

of my childhood. I lived in a refugee camp for three years, so I know what it is like to have no food and no security, and to feel like you could die at any moment.

**MC: How is your family?**

**NP:** Most of them are safe in a camp in Ethiopia. I was mostly worried about my brother, who had left the camp to find a job in South Sudan's capital, Juba. I was working at the couture shows in February when I got a call from a relative saying he had been shot and killed while trying to run away from the fighting. He was only 18. I was devastated but realized I had to try to help others facing the same appalling dangers.

**MC: How did you start the campaign?**

**NP:** I reached out to other South Sudanese women I knew and said to them, "We must do something to save our country." I felt that if we joined together as sisters from all the different tribes, maybe that could help bring an end to the feuding.

**MC: What do you hope to achieve?**

**NP:** It's the same as when I was a child—civilians are caught in the middle. We want the international community to make sure women and children are taken away from the violence and that they have food and medicine. Right now, thousands of people are dying because of the shortages.

**MC: As a South Sudanese woman, how hard is it to speak out?**

**NP:** It's very difficult. I come from a society where women don't have many rights. Men think we should stay out of politics. Most girls are married off at 12 or 14. I was supposed to have an arranged marriage, too, but was lucky to escape. That's why I feel I have to use my privileged position to be a voice for other women in my country. At the end of the day, I am still a refugee girl with a refugee family trapped in this horrific situation. I have to do everything I can to help.



Nykhor Paul (center) with supporters Nyanchiew Bichiok (left) and Kent Forte at the We Are Nilotic photo exhibit in New York City in April.



**SOUTH KOREA**

## ON THE RIGHT TRACK

Seoul gets a face-lift by slashing plastic surgery ads in public spaces

**PLASTERED ON THE WALLS** of bus depots and subway stations in Seoul, South Korea, are shiny advertisements for the city's countless plastic surgery clinics. Giant posters depict badly lit, sad-faced "before" photos next to bright, smiling "after" photos of women who have undergone a nose or chin job to achieve the Korean ideal of Westernized beauty. "They make me want to have surgery," says Diana Kim, a 23-year-old nursing student. "I sometimes feel like I want to go to a clinic because the before and after photos look so different."

Now it's the ads that are going under the knife. The capital city recently began implementing new restrictions against misleading advertisements on public transportation. No more than 20 percent of advertising space in the subway and just 5 percent on buses can be devoted to plastic surgery. Overly sensational language and images will be banned entirely, and ads will not be allowed in areas close to schools.

The new rules are aimed at reining in Seoul's surgery fetish. "Korea has among the highest number of plastic surgery procedures, with one in five women having been cosmetically enhanced," says Catherine Foss, executive director at the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery. The ads, which rarely display any mention of cosmetic surgery's many risks, have inflamed some citizens and government officials, who say they make surgery look easy and promote an unhealthy emphasis on body image, especially among young girls. The outrage peaked in December, when a high-school-age girl slipped into a coma during a nose job. "Plastic surgery is too common in Korea," says Lee Chang-min, manager at the Seoul Metropolitan Government's bus policy division. "So much exposure to it through the ads that dominate public areas has made it too approachable."

In a country where plastic surgery can be planned via smartphone and double eyelid surgery is a typical high school graduation gift, the restrictions will give Seoul's public spaces a much-needed makeover. —Leslie Patrick

**BY THE NUMBERS CONTINUED**

**PLASTIC SURGERY IS BIG BUSINESS WORLDWIDE. HERE ARE THE TOP EIGHT COUNTRIES, RANKED BY NUMBER OF PROCEDURES IN 2011:**

**905K** BRAZIL

**415K** CHINA

FROM TOP: MONA KIM, COURTESY OF HAKIM MUTLAG INNIS; OPPOSITE PAGE, FROM TOP: COURTESY OF THE SUBJECT, GETTY IMAGES; SHUTTERSTOCK