



FOCUS ON KENYA

Teresia Ndoti is a 25 years old young professional from Kenya. She is working for the International Transformation Foundation (ITF), a NGO founded in Nairobi in 2009 by local youth. Teresia was visiting Leszno, Poland for 3 weeks in the framework of the job shadowing project to deepen the ties of her organization with its Polish partner one, Fundacja CAT.

“Job Shadowing is where an individual gets to work alongside another individual so as to learn and gain experience in that particular work area and this is why I am in Poland. I came to exchange good practices and ideas with Fundacja CAT in the area of youth development.”- Teresia says.

The aim of ITF is providing youth educational and self-development programs encompassing leadership and entrepreneurship to harness creativity for youth system that provide jobs, offering security, opportunities to grow, and contribute to the development of the communities.



The collaboration between the Fundacja CAT and International Transformation Foundation dates back to the 1 st December 2018 when both sides have implemented the project “SET YP- Social Entrepreneurship Training 4 Youth Power”. The project was about creating awareness on Social Entrepreneurship and innovation and also it was seeking to empower the youth by helping them develop structured and innovative solutions towards increasing employability potential for young people. The project had 9 partners from 4 continents.

According to her in Kenya there is a democratic government that is headed by the president and vice president and one of things they enjoy as Kenyans compared to their neighbours is ‘the freedom of speech’.

“Kenya is generally a peaceful country but most of the times it experiences political tensions when the election period is near and it is also the time that tribalism is highest in the country”-She added.

Question about Kenyan culture and traditions, she answered:

“In Kenya we have about 43 ethnical tribes and they all have their own traditions basically. Most of them have traditions about wedding ceremonies, circumcision, funerals and greetings. For example, in the tribe of Masaai, the women do not greet the older men by shaking their hands, rather they bow their head and the older man puts his hand on her head. On the weekend, it is common to find the

people having ‘nyama choma’ over drinks and socializing. Kenyans love to party and dance and the nightlife is always vibrant”.

Teresia has experienced some cultural shocks while visiting Europe.

“Europe in general has the same design of buildings and too many corners. I remember my first time, I got lost because what I thought was my landmark in knowing my way back to the house was not at all. The buildings look almost the same. Also, how people love cold drinks and chew on the ice even if it is winter. If it is the cold season in my country, it is hard to find people drinking cold drinks.”-She says.

Currently in Kenya the “hot topic” is “Building Bridges Initiative”(BBI).

“It is what has been on everyone’s mouth for a while now and it started on 9th March, 2018. It was developed after two major political competitors (current president; former prime minister) decided to shake hands and unite the country. The BBI is meant to reconcile and unite the country. So now people are discussing about the content in it, in terms of what they like and don’t like and what they generally think about it. Also, while I was in Poland, Kenya lost a prominent person (former President of the country). He served as the 2 nd Kenyan President for 24 years. The citizens were given an opportunity for 3 days to go view the body and pay their last respect, also today Tuesday 12 th February was declared a public Holiday so that Kenyans can have the opportunity to attend the Requiem Mass that was held at the stadium. So I came and found the flags of country were half masked and discussion and news were all about him”- Teresia says.



When it comes to taboos Teresia says that homosexuality is a topic that is yet to come out and be spoken about freely. People know it is there and it exists but they try and avoid talking about it or they just generally ignore the topic. There were few activists who wanted to be recognized in the LGBT community but nothing much happened.

About racism Teresia thinks that In Kenya it is not an issue rather what we have is tribalism.

“Like I mentioned earlier, we have many tribes in Kenya and this brings favourism to fellow tribesmen. However, recently there a lot of intermarriages between the different tribes which has helped to curb this and reduce it.”- She explains.

Unlike Europe, North America and other parts of the world, Kenya does not have the four seasons that is Winter, Summer, Fall & Spring. Kenya’s weather is hard to be categorized into ones because of the different landscapes it has but it is generally described into short and long rains and hot and dry depending on the part of the country.