

The following Interview was conducted with Fatuma Garbang for the Star City Treasures AmeriCorps History Project. It took place on the 22nd of May, 2006 at the “F” Center. The interviewer is Ieman Eltakawi

Ieman: Uh, Welcome, uh, to this interview. I have the pleasure to make this interview, um...May I know your name?

Fatuma: Again: My name is Fatuma Garbang.

Ieman: Uh, I am going to ask you some questions. We're going to talk um, about your childhood, education, marriage and family, customs, and how you got to America and Lincoln and some other small questions. So at the beginning we are going to start about your childhood. Can you tell me about where you grew up?

Fatuma: I was born in Banteo, Upper Nile in 1956, January. December 1st 1956. I go to school in Banteo primary school, and my middle school was Malakal, and go to Juba senior school. Then I have done some training leadership skills, and then started university in East Africa. And did some woman leadership in Uganda. They called it "Aquina Mama of Africa". I have management skills and leadership skills tutor teachers and translator and cashier.

Ieman: And where is that city Juba?

Fatuma: Juba is the capital city of Southern Sudan.

Ieman: Yah. Ah so ah, Can you tell me please what you did about your family?

Fatuma: Ah I have 5 children. I have Admear, she is my older daughter. She is in George University. She studies Criminal Densive Law. I have Ajoke, she goes to Dees high School, and I have Kalbai go to middle Bob middle school, and I have one in Holms middle school, I have my daughter Koren. She is in 10 grade. She studies in London.

Ieman: O.K.

Fatuma: I have 5 children.

Ieman: Aaha. What does she study?

Fatuma: She is in 10 grade. She is going to be in college next year. She is going to study Business.

Ieman: Aaha, great!!! Is she going also to work with social things and do as you did in Uganda?

Fatuma: Ah uh I don't think she is interested. They don't have the same skills I have.

Ieman: So, how did you find Uganda?

Fatuma: Uganda I have been there in Uganda for almost, in Kenya 10 years in Ethiopia 10 years. Since the war has started in Sudan 1983 I never had gone back to Sudan.

Ieman: Umm

Fatuma: So I have been in Uganda, Kenya, and Ethiopia. All my children they don't even know the Sudan.

Ieman: In Uganda and Ethiopia.

Fatuma: But this year I'm planning to go for Sudan after the piece.

Ieman: Are you going to the South also?

Fatuma: Yes, I am going to South and the North.

Ieman: Great, I hope you'll find everything stable. Can you tell me about some of your family traditions?

Fatuma: Auh Which kind of traditions are you talking about?

Ieman: Auh for Southerns ...auh every tribe has its own traditions.

Fatuma: O.K. my Mom she is Nowair by tribe. My father from Northern Sudan from Medani, Gazira.

Ieman: Uhu

Fatuma: UmDagarsy is a town

Ieman: Uhu

Fatuma: So my father, he came to the South long time ago.

Ieman: Uhu

Fatuma: And he married from South of Sudan

Ieman: Uhu

Fatuma: So we grew up in a different culture, both Arab culture and Nowair culture.

Ieman: Uh

Fatuma: So and the Sudanese culture in general is not different from the Northern Sudan culture

Ieman: Yah

Fatuma: So both... I'm from Muslim Family.

Ieman: Uhu

Fatuma: Yes, my father is a Muslim and I am Muslim.

Ieman: Uhu .. So you used to grow in Medani for a while or?

Fatuma: No, I never gone to North Sudan, because my father was in South

Ieman: Uhu

Fatuma: So I remember when long time ago when I was small. I don't remember anymore.

Ieman: Uh

Fatuma: But I know all my family

Ieman: So what was he doing there in the South?

Fatuma: My father was a businessman

Ieman: O.K.

Fatuma: First he came to the South long time ago. He had a business in South of Sudan.

Ieman: Uhu .. What type of business?

Fatuma: a shop and all this, same things and all this.

Ieman: Aha Great. Ah so part of this tradition also could be like recreation ah. May be some things people used to make as craft or handmade and also it could be special food. Can you tell us briefly about also these things? What type of recreation and food, something specific of your tradition?

Fatuma: You know all the Sudanese things. We all like Mulokhiya and Kisra, and especially in the tribe they eat fish and drink milk. They are not vegiterian

Ieman: Yeah yeah

Fatuma: So this is what Nowair. The food... what the kind of food they ate, fish meat and milk.

Ieman: Yeah, is there anything specific about recreation, hand made things... also from the folklore

Fatuma: They are wariest. They make the spear

Ieman: Uhu

Fatuma: They love their spears. They make some other things just for a fight... for a war.

Ieman: I'd say, they have some beautiful things like what the women wear

Fatuma: What do you call it? Elephants horns. They make it as a neckles, as bangle and all this, the animal things. The spoons from the horn. Kind of animals they make the spoons from it

Ieman: From the bones?

Fatuma: Not from the bones from the horns.

Ieman: Ah, from the horns.

Fatuma: So people use it for eating.

Ieman: Aha. And also I remember I saw small animals made from wood.

Fatuma: Yeah

Ieman: They are made from Abanos I think, that black type of Ebony trees, very beautiful.

Fatuma: Yeah is available in South. You can make the table the chairs from it, is not a big deal, but this is a normal tree.

Ieman: Just something of the Folklore. Can you tell me something about your education?

Fatuma: Is like I mentioned before, I go to Banteo Primary school, Malakal Junior Secondary School, Juba Senior Secondary School, They study university Management

Ieman: In Malakal?

Fatuma: No, in Nyrobi, Kenya.

Ieman: Aha.

Fatuma: And Woman Institute of Education & Leadership in Uganda. And I did some training, some different training, I don't remember, I did so many things.

Ieman: So among these courses you have taken, which one is the most interested for you?

Fatuma: I love the Leadership Skill, which I did. Because I did it for so long. Because I was dealing with Woman's Organizations since the war started in 1993. I came to Ethiopia for the woman for nine years as a coordinator

Ieman: In an Organization?

Fatuma: In an Organization called Sudanese Woman Association.

Ieman: Aha.

Fatuma: It was in the South of Sudan

Ieman: Yeah

Fatuma: And then I became a coordinator of Sudanese Woman coordinating Western Upper Nile, then I came to Kenya 1994 a formal organization called Upper Nile Welfare Association. This organization is based on woman rights, violence against a woman, a child, education, for legal training for woman more than right, forcing marriage, stop marking the faces of women make them ugly, removing the teeth, marking the face, this kind of things we see on Sudanese faces here. We make a campaign and then put it in a legal thing, so if they did it, they will sew the family and they may take them to jail. So is because we want the women to look beautiful, people has to be nature. It happened to stop these things, even the circumcision we were making complain against it.

Ieman: You do circumcision in Nowair?

Fatuma: There are some people; they do it to stop it. It's good for a boy not for a woman. We make a campaign. And HIV, how woman can use a condom, or to protect herself. Like we also complain against the tradition which if your husband die you go with your husband's brother. We made a complain, yes. It's not allowed because there's some sickness. It can be in a family, and then the brother or the sister or what ever they will have the one who go with the person in the family and have the same you can get it. So we made a complain to make a change in a Sudanese society especially Southern Sudanese.

Ieman: And is this common in Nowair only or the other groups?

Fatuma: Even the Denka and Shuluk, all tribes in South.

Ieman: Ah what are the main tribes in South of Sudan?

Fatuma: The biggest tribes in Sudan are Nowair and Denka.

Ieman: And Shuluk.

Fatuma: No, the miluts, the biggest tribes are Nowair and Denka. The Shuluk is another big tribe, but we are all Miluts. Milut is a tribe; it has seven, there is a Shuluk, there's a Nowair, Denka, Anwak, Anwak, Jewsho, Kushowe. They have Ashaile in Uganda, Ashaile in Kenya, Ashaile in Ethiopia. So the big tribe is divided to different countries. It's because is big, but originally they are Sudanese. We share some languages; we share some culture, even the food and all these.

Ieman: Great! So you participated in doing great things. Plus also going with brother may be little bit in Northern tribes, but not very common, but the common thing and may be worst than in Southern tribes is the circumcision of girls.

Fatuma: Yeah, this is not good.

Ieman: Northern women also are trying to stop this in the Northern parts

Fatuma: Because we have some spaces since the war has started in Sothern Sudan. People have been displaced in different areas where there is no clinic, no hospital, so some women died because of that. Because they can't give birth natural. So it's not a good sign. In a situation like that where there's no clinic available all over the country. There's limit in hospital and all this. So for the women they would have to stop it, and when they stop it and there's no circumcision they can have a normal birth

Ieman: Then, how did you do that to stop it?

Fatuma: Through Campaign

Ieman: You reached them you mean?

Fatuma: Yeah, we go to the girls and woman in the village, and the women who are educated they have a little bit education we complain that this is the thing; we make a workshop, that these are the things we need to talk about. We came out with something and then put it in the newspaper or whatever. So it'll reflect and give the idea to the other people. Communicate other women in other world.

Ieman: Tell me about your family and your family customs related to marriage. I think you have mentioned it or you have talked about it. Tell me about meeting your spouse, how did you meet him, and how did you get married to eachothers?

Fatuma: I married in 1987; my husband is in England now. He is a medical doctor graduated from Khartoum University in 1970. Old doctor.

Ieman: And is he specializing now?

Fatuma: Yes, he is a family doctor.

Ieman: Is a family doctor in London?

Fatuma: Even in Sudan he worked for American Refugee Committee, He worked for Ethiopian Red Cross, Lot of experience, He worked for some Organizations.

Ieman: Great, great. Ah now we'll talk little bit about coming to America. Tell me about when and why you decided to come to America?

Fatuma: In 1983 when the war started in Sudan, I came to Ethiopia. Ah until 1992, 1992 I went back when the war started again in Ethiopia, I went back to Sudan in the South. I lived in a place called Nar for three years. 1994 I decided to get out from that area is because my children couldn't get the education. There is no education in that area and they are growing big.

Ieman: Is it a small village?

Fatuma: Yes, a small village, in a war situation, really there's no school; people lived in shelter, killing and all this. So I lived there with my children for three years. In 1994 I said O.K. now I better go to Kenya for my children to get education because they are growing big and this war I don't see that is going to end because the war I was looking at it, so I decided to come to Kenya. Then I applied in the American Embassy for me to be a refugee in the United States of America. So I came to the United States Sept 13 year 2000. Now I'm sitting in the United States.

Ieman: Ah Sept. 13 2000. Tell me about what it was like to first come to America?

Fatuma: Actually I don't know about America when I came, this make a decision I'm going to this country is because I'll have, I have a plan to come to this country. My plan is to grow my children; to get education in the United States, second and for the safety is because when we came in the war situation, I decided to come to this country. This's my decision; nobody forced me to come to the United States. Is because if I do not come to the United States, I'll not have my daughter to be in the University now. She is graduating in December. I'll not have this kind of; so coming to the Unite States it gave me a lot of benefit.

Ieman: Next December she'll be graduating from the university?

Fatuma: Yeah, from university yes.

Ieman: Oh great!! Which college?

Fatuma: Debet University in Iawa

Ieman: What is she studying?

Fatuma: She studies Criminal Justice Law.

Ieman: Oh, great!!

Fatuma: She wants to be a lawyer

Ieman: Now you've been here for six years.

Fatuma: Six years in the United States, until Sept I'll have six years exactly.

Ieman: And when did she start studying in the college?

Fatuma: When she came from Kenya she was in high school, so when she came she had a background education from Kenya. English was not a second language; it was a first language for my children. They don't even know Arabic and Nowair as languages. They know only English, so it was not difficult for them. So they came here and got with the system.

Ieman: And since they were here in the States did they have to finish first ESL?

Fatuma: Yes, Yes

Ieman: What is she doing?

Fatuma: She is doing African American History, and she is going to have Geography and African American History. Secondly, Psychology. Yeah, she is doing Psychology now.

Ieman: Good! Tell me about what you expected to find when you came to America.

Fatuma: My expectation is what I am looking for which is education for my children, this is what I expected and I got it because is available actually. In this country when I came I knew I would be independent, and I took care of my self because I came here I made a decision. I know I don't have parents, and I don't have a brother, I don't have a sister, I'm going to the United States to establish my life from the beginning, from zero. So I'm fine I work with great people. I worked for refugee's immigrants for four years in Chicago. Any community in the United States whether they are white or black, they are very good to me, because I love what I am doing. I respect my job. I love people. I love my work and what I am doing.

Ieman: Good, great! So you were in Chicago.

Fatuma: Yes, I was in Chicago

Ieman: So Chicago is a big town. What about coming to Lincoln?

Fatuma: I came to Lincoln is because I have some friends in Lincoln. I was isolated and alone in Chicago. Then I decided to move here. A small town always is better. No crowd no running around. So I came to this town because I have some friends and my brother lives in South Dakota. So I have connection with the people. So I moved here. I'm doing good.

Ieman: So tell me what it was like to first come to Lincoln?

Fatuma: Lincoln, I came before. I came in the year 2003. I spent two weeks in Lincoln. Since I came to the United States actually I don't want to move out. Is when I came to Lincoln I liked Lincoln right away is because the family who were in Lincoln here, they were happy. Being in Nebraska not Lincoln alone, in Nebraska State because all the majority of Southern Sudanese people, they come direct from Sudan. If you go to South and ask about Nebraska, they'll tell that Nebraska, so it's a famous place to the Southern Sudanese people. They say people who are in this town are good people. They are kind, they respect you, and they respect your dignity, your culture, whatever. That's why the Sudanese like this town; especially this state is better than any state in the United States.

Ieman: Good, very good!

Fatuma: I think they have more than eight, ten thousand in the state here.

Ieman: Ten thousand?

Fatuma: Yes

Ieman: Southern people?

Fatuma: Yeah. And they own housing. They have quality.

Ieman: Yeah, good. So you came three years ago?

Fatuma: I came last year.

Ieman: Oh you came last year?

Fatuma: 10 months

Ieman: Tell me about citizenship

Fatuma: I've become a citizen in February 17. Is it two months ago? Yes I'm a citizen of United States. I did my test. I passed the test. So is not a difficult test. I know how to read and write.

Ieman: So you are going to get it?

Fatuma: Oh sure I'll get my Passport today.

Ieman: Congratulations.

Fatuma: So I'm a citizen of this country.

Ieman: Congratulations. So we're talking about some short questions. As you look back, what do you think about leaving the country you were born in and coming to the United States?

Fatuma: Actually is a tough, is a tough decision, when you make decision you leave your country back, is hard, and is because there's a reason. The reason you leave your country behind and seek living in another country is hot, is because the country is in war for so long, and is more than 22 years in the war. 2.9 million Dollars, Million of people displaced, abused, neglect, sickness, death, and hungry, all this is there. That's why we decided to get out of this country because it was a long war. There's no future. You don't know when is going to end. People are dividing themselves politically, killing themselves, hatred, and all this. That's why we decided to get out to start a new life.

Ieman: To live in piece.

Fatuma: To live in piece.

Ieman: So, what recommendations would you give others who are following behind you?

Fatuma: Is good always for somebody to make a decision for your life, what is good for you. You take the good one, and leave the bad one. Notice what I can tell. And for the woman who are in this situation I mentioned before that they have to go to school and educate themselves and know their rights. This's important. Education is the first priority we suppose to have it in a country, is because if we educate ourselves, we'll know our rights. That's why when I work for Lincoln Literacy Council is the same women I worked for them in Sudan. This's the same women I found them here. And they are seeking education seriously. I'm familiar to those women.

Ieman: Really, so you knew them before. You met them in Sudan?

Fatuma: In Ethiopia and Kenya and everywhere. I am familiar to them. So they are seeking this education now, and they come to school every day, which I'm very happy for them because if they know, they will know their rights, and they will know which is best for them. Because it's only when they decide to come to this country, America is a country with opportunity for education, opportunity of good things if they want to. If you don't want to get this opportunity, it's up to you, but education is available. It doesn't

matter whether you are old or young. Any kind of scale you want, you can get it. So, I'm so happy for those, and actually if you see them 10 years or 5 years ago, before they come to the United States. No body can even talk, now they can speak English, which is very good.

Ieman: So why this country has helped them?

Fatuma: Yeah, it helped them a lot. They always make their decision to come to school.

Ieman: What do you want your children to know and remember from this?

Fatuma: What's this?

Ieman: From this experience you went through this situation.

Fatuma: I don't think they'll remember anything, because they were not actually born in bad situation. They were born outside the country, and they came to Kenya. They got the Kenyan culture. They came to the United States. Totally they are out of what is going on. They'll never understand. They will come out with American culture mostly is because when they came they were small. Now they are big

Ieman: What culture and custom do you try to keep from Sudan? Is it important that your children remember Africa?

Fatuma: The question is not clear to me

Ieman: First what culture and customs do you want to keep it for the children, for example in Sudan there are some cultures and how they grow children, how people treat each others in Sudan. Do you have some specific things you want to keep it for them, or you want them to just to be Americans and to have the American culture?

Fatuma: Actually it's hard to decide or to tell them that they have to keep this culture because actually they are in totally different culture. I don't think they'll remember anything about any culture anywhere, because the culture they live this is where they'll be, so it's up to them. They'll choose the good one, and they'll throw the bad one. I don't think I'll say that they have to keep this one, because they are in different culture. It's hard; it's tough for me to do that. Because they are not in Sudan, they are not in South. I don't know how they are going to keep Sudanese culture, and they are in America. I think it makes sense.

Ieman: Is it important that your children remember Africa?

Fatuma: No I don't think. They remember Kenya. They remember Kenya little bit of, things in Kenya, but they still speak Suaheelly.

Ieman: Yeah, good!!

Fatuma: The oldest one.

Ieman: So, now they speak English and Suaheely. Suaheely is also very famous especially in Africa.

Fatuma: The oldest ones. The seven years and the one in the university. The rest they forgot it, but when they are saying things in Suaheely they know.

Ieman: So you speak many languages?

Fatuma: Yeah, I speak Nuwair, Denka, Shuluk, Ammari, Arabic, English and Suaheely, seven.

Ieman: So these are seven languages you speak. You speak fluently seven languages?

Fatuma: Yeah

Ieman: Very good. What was difficult about coming to the States, or Lincoln? We spoke generally about coming to the States. Did you find something specifically difficult about coming to the States?

Fatuma: States, you mean the United States?

Ieman: Yeah, United States.

Fatuma: There's no, nothing difficult. When I came I did my interview, and I know they'll accept me because of the reason I told them. Because I told them about what was going on in the country, and I need to go to the US to establish my new life. My history was success. They interviewed me and I passed the test. I came to the U.S. and I knew I was coming here. I have nothing to say. I know I'll be independent. It's a free country; nothing is going to threaten my life. My children will get education. And I'll work, I'll have a job, I'll pay my rent, I'll pay my bills. I'll live my life in America. So nothing was difficult to me, because when you come to this country, and you have education, you are great.

Ieman: Yeah, so life is going smoothly for you.

Fatuma: Yeah.

Ieman: Good.

Fatuma: I will not say it's very smoothly, but this's what I can do.

Ieman: We have talked a lot about the situation of women in Africa. What do you think about the situation of women in Lincoln?

Fatuma: Oh, this's totally different. The women who are behind in Sudan or in Africa, they are at home, but those who come to the U.S. A. will benefit more is because they'll get the experience, job experience, education, some training, some new life, some different culture. They'll learn some different things, so when they go back home, they'll know about there's other world beside the world they are worried. They'll know their rights, they're here now, no abuse, no neglect, no nothing. So they know how to fight for their rights. They hit you on your face, you call the police.

Ieman: So all these women you have met before in Africa, now you meet them here. Do you think that they are doing the same?

Fatuma: They are changed. They are changed a lot. The culture changed, everything changed. They don't look like the women I saw before. They look different. They learn so many different things. They drive the cars. They know how to get their rights. They are looking for the good jobs, they think about education, how to go to school to learn. This mentality was not there. So they knew when they come to this country, these are the things supposed to be.

Ieman: Some of them they go to the university.

Fatuma: There are some graduate from the university. You know Jaclyn, she is a dentist, and she is a doctor. We have some in the Community college. This's America. They've learned it from here. If you go to Omaha, we have some graduates from college. Southern Sudanese women because we live in a war situation, not because they don't have education. They do have education, but because there's no security in the country. In Kenya and Uganda women are very educated, is because they don't have a war. The war actually destroys the woman. They become a victim of this situation. So there's no way you can take care of your children and go to school, dying, killing, displacement and running, and all this. There's no way. You can do it in the situation of piece. This's why they are here in a situation of peice. They'll have to do the things in piece, so they can achieve what they are looking for.

Ieman: Great, so what is not done smoothly here? You said life is not exactly going smoothly, why?

Fatuma: Ah, here in Lincoln you mean?

Ieman: Yeah

Fatuma: Or United States?

Ieman: Yeah, in Lincoln and United States.

Fatuma: Everything cannot be perfect. You have to struggle in some way. The other way you can get it. You cannot get it smoothly; it has to be some difficulty. Of course we are

coming from different country. For other people they don't understand your problem exactly.

Ieman: So do you find some help here? Some people are helping you to find it easier?

Fatuma: Here in America?

Ieman: Yeah.

Fatuma: When you ask for help, you'll get help, but if you don't ask for help anybody will know that you need help unless you talk. So, I don't know the town because I just moved, and I know only people I work with. The people I knew since 9 months and this is the people I know, but mostly I depend on myself. I have or I don't have it I am satisfied because I have to convince myself. I have to learn what I'm doing. I have it, it's fine. I don't have it; it's fine this's what I am used to it.

Ieman: Yeah, great. Do you have anything to add Fatma for what we have said?

Fatuma: Yeah, My other thing I need to say to you, people has to understand our situation here in United States in general. We have some culture, which it goes wrong. Things go wrong and they misunderstand that. So many children have been taken away from our hands. They said we abuse them here. They took them away, and they don't know that it's a part of the culture. When they take your children away and say you abuse the kids, this is not abuse. We don't abuse our kids. They said this is the law. Law is totally different from where we came. Can't take your children alone, you know in Sudan is not there. So number two is; here when you ask for help, you get some, sometimes you don't get some help, but they'll have to understand also that we do have some issues going on in our life, because when you come from different country you come to establish your new life, you need help, so they'll give a lot of pressure. Do this and do this. You'll feel like you are in, they press you; they give you a lot of pressure until you decide, even not to ask anymore. This's not good. We are coming from a country there's no any document like Birth Certificate, Marriage Certificate, is because of the war situation. When you go there and ask, they'll ask you for these kinds of documents. How are you going to get these documents? People need to understand us more, to understand our culture. For them to know us, if we are going to be in this State, some have been here for 10 years in U.S. Some 11 years in U.S. They need to; people need to understand that these people who live here what things they like and what they don't like. We don't encourage the crime, because we don't like. We are good people. We follow the law, what they ask us to do. We don't make a problem to the other people. This's our nature and our culture. Now there is some people because they don't know the culture of America, and they don't know the law, some they'll go in the road, they'll drive their cars with no license, no insurance, and in Sudan you buy your car, you drive it. Nobody will ask you, you know.

Ieman: Some people here did it?

Fatuma: Yeah, they buy a car, they go in the street, and they go to jail.

Ieman: Oh!

Fatuma: They don't know, if you tell the police, the police will never understand.

Ieman: Yeah.

Fatuma: You buy a car in Sudan, you drive it. No body will ask you, no insurance, no whatever, you know how to drive, go in the road.

Ieman: But nobody told them?

Fatuma: They don't know. If you do not tell the American about the culture, America will never know us, so this's we have to exchange the culture, different from American culture. America will know our culture. We'll leave it, we'll live good, and we will not have more crimes going on.

Ieman: But you as an educated woman who worked for many organizations before in Africa and in the United States, ah what do you think about if some of the organizations here in Lincoln for example, they just volunteer to inform the new comers about this, to make some classes for education.

Fatuma: I wish if every person, because orientation they give to the refugees before they come to the U.S. is not enough.

Ieman: Yeah

Fatuma: They tell us about America, how you go there, how you run a house, how you do this, whatever. People who come from a village, there are people who come from town like us. I am a medical doctor wife. I came from town, I've a cooker, I've a fridge, and I've a good house. So I'm different from somebody who comes from a village who even don't have anything. So this is what they tell us, when you go there clean the house. We don't know how to clean the house? We live in a house, even better than the house we live in now. So when you come here, you need enough, enough, enough orientation. They have to orientate you. This's America. Now you are inside America. This is what we are supposed to do, because they tell us when you go to America in the airport, they will give you a car, they will give you money, and they will give you this. There is nothing like that. You have to struggle and get it. So the expectation when they come to the United States they find it, what they told there, and what they will find it here is different. So they feel hopeless, because they don't know.

Ieman: Uhu

Fatuma: Exactly, they don't have agenda. Why they come to the United States like me? I have an agenda, I've come to the United States and taken care of myself is because I know, but the other people don't know.

Ieman: Yeah, so what do you think? Do you propose that some organization take care of the new comers, and make good orientation for the people who come from their countries, because they don't know about the law here, they don't know things here as you said.

Fatuma: Yes, if they can establish some system here when people come from different countries, the immigrants set up some orientations, the time they do not find jobs. The time they are doing the papers. We come out with some idea in the classes, and tell them this is America. This is what you are instructing. Not everything is there. Somebody will take care of, but when they are told somewhere, then they will say this is America, and then they will feel like, oh this is what they told me, is no difference there.

Ieman: Some disappointment happens.

Fatuma: Disappointment actually.

Ieman: So you as a tutor Fatma, you help or you teach some of these new comers, don't you teach them about these things here in America.

Fatuma: No, we teach them English language.

Ieman: Only English language?

Fatuma: Yeah, you can't teach them about

Ieman: But the English language itself, the syllabus doesn't include this orientation?

Fatuma: No, no, it doesn't talk about America. It talks about how to know English and how to find a job, and what is the importance of education in United States. Why one should know to learn the English language. What is useful for it, and what is useless, all these things. So we have to tell them exactly, this is the most important.

Ieman: There is lack of information for the new comers.

Fatuma: Exactly, they come with very big expectation about America.

Ieman: Do you have any proposal to inform them? Do you have any specific idea?

Fatuma: The organizations here in the United States of America have to establish some policy, some idea to accommodate people in the country, so they will not get in trouble. And the trouble they get, they are innocent sometimes, is because they just don't know how to solve it and how to serve it.

Ieman: And when they go to the court, are there some lawyers?

Fatuma: I don't know, I don't know about that, but when they go to court is because of lack of language, they cannot even defend themselves.

Ieman: They cannot express themselves.

Fatuma: Yeah, exactly, unless they know the language.

Ieman: Big problem. They don't bring any translator?

Fatuma: The translator always doesn't tell, the profession of translator you have to take classes to be a translator, not everybody translates. Sometimes translation, if you don't know it, you can translate something wrong. It will be a breakdown between the lawyer, the judge and the customer.

Ieman: So you said some of the families have lost their children because the law had taken their children, because they accused them of child abuse.

Fatuma: Even the woman abuse, they say the woman abuse, a woman in Sudan they beat us, but for the family who came here, the husband and the wife who came to the United States, they need also to be educated that, this is American people, women don't fight, people don't fight in this country, no fighting between woman and man. You feel like you do not have to fight, you know there's a divorce and good buy. Is better, very easy, take your money, go to court, get it. Hitting, punching, all these

Ieman: But African people, they don't know. They have no idea about this.

Fatuma: When they find here in America man and the wife, they are fighting and the children there, they take their children away. Then the man will go to jail and woman will go to jail. Yes, this is law. You can't fight in front of the children, but there in Africa, they'll beat you in front of your children, so they need to be educated. They need to tell them this: here in this country we don't do this. There is no way you can change American law. This law has been established along time ago. The refugee or the immigrant people who come to the United States have to learn in this country there is a system to be followed. This is the law. The law said this and this and this, no fighting, no abuse, no whatever. You have to follow, so they will know, this is not Africa. We are not in Africa. This is what they need to learn. So is for the refugee to be learning about America. Law, especially law is the most important part of being in this country you have to follow. And they don't follow the law is because they don't know the law. The law is different from where the law, the law in Sudan is law of abuse and neglect. Here the law of the system to follow for you to be in United States. They need to learn this, because they are coming from the abuse country, they cannot do it here.

Ieman: So it happened, it happened that... I just wanted to give you an example for this.

Fatuma: There are some issues for some families, I cannot mention them, but they are here.

Ieman: Just give me an example of just like a woman was fighting with her husband

Fatuma: There are so many guys in the jail now, because they were fighting with the husbands. And there were so many women, they left the kids with the husband and they left. Is the same level, is the issue all over, not in this state alone, but in the United States. So it's up to Sudanese, up to immigrants to know.

Ieman: Thank you Fatma very much, because this will open the minds of Americans, or of organizations to consider these issues. I think these issues are very important. So those people who come here from Sudan, they should know about the law here. They should know at least about driving, so they will not get in trouble, driving laws, as well as children abuse. They shouldn't fight in front of their children, and these things. Thank you very much.