

Ken's Story...

To give you a glimpse into the life of one of our volunteers, read what Ken Doyle has to say about his experience of teaching basic English to refugees:

"We don't talk to them very much about where they came from. Some of their backgrounds are very tragic. Some are still receiving counseling. Stories do slip out from time to time – 'no school there; only gun fire.' They come from refugee camps with little more than the clothes to cover them. I sometimes complain about the annoyances of my daily living. Imagine being immersed in a totally different culture without the tool of language, and challenged to cope. We give them a start with new words and some basic understanding. But more, we give them a small community in which they can experience some safety. They begin to bond with each other. They smile, and some may not have done that for a long time.

I didn't write the following. I think it came from the UN Refugee Agency: 'I hope they won't kill me. I hope nobody's following me. I hope I don't step on a landmine. I hope I find some water soon. I hope I don't die out here. I hope someone will find me. I hope the United Nations can help me. I hope they've got food and shelter. I hope they can help me find my family. I hope we'll be able to go back one day. I hope we find a place to call home. I hope we learn to fit in. I hope we can build a future here. I hope we never, ever, have to run again.'