

**Deutsche Welle Radio
"Learning By Ear"
Jobs & Training 1: Nurse**

Part 1:**Text: Richard Lough, Kenya****Editor: Ulrich Neumann, Maja Dreyer****Part 2:****Interview: Julius Kanubah****Editor: Katrin Ogunsade**

1 Narrator**1 Voice-over: Judith (29 years old)**

Intro

Hello and welcome to our Learning by Ear series about jobs and education. In the next eight episodes we will introduce you to a number of young Africans who are pursuing different careers, and give you some practical insights into their work. In our interviews with professionals at the end of each story we'll also advise you on ways into the job. In this first programme, we are going to meet Judith, a young hospital nurse from Kenya.

1. SFX_Ward**2. O-Ton Judith_1**

My name is Judith Mweu. I work in Kenyatta National Hospital, in a private wing in a ward called 10 C where we receive a wide range of medical cases. We admit patients primarily for care, observations and those who require surgery. We also have a wide range of diagnostic measures...because we don't want to try and treat what we don't know. We want to establish what the problem is and treat the exact disease or problem that the patient has.

3. SFX: X-fade into SFX_Prep and trolley

29-year-old Judith Mweu is preparing for her afternoon shift at a large state hospital in Kenya’s capital Nairobi. Judith qualified as a nurse six years ago. After finishing her studies she had to complete a one-year internship at three different hospitals across the country. She finished in 2003 and came here one year later.

It’s just after midday and she loads up her trolley with the drugs, sterile syringes and plastic gloves she’ll need over the coming hours. With everything ready Judith sets off down the ward’s corridor.

4. O-Ton Judith_2

We have a capacity of 23 beds. Today we have about 3 beds that are empty. However, at times, especially during the post election violence, the bed capacity was always full.

1. SFX_Ward [runs underneath throughout]

Kenyatta National Hospital is Kenya’s largest state-funded hospital. All told, it has nearly 2000 beds says Judith. The hospital employs thousands of nursing staff as well as doctors, surgeons and counsellors. So they work a shift pattern: mornings, afternoons and nights. The routine varies slightly depending on the shift. Here’s what Judith will be doing today...

5. O-Ton Judith_3

A typical afternoon entails giving medications. Basically we have oral medicines and those that have to be injected. We also turn patients who are not able to turn themselves to prevent bed sores. We also

encourage the patients. We give them psychological care, we observe them, and in particular we measure blood sugars, blood pressures, and we take the pulse...

6. SFX_Judith_Patient_1 [full up for 10 seconds then fade down and under next track]

The first patient on Judith’s round is Anya Wambui. Anya is a diabetic whose blood sugar levels recently sank dangerously low. She also finds it hard to speak. Judith starts off by asking her how she’s feeling before taking Anya’s pulse and blood pressure...

6. SFX_Judith_Patient_1 [fade back up at ‘Ok let’s see how your blood pressure is’ through to the sound of taking blood pressure]

Judith has a very good bedside manner. Her voice is calm and gentle as she talks each patient through what she is doing and why. Judith says the patients are already experiencing enough distress. She or her colleagues do not want to make it worse by not treating them with care and respect. As she works her way through the checklist of tests, Judith explains exactly what she’s looking for...

7. O-Ton Judith_4

We look at the patient as a whole. When I look at her I want to hear her voice. So that tomorrow if something has deviated from the norm, I will be able to tell: Today she is losing her voice, something has happened ...so every time I meet a patient especially for the first time, I establish a baseline situation and from that time onwards, there is going to be continuity of care. So, if something happens or they take a turn for the

worse, it is noted quickly. The best measures that need to be done are put in place without wasting a single second.

From the time she was a young girl Judith knew she wanted to be a nurse. She says she used to be a regular visitor to her local hospital with minor illnesses and would admire there the work of the doctors and nurses. At school she decided she wanted to do the same. She had no doubts that her future career lay in treating sick people and comforting their relatives.

But for any school pupils thinking of becoming a nurse she has a warning: a nursing degree is tough and requires quite good grades at school!

8. O-Ton Judith_5

It is taxing. During the course you will see why they wanted those high grades because the course is very complicated... The first year of my class contained 69 students but only 25 of us graduated. So that alone shows how taxing it is. Nursing education, just like any other health science has to be strict because the facts have to be learned and learned correctly. There are no two ways around it. There's only one way to do it, so the teachers are very strict, they are more strict than in other professions.

But, if you want to do it then go for it, says Judith. Because if you succeed, nursing is full of rewards. There's nothing more satisfying than seeing a patient leave the ward in good health, having come in sick and in need of your care.

9. SFX_Patient_2

Judith moves on to the next bed at which point she adds that in her job you do have to develop a thick skin. In any hospital, says Judith, death is a grim reality and you just have to learn to cope with it...

10. O-Ton Judith_6

At times it can be very demoralising because sometimes the efforts we put in to help the patient do not succeed. Each patient responds differently. So some might respond well, others might not...so after doing all we can and giving the patient the best medical and nursing care possible, at the end of the day when we don't succeed sometimes it can be demoralising.

11. SFX_Canteen

It's midway through her shift and Judith has come to the hospital's makeshift canteen to take her break. It can be a tiring day, she says, as you can't afford to lose your concentration. Make one mistake and you may cost a patient their life. As she sips on a soda she ponders what makes a good nurse...

12. O-Ton Judith_7

A good nurse needs to be patient - patient with the patients and with the relatives. Because I realise that when I am dealing with the patient, dealing with the relatives and family and friends can not be avoided.

It's clear that Judith has patience in abundance and is good at her job. She regrets that many doctors and nurses like her across the continent are leaving to work in Europe and America. This exodus of skilled

workers from Africa is called the ‘brain drain’. Judith admits it’s a real problem for healthcare in her country...

13. O-Ton Judith_8

There are so many who are doing it. The brain drain is really affecting the health care facilities in Africa big time, I would say. Because the US and UK being developed countries their payments are higher and there are better working conditions.

14. SFX_trolley+ward

Judith admits the opportunity to work in Great Britain is very tempting. But as she returns to her rounds on Ward 10C she insists that for the time being she wants to stay put and help people in Kenya. For any one who wants to follow her into nursing, she has this advice:

15. O-Ton “Final quote” Judith

I would encourage them to really look forward to the career. It is a good career, a good profession. They should be prepared for the challenges like having to read almost all through and having to deal with other people’s lives, being careful. Looking at every corner is mandatory! ... but the challenge is worth it and at the end of the day they be able to see the number of patients they have assisted and be happy about it.

After a quick break, Judith is back on the ward. There is never a dull moment, she says. You just never know what you will be dealing with next.

Outro Feature

From Kenyatta National Hospital in Nairobi, you have been listening to Judith who decided to train to work as nurse – a very exciting but challenging job, she says.

Jingle “Ways into the Job”

Intro Interview:

Do you want to find out how to become a nurse? Stay tuned and listen to our reporter Julius Kanubah from Liberia. He talked to Coco Frances Vaneway. She is a registered nurse at John F. Kennedy Medical Centre in Monrovia, one of Liberia’s largest hospitals.

Interview – How to become a nurse – Reporter: Julius Kanubah

Outro:

That was Coco Frances Vaneway from the John F. Kennedy Medical Centre in Monrovia, Liberia, talking to our reporter Julius Kanubah. And that’s all for today’s Learning by Ear programme about job-profiles. Thanks for being with us. If you would like to find out more about this and other professions, or other Learning by Ear programmes, or if you just like to listen to this show again, go to our website at [www dot dwworld dot de forward slash lbe](http://www.dwworld.de/forward/slash/lbe)
Good bye and good luck!