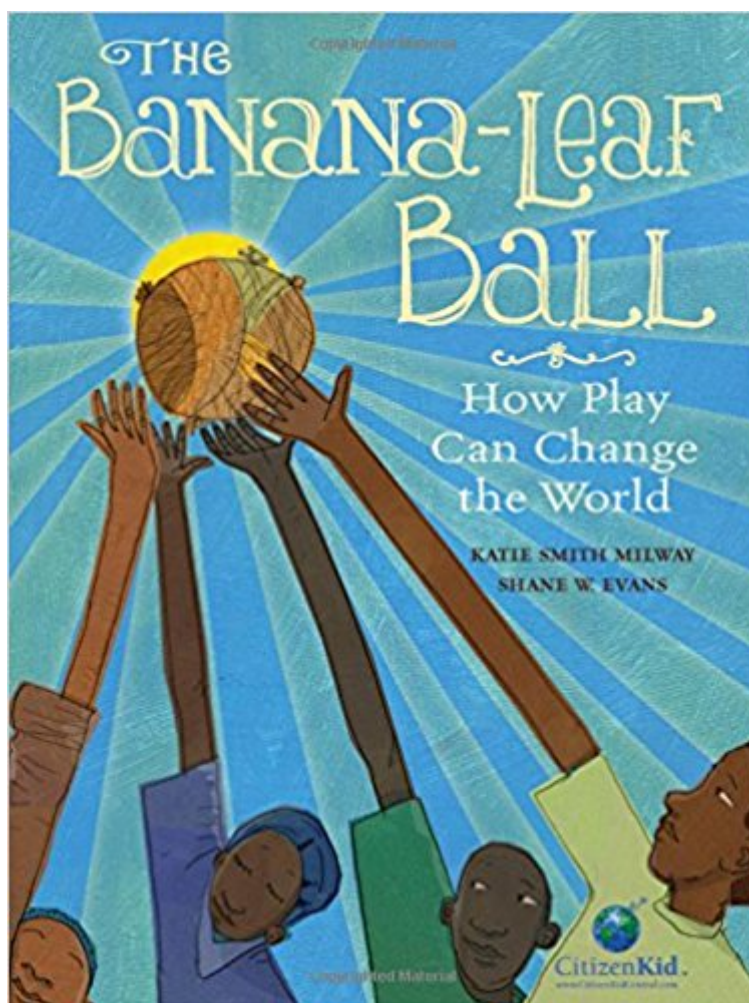


The book was found

# The Banana-Leaf Ball: How Play Can Change The World (CitizenKid)



## Synopsis

Separated from his family when they were forced to flee their home, a young East African boy named Deo lives alone in the Lukole refugee camp in Tanzania. With scarce resources at the camp, bullies have formed gangs to steal what they can, and a leader named Remy has begun targeting Deo. Then one day a coach gathers all the children to play soccer. Though Deo loves soccer and has even made his own ball out of banana leaves, he's unsure at first about joining in when he sees Remy on the field. But as Deo and the other boys get drawn into the game, everything begins to change. Their shared joy in playing provides the children --- including Remy --- with a sense of belonging. Ball by ball, practice by practice, children who were once afraid of each other laugh together, the book explains, and no one feels so alone anymore. Based on a true story, Katie Smith Milway's inspiring tale shows how a desperate situation can be improved by finding common ground through play. It provides a perfect starting point for discussing the social justice issues surrounding the growing number of refugees worldwide. Award-winning Shane W. Evans's artwork powerfully and poignantly personalizes for children the experience of refugees. Furthermore, the book examines the value of using sports to build pro-social behavior, particularly as it relates to bullying. By depicting characters who change and evolve over the course of the story, kids of all backgrounds and experiences will find something positive to relate to. The back matter contains information about the real Deo, instructions for games that build trust and inclusion through play, and suggestions for how to support play-based nonprofit organizations.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 650 (What's this?)

Series: CitizenKid

Hardcover: 32 pages

Publisher: Kids Can Press (April 4, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1771383313

ISBN-13: 978-1771383318

Product Dimensions: 9.4 x 0.4 x 12.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 7 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #237,074 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #119 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Africa](#)

Age Range: 6 - 9 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

A moving story about how a single item can change a life and how playing can fill that life with joy. Booklist --Booklist This outside-looking-in depiction of the power of play to bridge new relationships in Burundi serves as a universal lesson that all readers can draw on. Kirkus Reviews

Katie Smith Milway, a native of Vancouver, B.C., has coordinated community development programs in Africa and Latin America for Food for the Hungry; consulted on village banking in Senegal with World Vision and was a delegate to the 1992 Earth Summit. She has written books and articles on sustainable development and is currently a partner at nonprofit consultancy The Bridgespan Group, based in Boston, Massachusetts.

All of Katie Smith Milway's books have such powerful life lessons that make it so easy and enjoyable for parents and teachers to incorporate positive teaching moments while reading with their children. The Banana-Leaf Ball book is one more fantastic book of Katie's that focuses on empathy and how the act of play can bring children together (in this case children in a refugee camp) and create social change within their communities. I often look for books with great illustrations to show my kids different ways to create art and Shane Evans, the illustrator has used a fantastic mix of collage, drawing, and painting to portray this meaningful story. Other books with great life lessons we have enjoyed by the author are One Hen and The Good Garden.

This book will be a great addition to any library, public or in your home. I'm an empty-nester parent who has been collecting children's books my whole life, and the illustrations in this book are among the most beautiful I've seen. They incorporate a collage-look to perfectly complement the inspiring story. The story is set a world away from most people who will purchase this book, yet it will feel very familiar. The parts that seem different - being rushed from your home by torches and machetes, and ending up in a refugee camp - are good opportunities to learn, and practice empathy. And at the end of the book there are a number of ways to put that empathy into action. They list several organizations that you can look into, and maybe support with fundraising, as well as several great games that you can try out yourself to see just how powerful play can be to transform individuals and groups. Congratulations to Katie Smith Milway and Shane Evans!

Katie Smith Milway has done it again! Her new book gives young readers a glimpse into the lives of children in refugee camps and how they might feel. The young protagonist, Deo, has some of the same problems as the rest of us -- how to fit in, how to handle bullies, how to make friends. Deo finds his way through soccer, and as a member of a soccer team, he no longer feels alone in the world. This is all based on a true story of a child from Burundi who spent 15 years in a refugee camp (after fleeing an attack), and grew up to be a soccer coach, and then a trainer of other coaches in Burundi. I highly recommend this beautiful book.

This was a really good book to help children understand the bigger world out there. It had some really nice illustrations and a story that was easy to follow and will encourage friendships.

I think this is Katie Smith Milway's best book yet! Most children can relate to Deo's love for soccer. Katie handles the difficult issues of being forced violently from home and being separated from family in a sensitive and age-appropriate way. This is a beautiful story of the power of sport to break down barriers and unify us as we work together as a team. The illustrations are also wonderful. My own children are grown but I can't wait to give this book to my youngest nephew!

This book would be a winner for any grade-school classroom. It's an inspiring story about how the person you couldn't stand can become your friend; how bullying can be defeated in the process; and how hope and good can be wrested from the bleakest circumstances: among kids wrested from their families and surviving in a refugee camp. The beautiful illustrations are a bonus, and kids will see themselves and their common lives in them.

We loved this book! The story is beautiful and inspiring and my 6 year old learned so much and asked so many questions. The teachable moments of empathy and inclusion are so important and timely.

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