

Setting the Scene:
A Reading Resource for Educators

NINE LIVES IN THE WORLD'S
LARGEST REFUGEE CAMP

CITY OF THORNS

BEN RAWLENCE

PICADOR



UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

Compiled by Maggie Archbold and Ryan Hauck

Setting the Scene: *City of Thorns: Nine Lives in the World's Largest Refugee Camp*



Dadaab Town is located in Northeast Kenya (70 km from the Somali border, and 500 km from Kenya's capital, Nairobi).

For hundreds of years, Dadaab was home mainly to nomadic herders who drifted across the unmarked border between Kenya and Somalia. When Somalia's civil war broke out, the United Nations built the Ifo, Dagahaley and Hagadera refugee camps in order to shelter 90,000 refugees.

Today, Dadaab, if considered a city, would be Kenya's third largest (National Security Reporter, 2015)

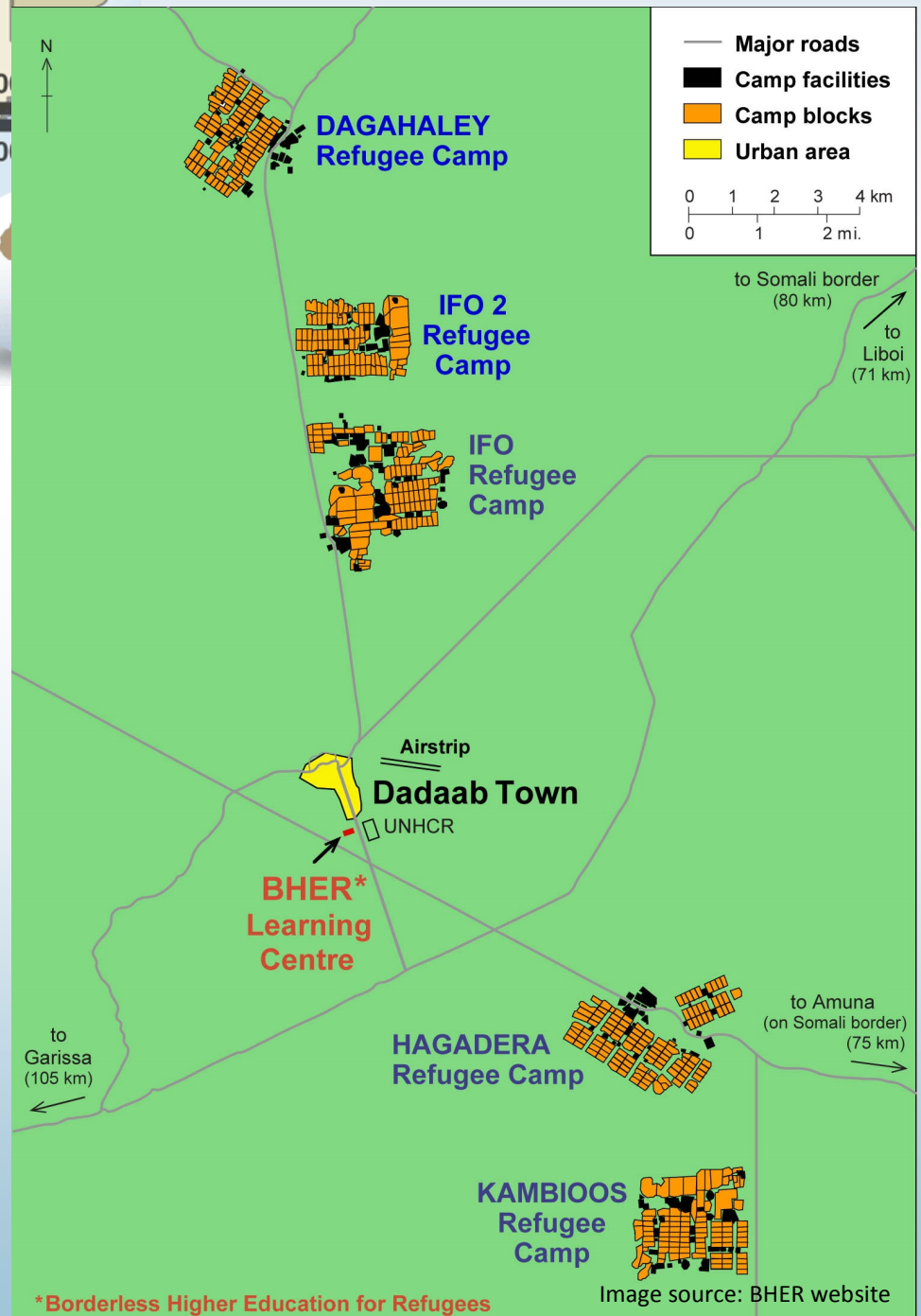
There are six refugee camps located within the region of Dadaab. Dadaab Camp stretches over 50 square kilometers.

These include Ifo, Dagahaley and Hagadera which are the oldest and the largest of the camps (UBC 2016). As of today, it holds more than 350,000 people—and up to half a million (UNHCR 2015, MSF 2016).

These camps are comprised mainly of Somalis, who represent 99 percent of the population hosted in the camps, as well as small numbers of Sudanese, Ugandans, Eritreans and Ethiopians. If Dadaab were a city, it would be the third largest in Kenya (UNHCR 2011).

Dadaab refugee camp is growing by 1,000 births each month (Ben Rawlence 2015)

Half the population of Dadaab refugee camp is under 18 (Melanie Gouby, The Guardian 2015).



Setting the Scene: Ifo Camp and Ifo 2

On arrival, the refugees – most of whom are women and children – have no money, no food, no water and no shelter. It takes 12 days, on average, to receive a first ration of food, and 34 days to receive cooking utensils and blankets from the UN's refugee agency, the UNHCR, which runs the camps. (MSF 2016)



Photograph:
B. Bannon/
UNHCR

Pictured above: Ifo extension camp at Dadaab. Ifo was designed to deal with the fresh influx of refugees from Somalia. New residents had first lived in risky areas on the camp outskirts. (Sam Jones and agency 2015).

Pictured left: Ifo Camp, seen from above in May 1992.



Photograph:
T Bolstad/UNHCR

Kenya- Dadaab District Ifo 2 Refugee Camp Overview

As of June 2013



Geographic Information Systems unit
LWF/DWS-Dadaab
©2013
Source: UNHCR, LWF/DWS-Dadaab
Datum: WGS 1984
Projection: UTM Zone 37N
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations



Population: 64,015
Camp size
1. Hectares - 1005.2987
2. Kilometers Squared - 10.05

Services and Providers		
Community Services 1. KRCS	Education 1. ADEO	Food 1. CARE
Gender Based Violence 1. CARE	HIV/AIDS 1. IB	Health 1. IOM
Livelihood 1. IOM	Protection 1. CARE	Shelter 1. IOM 2. NRC
Transportation 1. IOM	Water & Sanitation 1. NRC	

Key
ADEO - African Development and Emergency Organisation
A. POLICE - Administration Police
BS & PT - Bus Station & Public Toilets
CC - Community Centre
CFS - Child Friendly Space
CS - Community Space
CVT - Centre for Victims of Torture
DC - Disability Centre
DRA - Department of Refugee Affairs
DRC - Danish Refugee Council
FAI - Film Aid International
FDS - Firewood Distribution Space
FLC - Family Life Centre

GCS - Garbage Collection Site
GIZ - Deutsche Gesellschaft Internationale
HC - Health Centre
HI - Handicap International
IFRC - International Federation of Red Cross
IOM - International Organisation for Migration
MD - Mathenge Sticks Distribution Site
MSF - Medecins Sans Frontieres
NCCCK - National Council of Churches in Kenya
NRC - Norwegian Refugee Council
PGM - Prayer Grounds & Mosque
PS - Primary school
RA - Recreation Area

RC - Resource Centre
RCK - Refugee Consortium of Kenya
RRDO - Relief Reconstruction and Development Organisation
RS - Religious Space
SC UK - Save the Children UK
SP - Section Post
SPU - Stove Production Unit
SS - Secondary School
TBA - To Be Allocated
TC - Transit Centre
TN - Tree Nursery
UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VC - Vocational Centre

Setting the Scene: Recommended Resources

Author Profiles The 'Traumatized People' Living In The World's Largest Refugee Camp (01/11/2016)

<http://www.npr.org/2016/01/04/461891627/author-profiles-the-traumatized-people-living-in-the-worlds-largest-refugee-camp>

Ben Rawlence speaks to NPR's FRESH AIR contributor Dave Davis about the book *City of Thorns*, and the very complex situation for refugees in eastern Africa.

Refugees in the Horn of Africa: Somali Displacement Crisis: Information Sharing Portal (last updated: 11/30/2015)

<http://data.unhcr.org/horn-of-africa/region.php?id=3&country=110>

UNHCR Factsheets for Dagahely Camp, Hagadera Camp, Ifo Camp, Ifo 2 Camp, and Kambioos Camp, with references to services, demographics, maps, etc.

No Way In: Refugee Camp Full

<http://www.msf.org.au/resources/special-features/dadaab-refugee-camp.html>

Read the full Doctors Without Borders (MSF) report on the growing humanitarian crisis at the refugee camps of Dadaab, Kenya.

Dadaab Stories

<http://www.dadaabstories.org/>

'One Camp: Half a Million Refugees. Countless Stories.' This is an interactive website that allows you to enter Dadaab camp and experience it virtually.

Education in Emergencies: The Case of the Dadaab Refugee Camps

https://www.cigionline.org/sites/default/files/cigi_pb_47.pdf

Education in emergencies is key to human development and protection, but has not been a priority in humanitarian aid. It is grossly underfunded globally and particularly in the Dadaab refugee camps. This detailed report from the Centre for International Development, recommends that working organizations responsible for providing education in the camps focus their grant writing in support of human capacity building and infrastructure improvement, and that the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and funding partners collaborate to prioritize aid to the Dadaab camps, focusing on the education sector.



Photograph: Brendan Bannon/UNHCR)

Pictured above: In 2011, refugees fled Somalia in numbers. Dadaab could not accommodate them and they settled on the outskirts of Dagahaley and Ifo (Sam Jones and agency, 2015).

Setting the Scene: Dadaab in the News

Waiting for Dadaab (PHOTOS) (10/30/2011)

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/arthur-nazaryan/waiting-for-dadaab_b_1065882.html

Every day an estimated 800 refugees from Somalia stream into Kenya's Dadaab refugee camp. With persistent war, and the worst famine for decades in 2011, the camp has swollen to a staggering 400,000 residents. Dadaab is a mass of tents sprawling through the desert. Most refugees have little, if any, access to the rest of Kenya. Instead, they have to languish for years, sometimes decades, in the desert camp.

Kenya's Dadaab finds innovative ways to educate knowledge-hungry refugees (01/31/2013)

<http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2013/jan/31/kenya-dadaab-innovative-educate-refugees>

New university campus near Dadaab complex aims to improve life for Somali refugees and prepare them for returning home. The Dadaab campus of Kenyatta University is the first higher-level institution to serve a refugee site.

Referenced in Chapter
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World Refugee Day 2014: Living Conditions in the Largest Refugee Camps (06/20/2014)

<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/world-refugee-day-2014-living-conditions-largest-refugee-camps-1453517>

IBTimes UK looks at refugees' living conditions in the world's biggest refugee camps. Among the refugees interviewed by MSF in 2013, 41% complained about the conditions of their shelters, which do not protect them from the rain. Around 11% had no access to latrines.

World's largest refugee camp in Kenya could be 'the future' (09/21/2015)

<http://www.thestar.com/news/world/2015/09/21/worlds-large-refugee-camp-in-kenya-could-be-the-future.html>

Dadaab, in northern Kenya near Somalia's border, is the world's largest refugee camp. More city than camp. More prison than city. Is this the future for refugees?

Education: A Challenge to Terror (11/30/2015)

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/sarah-drydenpeterson/education-a-challenge-to- b_4018869.html

In Arabic, Al-Shabab means "The Youth." Universally, youth is a time of growing, of change. It is a time when much is new and not yet established. Research in psychology describes youth as being in a "future-oriented position." Youth involved in the militant group Al-Shabab are no different. They are seeking to build lives and opportunities. Yet the pathways to a future chosen by those involved in terror are destructive, to themselves, their own communities and, increasingly, as the recent attacks on the Nairobi mall demonstrate, to a global community as well.

Kenya Cholera Epidemic Hits World's Largest Refugee Camp (12/18/2015)

http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/19/world/africa/kenya-cholera-epidemic-hits-worlds-largest-refugee-camp.html?_r=0

A cholera epidemic that has been spreading in Kenya for more than a year is threatening Dadaab, the world's largest refugee camp complex, situated near the Somalia border. It said more than 540 Dadaab residents have been infected with cholera, a debilitating and often fatal bacterial disease spread by human waste in drinking water.

Living, Learning, and Teaching in Dadaab

<http://ltd.educ.ubc.ca/media/dadaab-camps/>

People in Dadaab refugee camps consider education as the only tool to combat and eradicate any kind of obstacle in life. They believe that if higher education is brought to Dadaab it will liberate them from the dark and give them hope. Students in Dadaab have the courage to compete favorably with all students in the hosting nation, Kenya.

Referenced in Chapter
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Solar Mamas: Are women better at getting out of poverty? (00:52:00)

<http://www.whypoverty.net/video/solar-mamas-poverty-2/>



The Barefoot College in India trains impoverished women from around the world to become solar engineers. *Solar Mamas* tells the story of Rafea, a Jordanian Bedouin mother who is given the opportunity to study there and become a solar engineer, capable of bringing power to the remotest places. The Barefoot college focuses on women because as founder Bunker Roy explains, women are more likely to stay in their communities once they've trained. Unlike men, who'll take their new knowledge and leave for the big cities, the women will return to their families and homes, bringing their new skills back to share.

Setting the Scene: Dadaab in the News

Who are Somalia's al-Shabab? (04/03/2015)

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-15336689>

Islamist militant group al-Shabab is battling the UN-backed government in Somalia, and has carried out a string of attacks in neighbouring Kenya. The group, which is allied to al-Qaeda, has been pushed out of most of the main towns it once controlled, but it remains a potent threat. Who are al-Shabab and what is al-Shabab doing in Kenya?

Somalis torn between hunger in Dadaab and uncertainty at home (01/19/2015)

<http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/jan/19/somalia-dadaab-refugee-camp-kenya>

The Dadaab refugee camp is the world's largest, with a population of about 357,000, and approximately 1,000 births a month. UN officials have said they expect it still to exist in 10 years' time. Though the numbers going back are tiny, the return agenda is shaping both policy and individual refugee decisions.

World's largest refugee camp scapegoated in wake of Garissa attack (04/14/2015)

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/14/kenya-garissa-dadaab-scapegoat-al-shabaab>

The Kenyan government has called Dadaab 'a nursery for al-Shabaab' and is demanding its closure. But dismantling the home of 350,000 people will not happen quickly or make the country safer, says Simon Allison. After the terrorist attack on Garissa University in which 147 students were killed Kenya's government has found a scapegoat. Three hundred and fifty thousand scapegoats, in fact.

Referenced in Chapters
37-38

Dadaab refugee camp closure would risk 350,000 Somali lives, warns Amnesty (04/17/2015)

<http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/apr/17/dadaab-refugee-camp-closure-risk-350000-somali-lives-amnesty>

Amnesty International has joined the UN and others in urging Kenya to halt its plans to close the world's largest refugee complex, arguing that forcing the 350,000 Somalis in Dadaab to return home would put their lives at risk and breach international law.

Climate of fear in Dadaab refugee camps leads many to consider repatriation (05/20/2015)

<http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/may/20/dadaab-refugee-camp-kenya-repatriation-somalia>

Dadaab has once again become the focus of the Kenyan government's response to terrorism after the massacre of 147 students at the University of Garissa April 2015. Ten days after the attack, Kenya's vice-president, William Ruto, gave the UN until July to relocate all the refugees and close the camp, saying that Dadaab has become a hideout for al-Shabaab in Kenya. "The group which attacked Garissa earlier this month ... they stayed in the refugee camps," said Bunow Korane, the chair of Kenya's Refugee Affairs Commission. "They assembled their arms there." According to security experts, however, there is no evidence linking Dadaab or refugees to al-Shabaab and the Garissa attack.

Article by Ben
Rawlence

Author of book on Dadaab says Shabaab has no base in refugee camps (01/09/2016)

<http://www.nation.co.ke/news/Shabaab-has-no-base-in-Dadaab--says-author/-/1056/3026994/-/79x024z/-/index.html>

Al-Shabaab has at most a "transient" presence in the Dadaab camps, the author of a new book on the Somali refugee complex said last week. "The idea that Shabaab is planning attacks from the camps is complete nonsense," declared Ben Rawlence, a former researcher in the Horn for Human Rights Watch who lived in Dadaab for seven months.

