

## **Patrick Karekezi**

***“I survived against all odds. Now, I am helping to create a stronger generation of Africans.”***

Patrick survived Kwashiorkor against all odds, and currently works with young people to help empower them to realize their potential. Patrick will never underestimate the impact of nutrition on education, nor the impact of education on ones' life.

As a child growing up in Rwanda, Patrick suffered from Kwashiorkor, a severe form of malnutrition. His mother would walk eight kilometers each day to a hospital to seek treatment and, due to her perseverance; he was able to begin the long road to recovery. Patrick defied all odds and slowly recovered enough to attend school. However, in 2008, tragedy struck, and Patrick's parents died in a car accident.

Homeless and alone, Patrick fell into a deep depression and had to leave school. His uncle, who adopted Patrick and brought him to live with him in Jinja, Uganda, offered a glimmer of hope.

In Uganda, Patrick was able to begin a new chapter. Despite not speaking English, the language of his new school, Patrick quickly learnt and excelled in his studies, seizing the opportunity to create a positive future for himself. Scholarships, prizes and academic awards soon followed – and indeed, have not stopped: Patrick recently secured full funding to enroll at the African Leadership University in September 2019.

Leadership at school came naturally to Patrick, being elected to the Student Council and to the Ugandan National Students Association. Patrick used his platform to write two books – aimed at encouraging young people to realize their potential and become change makers – and found a youth organization, TALA – Touch A Life Anywhere, to create a more sustainable world for the current and future generations.

Patrick is excited to pursue his undergraduate degree in global challenges, and use his story to inspire action to achieve SDGs 1, 2, 3 and 4, creating a better world for all.