

YOUNG **HUMAN RIGHTS** **REPORTER** **OF THE YEAR**

Refugee's Rights

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Young Human Rights Reporter Runner Up 2013 (Upper Primary Category)

"I've walked for so long...I'm leaving my children...my life's so hard." That's how Cassie felt after she was forced to leave Zimbabwe because of the country's leader. Cassie is a lady who migrated to England. She started her journey in the back of a lorry that would only fit two of her children, so sadly, she had to choose to take the younger two and leave the older two behind, consumed with fear, not knowing if she would ever see them again.

What mother could look at her four children and choose two of them to live? Can you imagine being forced to make such a choice? Strength shows not only in the ability to persist but in the ability to start over again.

Now Cassie has a new fight on her hands. A fight against people's attitude, prejudice and their indifference. There is another story about a boy called Faraz. He comes from Iraq where there was war. He was only eight years old when he travelled for days in a petrol tanker, trying to escape to safety. The whole way, he was being suffocated by the fumes of the oil and he could have died. He is the boy who sits in the corner at school now with no one to play with and no one to talk to.

Can you imagine how you would feel? Witnessing bombing and shooting, moving as a refugee yet still not finding a happy life. What can you do about it if someone new comes into your classroom and they are in their own world? I know what it's like because I have moved many times.

When I came to Sudan and joined a new school, I didn't know anyone. I spent four years there and my mum wasn't there for two of them. When I moved to the UK, I also didn't know anything because the education was very different and the people were different. It is very hard to move from place to place and it takes great strength.

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I ask you for one thing. There are 85,000 refugees here and every single one of them has a story to tell. Make sure you are listening. As Ban Ki Moon said, “Refugees leave because they have no choice. We must choose to help.”