



Joint Catholic-Lutheran Commemoration

Rose Nathike Lokonyen

Birth date: 1993

Place of birth: Chuhudum, Equatoria, South Sudan

5 siblings

Rose and her family fled to the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya when she was eight years old. Since the age of 14, she has been the head of household for five younger siblings.

Rose managed to take care of her siblings and finish her education in a school run by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), who are responsible for education in Kakuma camp. She became an incentive worker for the LWF, motivating girls to go back to schools and raising awareness on early marriage, HIV and rape – all issues many refugee girls are confronted with. In her spare time, she played soccer.

Rose was discovered as an athlete runner in 2015 during a school race in Kakuma, and started training the 800-meter distance for the Olympic Games in Rio 2016. She was selected as one of five South Sudanese runners on the team refugees in the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. She was carrying the Olympic flag when the team entered the Maracana stadium to applause and standing ovations.

Rose now lives in Nairobi and continues to train as an athlete. She uses her income to support her younger siblings, who still live in Kakuma refugee camp.