

## **THE DAWN PROJECT COMPETITION 2025**

### **Participant Profile**

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**Category:** Writing (Adult)

## WHEN THE FORESTS WEEP

*Oya, tell me  
When last did the iroko dance  
to the song of the wind?  
When last did we breathe  
without choking on dust?*

*The forest used to greet us with shade.  
Now, it curses with flood and fire.  
We chop trees like meat at Owambe,  
yet wonder why the land no gree bear fruit.*

*We burn bush to plant hope,  
but harvest heat and hunger.  
The animals don pack go  
no thanks, no goodbye.*

*Elders say the land is angry.  
But it's not anger, it's warning.  
The sky is hotter,  
the rivers are thinner,  
and we are running out of time.*

*We, the youth,  
must not inherit silence.  
Plant a tree, even if it's one.  
Build with bamboo, not cement dreams.  
Cook clean, live light.  
Demand green, not greed.*

*Let the next child see a monkey,  
not just memes on phone screens.  
Let our legacy be roots, not regrets.*

*Because when the last tree falls,  
and the last stream dries,  
even money no go fit quench thirst.*