

Weekly Log Questions:

What went well?

(The progress I made; what was achieved and done)

This week, in addition to our regular operations, we visited the Kisumu Rehabilitation School (operated by the Department of Child Services) twice. The first time we visited was on Thursday for a meeting in which we followed up on some conversations Thomas had (who was still away and not present at the meeting), settling on the fact that Better Me would begin to visit this centre at least once a week to deliver life skill sessions. The life skill sessions are in very high demand, many schools in the area also want Better Me to begin visiting them. This centre houses mostly boys who have received their sentencing and will be kept here for up to three years; some of the boys here have come directly from the Remand Home, so we recognize them and will not have the opportunity to work with them on a predictable, long-term basis. In addition to the boys who make up a vast majority of the centre's occupants, there is a separate building for girls, currently there are four. Unlike the boys, these girls have not been sentenced for any crimes, instead they are here for protective services, they have suffered physical or sexual abuse, or are in witness protection. On Monday (following our Thursday meeting) we returned to the centre and facilitated our first session there. The sessions here will be segregated between the boys and the girls, focusing on different priorities; on Thursday we worked with the girls.

What could have been done differently?

(Things that did not get done and/or could be changed)

Overall this week was slower than previous ones, school is ending so we did not go to St. Williams this week. On Monday, Korando had its final day of classes; many students have now gone home for summer break, however about forty remain here. On Tuesday we were invited to a school that Better Me has worked with in the past (to provide German lessons) to watch their end of year celebrations. I was surprised how similar they are to the final days of school here in Canada, whilst being quite different. Ideally, I could have capitalized on this relatively slower week (in terms of official operations) to catch up on reports and finalize the MOU. However, there has been a large influx of volunteers over the past week or so, with Yana, Yara, Pius, Dorothea, and Julia all arriving. As a result of this expanded volunteer base, most of my freetime was spent getting to know the new volunteers, socializing.

One other thing that could have gone better this week was the life skills session I taught at the Remand Home on Wednesday. Emboldened by the fantastic success that was last week's lesson, I thought I would try to teach the older students something a little more complex. Given what is currently happening in Kenya (political unrest) and my studies at UofT, I thought it would be topical to teach the youth about politics. Given that this may be a sensitive or controversial lesson, I ran the idea past the Better Me staff first who said it was a good idea. I designed a

lesson that sought to do three things 1) inform the youth why they should care about politics and 2) teach them how we think about politics on a basic level, i.e., left V right; democracy V authoritarianism; the political compass and 3) be neutral in my teaching as to not persuade anyone that any ideas or beliefs are better or worse than others. This lesson did not go as well as I had hoped. I think the subject matter was slightly too complex, that language was a barrier, even with translation assistance, and the lesson was not captivating enough for the students. The latter issue may be influenced by the fact that they seemed to have an assembly or centre-wide meeting before the lesson started so they were probably sick of being talked at. I think the complexity of the lesson and the fact that it was not engaging enough is a personal failing on my end – I suppose being so versed on the topic makes it harder to conceptualize the learning curve for people being introduced to it for the first time. I believe with a slower and more broken down lesson the students would grasp the concepts better. This better lecture should also be paired with more engaging instruction.

What did I learn about myself when working with others?

(Contributions, behaviours, and [values](#) I exhibited)

This week I believe I exhibited the Laidlaw values of *good/integrity* and *ambition*. Good in regards to collaborating with the new arrivals, making their acquaintance, and informing them of different functions and responsibilities (teaching and delegating). Ambition through my attempt at doing more complex work at the Remand Home – teaching a politics class, as well as having the older students do a minor English examination on Friday.

What did I learn about leadership?

(Leadership [attributes](#) and insights I developed)

This week I learned the value of *social and cultural intelligence and awareness* (Laidlaw attribute) as I *navigated the new and foreign situation* of having the influx of volunteers (from Belgium and Austria) and *used social and cultural intelligence and awareness to build relationships*. Though working in an international workplace, I learned that people are always more similar than we are different, making collaboration and bonding a common and easily achievable desire.

What do I want to develop or focus on next?

(What I still need to develop)

This week I think my leadership style took a nonchalant approach, particularly when teaching the new volunteers. In the coming weeks I want to go the extra mile to assist them however possible so the whole team can reach new heights.