

YFS on Career guidance

Remarks by H.E Jeannette Kagame
First Lady of the Republic of Rwanda
Kigali, Thursday, 21st June 2012

The choices you make today determine the person you become tomorrow. Choose wisely!

- Honourable Ministers
- Members of Government here present
- The One UN family
- Representatives of Institutions of higher learning
- Young Rwandans to whom this forum is dedicated
- Imbuto Foundation members and Friends
- Ladies and gentleman

Mwaramutse!

It gives me great pleasure to be with you here today for another session of Rwanda Youth Forum Series. The Rwanda Youth Forum is designed to be a platform for dialogue with youth of Rwanda on a wide variety of topics that will hopefully have an impact on and shape their lives. Previous for a have focused on innovation, entrepreneurship, professionalism, communication

and leadership. Today, we broadcast the interesting and important topic of career guidance.

Career, as you all know, refers to a profession or occupation that one chooses as one's life calling. Choosing a career is a delicate issue and often a dilemma for young people. They are not always well informed about all the options out there and tend to simply adhere to the choices of their parents, teachers or guardians, with less consideration for the environment in which they live, their aptitude, their character, their natural inclinations, strengths, weaknesses, their own genuine interests or even the development needs of their countries.

Some young people are luckier than others and benefit from professional career guidance at an early age. They are made aware of all the options available, undertake aptitude tests, participate in exchange and mentorship programs to guide them in the right direction, and have the benefit of working with

career counselors and tutors over years as they take their time deciding what career options is best for them.

In choosing the right career, there are a number of things that must be taken into consideration, but I just want to point out three crucial ones:

The first step to choosing the right career is to know oneself. Know what you like and what you do not like. Know what you are strong in and what you are weak at. Similar to looking for a friend, you want to find a career that complements your character, not one that conflicts with it. For example, if you're active and outgoing, you might not do well sitting behind a desk all day. By the same token, if you're shy and soft-spoken, you might not do too well in a job that requires a lot of social interaction and if you like working alone, you wouldn't thrive in a team setting. If you are conventional person who likes things like rules procedures, schedules and instructions, you may be better off thinking of a career as an accountant, an actuarial

scientist, a building inspector, a financial planner or technical writer.

In the same breath, if you have an enterprising personality, a doer and like to see things from start to finish, you would most likely do well in advertising, management or sales. If you have an investigative character, you most likely are a person who likes to work alone. You tend to exercise logic over imagination, solving problems and mysteries, putting together pieces of a puzzle with precision and science. You are a person who pays extreme attention to details and thus you might do well as a computer systems analyst, a librarian, professor, engineer, statistician or scientist.

The list goes on, but the bottom line is know yourself-your character, your likes and dislikes, your strengths and your weakness.

The second step to choosing the right career is evaluate your skills. Everyone has unique talents that are either in-born or learned over time. What are you particularly good at doing?

The third step in choosing the right career is to invest training and education. Once you have a good sense of who you are, what are your likes and dislikes and your talents, it is important to choose studies at technical or graduate level can broaden your career options. A solid educational background will determine whether you will find a job easily or not. It will determine what kind of jobs will become available to you, how much money you will earn and, more importantly, your chance of moving up in your career. Nowadays, the job market is very competitive so the higher you go in education, the better are your chances.

As you reflect, do not let noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. Always have the courage to follow your heart and intuition.

I would like to encourage the young men and women gathered here today, to always seek out advice and guidance from others. Be it your parents, your teachers, your elders- we see in you so much that you may not see in yourselves. Allow us to guide you during your journeys of self-discovery not only as individuals, but professional too.

Finally, I want to speak to you as fellow Rwandans, as our youth, our children and the future of our nation. In all the choices you make- be they big or small- remember that we have a nation to build and a legacy to leave. There are those whose education and training do not serve their own. They chose to leave the continent in search of greener pastures elsewhere, but unfortunately, they are but a drop in the ocean in a world that does not see their value nor recognize their input. I would urge you to put country before self, to put values before riches and to give back to the society which invested so much in you.

I wish you the very best that life has to offer and the wisdom to make good choices for the choices you make today will determine the person you become tomorrow.

MUGIRE AMAHORO