Girl sent to work as maid excels at PLE

BY PEREZ RUMANZI

NTUNGAMO. A child who was raised by her poor grandparents in Ntungamo District has surprised many after excelling in Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) that were released last Friday.

Recheal Atuhwera, 16, was raised by her grandparents after both her parents allegedly left her with them immediately after her birth. Her grandparents were living a humble life and could not give her all she needed to start school.

At 12, because of financial hardships, she dropped out of school in Primary Three and her grandparents sent her to Ntungamo Town to work as a house maid.

However, at the home of Mr Medard Niwagaba, an employee in the Office of the Prime Minister and his wife, Ms Ronas Niwagaba, a secondary school teacher, Atuhwera was given a chance to continue with school.

Atuhwera's resilience and determination has restored hope after she scored Aggregate 8 in last year's Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE).

"In 2021, while searching for a maid, the people in the village sent her to me. Aware of labour laws, I feared employing an under-age child hence enrolling her to school," Mr Niwagaba said.

He added: "Although she looked vulnerable, she was bright. I took her to Mother Care Primary School in Ntungamo Town. Coming from a village school, the teachers doubted her academic capabilities but I pleaded with them to test her."

Surprisingly, she was 90th out of 125 pupils after first term and was 9th, the next term. Since then, she never scored below Aggregate 6.

Ms Proscovia Tumuhimbise, the school director, said she was one of the candidates the school expected to get Aggregate 4.

"She was so focused, looked mature and she knew what she wanted. We thank God for her. Despite the challenges she faced she was never stressed or discouraged," Ms Tumuhimbise noted.

Atuhwera, who wishes to join Mary Hill High School, said she expected to perform better.

"I thought I could do better but I praise God and my guardians for the support," Natuhwera said.

She also expressed happiness and gratitude that her guardians have committed to pay for her further education.

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