

## Human rights | More than seventy years of struggle

Human rights are indivisible. The sentence sounds banal, almost frayed. Like a phrase. The reality of human rights calls for change. Examples from the human rights charter of the United Nations in reality - the example of a slum in Nairobi.

**TS|BN December 9, 2018** The "Ayiera Initiative" in the Korogocho slum in Nairobi takes human rights very seriously. Its founder Hamilton Ayiera founded it more than ten years ago. As a young man, the 34-year-old was a talented footballer. After a tournament in Egypt, he returned to his slum and decided: From today, I will not only change something, but improve a lot. Said, done: the "Ayiera Initiative" was founded.

### Human rights | Food

It was a street soccer tournament. Hamilton Ayiera Nyanga had received a few hundred euros at the competition. That was so much money for him that he would have had to work for years - had he always stayed in the slum. Many of the villagers in Korogocho earn only what they need to survive. Many of them are forced to go to the open rubbish dump "Dandora" every day. It meanders parallel to the Nairobi River along the village of Korogocho. There the slum dwellers look for something to eat for themselves and their families. They poo food leftovers from the stinking dirt in order to survive at all. Or they find iron, metal or plastic that can still be used. They sell it to a trader and get one euro for it. Per kilo. Per day.



*Human rights: Food is not available for everyone © Tom Rübenach*

So they rummage through the "human right to food" that the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" guarantees them. This was adopted by the United Nations on 10 December 1948, exactly seventy years ago. That they still do not apply everywhere is the great lie of this paper. There are more than 200 slums in the Kenyan capital that the German term "Elendsviertel" describes more accurately. Korogocho is not only the second largest, the living conditions there are also much more precarious than in other slums.

## Human rights | Health

Because of the nearby rubbish dump (see title photo) many of the slum dwellers suffer from respiratory diseases. From childhood on they breathe in the vapours and the biting stench of the garbage. Health is also a human right. In slums like that of Korogocho it works like cynicism.

If it weren't for the "German Doctors". This German aid organisation regularly visits the Ayiera Initiative. Serial examinations help to "measure" health and initiate necessary steps. The voluntary doctors from Germany have a clinic in the Mathare slum. This is the largest in Nairobi. They have been working there since 1979 and try their best to help people in dire poverty. And to guarantee them the human right to health. Malaria, HIV, tuberculosis: these are just a few of the many diseases that the Doctors care for. Around 300 patients are treated there every day. All the more impressive that the doctors and the team of "German Doctors" still find the time to travel to Korogocho at least at regular intervals.



*Morgan (9 years): He also has the right to health and the right to education © Tom Rübenach*

## Human Rights | Education

The Ayiera Initiative in the slum of Korogocho works together with Care, the Ministry of Development and the Foundation "Future for Children in Slums" (formerly "Stiftung Hoffnung 1-plus"). One of the goals is to improve education for children and young adults. At least they can afford a further education for their children. If it weren't for foundations and others, many children would never have the chance to receive an education scholarship for college, university or profession.

When people in Germany talk about combating the causes of flight, they usually only mean fighting against the reasons for flight. At the same time, it is always an attempt to limit immigration or flight to Europe. Sua sponte human rights to their validity to help plays rarely a role, in fact almost never. But that is what it is all about. Not only on the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The human right to education, for example, is one of the crucial ones. Because its realisation can lead to real development, see Europe. Focusing on isolation has nothing to do with combating the causes of flight. The latter are not honest if it is not also about the enforcement of human rights.



*Human rights: a schoolyard in Korogocho © Tom Rübenach*

### **Human rights. The fight must go on.**

The Germans find terms like "struggle" hard to understand. But it is often more than necessary. Especially when it comes to human rights and their enforcement. In this context, struggle means above all consequence. The not-loosening. A constantly on the nerves of all those who believe: if we are well, the fish is eaten. To provoke those who really understand "combating the causes of flight" to mean isolation.

The world is in a difficult phase. Trump, Putin, the Chinese oppressors, so-called democracies (which are no longer liberal): all these names and policies obey only one imperative. And that is above all to keep one's own little garden "in order" - whatever that means. For many, the garden fence is no longer an ornament, but an insurmountable border. It is high time to expose our supposed idyll as what it is: sheer egoism.

You may watch the video about living with the garbage dump in Korogocho here:  
<https://vimeo.com/304943174>

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