

## MASAI GIRLS FIGHT TO STAY AT SCHOOL

The Masai (numbering about 400,000) are a tribe of cattle herders who live in East Africa and follow their animals on seasonal migrations. The harsh<sup>1</sup> reality of economics means that many Masai girls are taken out of school at an early age by their family. Girls are traditionally considered old enough to marry at 12 or 14, and parents receive a dowry of cattle when they marry. Now teachers at the Africa Inland Church School in the Kajiado region are trying to help those girls who want to continue their learning, rather than get married.

Christine Shuaka was 15 when her family said she had to get married, but she refused: 'I said no. I said I should be educated first and then after I could marry – I would have enough worth to be married. My parents did not want me to continue my education.

But to rebel and stay at school the girls have to take drastic<sup>2</sup> steps. Often they have to run away from the family home and they consider the Africa Inland Church School a safe place to run away to. Priscilla Nangurai is the school's headmistress: 'They know they have a right to education. The school has become a safe place, and that encourages them, and gives them courage to run away and come to school'. Even with laws which give every child the right to schooling attitudes within the Masai are only slowly changing, and often government officials have to step in.<sup>3</sup>

(Adapted from BBC News)



### GLOSSARY

- 1 severe
- 2 extreme
- 3 intervene

### TRUE OR FALSE

● Decide if the following sentences are true or false and correct the false ones.

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| <p>① The Masai live in West Africa.<br/>.....</p> <p>② By age 15, Masai girls are thought to be ready to marry.<br/>.....</p> <p>③ Families receive a grant when their daughter marry.<br/>.....</p> <p>④ The Africa Inland Church School has become the home of girls who want to go on studying.<br/>.....</p> <p>⑤ Christine Shuaka is the school principal.<br/>.....</p> <p>⑥ Government officials do not intervene in the educational issue in Kenya.<br/>.....</p> | <p><b>ACTIVITIES</b><br/><br/>T F</p> <p>T F</p> <p>T F</p> <p>T F</p> <p>T F</p> <p>T F</p> |
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### SENTENCE COMPLETION

● Match a line of the first column with one of the second column in order to create sentences.

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| <p>① For the traditional Masai family</p> <p>② About half of the the Masai girls</p> <p>③ Masai girls in Kenya are battling</p> <p>④ Christine Shuaka told her parents she loved school</p> | <p>Ⓐ to remain pupils instead of becoming young wives.</p> <p>Ⓑ and wanted to be a doctor.</p> <p>Ⓒ are taken out of education to get married.</p> <p>Ⓓ keeping a girl at school makes no economic sense.</p> |
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