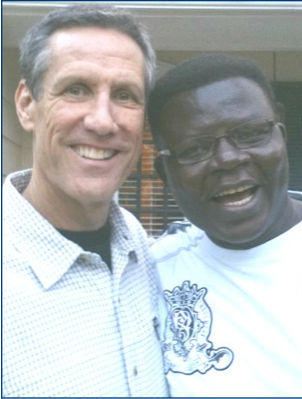


CHARLES JUMA A BRIEF LIFE STORY



Charles grew up an impoverished child —a product of the poorest family, in the poorest village, in the poorest region of Kenya. Grass provided most of his daily nourishment. At 15, this brilliant Muslim boy graduated from high school, and ran away from the misery in his small village to Nairobi, a city of 18 million people. He knew only one person. Miraculously, he ran into that person in a city of 18 million people! With no job, he roamed the streets. One day he heard music outside of a church. As Charles listened through a fence, the choir leader invited him to church. When he heard the gospel, he immediately responded to follow Jesus. For the next two years, the church leaders disciplined Charles. During this time all of his family received Jesus. Later he became the youth leader in his church. For over ten years, he developed a dynamic and influential ministry to kids in schools all across Nairobi and throughout Kenya.

In 2003 I met Charles, when I spoke at Southern Seminary in Louisville, KY. During a break, I grabbed my bag lunch and turned to see the lone person sitting by himself. I introduced myself to Charles Juma. Over the course of that conversation and afterward, I discovered a uniquely gifted leader in Charles. As a result of that lunch, both of us knew we were kindred spirits. After our meeting, Charles pursued Reach Out's Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry training. Now he leads Reach Out's East Africa ministry. We work together to equip African youth leaders in Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry who then reach and disciple young people like Charles.

After Charles came to America to study in Louisville, we met. Now finishing his PhD, he travels back to Kenya and the 13 countries where Reach Out trains leaders for four to five months each year.

This one story explains why Charles and Reach Out have such an intense desire to equip leaders to reach and disciple young people. In Rwanda, Charles stood inside the church where he would preach, waiting for the service to begin. The pastor pointed to a group of teen boys standing a few feet away and said to Charles: "Each one of those boys murdered many people during the genocide. They live with deep pain, guilt and shame. We have so many kids like these all over our country. We must reach and disciple them, because Jesus is the only one who can heal their hurt and lift them out of their pit of guilt and shame. Charles, I believe the Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry training is what we need. Will you please help us?"

Charles Juma is well-equipped from his own childhood experiences to help the younger generation in Africa. As an indigenous African leader, he has equipped many other indigenous African leaders to train younger generation leaders in churches to implement Jesus-Focused Youth Ministry.

Barry St. Clair

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YOUTH SOLUTIONS