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REPORT FOR DECEMBER THURSDAY 7 AT KPLC INSTITUTE OF STUDIES BY AKAD

I arrived just in time for the team building activities that were a blast. It was charades this time but with a twist. So this time one person was given information and asked to describe it to a group but not mention the word itself. It was movies: talk of 21 Jump Street and Baby Driver, it was political leaders like Sonko. It then graduated to acting it out but all along it was great. It was in the hullabaloo that Sheila Njeri joined us, stunning lady. The exercise allowed me to understand communication much better. This time I was able to notice that while we may have the same intentions, we may have different ways of expressing them. Where we are in a team, we have to be able to communicate and not allowing these different points of view to be a hindrance but to strengthen understanding of a concept. After that we went back in for a little of profiling with people giving verbal versions of the profiles that they wrote the previous day. Mary Effie kicked us off, confident as she is. She has quite a C.V for a young lady her age, but the highlight of the whole session was Dr. Weche taking a back seat and leave we the mentees to grill the speaker.

As iron sharpens iron so does a man sharpen another. Constructive criticism was dished out for free with the sole purpose of encouraging growth. It was by consensus that she was definitely on an upward trend. Arthur and Michael presented theirs. They were very impressive but both had a similar drawback – inadequate voice projection. This prompted Rev. to seek the services of Collins, a thespian to the core, to uplift these guys in a way. A couple of exercises later at the back of the hall had their voicing improved. Lenny was next occupying the hot seat and was a sort of template on which many skills were highlighted from voicing, tonal variation, body posture and eye contact. It was group effort to help the musician and by his third presentation he was twice as good. The skills that I would have taken for granted suddenly became very important. How you stand before your audience and your use of emphasis on certain parts of your presentation could make all the difference. Caleb and Sheila took the stage. Caleb was much composed, a good presentation for a fairly new member. Sheila's was bubbling with energy and was a great relief from the stereotypical presentations we had been used to that were rather austere. When the comments came in one thing that stood out is people value what you say when you say it with much confidence and excitement than when you indicate uncertainty. I could say the morning was off to a great start.

After an interesting tea session the guest of the day Mr. Albert Mugo walked in with an inspiring sense of humility. He was informally dressed considering he was now retired CEO of KENGEN. He talked of his past and his journey to engineering from a child to university. Interestingly, he was interested in law and engineering was never in his personal solar system but it was his O level combination of Math, Physics and Chemistry that eventually led him in the course at the University of Nairobi. The course was engaging but mostly due to the time constraint. He went on to work with KPLC and KENGEN. From his experience I was able to pick out that in whatever you do it well. The engineer regretted filling out his high school choices haphazardly since as was the norm the first national exam was sort of a 'rehearsal' so that the second year of repetition would be undertaken with extreme seriousness. But he performed fairly well. If he had done it seriously he would have gone to a better school than he went to. Moreover he also taught me that sometimes things do not go as we would want them to go but we can always get the best of what life throws at us, make lemonade with lemons. Engineer is a very passionate man about what he does and this showed me that passion is the fuel of great achievement. It is what enables people to go through tough current situations for the sake of the long run. The time with engineer was priceless.

Lunch was great with a circle of youth around the engineer soaking up the warmth of his conversation with Dr. Weche further cementing the day's lessons not forgetting Sun City. Following Christie Weche, we went to the Ruaraka substation. Mr. Langat took us through and it was really informative. There was much to the place rather than a complex crisscrossing of thick cables and contraptions that always gave you the feeling of a fatal electrical shock. I learnt that electricity is transmitted at 66kV or 11kV and is stepped down to 415V and 240V for domestic consumers. I also got to understand how power rationing is done and that it really has a valid reason for happening not just hell bent malice. Tea followed as couple of us gave a summary of what they learnt since Joining AKAD for the week. What permeated everything was the deep gratitude for what Rev. was doing. The speeches revealed much passion for mentorship and a sense of honour on engaging in the programme regardless of the scathing that could come out of hanging around *Daktari* long enough. It made me feel nice and see the value of mentorship considering both Julie Gichuru and Mr. Albert Mugo both agreed that if they had mentorship they would be far better off than just groping in the dark as they did.

The day was good and I expanded my social network. I am really hoping for tomorrow.