

# African studies ( role-playing )

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Role-Playing Assignment, Africa: Amina's story. My is Asad. I am thirty five years old and I am the father of three children. I live in a place called the Dadaab camp, which is located in Kenya. I come from the neighbouring country of Somalia, which has suffered serious famine recent months (Raghavan, Washington Post, September 7, 2011) Mogadishu is the capital of Somalia and we used to live a few miles from there. Our village near the Shabele river has been our family home for many generations. Last year the weather was much too dry for many months and the whole village was struggling to keep our crops and animals alive. We used to sell our produce in the market and it was a good life. Eventually we ran out of food in our village and I decided that the chance to provide adequate nourishment for the little ones was to leave Somalia. I trekked all the way across the border with my wife, my elderly father and my children.

We live in a white tent which is situated in long neat row of similar tents. In the cold season we cover it with colored cloth to add insulation. The Kenyan government has provided fresh water for us, and I go to the food distribution center every morning where we receive rations for the day. The camp is well organized, and operates like a small town, with its own leaders as well as our traditional elders. (Horst, 2006, p. 79) It is hard sometimes to keep the children amused, because there is very little to do. At least my I have some work to do, because I am part of a project to gather firewood for the refugees in the camp. (Loescher and Milner, 2005, p. 164) The pay is very low, but it helps. I am trying to save some money but it is very difficult because we need it when one of the children gets sick. Last month we heard that there was some trouble back in Somalia when violence broke out over food rations, and some soldiers killed and injured refugees when things got

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out of hand. (The Guardian Newspaper, August 5, 2011). This makes us too scared to go home, but we still have hope and pray to Allah that one day we will return to our homeland.

#### References

Horst, C. (2006) Transnational Nomads: How Somalis Cope with Refugee Life in the Dadaab Camps of Kenya. (Studies in Forced Migration). New York: Berghahn Books.

Loescher, G. and Milner, J. (2005) The long road home: protracted refugee situations in Africa *Survival* 47 (2), 153-174.

Raghavan, Sudarsan. (September 7, 2011) Somalia's biggest famine in decades claiming the smallest victims first. *Washington Post*, Available online at: [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/inside-a-mogadishu-hospital-a-struggle-to-treat-the-smallest-victims-of-famine/2011/09/06/gIQAgnn8J\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/inside-a-mogadishu-hospital-a-struggle-to-treat-the-smallest-victims-of-famine/2011/09/06/gIQAgnn8J_story.html)

The Guardian Newspaper (August 10, 2011) Somalia famine refugees killed in looting at Mogadishu aid camp. Available online at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/2011/aug/05/somalia-famine-refugees-killed-looting>

#### Notes for presentation:

Mention that your religion is Islam, and that it is very important for you to be the provider for your family and to protect them from harm. Print out the pictures from the following website on the Dadaab camp and talk about them.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/infocus/2011/04/the-worlds-largest-refugee-camp-turns-20/100046/>

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