

## PPL PARTICIPANT STORY: The Need for Immigration Reform

I immigrated to the United States three years ago. I had been living in a refugee camp in Kenya with my Husband and four children. We lived in this camp for fourteen years waiting for the United Nations to sponsor my family. When that never happened my mother, who was already living in the United States, sponsored me so that I could come and live with her. I had to leave my husband and children behind since my mother could only sponsor one person. The main reason I wanted so badly to come to the United States was because life in the refugee camp was horrible. While I lived there with my family the Kenyan soldiers attempted to rape me multiple times, neither my husband or myself were able to work which meant that we had very little food- just enough to survive.

Now that I'm in the United States I worry all the time about my husband and children in the refugee camp, especially about my one month old child that I had to leave behind. I'm working hard so that I can send money to them so there lives will be better, but what I really want is reunification. It has been hard to start the reunification process because before I came to the United States I didn't tell my interviewers at the U.S. Embassy that I had a husband and children. If I had told the interviewers that I had a family they would not have let me immigrate to the United States. Now I'm being told that it's impossible for me to reunify with my husband and children in the United States because I never disclosed that I had a family. I'm still trying to reunify with my family, but there is little hope that they'll be able to join me in the United States. I know I'm not the only immigrant in this situation.

It is because of U.S. policy that I cannot bring my husband and children over to this country. My life has been filled with civil war, the hardships of fourteen years in a refugee camp, and now that I have finally found a safe place for myself I cannot even share this joy with my family.

**For this PPL participant what she needs is her family. Without immigration reform not only will this woman's separation from her family continue, but more immigrants like her will suffer the same fate.**