

GREAT LAKES UNIVERSITY OF KISUMU

FACULTY: TICH
COURSE: COMMUNITY NUTRITION



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ADM: BCN/14-M/05

ASSIGN. : AN ESSAY ON WHY I AM DOING NUTRITION,
EXPERIENCE AND ASPIRATION

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I am Dorcas Atiir Koki, born and raised up in Lodwar, Turkana County. I completed my 'O' level Primary education at Loyo Primary School and later graduated from Turkana Girls' High school.

The passion for nutrition developed after my form four. This happened when I was doing voluntary work at a certain dispensary which was owned by Share International Ministries. It deals with many departments; one of them deals with sponsorships of the less fortunate children like the orphans and those whose parents cannot afford to take them to school. I was among the beneficiaries and we have been given a name "Children of the Kingdom" (C.O.K). It was our duty as COK students to help the ministry during holidays, the departments are more than 20 and the work was so much. We were divided according to the departments and I was taken to department of health because I wanted to do nursing, and not because I had passion for it but nursing was the best according

to our people. All of my classmates were singing about nursing and so I could not remain behind and think of nutrition though I had felt something for it. Many people despised nutrition in my community as they thought that nutrition was all about cooking and they believed that it was done by failures. This was very discouraging because everyone was talking against nutrition. Most of the people could run for other courses like community health and nursing and because I had no one to guide me on career choice I decided to follow the majority.

When I started the voluntary work at Kanawoi dispensary (Share International Ministries) I observed so many things. Apart from curatives they have a nutrition program. They distribute ready- to- use food and corn-soya blend. The ready- to- use foods (RUTF) is given to children and corn-soya blend (CSB) is given to pregnant and lactating mothers. The people who were doing the distribution were not qualified; one was a driver and the other one was just a lady from the community. Even mid-upper-arm circumference was taken in an incorrect way. The mothers were given the rations without even being counseled. The screening was poor and so many children died not because they were sick but because no one could tell the mothers of the importance of a balanced diet and that RUTF cannot help the child without the food. The distributors were not talking to the mothers; they just took the measurements, and if they had reached the target they were discharged and if not they remained in the program forever. When I saw this and the way children were passing on because of lack of knowledge on nutrition, it made me fall for nutrition even more. I realized that nutrition was what I needed to do to help this people because not even nursing can help.

When this force became stronger, I told my family and others that I had changed my mind and was doing nutrition. They did not accept, even my donor did not approve, but I insisted. I told them it is the best choice and nothing can change my decision. They later supported me just because I was firm with my decision.

While under taking my diploma at Thika School of Medical and Health Sciences, I was able to help the mothers and the children by giving health talks and also nutrition counseling. I managed to join the outreach activities.

After my diploma, I was able to enroll at Great Lakes University of Kisumu (GLUK) for a bachelor's degree. I was admitted in third year and now am in second semester. GLUK is the best school for nutrition because they are concerned with the community and it has given me the strength not to remain where I am but to go to greater heights. I wish to do a Masters after my bachelor's degree and also own a consultation clinic in the future, where people from all over will be coming for consultation. Kenyans are passing on each day due to nutritional problems.