

## The Scholarship Factor

### How a refugee girl is 'walking in the light' at Alliance Girls High School

By STANLEY KASEMBELI

The essence of refugees' students getting the life they want and the high schools to attend outside the camp environment comes down to seizing the opportunities at hand. Nyanut Maluach Kuot, a South Sudanese refugee girl who scored 421 marks out of a possible 500 in the 2017 KCPE examinations, is among the 120 students benefitting from the Secondary Education Programme (SEP) scholarship implemented by Windle International Kenya (WIK) with funding from United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Following her phenomenal performance, she was selected to join Alliance Girls' High School (AGHS) in Kikuyu, Kiambu County. The school whose motto is 'Walk in the Light' is making Nyanut to literally do so. Deservedly, she was awarded a certificate of recognition by His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta and the first lady of the republic of Kenya, Margaret Kenyatta, during the 2018 pupil reward scheme (Pures) at State House in Nairobi.

Nyanut has recurrently demonstrated strong academic performance despite the stiff competition at Alliance Girls. Comparably, the fact that Nyanut is attending the same class as the 2<sup>nd</sup> best Kenyan candidate in the 2017 KCPE exams, confirms how exceptional she is after defeating her on more than one occasion. For Nyanut, all that matters is the opportunity presented to her by WIK and how she is capitalizing on the same. Subsequently, she was also recognized by the AGHS Principal, Mrs. Virginia Gitonga, after she was position  $\frac{4}{61}$  with an A (plain) and overall position  $\frac{21}{487}$ . According to her, getting the Principal's Award was equally fulfilling considering that her rank at entry (by KCPE score) is 173 out of 487.

As a matter of fact, the scholarship factor made Nyanut not only join her dream school but also enjoy the school culture that moulded notable alumni like novelist Dr. Margaret Ogola, Governor Charity Ngilu and former first lady of Kenya, the late Lucy Kibaki. Conclusively, it is human nature to doubt anything but by and large, I cannot doubt the fact that Nyanut Maluach Kuot, being a brilliant, affable, assertive, responsible and eloquent girl from Kakuma Refugee Camp, shall graduate from Alliance Girls as a holistically successful lady. We wish Nyanut a fruitful walk in the light in pursuit of her dreams with the vital support from WIK and UNHCR.



*Nyanut Maluach Kuot (right) with Ms. Lilian Nkonge at Alliance Girls on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2019. Ms. Nkonge coordinates scholarship students at AGHS and appreciated WIK's supportive gesture of enabling girls realize their dreams. Nyanut is currently a form two student at AGHS and a key volleyball player for the school team.*