

EIGHT-YEAR- OLD BOY LIVES ALONE, STRUGGLES TO STAY IN SCHOOL

Eight-year-old Joseph Isingoma, washing utensils at a relative's place in Fort Portal city, Kabarole district, where he stays alone after the father abandoned him. The relative, who works at a landing site in Ntoroko, checks on him once a week. Story on page 2 (Scan photo using Vision Digital Experience to watch video)



ISINGOMA'S ONLY KNOWN RELATIVE VISITS HIM ONCE A WEEK

EIGHT-YEAR-OLD BOY **LIVES ALONE,** STRUGGLES TO STAY IN SCHOOL

APPEAL FOR SUPPORT

Ritah Kenyange, Joseph Isingoma's teacher, is now appealing to well-wishers to support him join a special needs school because of his disability.

Kenyange says she recently secured for him a place at Canon Apollo Primary School, which teaches children with disabilities.

"At this school, he will be able to be taken care of. It will help him move away from the difficult life of staying alone," Kenyange said.

She requests well-wishers to help the boy raise school fees which is sh450,000.

"This child has gone through a lot of hardship in his life, but he is determined to study. With support from well-wishers, he can join the school and have a bright future." Kenyange said.

landing site in Ntoroko district. Bigambwenda reportedly visits the boy about once a week. During these visits, she brings basic necessities, such as food and other household basics.

By Jonan Tusingwire

In a quiet neighbourhood on the outskirts of Fort Portal city, eight-year-old Joseph Isingoma, has been living alone for two years.

Mary Bigambwenda, a relative, said Isingoma's mother died shortly after he was born. Bigambwenda said Isingoma's father married another woman and when she also passed away, he left the boy at home without a caretaker.

"For two years, the boy has been living alone. He now survives 'on handouts from neighbours," she said.

Despite the hardship, Isingoma has not dropped out of school. He is currently in Primary Two at Bagaaya Primary School.

Isingoma also lives with a disability known as Kyphosis, an excessive, outward curvature of the thoracic spine (upper back) causing a hunched appearance.

When *New Vision* visited Isingoma's home, he had just arrived from a nearby well carrying jerrycans of water and firewood.

In the house were a few cups and plates littered in one corner.

He later lit his paraffin lamp and narrated to *New Vision* his daily routine.

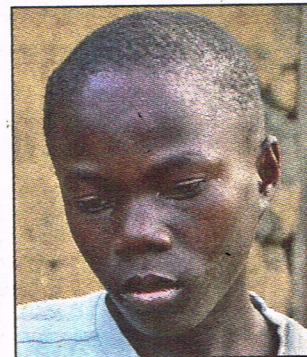
"After school, I fetch water, cook and sleep," Isingoma said.

His teacher, Ritah Kenyange, told *New Vision* that she made



Isingoma washing utensils. He has lived alone for two years since his father left him

PHOTOS BY JONAN TUSINGWIRE



Isingoma



Kenyange

a follow-up on Isingoma after she noticed that he was always coming to school without scholastic materials, such as books, pens and pencils.

"When we tried to find out why, we discovered that he was actually living alone," she said.

Kenyange said, despite the

hardship, Isingoma is eager to learn and attends school whenever he can.

"But it is very difficult for him to keep up without the basic

necessities," she said.

According to the neighbours, Isingoma's only known relative who checks on him is Bigambwenda, who works at a