel must first be preached to all the nations.* (vs 10)

No doubt as nations and tribes rise against each other, the global refugee challenge will grow. Hand wringing is for political leaders but as for us, energy must be focused on Jesus’ words in vs 10.

### OPPORTUNITY

As with all circumstances we face, the question for Christ followers is simple; what is our response? Certainly, humanitarian aid is necessary but in our other hand must be the Gospel. After all, the end only really comes when the Gospel is preached in all the world. (Matt 24:14) Our founder George Otis used to quote that verse often, before moving into yet another radio outreach. It was as if he felt compelled to bring back Jesus by reaching the world! I admired his passion.

### EFFECTIVE RADIO

Internet, television and all the digital media smothering our communities today, have little effect on the growing refugee population. But affordable, available radio does; the enemy of our soul knows that. And that explains our last 30 days...

We receive a constant flow of listeners writing and calling from highly conflicted areas including the Middle East. But in all areas where we support radio, we have recently experienced unanticipated strain on our finances as partners try to manage their post COVID income levels to keep stations operating. And everyone calls for help.

We have actively tried to help, hoping the flow of requests would not become a raging river. But that dream was not a dream-it soon became a nightmare.

### RWANDA

Pastor Joseph called with the news his mountain top radio site, now reaching 2 of the nation’s 5 refugee camps had experienced a transmitter fire. Excessive power had burned up the onboard power supply, moving into circuit boards, where real damage occurred. We scrambled and by the grace of God a friend provided a new (smaller) transmitter that could get us back on the air, enabling a grace period when we might repair the big transmitter. After an unexpected \$4,000 repair cost, the Ugandan technician repaired the big transmitter, but warned us the transmitter fire was not a lightning strike as we had thought. Instead, it was a sustained fire fueled by “dirty” country power (fluctuating voltage).

The solution? Another \$1,500 for a big stabilizer to protect the repaired (and new back up) transmitter. We breathed again...until he switched everything on. The power never made it to the transmitter. Instead, it completely burned up the new stabilizer. At the moment we are on/off the air in Rwanda and our outreach to over 5 million Rwandans is unstable, until national grid technicians can step in and somehow make adjustments. This **cannot** happen in a nation once ravaged by genocide and a nation now hosting multiple refugee camps!

The solution really is solar power. We have proven that with the last three stations we built, but we have always known the \$15,000 cost is a significant challenge for us. I have been waiting on the Lord for many years, after our partner completely wore out 7 generators in 5 years. But it does feel like it’s time to press into the Lord for this. Please pray with us.

## NOW ZAMBIA?

And then Zambia called. We had been preparing to bring the Life Essentials Study Bible system to Zambia (April) when suddenly there was a cholera outbreak. In our last check over 16,000 were infected and nearly 700 dead. Zambian Life Essentials was now on hold.

But they called again; this time about radio. A recent change in tower ownership increased our partner monthly rentals by nearly 100% at a time when post COVID financial challenges still ravaged their economy. More scrambling-this time to move our equipment from private towers to less costly government owned towers. A good friend stepped in to help with the transition costs. We had the first tower (of 4) completed when suddenly the remaining government towers became inaccessible without warning, stressing our partner radio income yet some more.

Understandably, our partner entered into financial negotiations to allow stations to operate as money was sought...the very next day **another** call came. This time the studio solar system we had installed 5 years ago suddenly needed emergency help-the 6 big batteries are dead and unable to keep the station studios operating during the country's just-announced load shedding. The station would have no power for 8 hours at a time. Five stations would be silent! Batteries could have made the difference. So, we are now praying for solar batteries (\$3,600).

I could only think of the peripheral communities waiting to hear the broadcast from their homes in Zimbabwe (from our Siavonga station) or the Congo (from our Mongu or Mansa stations) or even the new Chinese audience we have been reaching (from our Lusaka station). I try to not think of this during evening hours...please pray with us for the batteries and at least \$6,000 to clear the station's accumulated operating debts. Zambian Christian radio must continue!



**Jane Baako - 45**  
Mother of 6

**"I have no happiness in my life due to challenges in the refugee settlement. After I got this radio, I feel peace of mind, the beauty of the song's preaching and My fellow refugees' ideas on Radio."**



**Keji Susan - 35**  
Mother of 4

**"This is always how much I and family site and listen Radio program. I can't afford a radio, but God was planning it for me. I am using this radio to educate myself challenge and the kids with wonderful programs of life. It has been solution to my challenges."**

## ADJUMANI AGAIN

With so many challenges, I deliberately took momentary comfort in thinking of the new studio renovation at our Adjumani refugee radio station. The testimonies are so encouraging-I certainly enjoyed the moment. However, I have learned to not hold on too tight...sure enough...another call.

This time it was the request for a new diesel generator. Our solar power works great during daytime but when darkness comes, the station goes off the air. Over 5 million people cannot hear us when darkness comes. Silence is definitely not golden for refugee radio!

The generator we do have, needs replacing with a diesel version which operates much less expensively; a real need since the UN and other agencies have stopped providing support for radio airtime when their development programs are broadcast to refugees. It makes sense-after all, they have almost stopped their food support. Development is not seen as affordable now. But their understandably reduced budget contributes to eliminating our night time refugee broadcasts.

Refugees struggle with significant food challenges and now face diminished messaging of hope. It is almost unbearable to think of refugees (some who we have come to know) sitting silently, waiting for morning to come when Usalama can return. Please pray about this \$5,600 need.

## KENYA CALLING

Our refugee radio station in Kakuma reaches over 270,000 refugees (formerly known as the Lost Boys of Sudan) with Christian programs. Our only broadcaster worked the studio for 16 hours every day for 2 years until we could find support for a second presenter to assist. Finally... a refugee radio station that is working well...until today. As I write, that station is off the air. The transmitter simply will not work. And that means a technician must make the 12-hour bus ride to check it out, but before we can install the back-up transmitter, it too needs emergency repair. Another silent radio voice in this **same month!**



**"When I received the radio, I found that it was full of the teachings of the Gospel."**

**Listener John - Village 3 Kakuma refugee camp**

**"...the songs that I usually hear always encourage me to be firm and feel in hope"**

**Listener Anjelo - Village 3 Kakuma refugee camp**

**"I was really changed through listening to the Sonset specially Juba Arabic every Sunday. My life is different now."**

**Listener Christine Kalobeyi - Village 3 refugee camp**

## HAITI

We shared the need for Pastor Marcel's Source of Faith radio in Cap Haitien and already some have joined us. We are so grateful and have stepped up efforts to help with tower and shipping. But just this week, violence has exploded once again on the streets of Port au Prince, causing leaders to talk faster and others to hesitate with response. And we cannot get our broadcast equipment out of the airport because it has been locked down. Enemy fingerprints rest heavily on this recent violence. We must continue to work and pray for Haiti.

## RUSSIA and UKRAINE

We have shortwave radio access to both Russia and Ukraine. We have started a weekly Russian program but the war has not encouraged support. Our Russian producer has (constantly) requested more programming which he can create but we must air on leased transmitters (\$200 per month). And his team can produce small Ukrainian programming which we can also air across all battlefields-very much like we did to both combatants in South Lebanon in 1979. But the additional transmitter lease costs press us when we struggle to keep all other radio afloat.

## OUR FOCUS

Rising conflict has created an entire ministry opportunity. Most displaced people would have never considered seeking Christian messaging, but as their world crumbles, they now search for help...and many are now within the sound of our broadcasts. We can certainly understand why the enemy is so active these past 30 days. He wants silence... Let's give him some noise.

Please pray about helping.

Don



**Alafi Godfrey - 31**

**"I got this radio I don't know anything about God three weeks back. Around 9 am one of the pastors was Preaching about sin as if the pastor knew me. After his preaching I evaluate myself, immediately from then I took decision to follow Christ in my life, I have join Baptist Church I am still under discipleship keep praying for me."**



**Chandia Christine - 28**  
Mother of 2

**"At first I live in hopeless life thinking about conditions we are in. After I got this radio there is living hope in my life, my husband wanted to know why I am always happy this day. I point him to this radio after three days he became more happy. Every evening we pray first together before sleeping."**



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