



Resources

Indatwa ihora kw'isonga nshimira (The Most Outstanding Institution I am Grateful For)

Solive Niyotwizeye

Rwanda Children's Adult Literacy & Numeracy Program

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The following poem was composed by a learner in an adult literacy and numeracy program provided by an organization called Rwanda Children that offers a diverse array of educational programs to adults and children in the Ntarama sector, Bugesera district, and country of Rwanda. The program provides six months of education and follows a curriculum provided by the Rwandan government which emphasizes reading and writing in Kinyarwanda—which is the national language in Rwanda. The program also supplements this curriculum with education around health and nutrition while providing a variety of supports to its adult students. The poem was performed at a graduation ceremony in January 2023 by a student who entered the program unable to read or write her own name. Two of the attendees were deeply moved by the poem and approached the student to ascertain her interest in publishing. The student-poet (first author) was delighted, and it was agreed that Ntarama native and founder of Rwanda Children (2nd author) would translate the poem into English while the 3rd author would write an introduction explaining the context around the poem.

The journal *Dialogues in Social Justice: An Adult Education Journal* was selected as a target outlet because of its “practice of freedom” section that publishes poetry with implications for the field of adult education. The authors hope that this poem can serve as an inspiration to those starting their adult literacy journey as well as to those who have committed themselves to teaching language and literacy to adults.

Poem (Kinyarwanda)
UMUVUGO
NSHIMIRE INDATWA IHORA KU ISONGA

1. Nshimire indatwa
Ndangamirwa Rudasumbwa
Uzahore ku isonga
Mucyekerekezo kigana aheza
5. Isura yawe tuzayihorana GSF.
Twebwe wasize ukatunogereza
Twaterwaga ipfunwe
Ryo gupfukiranwa no kutamenya
Uba uraduhuje turajijuka
10. Tumenya gusoma Ikinyarwanda.
Ndetse no kwandika turabizi
Imibare turayandika tukanabara
Icyongereza turadidibuza
Ibyo byose ni wowe tubikesha
15. Uzahore ku isonga.
Ibyo watugejejeho byo ni byinshi
Aho ugereye iwacu Intarama
Wadukuye mubwigunge
Ubuwuzi butugeraho tutavunitse
20. Uburezi bufite ireme urabwubaka.
Uburere n'ubumenyi
Niyo mpano iruta izindi
Upfunyikira abakwizihye
Uwanyuze iwawe ntayoberana
25. Ntabura ijambo mubandi.
Ahorana ishema n'isheja
Akagira n'ijabo ryibyho agukeshya
Twe abo watuje turakurata
Tukakuvuga ibigwi ukwiriye
30. Uzahore ku isonga.
Wowe uhoza ibibondo
Ugahumuriza ababyeyi
Uri Rudasumbwa iteka
Uzahorane imbyeyi zikamwa
35. Imirima yawe izahore yera umusubirizo.
Abakugana bagwire
Bavome amazi afutse rwose
Bashire inyota Bose
Basakaze ibyiza byawe
40. Babikangurire n'abandi.
Uzabe icyamamare hose
Dore ko n'ibikorwa byawe
Byivugira ubwabyo

45. Si amabanga cyangwa ubwiru
 Niwamurongo mwiza.
 Wadushyiriyeho twese
 Uduha amahirwe twese
 Yo kugera kuntego nziza
 Tukagera ku iterambere
50. Rishingiye kubajijutse.
 Bitangirwa iteka n'intwari
 Ndavuga mwarimu mwiza
 Rususurutsa itetero
 Ni wowe ubyara abakomeye
55. Abahanga bose baca iwawe.
 Nterura nshima ubuyobozi
 Inzego zose zisenyera umugozi umwe
 Mudushakira imibereho myiza
 Uko mufatanye urunana
60. Mukorana umurava n'ubwitange
 Natwe tubari inyuma
 Ngo twubake igihugu cyacu
 Ntituzabatererana murunana rw'imihigo
 Imihigo yacu nimwe
65. N'ukubaka iterambere.
 Rishingiye kumuco wacu
 Tugaharanira kwesa imihigo
 No kurwanya ikibi cyose
 Cyakototera ubumwe bwacu
70. Kigamije gusenya ibyo twagezeho.
 Kuri uyu muni mwiza
 Turashimira buri wese
 Witabiriye iki gitaramo
 Kitwizihye twese
75. Twishimiye cyane.
 Umwanya twahawe
 Wo gusakaza umunezero
 Utuvuye ku mutima
80. Ugasesekara kumunwa.
 Sinabona ishimwe nashima
 Sinaronka ituro ntura
 Rudasumbwa ubahiga bose
 Mutuye inganzo idatuba
85. Muzahore ku isonga.
 Mugwize ibyiza, mugire urugwiro.
 Yari umusizi wasizwe inganzo n'iyamuhanze
Niyotwizeye Solive Murakoze.

Poem (English)
The most outstanding institution I am grateful for

1. I am very grateful to a well-respected institution
 The one that is preferred and exceptional (outstanding)
 I wish you to stay at the top and keep winning
 May you stay on the right track heading to a pleasant level
5. We are going to protect your wonderful Rwanda Children image
 For us who have been blessed by you
 Previously shame was always on our face
 As we had been kept uneducated and unformed
 But you put us together and educated us
10. Then, we pursued literacy in Kinyarwanda language
 Moreover, we now know how to write
 We can write and count numbers
 We can speak English fluently
 All of these were possible because of Rwanda Children
15. May you stay at the top(winning)
 You have empowered us in many ways
 Since you arrived in our home village of Ntarama
 You lifted us from loneliness
 We have access to healthcare services without a problem
20. You built a sustainable education system
 With discipline and knowledge
 The most important gift
 You give everyone who comes your way
 All your alumni can't be mistaken as they stand out among others
25. Their voices highly count in the public
 They always have pride and dignity
 As a result of your effort they have integrity
 For us you gave a home
 We give you praises you deserve
30. May you stay at the top
 One who wipe children's tears
 Comforter of parents
 You are the best all the time
 May you remain with milk cows
35. May your food fields continue to produce forever
 May traffic at your place multiply
 Therefore, people would fetch proper water
 To take away thirst
 Then spread the good news of your goodness
40. For the sake of sharing with others
 May you become a famous everywhere
 Especially since your works
 Speaks for itself

45. As it is not a secret or mystery
That is the right pathway
You have set for us
You gave us the same opportunity
To achieve greatest goals
And reach development
50. Development that is based on skilled people
The ones that always get started by heroes
I mean a good teacher
The keeper of children nurturing space
You give birth to the most prosperous people
55. Most intelligent people goes through your program
I am lifting my voice to praise the leadership
That works together for common good
To find a better future
As you team up
60. And work hard with sacrifice
We are behind you
So we can build our country
We will not abandon you in this journey of delivery
We have same goals
65. which is to build proper development
That is based on culture
Aiming to win
And fighting against bad influences
That could come toward our unity
70. With intention of destroying our achievements
On this good day
We are thankful for everyone
Who attended this congregation(Graduation)
Interesting to all of us
75. And we are happy for
The time we have been given
To spread happiness
That comes from our hearts
80. Visibly seen on our lips
I cannot find best way to express gratitude
I cannot find best way to repay
The unbeaten organization that conquered all
I offer you this unreserved piece of art
85. Stay at the top (Keep winning)
Keep storing the goods and hospitality
It was the artist who has been anointed by her creator

Niyotwizeye Solive



Figure 1. Poem Being Read at an Adult Literacy Graduation Ceremony at Rwanda Children Christian School by (Left) Betty Ndacyayisenga & (Right) Solive Niyotwizeye



Solive Niyotwizeye is twenty-one years old, and a single mom who currently lives in Bugesera district with her parents and her son Pacifique Niyibikora who is two years and a half years old. She works as an agricultural laborer and recently graduated in the third intake of Rwanda Children’s Adult Literacy and Numeracy program. Her wish is to continue her studies and get the chance to learn a technical skill.



Serge Gasore is a mentor, author, speaker, and is married with three children. He received a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and two master’s degrees (Global IT Leadership and Global Service) at Abilene Christian University. He is a co-founder of Rwanda Children Christian School.



Jeremy Bohonos is an Assistant Professor of Adult Education at Texas State University. His research focuses on organizational (in)justice with a special emphasis on race and racism in the workforce as well as adult learning in sub-Saharan Africa.

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