

*The following words are from Ssentongo Joshua and have been transcribed exactly as he wrote them in February 2014.*

**My name is Ssentongo Joshua, born in Kampala, Uganda.** I am the third among the 6 children born to Kamulegeya Godfrey and Nabunya Rebecca – all Ugandans.

I was born in a very poor family in that my father could not afford looking after the family and at the same time pay for our education. We could go to school but only to be denied report cards at the end of each and every term due to fees balance more over in the poor schools we used to attend in our early childhood.



Getting food was a tug of war, in that I don't remember any single day in our family that we ate more than once - maybe it's the reason why nobody is tall in our family. If we ate lunch, then in the evening we used to starve for supper. If we ate supper, that means we had been starving for the whole day. All that miserable life above was because my parents were denied a chance for education and they were totally illiterate. It was tending to be generational because it had started showing signs of following us because there was no indicator that we could study beyond primary seven.

The days of hope started when our grandmother took us from our family together with our mother to Wakiso, Bulabakulu village - in an organisation which helps orphans and poor families where we started getting real education. I finished my primary seven at the primary school at the village in 2006, then the question developed where to get sponsorship in my high school education, there came Christine and Andy and their entire group who answered the question positively by connecting us to the wonderful sponsors in Wales. Myself I've been sponsored by Mr and Mrs Hayhurst who have been there for me from S1 in 2007 to S6 in 2012. I've been helped to stop the illiterate generation. I've gathered academic skills and at this moment am working as a teacher at the same organisation. I conclude by thanking everybody who has been part of my academic success making me to become somebody from nothing. May God bless you all.

Footnote from AGLMUK

Joshua has been a real inspiration to us and a fantastic role model for others at Bulabakulu. We were unable to afford to send him to university last year and thus he agreed to spend the academic year serving as a teaching assistant at the primary school – although teaching was not, at that time, his chosen career. He flourished as a teacher with rave reviews from the head teacher and a growing sense from within that this is really what he wanted to do! AGLM and AGLMUK agreed to find a way for Joshua to be formally trained and to receive accredited status.

Update 2016

Joshua is studying for his professional teaching qualification on a part-time basis. This has been fully funded by his generous UK sponsors. 2015 saw him get married and he and his wife have a child.

