

## LESSON

# 8

## Prepositions

*Introducing the two prepositions mu and ku, to express insideness, proximity, and towardness.*

In Kinyarwanda, there are very few prepositions; in fact, there are no more than three: **ku**, **mu**, and **i**. However, they have a very wide use. For now, we will confine our attention to only one function of the words **mu** and **ku**.

- They precede the noun and remove its initial vowel: **mu** muriro (*in the fire*).
- **Mu** implies the notion of *insideness*, as *Ndi mu nzu* (*I am in the house*). Depending on the verb, its meaning may change. When the verb indicates *motion*, such as in *Ndajya mu nzu*, the concept is “*I am going into the house*.” Also, *Ndava mu nzu* now becomes “*I’m coming out of the house*.”
- **Ku** conveys the idea of *proximity* or *outsideness*, once again depending on the verb. Compare *Ndava ku nzu* (*I am coming from the house*) versus *Ndajya ku nzu* (*I am going to/toward the house*).

### Mu

Umuheha uri **mu** gikombe.  
*The straw is in the cup.*  
(insideness)

Ndava **mu** muriro.  
*I am coming out of the fire.*  
(from inside)

Shyira uyu mwenda **mu** mwobo.  
*Put this cloth in (into) the pit.* (insideness)

### Ku

Umwana arajya **ku** muriro.  
*The child is going toward the fire.* (towardness)

Ndava **ku** muriro.  
*I am coming from the fire.*  
(proximity)

Shyira uyu mwenda **ku** mwobo.  
*Put this cloth next to the pit.*  
(proximity)

## VOCABULARY

umwōbo	<i>hole, pit</i>	imyōbo	<i>holes, pits</i>
umujyi	<i>city</i>	imijyi	<i>cities</i>
umunsi	<i>day</i>	iminsi	<i>days</i>
umwījīma	<i>darkness</i>	hafi	<i>near, nearby</i>
umunezero	<i>happiness</i>	hanze	<i>outside</i>
ndajya	<i>I am going.</i>	turajya	<i>We are going.</i>
urajya	<i>You are going.</i>	murajya	<i>You (pl.) are going.</i>
arajya	<i>He is going.</i>	barajya	<i>They are going.</i>

**Note:** *Ndajya, urajya, arajya; turajya, murajya, and barajya* are another method of rendering *I am going, you are going, he is going*, etc. The verb root **-genda** we have been using thus far is irregular, in that it may not be followed by a preposition or other locative idea. *Aragenda neza* is fine, but *aragenda mu nzu* is not. *Arajya hehe? Arajya mu nzu* are acceptable forms.

## EXERCISES

### Exercise 1

Translate the following:

1. Into the city
2. Toward the city
3. In the hill. To the hill
4. In/out of the hill
5. At the road (at the side of)
6. In the road
7. To the chief
8. Out of/into the hole
9. To/from the teacher
10. Into the darkness. Out of the darkness

### Exercise 2

Read aloud (remember vowel lengths and proper emphases); then translate into English:

1. Umwami arajya mu mujyi. Turajya ku murima wacu.
2. Uriya mwigisha afite umunezero mu mutima we. Uyu mwigisha si mwiza.
3. Abahungu bacu barakora mu murima w'umutare. Ndajya ku mwobo munini.
4. Uyu muni afite umwijima mu mutima we. Mfite umunezero mu mutima wanjye.
5. Umwana wawe arajya ku mwobo munini. Murareba mu mwobo munini.
6. Barajya ku mwigisha wabo mwiza. Turajya ku bigisha bacu beza.
7. Barajya ku muriro. Barava ku mugezi w'umutare.

### Exercise 3

Referring to the key to exercises, retranslate the above back into Kinyarwanda.

### Exercise 4

Translate and read aloud:

1. Petero, gira vuba, dukwiriye kugenda ubu; abana baraza none.
2. Nta bantu bari mu nzu. Nta cyo bitwaye. Ahari bari mu mirima yabo.
3. Witonde, umugozi ni mugufi n'umukandara ni muremure.
4. Ukwiriye guhagarara, nanjye ngiye kwicara.
5. Petero, dukwiriye kugira vuba. Dukwiriye kwiruka, abakozi baraza.
6. Ngiye gusaba Maria imitsima itandatu, maze nkwiriye gucana umuriro.
7. Witonde Petero, umwobo ni munini cyane.
8. Bakwiriye gutangira gukora mu mirima none.
9. Maria, nta bantu baje. Nta cyo bitwaye; ariko dukwiriye gushaka abandi.
10. Petero, mbese abahungu n'abakobwa bari mu nzu? Nta bo. Nta bantu bari mu nzu.
11. Abana batoya barakina, ariko Petero na Maria ni bakuru. Bakwiriye gutangira umurimo.
12. Maria uri he? Ndi hano. Na Petero, mbese ari mu nzu? Nta we. Ari he? Simbizi.
13. Nta bantu bari hano. Ngiye kubashaka. Ahari bari ku mugezi.
14. Uriya musaza mugufi arasaba abantu umutsima. Nta mutsima dufite, ariko turashaka gufasha uriya musaza.
15. Ahari hari umutsima [har' umutsima] mu nzu ya Maria. Ngiye kubaza Maria.
16. Mbese Maria, ufite umutsima? Hanze har'umusaza mugufi. Arashaka umutsima.
17. Ababyeyi b'aba bana bari hanze. Ni byiza, ariko bakwiriye kuza mu nzu.
18. Maria, gira vuba; ukwiriye gucana umuriro, ariko ukwiriye kwitonda.
19. Petero, hagarara hano. Maria ukwiriye guhagarara mu muhanda.

## EXTRA VOCABULARY

nta cyo bitwaye	<i>it doesn't matter</i>	guhagarara	<i>to stand</i>
nta (bo, cyo)	<i>nobody, nothing</i>	gusaba	<i>to ask for</i>
gira vuba	<i>hurry up</i>	gucana	<i>to light (a fire)</i>
kwicara	<i>to sit down</i>	kwitonda	<i>to be careful</i>
kwiruka	<i>to run</i>	gutangira	<i>to begin</i>
ahari	<i>perhaps</i>	kugira	<i>to do, to have</i>
ndabizi	<i>I know it</i>	urabizi	<i>you know it</i>
simbizi	<i>I don't know it</i>	ntubizi	<i>you don't know it</i>
uri	<i>you (sing.) are</i>	muri	<i>you (pl.) are</i>
nturi	<i>you are not</i>	ntimuri	<i>you are not</i>
ari	<i>he/she is</i>	bari	<i>they are</i>
ntari	<i>he/she is not</i>	ntibari	<i>they are not</i>
vuba	<i>quickly, soon</i>	kubaza	<i>to ask, question</i>
ahari	<i>perhaps</i>	gusaba	<i>to request, ask</i>

## EXTRA SENTENCES

Ndagenda hatoya, nawe urabizi.  
*(I'm going soon, and you know it.)*

Dukwiriye gutangira none kugira ngo turangize byose.  
*(We must begin today in order to finish everything.)*

Niba ubaza Petero arakubwira byose.  
*(If you ask Peter, he will tell you everything.)*

Ndabizi, nawe urabizi, ariko abandi [arikw abandi] ntibabizi.  
*(I know it, and you know it, but the others don't know it.)*

Ntituri mu mwijima, na bariya barabizi.  
*(We are not in the shade, and those people over there know it.)*

Ndamubwira guhagarara mu mwobo muremure, ariko ntabizi.  
*(I'll tell him to stand in the deep pit, but he doesn't know it.)*

Akwiriye kuva mu mwobo kugira ngo abandi [kugira ngw abandi] bamubone.  
*(He must come out of the pit, so that the others may see him.)*

Shyira ibintu hasi ubu; hanyuma ukwiriye kugaruka kugira ngo ucane umuriro.  
*(Put the things on the ground now; afterwards you must return so you can light the fire.)*

Hamagara Petero, maze ukwiriye kugaruka mu nzu.  
*(Call Peter, and then you must come back inside the house.)*

Jyana ibi bintu, maze hanyuma ukwiriye kugaruka vuba. Ukwiriye kumvira ababyeyi bawe. *(Take these things, and then afterwards you must come back quickly. You must obey your parents.)*

Turashaka kujya mw ishuri kugira ngo twige byinshi.  
*(We want to go to school so that we may learn a lot.)*