



Visiting FORGE in Zambia

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At the conclusion of our recent trip to Mozambique and Zambia, I traveled with fellow field organizer Kim Smith to northern Zambia to Meheba Refugee Camp with FORGE, an organization that works hand-in-hand with refugees.

Meheba Refugee Camp has been in existence for over 30 years. It is about 700 square kilometers and has about 14,000 refugees, mostly from Angola, Congo, and Rwanda. Sadly there is no running water, no electricity, and no doctors.

A youth orientated organization, FORGE partners with refugees on a host of projects such as micro-finance, nursery schools, a women's

center, and has helped to build the world's largest library in a refugee camp.

We stopped in at the FORGE Health Service center that was set up to aid in basic health care. Mr. Burton, the refugee that works there, told us how he helps to facilitate health care for people that are suffering from burns, insect bites, malnutrition and dehydration, and malaria.

We also stopped in at Kunachi Nursery School for refugee children that FORGE set up and operates. All the children were very eager to try out their English with us and sang a few songs.

Sadly, I noticed that during lunch, many of the children had nothing to eat, as food security is a major issue in Meheba that is now being compounded by the global food crisis.



Many of the refugees in Meheba have fled their home countries due to wars and violence, and have seen horrific tragedies in their lives. Yet through it all, they are overcoming hardships and poverty and with the help and resources from FORGE, combined with more attention and better policies from the outside world, we can help to create a better partnership between our country and some of the most neglected and marginalized people on Earth.