

100% of the proceeds from the sale of *Poverty and Promise* go for the advancement of Kenyans.

AWARDS for Trade Paper Release

Gold Medal IPPY: 2009 Independent Publisher Awards (Multicultural)

National Best Book Winner: Book News USA (Multicultural)

First Place Non-Fiction: Arizona Authors Association Literary Program

Gold Medal INDIE: 2009 Next Generation Indie Awards (Multicultural)

Finalist INDIE: 2009 Next Generation Indie Awards (Travel)

Finalist Glyph: 2009 Arizona Book Publisher Association (Multicultural)

Finalist Glyph: 2009 Arizona Book Publisher Association

New! Audio Book Version of *Poverty and Promise:* *One Volunteer's Experience of Kenya* Read by the Author, Cindi Brown

REVIEWS FOR TRADE PAPER 2008 RELEASE OF *POVERTY AND PROMISE*

"Though Brown decided to return to America before finishing her two-year contract in Kenya with U.K.-based international relief organization VSO (Voluntary Services Overseas), she relishes her recent experiences there in this compassionate, affecting memoir. She describes her work for TICH (Tropical Institute of Community Health and Development), the programs they try hard to implement, and the hours she and her colleagues spend in training. Impressed with her natural surroundings, Brown endures overbearing heat and celebrates the country's intrinsic grace ("I see more than dustiness, more than landscapes made hazy by the sun's glare") while witnessing the harsh living conditions, constant hunger, disease, crime and corruption plaguing its citizens; young men repeatedly try to befriend her, hoping to marry and emigrate to the United States. Though ultimately unnerved and overwhelmed, Brown conveys her story honestly and effectively, upfront about her fear and frustration, as well as the rare occasion for hope. Book proceeds go to support programs in western Kenya."

-Publisher's Weekly

"It takes a special type of person to volunteer - to do something for another with no compensation. *Poverty and Promise: One Volunteer's Experience of Kenya* follows Cindi Brown as she speaks about her days as a volunteer in rural Kenya, where many of the luxuries taken for granted by Americans are simply unheard of. A touching story filled with little triumphs over great adversity, *Poverty and Promise* is highly recommended for community library memoir and biography collections."

-Midwest Book Review

"An inspiring journey of the soul, and a rare insight into the lives of Kenyans. The author shares her emotional struggles dealing with overwhelming poverty; and with the cultural stereotypes and doubts that keep most of us from ever embarking on such a courageous journey." **-Julie Conover**, Host and Producer, *Passport to Adventure TV*

"A compassionate memoir of the highs and lows of volunteering internationally. The reader is swept into the author's love, anger, frustration, and deep connection to the poor, the sick, the brave, and the caring people of a troubled Kenya. A compelling read!" **-Rita Golden Gelman**, Author, *The Female Nomad*

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Audio Book Title Information

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Abridged - Narrated by the Author
2 CDs - Approximate Total Time: 4 hrs
Pub. Date: December 31, 2009
Retail Price: \$10.95

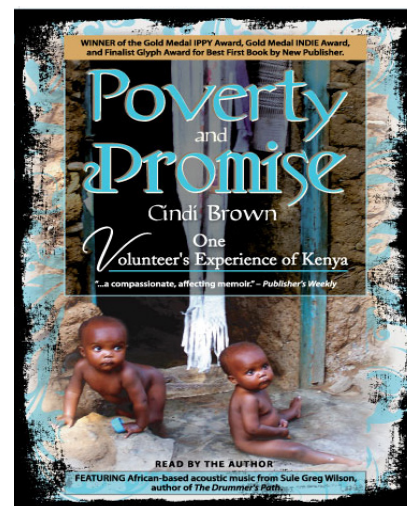
"I was constantly enamored with the people's personalities, foods, music, beliefs, and celebrations, finding delight in their ingenuity, and alternating between frustration and anguish over their daily challenges. Narrating *Poverty and Promise* celebrates their glorious resilience, grace, and promise."
Author, Cindi Brown

Available through:

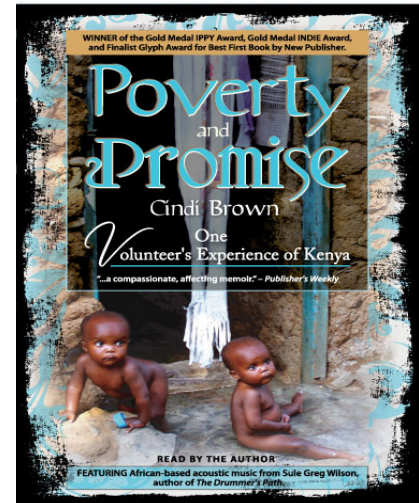
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Pages: 304, Trim size: 6 x 9



**Cindi Brown, author of *Poverty and Promise*,
reflects on Kenya and Kenyans
(Introduction to audio book)**



Each day, I would walk to school on dirt roads, crossing paved streets and dodging cars and boda bodas (bikes for hire). I passed little herds of sheep and large groups of cows, school children in uniform shouting out, “Hey, white lady,” or “How are you?!” Young, handsome men from the slums walked to town for work, wearing slacks and dress shirts, or t-shirts ripped and worn. Cars passed, kicking up red dust. I would smile and say “Hi” to Maasai warriors guarding the fancy homes. Sometimes they would stand up from their rock perch and shake hands, their lovely red plaid robes falling around their shoulders and covering their tiny, bony legs.

One block from school, the smell of hogs and their grunts would drift from behind a vine-covered wire fence. A family of turkeys lived there, too, and they’d be on the road, pecking in the grass, sometimes chasing people. Occasionally, I would pass coworkers, perhaps Mr. Henry Oyugi, perched on the back of a boda boda and calling “good morning.” Seeing his bearded face, tweed jacket and notebook stuffed with loose papers, as he bumped on the back of the bike, would make me smile. Henry’s research office was next to mine; the only thing separating us was a wall of slatted windows and some minor, but interesting, cultural differences. A student or intern, or both, were always in Henry’s office, inputting research data into his computer or getting a lesson in research methodologies. Lots of loud accented talk in a mixture of Luo, Kiswahili and English, punched with laughter here and there. I’d watch Henry and his prodigies with their heads bent over a data book, then I’d turn to look out our second floor window, across the tops of trees with red and yellow flowers in full stance. I looked toward Lake Victoria, into a crystal sky dotted with cloud puffs, and heard bird wings flapping, or Director Dan’s rooster, having strolled from his yard next door, crowing below. Henry’s voice would rise and I’d look back to see someone else entering his office with a question or a problem, bodies collecting in Henry’s realm, voices mingling languages and hands clasping in greeting.

Great Lakes University of Kisumu (GLUK) in Africa. I worked at this college and assisted with communications and the planning of their Annual Scientific Conference and participation in the agricultural show. Passing through the gate each morning meant greeting Fred, John, and other guards, signing the logbook and acknowledging others who were arriving or leaving. Greetings are very important in Africa. It’s rude to simply say hello and keep walking. The standard exchange involved shaking hands, usually both hands, and holding on as you ask each other about your morning and your previous evening and your night. They’re rather lovely, these hand-holding, eye-gazing exchanges. I miss them. And I miss the people.

Two blocks from school, thousands of people lived in Nyalenda slums, where we worked to train widows in income generating projects. Two blocks in the other direction is the house where I rented servant’s quarters from a Sikh Indian family. They took me into their fold like a daughter. When I think of all the things I offered and shared, hoping my contributions made a difference in some way, all I can recall is how much the people of Kenya gave to me, how much they touched and taught me about compassion and living in difficult situations. Often, I feel guilty for returning to the “good” life in the United States, leaving them behind to continue to fight to advance their lives.

This book is my homage to Kenyans and my celebration of them. Whatever I was looking for when I moved to Africa, I found it. I found hope and heartache. While my heart heals a little each day, it will never be whole and I wouldn’t want it to be. Recalling the pangs of seeing sick babies and frightened parents, of seeing people diseased but smiling, is like a spur in my soul, prodding me to action. I no longer walk the dirt streets of Kisumu, passing cows, small children, young men and old Mamas, but I carry them all with me, close to me, and share them with readers who long to know of life in a foreign land, of lives of promise in a foreign place.

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