

Hi friends this is the real life experience in Kabondo story made by Paul Opiyo, am sorry that it has delayed to reach you but it was because, the week has been very busy since you left and also there has been a problem with power throughout the week. I therefore beg to apologize for the same. Otherwise I hope you are doing well that side. Please copy to all **friends of Kabondo**.

Real life at the villages of Kabondo. By Paul.

When the cock crows everyday at dawn at 5.00am in the morning, people get up to start their day today routines. Some prepare for work at different places mostly in schools for teachers.

A bout 80% of those live around the villages are farmers and 20% is shared among those who are teachers and others.

In the village the old, the middle age, the youths, school leavers, school drop outs, the married, the unmarried, men, women, ladies and young men wakeup as early as 5.00am to 6.00am. before even washing their faces they think first of their jembes and pangas, bulls and ploughs. All the heads are directed to farms. Some goes to work for pay as casuals and for others they go attend to their own farm as source of their livelihood.

There are two season in a year when people work a lot on the farms. The first season begins from March and it is the longest season with a lot of rains. People began to prepare their farms as early as January or February waiting for the planting times that begins in March to April. After and weeding, the crops take three months and they are harvested majorly during august July and august.

The work continues after the first harvesting people prepare their farms for the last and the shorter season beginning from august to December with little rains. Short seasoned crops are planted.

The period between April and may involve a lot of work in the farms since it the pick times of planting and weeding. In Kabondo the most crop people depend on is maize and beans since they can be grown in the two seasons in a year. They take a short duration to mature hence making them the only dependable food crops. Other crops that take longer time mature are also planted such as sweet potato, cassava, bananas etc.

During this time of the year people are mostly engaged in farms, working long hours daily in order to care for their families. The weight of the work depends with a number of acres someone has for example some can farm up to five or ten acres, others have as little as one or two acres.

Those with large acres normally higher other people for a pay in order to farm their lands. Those without bulls' also higher to help plough their farms.

For Paul it is not different, I live in one remote village of kakangutu east in Wang'chieng location in Kabondo in a two acre piece of family land where I carryout my routine operations. In our family I have two bulls which I use to prepare the land before planting. Other can also higher them for a small pay a day.

Waking up early at the crack of dawn is not a question of who am I. it is normal to be early at such time to farm in order to catch up with scorching sun in the morning. The first thing I do in the morning is to

wash my face and without thinking of what to put in the stomach, I check where my jembes is .during the land preparation period I take my two bulls to farm.

When in the farm I work for as long as three to five hours then go back home for other activities. However it is normal for most of the people to work in the farm before taking anything since they got little time to prepare because we are competing with the sun.

At a round 10.00am or 11.00am I live farm for home when with the bulls or by hands. At home then, the preparation of breakfast which commonly is Uji or porridge. This is made out of flour and water others also take tea so it depends on what you can manage and for me mostly it is Uji.

It can be taken with sweet potato or free without anything, then I go to look after my bulls perhaps feed them and water them before taking my lunch. To Paul lunch is not always a must it depends on how my breakfast was heavy or light, I can as well go without it. The live in this village is not very easy but it depends on how you are adapted to it.

After all is done I take my bath at home and then relax a little before taking cattle again for grazing. In the evenings make sure that there is something home to for supper and everybody moves up and down trying to sort out for supper. A day sometimes become very till you feel exhausted such after supper I go to bed around 8.00am or 9.00am waiting for another cock crows in the following day and the routine repeats itself daily.

Personal real life experiences.

I attended Anyona primary between 1995 and 2002 then join Othoro secondary between 2003 and 2006. after completing my high school I went to manage our family farm at home. I stayed home for one year trying to gather money in order to manage college fees but the little I got was consumed in the at home.

In the year 2008 I decided to travel to Mombasa to search for a green pasture. This was where I gained a lot of experience. It was then I joined the Mombasa port casuals' welfare and association in October 2008 and in 2009 January I became the secretary of the organization. The organization mainly advocated for the welfare of the casual workers within Mombasa port and also negotiates the wage paid per day in different department in the port.

All those who were not employed and doing any casual jobs within the port were allowed to join the movement and each member was to contribute sh 50 a month. The total membership when I joined was 150 and the membership increased rapidly to 1500 by the end of 2009. the following year in 2010 I faced a very tough competition in the general election and a lot of tribal criticism from those who were competing for the post of the secretary general.

Fortunately I was re-elected the secretary of the organization. A lot of things happened and many people joined this association. The growing membership brought about some changes in the running of the organization and new structures were put in places for effective running of the organization.

The members were regrouped into three main sections namely:

Construction -----780 members registered

Shippers and freighters-----720 members registered.

Mechanics-----300 members registered

Cleaners-----430 members registered

Each section has its head that are all answerable to the executive committee chaired by the chairman of the association.

Achievements:

By the end of my tenure in the office, there was a pay rise of all the casuals in each section.

Membership increased immensely from 150 to 2230.

There was improved working condition for all the casuals working within the port and registered with the association.

No machine was introduced to for such work that employed hundred of casuals.

Tools for change:

I led a delegation to the port authority and tabled our grievances demanding a 50%pay rise and a fair working condition of the casuals within the port.

Abolishing of machines being imposed by the port authority to reduce the number of casuals in the port. We gave out a strike notice for fourteen days for the port authority to address our grievances. This did not work and on 10th April 2010 we organized a peaceful demonstration and all the casuals boycotted the work.

There was no any activity carried out within the port for 4days until they agreed to solve our problems tabled to them. They incurred some losses majorly on the shippers and freighters hence the ship owners called for quick negotiation so that we return to work.

Challenges:

Tribal and ethnicity.

Political upheaval and a lot of life threats.

However we worked well till November 2010 when I decided to resign from the office on the ground of personal and religious principles.

In January 2011 I joined a faith based organization based in mtongwe majorly dealing with girl child support and fighting against gender based violence where I served as the vice secretary till 2012 January when I returned back home in Kabondo .at Kabondo I was faced with a traumatizing life experience when I found my sister got of school due to pregnancy.

When at karanda girl child support organization we carried out a lot of research on factors leading to the high rate of girls dropping out of school and how they are influenced to get into drugs and early pregnancy. It was then that I began to write a proposal on the girl child support. However I have not presented that proposal to any organization to date.

When at home I got involved in the community work and on June we team up together to form Karopa integrated cbo of which we registered on 11/7/2012 of which I registered and served as a member till January 2013 when I was elected as the secretary of the cbo where I serve to date. Most of my life has been revolving around Secretary and also involve absorbing a lot of leadership pressure. It has become part and parcel of my life and hence my lifestyle. It has been a very busy lifestyle I suppose.

Renish translations of daily life:

I usually woke up at 5.00am to prepare for school. The first thing I do is take a cold bath, put on my uniforms, take my bag and walk to school. We are needed to arrive at school as early as 6.00am, since my school is one and half kilometer from home, am needed to begin walking early.

At school we for morning studies till 7.30am then we do our daily manual work at school and at 8.00am we get back to class for our normal classes. We usually have ten lessons per day from 8.30am to 5.00pm. however there is a short between 10.30am to 11.00am and another lunch break at 1.00pm before games time and home at 5.00pm.

We come back home at 6.30pm daily, I carry out some house chores since there is no dinner I wait for supper as I study in my mothers house. After supper I study until 10.00pm and then I go to sleep. The routine repeats itself everyday. Every weekend on Saturday I wake in the morning, go to farm, come back, do my washings, get breakfast and prepare to go to school in the afternoon.

On Sundays in the morning I prepare what to take and probably Uji, get a bath and go to church for prayers. After church I get ready for school in afternoon and the routine repeats itself.

Mama Anna's translations of daily life in kabondo.

Every morning from Monday to Friday, when I woke up I go to the farm, I work in the farm till 10.00am or 11.00am. from the farm I begin my house core. I begin with preparing breakfast for the family and probably Uji, after taking Uji; I begin washing the utensils, go to draw water from the nearby well since my well is not completed, I bring enough water for the days use and then do some little laundry.

At around 12.00Noon I begin to prepare for lunch and sometimes when the breakfast was heavy there is no need for the making lunch. After lunch hour, I look for what to prepare during supper. I go to farm to look for local vegetables that grow in the fields mix them and make them ready for supper.

After all is done I took a bath and then relax to wait for the supper preparation and after supper I sleep at 9.00pm and the routine repeats itself everyday.

With regards

Paul opiyo