

THE WHOLE WORLD IN SCHOOL 2021

THE
**READING
ROCKET**



VISITING FRIENDS AROUND THE WORLD

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JUMP ON THE READING ROCKET INTO THE WORLD



COLOMBIA



JENNIFER

In Colombia, we meet Jennifer. She belongs to the Wayuu people, and her family lives close to a big coal mine.





MUNA

In Jordan, we visit Muna. She lives in a big camp for Syrian refugees. She wants a good education so that she can achieve her dream.



DJUMANSI OG ARDJOUMA

In Burkina Faso, we visit Djumansi and Ardjouma. They help working the family's fields every day.



RHODA

In South Sudan, Rhoda plays basketball with her friends and dreams of a bright future for the world's youngest country.



JOSHUA

In Uganda, Joshua lives with his grandmother so that he can go to school. But the school has closed down because of COVID-19.



RHODA

We first met Rhoda in the Reading Rocket 2017 about South Sudan. Rhoda was nine years old. She and her family had fled the civil war in the country.

RHODA HOPES FOR PEACE

 LINE GØRUP TROLLE  HEGILY HAKIM GEORGE & DOMINIC KANGO

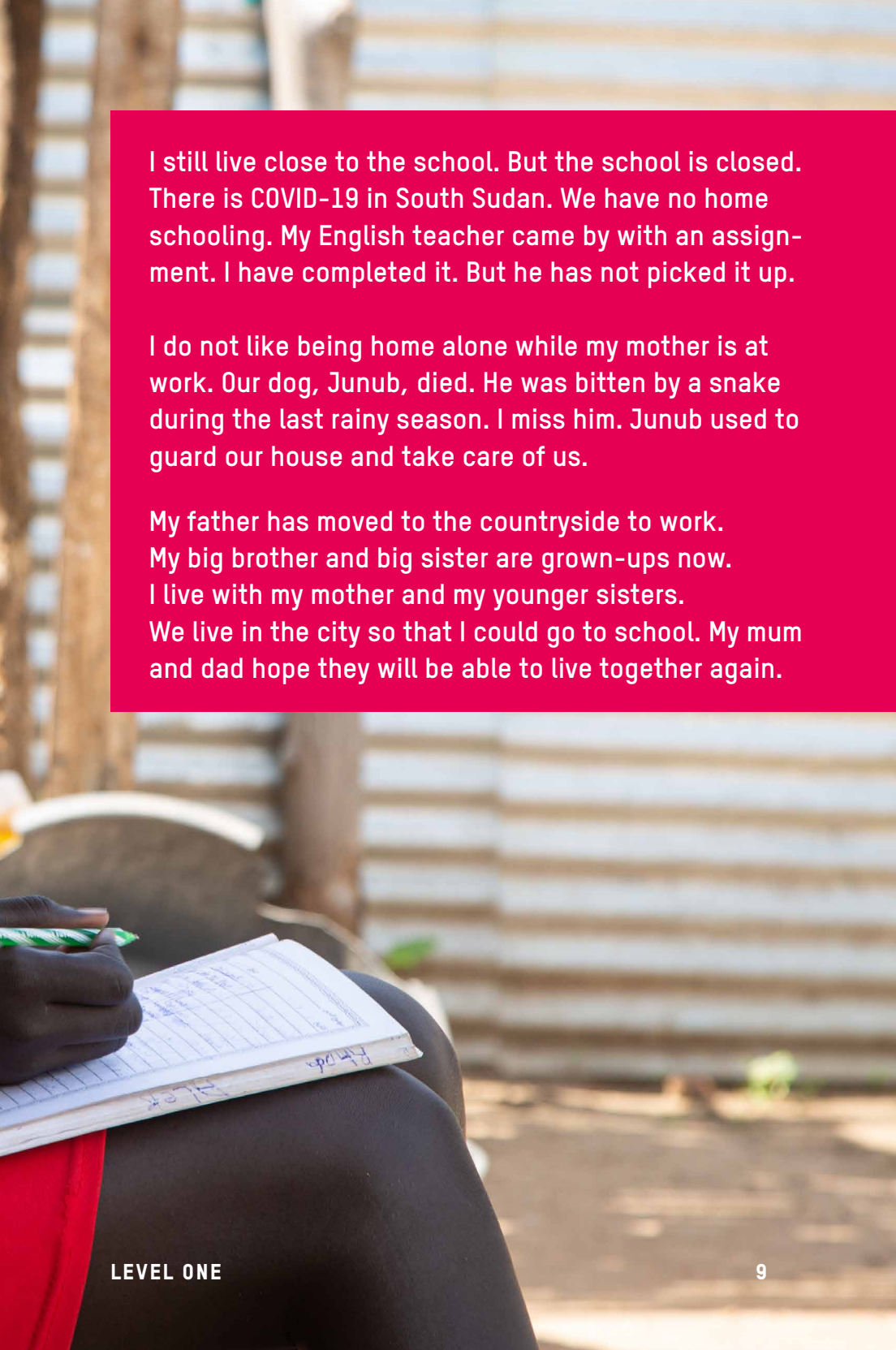
I have not always lived here. But it feels that way. My name is Rhoda. I am 13 years old and I am in 4th grade.

When I was six, we had to flee from our village of Wernyiol. We were on the run for a long time. That is why I joined a school with classes for children who have been out of school.

When my family first came to Lologo, we lived with my uncle. He has moved now. We are renting another house, close to the old one behind the red gate.





A person with dark skin is sitting outdoors, holding a green and white striped pen and writing in a notebook. The notebook is open, showing a grid-like page. The person is wearing a red garment. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a wooden structure and a corrugated metal wall.

I still live close to the school. But the school is closed. There is COVID-19 in South Sudan. We have no home schooling. My English teacher came by with an assignment. I have completed it. But he has not picked it up.

I do not like being home alone while my mother is at work. Our dog, Junub, died. He was bitten by a snake during the last rainy season. I miss him. Junub used to guard our house and take care of us.

My father has moved to the countryside to work. My big brother and big sister are grown-ups now. I live with my mother and my younger sisters. We live in the city so that I could go to school. My mum and dad hope they will be able to live together again.



I help my mum with washing clothes and dishes. She had a job at the school, as a guard. While the school is closed, she works at the market. It is hard to make enough money there.

I hope we can afford to go back to school when it reopens. The school is free. But we have to pay a fee to the school for chalk and books. We also have to buy booklets, pencils and a uniform.



I have a new dream. When I was younger, I wanted to work in an office. But now I want to become a doctor. Then I can help others. I myself have problems with my eyes. It is hard to see clearly – especially in books and on the blackboard.

I miss my teacher and my friends from school.
My friend who is also named Rhoda has moved.
I have got a new best friend. Her name is Anyieth.
We are neighbours and often eat together. We play
together almost every day.

We play kebe and jump rope. But we like basketball
best. We play with Achui, DengKon and Nyap. They also
help me at school when I cannot see what the teacher
is writing on the blackboard.



We make sure to wash our hands often. Then we can
play. We also play tungali. You have to throw and grab
small and large stones. It is quite difficult, but we have
been practising for a long time.





My neighbour has a television. She lets us watch movies from India. In those movies, there are clean roads, tall houses and all the children go to school. This is how I hope South Sudan will be one day.

I remember only a few things from when we fled. People ran, and my mother carried me very far. But I do not like to talk about war. I want peace in South Sudan. For me, peace means going to school every day. And being able to walk around where I want without being afraid.

When I first came here, I wanted to return to my old village when peace came. It is not like that anymore. I know only my grandmother in Werniyol. Now my home is here in Lologo.

Once the pandemic is gone, we will travel with my uncle to Werniyol and visit my grandmother. I am looking forward to that.

SOUTH SUDAN TODAY: There have been conflicts since the civil war in 2013. In many places, children and young people cannot walk safely on the streets alone. There is a lot of crime and violence. In 2020, a new peace agreement was signed. In August, the country got a new government. That gives hope for the future.



Find video and photos at the website. Visit Rhoda's home, learn about South Sudan and learn how to play tungali.

HELEVERDENISKOLE.DK/RHODA-2021



JOSHUA

We first met Joshua in the Reading Rocket 2020 about Uganda. He was nine years old. He lived with his grandmother, and he dreamed about getting a radio.



JOSHUA RECEIVES A PACKAGE

 LINE GØRUP TROLLE  EMMANUEL MUSERUKA

Joshua swings the pickaxe to the ground. It is the rainy season, so the ground is soft. Joshua is in the field every day. So are his little sister Sande and little brother Shadrack. Shadrack also lives with their grandmother now.



Joshua hears his grandmother calling. They all must hurry home. What has happened?



There is a man at their house. He has a large box in his arms. The box is for Joshua. It is full of letters and drawings from Denmark.

There is also a book. It is the Reading Rocket about Uganda. Joshua reads with Shadrack, Sande and his friend Joffrey. They laugh when they see themselves in the pictures.



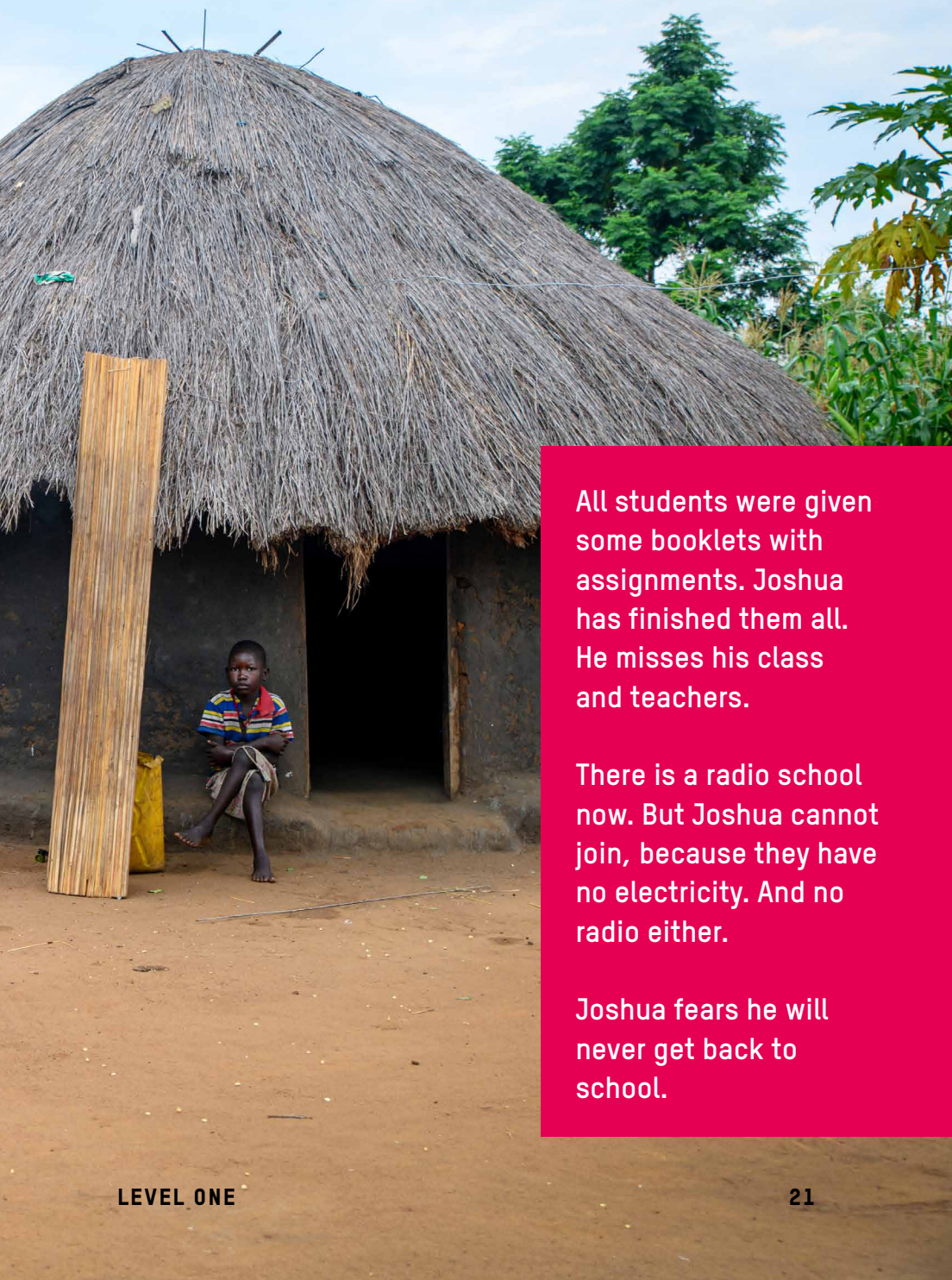
Joshua lies on his back.
He wants to read the
letters himself.

The Danish children write
some sweet things, he
thinks. It is almost like
they are visiting him here
in Uganda.

Joshua is happy that
he can read the letters.
Tonight, he will write a
letter to the children in
Denmark.

Now Joshua has to get up. He must collect firewood. Then his grandmother can cook over the fire. Joshua is ten years old and he is in 4th grade. Joshua and his siblings live with their grandmother so that they can go to school. But there is COVID-19 in Uganda. The school has closed down.





All students were given some booklets with assignments. Joshua has finished them all. He misses his class and teachers.

There is a radio school now. But Joshua cannot join, because they have no electricity. And no radio either.

Joshua fears he will never get back to school.



Joshua often thinks about his mother. He misses her every day. They have not visited each other for a very long time, because the bus ticket is too expensive.

After Joshua has eaten, he will find Joffrey and Oscar. His friends make him happy. They have made a new friend, Akera. They are all neighbours. They are allowed to play together. As long as they wash their hands often.

Akera has taught them a new game called lawic. You draw a target on the ground and throw bottle tops into it.

Joshua dreams of becoming a pilot. He will fly around the world and visit the people he misses. But for now, Joshua is just hoping he can get back to school soon.



Find video and photos at the website. Learn how to play lawic, join Joshua in the field and read his letter for the Danish students.



HELEVERDENISKOLE.DK/JOSHUA-2021





JENNIFER

We first met Jennifer in the Reading Rocket 2019 about Colombia. Jennifer was 10 years old. She and her family lived close to a very big mine.

JENNIFER IS WAYUU

 LINE GØRUP TROLLE  GENESIS GUTIERREZ

Jennifer has always lived in Barrancas. So have her parents and grandparents. The Wayuu people have belonged here for many generations. Jennifer is 12 years old and has two younger sisters.

The school is closed

The small local school only goes up to 5th grade. This year, Jennifer started at a large school with many more students. She was excited on her first day of school in 6th grade. She took the bus with the older children into the town Papayal.

Jennifer is happy with the new school. The other kids are kind and it is fun to learn a lot of new things. But she was there for only two months. In March 2020, all schools in Colombia closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Some days, it is nice to be at home. Jennifer can choose when she wants to do schoolwork. Her mother picks up exercise books for her at the school. The teachers visit each student at home and collect their completed work. Jennifer's school teaches in both Spanish and Wayuunaiki, the language of the Wayuu people. Their assignments are also in Wayuunaiki. The work is not always easy as Jennifer cannot ask a teacher for help. She has no internet, cell phone or computer. Her mother helps as best she can. Sometimes they can borrow her uncle's cell phone.

In Colombia, the summer holidays are in December and January. Jennifer has not seen her new classmates for more than half a year.

Jennifer is afraid that she may not be allowed to start 7th grade, as she has not been in school for almost the entire 6th grade.

Chickens, goats and soccer

Jennifer misses her new friends. She is not allowed to go to the city. She must not play with her friends in Barrancas, either. Her mother is afraid that the family will be infected with COVID-19. So Jennifer is very happy that she has sisters – eight-year-old Zuleinis and five-year-old Lizette – and that her cousins live next door. They all play together every day.

Every morning, Jennifer feeds the family's chickens. Then she helps her mother to cook and do the dishes. In the afternoon, she goes to her grandparents. She takes their goats to the jagüey, a large pool of rainwater, where they can drink. When she comes back, her grandmother tells stories. Jennifer loves to sit in the shade and hear about Barrancas and the time when her grandmother was a child.

Jennifer is sitting in the shade doing schoolwork. In the morning, she feeds the chickens, which provide eggs for the family.





Jennifer helps her grandparents every day. It takes her five minutes to walk to their home.

In the evenings, Jennifer sometimes goes out to play soccer with her sisters and cousins. In the middle of the day, it is too hot, but after six o'clock they can play. It is a long way to the soccer field, so most days they play by the jagüey. It is a place where people meet. Here they can play or relax in the shade under a tree. The air is hot, and Jennifer likes the cooling breeze here.

The black dust is everywhere

In many other places in Colombia, people can use the rainwater for drinking and cooking. But the water by Jennifer's house is so polluted that they can use it only for the animals. Every week a truck from the mine comes. It fills the tank in front of Jennifer's house with clean drinking water. Barrancas is located close to a large mine where workers dig for coal. You can see the mine when you walk around the village. It is an open mine, which looks like a huge hole in the ground. Jennifer can also smell the mine. It smells burnt. Sometimes you can taste it in the food.



In front of each house in Barrancas is a tank for clean drinking water. The families use this when they are cooking.

The mine is getting bigger all the time. It is moving closer and closer to Jennifer's house. Many families and entire villages have already been forced to relocate. The mine was closed for two months due to the pandemic. But now the work continues as before. The dust from the mine makes the rain black – when it finally rains. It has been like this all of Jennifer's life. There is a black layer of dust on everything. On plants, rooftops and roads. Fruits and vegetables must be washed thoroughly before they can be eaten. The pollution is destroying the land that the Wayuu people have lived from for hundreds of years.

Jennifer hears the adults talking about how difficult it is for many in the city to cope during the pandemic. There was already a shortage of food and clean water. And now, with the lockdown, people cannot sell their animals or work for others. Everyone has to stay at home. Jennifer is concerned about the city and the environment. She thinks about how it will affect her and her sisters' future.

We are Wayuu

In Wayuu families, girls and women have a special role. They must carry on many traditions. Women teach their daughters to crochet and weave Wayuu patterns. Jennifer wove the hammock she sleeps in at night. It is called a chinchorro. The men and boys braid beautiful straw hats and make shoes. Everyone learns Wayuu dances.

But it is the women who make the traditional drink chicha. Jennifer's mother makes chicha from corn and goatmilk for the family every day. Chicha can be a little sharp in taste. But Jennifer's mother usually adds berries or fruit to sweeten it. Chicha is important to the Wayuu people. Guests are always offered chicha and it is impolite to say no. Jennifer misses having visitors. She used to cook all day with her mother, aunt, sisters and cousins. When they had guests, they would make rice with tender, juicy goat meat . And then they would drink nice, cold chicha together.

Jennifer's grandmother is teaching her to weave a special Wayuu pattern. She has also taught Jennifer how to crochet a backpack.





Jennifer's mother prepares the corn and goatmilk. It will be heated over the fire to make chichi.

El encierro – the confinement

This year, something special happened for Jennifer, which she is very proud of. She had her 'encierro', which means confinement. It is an old Wayuu tradition. When a girl has her first menstruation, she stays inside a hut for a short time. Here she must learn to become a young woman. Only her mother and grandmother can see her. The grandmother decides how long it should last. It can be a few days or up to a month. For Jennifer, it was a really good time. Following tradition, she crocheted. During that time, she also learned more about the Wayuu people and what it means to become an adult.

Jennifer is proud of being Wayuu. She wants to carry on the traditions. During the time she was alone under the 'encierro', she thought more about her dreams and became even more determined to achieve them. She wants to stop pollution from the mine, so that the Wayuu people can once again live off their lands and drink the water from the river. Jennifer also would like to become a doctor and help people in Barrancas. She hopes that the school will reopen very soon.

THE CERREJÓN MINE: Close to Jennifer's village in northern Colombia is the Cerrejón mine. It is one of the largest coal mines in the world. It covers 700 km² – an area larger than the island of Bornholm. The mine creates major problems for people in the area with pollution, diseases and shortage of water.



Find video and photos at the website. Visit Jennifer and see how she learns to weave by her grandmother.

HELEVERDENISKOLE.DK/JENNIFER-2021





MUNA

We first met Muna in the Reading Rocket 2018 about Jordan. Muna was 10 years old. She lived in the Za'atari refugee camp. The family dreamed about moving back to Syria.

MUNA IS DREAMING ABOUT A REAL HOME

 LINE GØRUP TROLLE  NESMA AINSOUR

Muna takes a bite of her kunaffeh. The dessert is made from many thin strips of crispy, sweet-tasting dough. The hot cheese in the middle stretches a bit and then sags. It melts on her tongue. Muna smiles at Maria and her aunt. They are at a restaurant. They have been walking the streets of the city all afternoon, looking at shops. Muna feels happy and completely relaxed.

Her mother calls, and Muna's thoughts come back to the present. She is sitting on the floor of the container house with her brother, Motasim. Muna is thinking about the last ten days. She was visiting her cousin Maria. Muna's aunt and cousin live in a nice apartment in the city Mafraq. It is not far from the camp. Muna has just returned home. The memories already feel like a good dream.

Muna's mother calls again. Muna joins her mother in the kitchen. Maybe they can make kabseh or dawali for lunch today. These are Muna's favorite dishes.

The family has moved

Muna has just turned 14. She was six years old when the family came to Za'atari. The refugee camp is located in the warm desert landscape of Jordan. Tents and containers line up in the dusty streets. Another of Muna's aunts and her grandmother have moved back to Syria. Hardly anyone does that. Muna's mother cannot afford to live outside the camp. Muna and her siblings have moved with their mother to another district of the camp, close to their uncle.

Their new house is a bit larger than the old one. The family has three containers now. They also have a kitchen and a toilet. There are solar panels on the roof, so now they have power all the time. It is nice to be able to watch TV. And Muna no longer has to fetch water from a tank in front of the house. They have got a tap inside.

A new school

After they moved, Muna started in a new school. She is in 8th grade. The new school is larger than the old one and goes from 5th to 12th grade. The girls go to school in the morning, and the boys in the afternoon. Muna's new classmates are nice. But she misses her cousin Arwa, her favourite teacher, and her friends from the old school. Shortly after Muna changed school, the COVID-19 pandemic came. Muna did not have the time to make friends in the new class.



In 2018, Muna received letters and drawings from Danish children. She is still very fond of them. She also got some photos of herself and her family. Sometimes they look at them together.





Muna plays her favourite game, PUBG, on her mother's mobile phone with her brothers, Mohammed and Motasim, who are five and 10 years old.

One mobile phone for schoolwork during COVID-19

When the pandemic came to Jordan, the country and the camp closed down. The schools closed, and people were allowed to go outside only at certain times of the day.

Muna remembers that time. 'The school was closed. We did not get visits, and I rarely went out to play. It was not allowed to move around the camp. I was also afraid that I or someone in my family would get infected.'

Muna was taught at home. Not everyone in the camp has access to the Internet, but Muna and her siblings could use their mother's mobile phone for schoolwork. Her teacher made short videos to explain the tasks for the day, and sent them to Muna's mother. Muna did the work in her notebook, took pictures of it and sent the pictures back. It usually took two or three hours to complete the tasks. The rest of the time, she was often bored.

Before the pandemic, Muna used to play with her neighbour and best friend, Mariam. But Mariam moved out of the camp. Although everyday life is slowly returning, the playgrounds in the camp are still closed. So Muna mostly plays hide-and-seek with her brothers and sister at home. She likes to go to the market with her mother. When she is allowed to, she plays PUBG on her mother's mobile. She also listens to music and does sports. 'Right now, I am learning Zumba on YouTube,' Muna laughs.

Jordan is my home now

Muna sometimes tries to remember their old house in Syria. But she has almost no memories of it. Muna remembers her father. He was still alive when they came to Jordan, but he died in an accident in the camp. She misses him every day.

Between the containers the family has a small garden with nice flowers. Muna makes sure they get water.





Muna likes cooking and, especially, making Arabic coffee. She has been practicing a lot and she is really good at it now.



Muna used to want to travel back to Syria. But it is not like that anymore. 'To be honest, I do not miss Syria. Most of my memories are from my life in Jordan,' Muna says.

Muna hopes that the family will be able to move out of the camp one day: 'I am tired of everything in the camp. I really want a proper home like a "normal" person. An apartment or a house where I have my own room.' Muna also dreams about getting a close friend again. 'I would like to live in Mafraq, close to my cousin Maria. She is both my cousin and my good friend.'



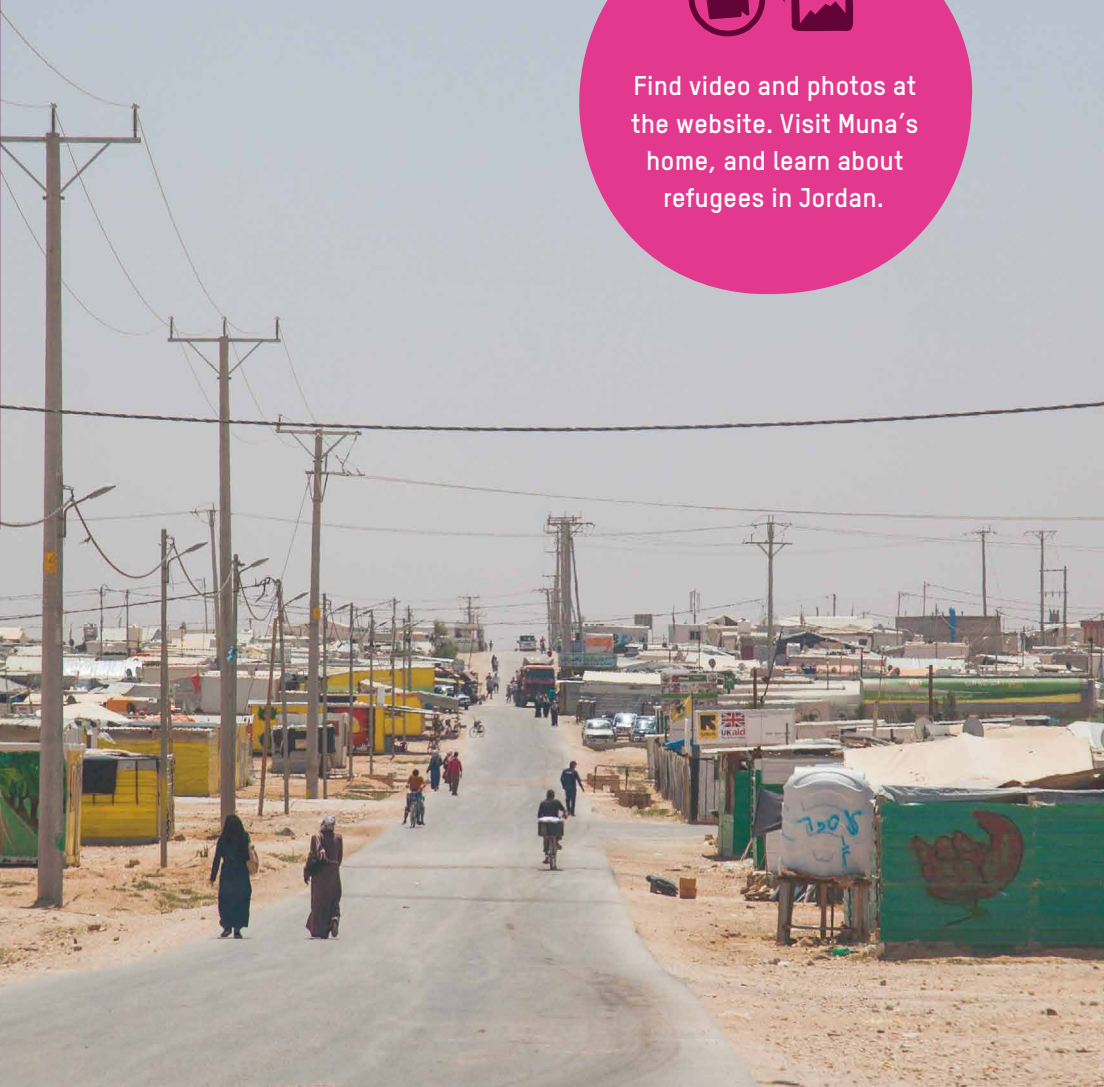
The refugee camp Za'atari is located in northern Jordan, close to the Syrian border. The camp is home to about 77,000 Syrian refugees. Muna likes to paint, draw and be creative. She has made her dream house in cardboard. This is how she would like to live.

Muna has new dreams for the future. 'I want to go to a regular school and get a better education. I want to be a police officer,' she says. 'It is an important job. I do not think that any children should suffer like my siblings and I did. I want to help ensure that all people are safe.'

REFUGEES IN JORDAN: Nearly one million refugees from Syria live in Jordan. Many live in camps, but the majority live outside the camps in apartments or with family. Very few choose to move back to Syria. Some have nothing to return home to, others fear for their safety. Many parts of Syria are still plagued by conflicts. Houses and roads have been destroyed. There is an economic crisis, and the COVID-19 pandemic has only made it worse.

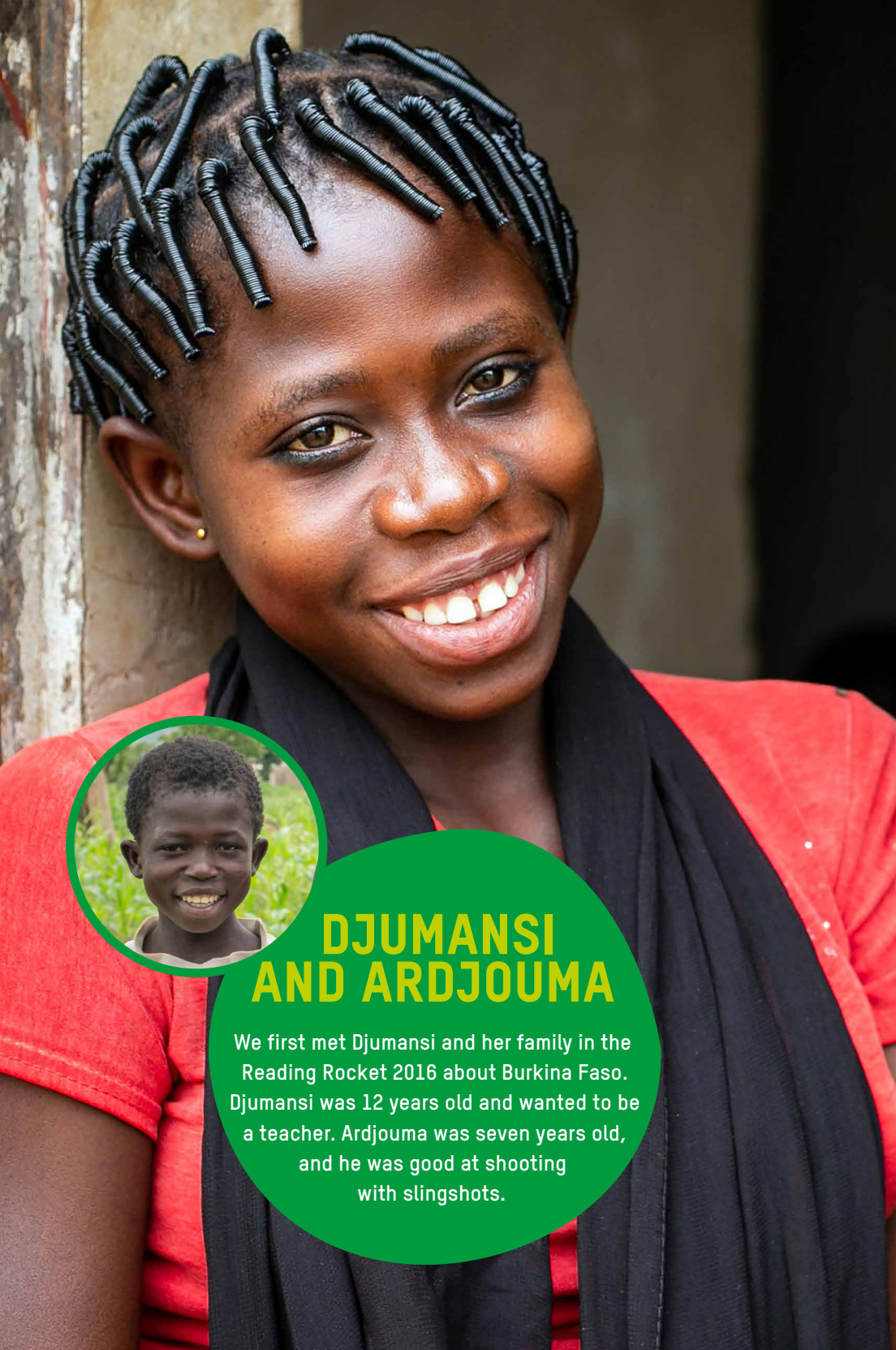


Find video and photos at the website. Visit Muna's home, and learn about refugees in Jordan.



HELEVERDENISKOLE.DK/MUNA-2021





DJUMANSI AND ARDJOUMA

We first met Djumansi and her family in the Reading Rocket 2016 about Burkina Faso. Djumansi was 12 years old and wanted to be a teacher. Ardjouma was seven years old, and he was good at shooting with slingshots.

DJUMANSI AND ARDJOUMA ARE HELPING THE FAMILY

 **LINE GØRUP TROLLE**  **CISSÉ AMADOU**

The clear water splashes as Djumansi pours it from the tub into the jar. Djumansi and her older sister Bavargou fetch water from the pump every morning. They carry the water in large tubs on their heads. They walk through the cornfields back to the house, taking care not to spill any. They must fetch all the water the family needs for the day – for cooking, dishwashing and bathing.

Djumansi is 17 years old and lives with her parents and four siblings. Her youngest brother is named Ardjouma. He is 12 years old. The water does not have to be carried so far any more. Recently, the family moved to a new house closer to the pump.

From Lobi traditions to Christianity

Djumansi and the family used to live in a traditional Lobi house. It was built of mud, and instead of rooms, there were several small, round structures. The new house is not a Lobi house. It is square and built of bricks. Djumansi thinks the new house is better. In the old house, it rained inside during the rainy season. The new house is watertight. Here they can sleep safely all year.

When Djumansi and Ardjouma were younger, the family followed the traditions of the Lobi people. Djumansi knows that the healers in the village use the fetish figures of the Lobi people to heal the sick. Ardjouma is still proud that he knows some Lobi dances. Both have participated in some of the big Lobi festivities. The largest is called a djoro.

But now the entire family has become Christians. It is not uncommon for people to change from one religion to another in Burkina Faso. Djumansi and Ardjouma like that they can choose for themselves. And they like going to church on Sundays.

The family is still farming

When Djumansi has finished fetching water, work in the cornfield awaits. There is a lot of work in the field – sowing, weeding and harvesting. Djumansi's father lost one of his arms in an accident many years ago. He cannot work as much as he would like to. So the entire family has to help.

Although the family has got a new house, they have not moved far away. They still live close to their fields. But their land is becoming less productive – there are fewer crops every year, says Djumansi's father. It does not rain as much as before, and the ground is very dry. This makes it difficult for the family to get enough food and make money from selling their corn and goats.



After Djumansi and her sister have fetched water, they pour it into the big jar in the yard of the family house.



Djumansi and Ardjouma are with their father and mother, Dimané and Bourobar. Behind them, the family's fields are visible. They cultivate corn, millet, durra and beans.

The bad soil creates conflicts

When Djumansi was little, Burkina Faso was a peaceful country. There was enough food, and people felt safe. Djumansi's father says the depleted land and lack of food have created violent conflicts in the country. In the north, as the soil dries out, the desert is spreading. In some places, people in the same village get angry with each other. Elsewhere in the country, people from different ethnic groups fight over land. In particular, nomads, who once drove their animals around, are now persecuted. People are fighting over who has the right to the land on which nomads graze their animals.

Djumansi wants to be a hairdresser

When Djumansi was 12 years old, she dreamed about becoming a teacher. She was especially fond of science in school. But she

Djumansi is a trainee hairdresser. She is patient and practises a lot. She really likes braiding hair.



had to drop out in 5th grade. The family could no longer afford to send her to school. Although school itself is free in Burkina Faso, many families cannot afford to send their children to school. It costs money to buy textbooks, exercise books and pencils. And in some areas, you also have to buy a school uniform.

Djumansi is still good friends with Antoinette, as she was five years ago. They see each other as often as they can. But Djumansi is busy. She is becoming a hairdresser. Djumansi's aunt helped her find an apprenticeship with Awa, who has been a hairdresser for five years.

Djumansi works at Awa's salon every day except in the rainy season, when there is a lot of work in the fields. Djumansi works for free while she is training. This is how it is to be an apprentice. But she eats with Awa. That is her salary. Awa finds Djumansi a very skilled and a diligent student. She is very fond of Djumansi, and so are her customers. When there are many customers, Djumansi is both allowed to cut and braid their hair. She especially likes to make the beautiful, very thin braids.

Djumansi is happy to be with Awa. She wants to become a good hairdresser. She dreams about opening her own hair salon one day. She also wants to train other young people.

Ardjouma wants to return to school

None of the family's five children go to school anymore.

Djumansi's youngest brother, Ardjouma, might be able to return.

The family still hope they will be able to afford it.

Ardjouma is 12 years old. He had to drop out of school in 1st grade. Ardjouma liked going to school and would like to go back. He even thought exams were fun. Now he helps in the fields every day instead. He takes care of the family's goats and sheep.

Ardjouma has four good friends. They often play football. They also go hunting with their slingshots. It makes him shake with excitement when he is lying in the grass waiting. They shoot birds and monkeys. They keep the animals away from the fields, so they do not eat the family's corn.

Ardjouma is taking care of the sheep and goats. He also cultivates his own field.





Every morning, Ardjouma helps his father in the fields. Sometimes, they make a little money from working on the fields of their neighbours.

Ardjouma likes corn cakes, which they make from the corn from the fields. He also has his own little field. Here he grows tomatoes and eggplants. They taste good, and it is a great help to the family's meals.

The youngest of five siblings

When Ardjouma is not working in the field, he helps his father. Ardjouma makes sure to be at home a lot so his father can ask for help whenever he needs it. One of the things Ardjouma likes the most is to walk in the fields with his father – just the two of them. They do not talk much, but it is nice to be there at the same time. He wants to help his father with everything he can.

Ardjouma also liked being with his grandfather. But recently he died. Ardjouma was very upset. He often thinks of his grandfather and misses talking to him. His grandfather had lived a long life, and Ardjouma learned many things from him.

Some days Ardjouma finds it hard to be the youngest sibling. The others tease him and make him do their chores. But it is also good to have older siblings. They take care of him, and he looks up to them. Ardjouma wants to be a mechanic. His older brother has promised to look for a garage in the nearest city, Gaoua, where he can get an apprenticeship. Ardjouma hopes he will succeed. But most of all, he hopes the family can afford to send him back to school.



Find video and photos at the website. Watch Djumansi and her sister fetching water, and Ardjouma playing soccer with his friends. Also pay Djumansi a visit at the hair salon.

**HELEVERDENISKOLE.DK/
DJUMANSI-OG-ARDJOUMA-2021**



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