

100%
FOR THE CHILDREN

Poetic Empowerment

A COLLECTION OF POEMS

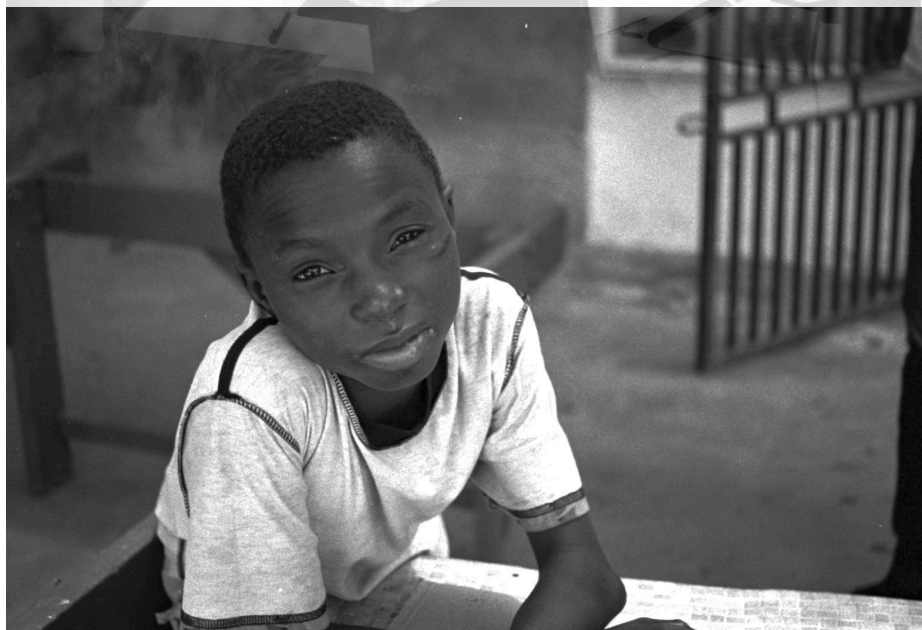
WRITTEN BY:

DANISH STUDENTS,

STREET CHILDREN OF ACCRA

AND MARGINALIZED GIRLS

IN NORTHERN GHANA



Poetic Empowerment: **Youth in Dialogue 2017**

Sponsored by

Oplysningspuljen 2017 – Civilsamfund i Udvikling (CISU)

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as 100% for the Children

Made in collaboration with

Randers Lille Skole

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Catholic Action for Street Children (CAS)

Rural Education for Empowerment Programme (REEP)

Editors' note

This collection is the final product of the project “Poetic Empowerment: Youth in Dialogue 2017” — sponsored by CISU and administrated through 100% for the Children. Inside is an assemblage of poems written by Danish and Ghanaian youngsters aged about 10 - 22 years. These have been selected on a criteria of relevance and diversity from a material of more than 100 poems and are split into three groups: Danish students, Street children (CAS) and Girls (REEP) – one for each partnership. All texts are in English, as it is the language that allowed our communication. This has been an obstacle, since the individual capabilities vary a lot and as for newcomers to creative writing, it is more optimal to learn about poetry in one's own language. Mistakes in grammar and spelling have been corrected only where it seemed necessary. Texts that have been translated are marked by an asterisk* in all instances and only account for some of the poems from the Danish students as well as the street children from CAS. The Danish poems have been translated by the editors alone, but difficulties regarding translation and the creative content of the Ghanaian partners have to be further explained.

First of all most of the kids at Catholic Action for Street Children (CAS) knew little English and a few could not write. Therefore many worked through interpreters who guided them and had to take responsibility for the correctness of the translations. Some participants asked if they could rewrite poems and stories they already knew, and it is stated where such a text has been included. This turned into an interesting problematic in our work with the girls from the Rural Education for Empowerment Programme (REEP) as we repeatedly encountered texts that were rewritten from memory, without their telling us. It became an issue about plagiarism, which was hard to fight, but easy to explain. The local school system emphasizes rote learning and does not encourage independence or creative individual thinking. This along with a wish to please and a culture, which still has roots in oral storytelling, resulted in a material that had to be carefully examined and in some cases discarded. Nevertheless our work carried fruit, and we hope this book of young voices will be used to learn about Denmark, Ghana and the beautiful world of poetry.

Camilla Olesen & Kristoffer Q. Bressum

1. Danish Students

Friendship

What is a friend?

Is it someone, you can trust?

Is it someone, who can help you at the end?

A friend is someone, who can help you, to tie the knot,
so you can turn the other way,
and go to the top.

Who is your friend?

Your friend is someone, who will carry you.

Your friend is someone, who will make sure, you won't hit the dead-end

A friend will fill you up with laughter,

Your friend is your lucky charm.

Your friend will still be your friend after.

Magic

Magic is a trick

That fool people

Magic is a feeling

That comes in a short moment

It's something

That comes when people love

It's something

That make people happy

Magic is something

That don't exist

But if you believe in it

You will find it



I live on a hill*

I live on a hill,
close to mariagervej
7 blocks
a community
On the third floor
number ten
I live
with my family
On Borgmestervangen
in my stairway
half retired citizens
sweet and kind
On the first and fourth floor
lives two young people
drinking and partying
until sick o'clock
On my street
A backyard
playground and grass
kids play till evening
On the football fields
yelling and noise
and the sound of the ball
being kicked
On the balcony
there's a bird meeting
the birds twitter
all the time

I live on a street*

I live on a street
in the great northcity
with flowers as its name

pensioners scramble everywhere
because front yards need pricking
and they have to water flowers

I see it as a bird haven
and happy neighbors want to join

I live in a house
a real townhouse
with noise and commotion
and summerrain

it's a cousin teasing
and another eating
and Charlie just grinning

what to do
when you die from laughter
because your parents play
tether-tennis

or you jump
on a trampoline and
watch dad grilling

I live on a street
in the great northcity
with flowers as its name

My best friend

When I look at my computer I see my best friend
the only thing I can tell all my secrets to
I go to a website where there is a cow
and when I click on the cow I hear it say moh

I go to sleep while I'm watching friends
I watch friends on my computer on netflix
I watch it all day I watch it all night
but if I watch it too much there is nothing I can fix



The Bus*

Big transporters

Yellow and blue

people go in and out

busy and stressed

differing folks

Screaming Children

oldies talking

Youngsters speaking on the phone

The sound of music

from headphones

and thoughts are set in motion

while looking out the window

When you look out the window

see people cycling

see love in the air

when people go hand in hand

Stay in school

stay in school

cause that's cool

eat your food

cause it's good

get a job

start your own shop

make money

so you can buy honey

have you tried fishing?

I've tried I tried it

and it's hilarious

to catch a big fish

you have to be patient

and quiet.



Bird Escape

he looks down
the consideration fills his
once and for all stressed
mind with little bubbly
thoughts about; what if?

he came to the one conclusion
the same as yesterday and
the day before. He went back
inside. THE BIRD ESCAPE had
to become the foggy dream
he could only dream about.

Insomnia

Insomnia makes it so I cannot sleep
it throws my education against a reef
I wish to just let it all go
and kill myself and my parents in a row

Insomnia gives me the worst headache
it sometimes helps to listen to the band ché
but for the most of the time
I just want to tie a stone to my ankle and fly

Oh Ghana

Oh, Ghana
Oh, Ghana
The land of gold
The land of diamonds
The land of hope
Oh, Ghana
Oh, Ghana
A British colony
A Danish colony
It's own
Oh, Ghana
Oh, Ghana
You can
You will
You must
Oh, Ghana
Oh, Ghana



We're in a school*

We're in a school
where almost the entire day we sit on stools
we have many rules
but there is no one who complains

The classrooms are good
and in the latest fashion
all children go to school
it is a rule in Denmarks commune

In Jutland we live
there is a fjord
there are beaches with water and sand
we call that a happyland

We drink a lot of soda
marry and get a husband
Denmark is a land with tap water
we call that a happyland

Confirmation*

A silly tradition in white
a king wanted to know
who his christians were
a tradition was born

mine was in white
a dress with Lace
a church so big
and many people

the family is big
but happy and smiling
the party is on
with trust in my faith

2. Street Children (CAS)

My day at CAS

When I wake up in the morning I wash my face
and brush my teeth.

I then walk to CAS

At CAS I wash my clothes and take my bath

After that I eat then I go to class to learn
maths, and reading

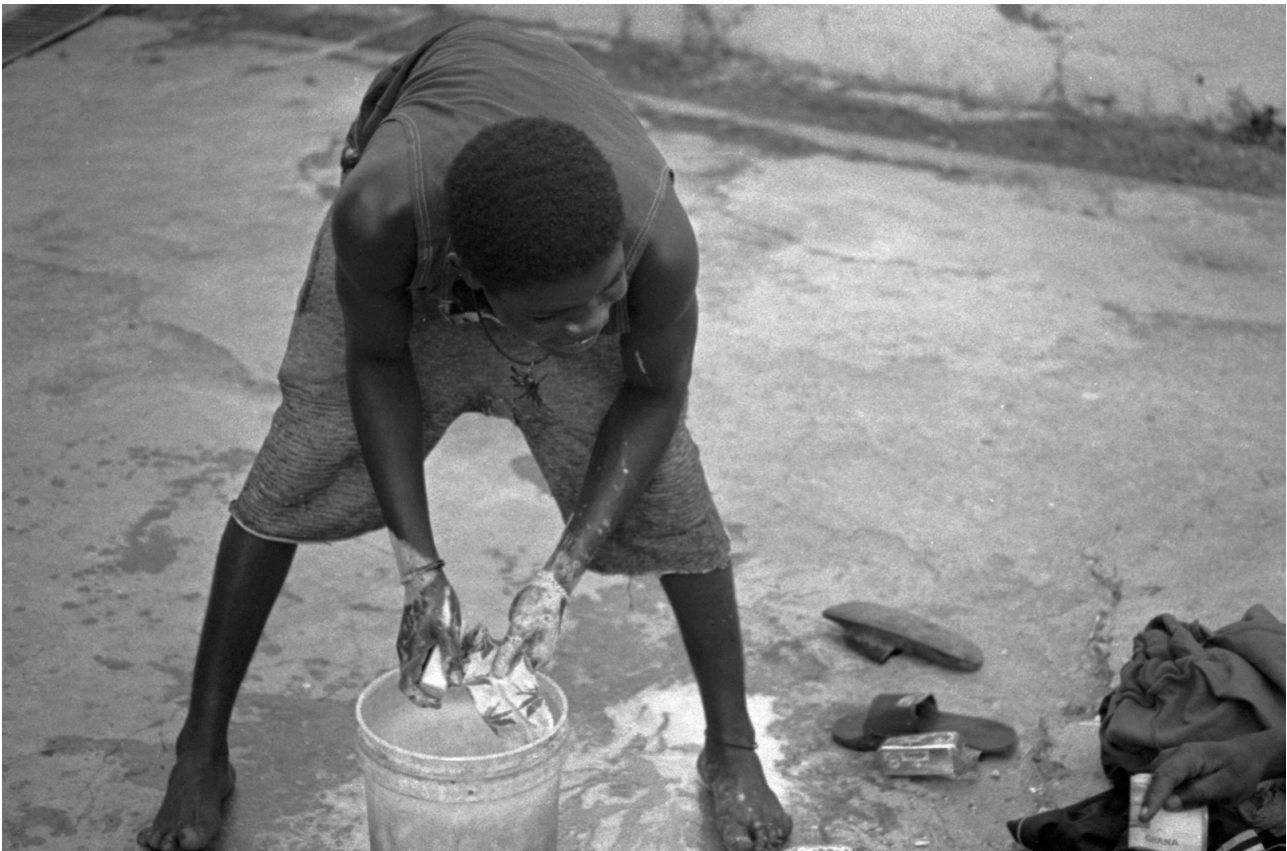
After class we go to computer class to learn
how to use the computer and play computer games

After computer class we go on a lunch break

Then we go to our various centres to learn, sewing, hairdressing
breadmaking and carving

After our centres we come out to play football, basketball
and other games.

After playing CAS is closed for the day so we go back
to the street where we sleep.



Obraa me boye*

I lived with my mom
She took me to school
I went but she died
and left me alone
Life became difficult for me
So I decided to sleep on the street
O God help me so nothing bad
happens to me
God I know you made me
I know you made the birds and
animals.
Thank you God
Agua me dawua se

Gandam fanse*

I will not fear any cat or man
I fear only God
Ayisha my elder sister
Hey you can sack me from the
house but I will be back
Anytime I see her, I tremble
Ayisha put soil in food for me
she ask me to eat
I will not eat
The house is mine I will one
day return.

Speak out

Do I have to speak out in all circumstances?

Speaking out, is it a necessity?

My mum says, "Jenny, my girl, learn to be bold and vibrant".

Most children like me

Find it difficult to speak out

Because, being a child on the street

you aren't respected and also treated badly

but it's high time we, the children speak out

For our voices to be heard.

Respect

Do children on the street

have respect?

Do they require any

respect?

Do people require them as

sex toys?

People think these children

use themselves for sex trade.

People use them illegal as child

labour, bullying and child trafficking.

These children need respect

We have to respect them

without gender equality or

even their backgrounds.

Odo emra nye tem

Right attitude

Same brain

Same blood

All can deliver outstanding result

Money*

If you don't have money

you become stranded

when you get money you gotta build

a house



I am Trotro*

I am trotro, you can find me on the roads of Accra.

I come in different shapes and sizes

I can be very small, very big and medium size.

I can be new, old and rickety.

I come at dawn, at noon and night.

I am available for all at all times.

I pick my riders and drop them off at their destinations.

Inside of me, my human companion collects my money.

My human companion (bus conductor) fights for my money

With the riders.

Some people preach the word of God inside of me

Whilst others listen to music, sleep and eat.

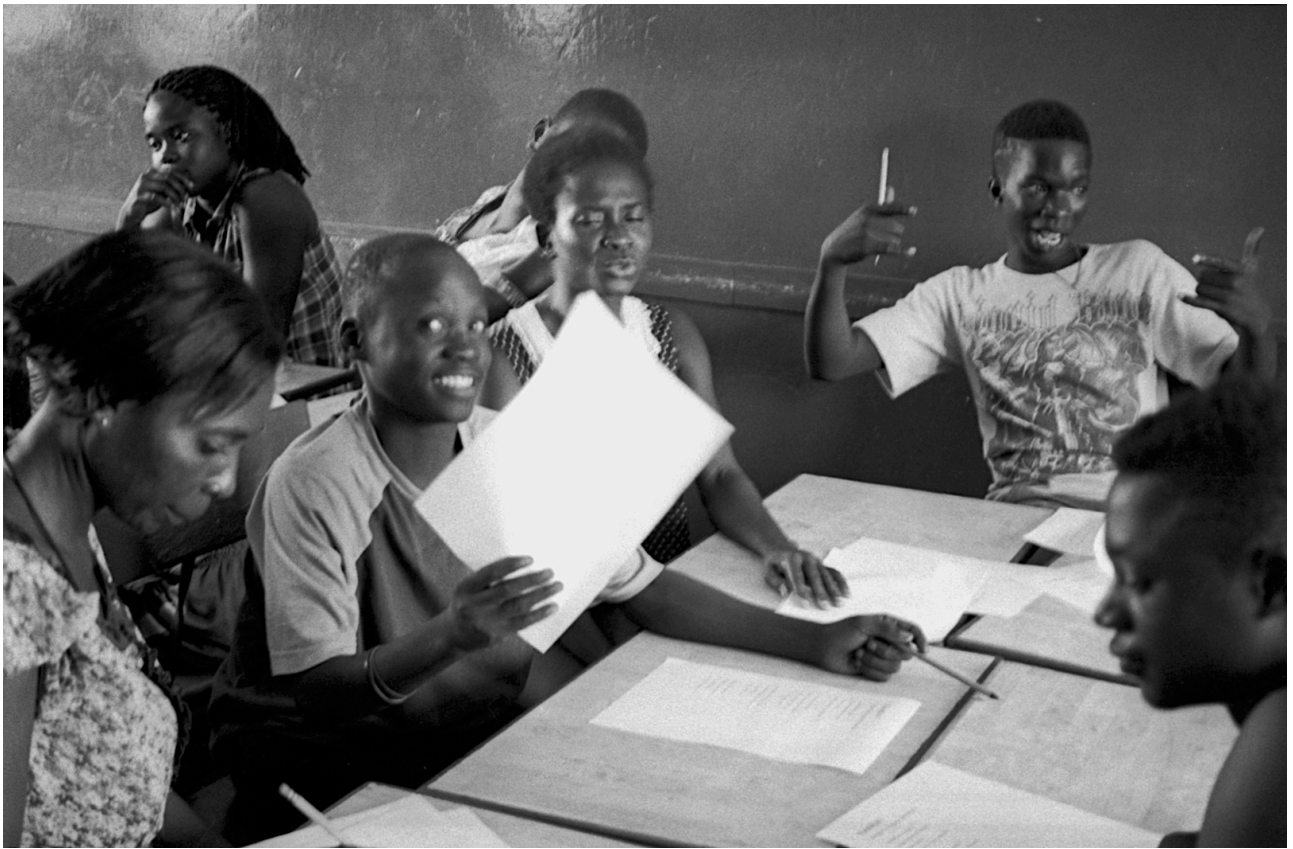
Outside of me the world passes by.

People sell things to earn a living and forget

About me.

Outside me people live their lives in the prime of

My activities.



Equality*

Be yourself Don't be scared,
We are not here to be compared,
We are equal.

There is no one like us we are
special
We are on the same level
We are equal
Isn't that right?

Volleyball*

It is a game that makes
one very happy
It is played by 6 people
in a team

If the ball is not passed
you don't enter the court
If you are serving
no crossing of line
'till ball is out of
your hand
"For I deliver to you"
That which I also receive
from others
Amen

Akwa dwoo*

Laziness, Laziness, Laziness
Laziness is a bad disease
If Laziness comes into your life,
You will be miserable, terrible and
worried.

Foot Ball*

The reason why I like foot ball
is that it makes me happy
fun and smart.
I like to run with the ball
pass it to others in a hurry
and There I score a goal
Then defend so my team
is not scored on
Then attack as well
nobody can stand
"I wah" don is my nickname"



Life is not easy*

Life is not easy

When we wake up in the morning

we suffer before we eat

But we know God is alive

So one day we will be somebody

We move to other towns at a tender age to work before

we can eat.

We even risk our lives by venturing into hazardous places.

Where friends have let me down so many times.

We face our enemies during the day and the

witches during the night.

For now I don't even know what to do again

In life you can't make forward if you always want

others downfall

People always encourage me that I will be great but the

situation still persists.

The issues of life always give me sleepless nights

Then started rapping for a long time, and I should be

earning a lot from it but am still the poor boy

as I am.

Is it my destiny or am I being bewitched?

I know God will supply all my needs someday

I believe

I believe

I believe in God



Roles and chores (rewritten)

A girl for the kitchen

A boy for the classroom

A girl for the market

A boy for the park

A girl to fetch water

A boy to play draughts

A girl to pound fufu

A boy to demand food

A man for war

A woman to suffer

The ravages of war

Who scheduled the roles?

It is the dawn of a new day.

A millenium of knowledge and understanding

Both shall go to the kitchen

and continue to the classroom

Both shall go to the market

And the playing field

Both shall fetch water and play games

Both shall pound fufu and sit

together to eat.

We are all going to the kitchen.

3. Girls (REEP)

Creation

When God the almighty
bring something into existence
what does it mean?
when man bring something into
existence you will say he
has created something.

Can't you also do something
to show you are a creator
you can do it.
Because doing it will prove your
name all around the world.
So my dear being create something
and God will bless you and it.
Thank you.

Educate your girl child

Educate your girl child, you Parents
Educate your girl child and stop
Forcing them into early marriage,
Educate your girl child and stop
Selling them for money
You don't know what God has planned for her.
You will just be surprised to see
your child to be the best doctor,
nurse, accountant or the richest
in the world
Please Parents don't waste your girl
child talent or future,
"Remember, if you educate a boy you educate an individual but when you educate a girl
you educate a nation"
Thank you



Foster child

There was a girl called Amina,
She was with her parents called
Afa Fatawu and Barkisu
Amina was schooling at the best school in town
All the Masters liked her because she is a
Brilliant girl in school
One day Amina's aunty from Dalun came,
who is not able to give birth
the aunty just came to Amina's father
for him to give her, Amina, away
to help her in the house, Amina's mom was angry
The aunty said if that is the case Barkisu calm down
everything will be alright. So please calm down.
Amina's aunty promised that Amina will continue
her study at Dalun.
When Amina reached Dalun
everything went wrong with her
All house chores on Amina
after no food for Amina
her education has been stopped
And there is no communication
between Amina and her parents

Mom and dad I never
want to stay with
my aunty, because
when I see Amina's case
she is not comfortable
there.

Helpless town

There was a town called
Abatoir, and they disowned,
Their King and there was not,
an elder in the town no Leader,
on one day, when Children went to
the Stream and one man talked to them

and they refuse, one of them
just said no Leader in this town
and it came to a time when there
was hunger in the town
Pregnant women are dying
lactating mothers are suffering

Dream

Have you ever Dreamt before?
What did you experience?
What is the Funny thing in
you dream?
What about you?

A dream is something that a
person must experience.
I last dreamt that someone was
giving me something special
a gift wrap with an envelope and
money at that moment my sister
woke me up, I was very angry
for her waking me up.
What about you? If you dream
like this, will you like to
continue it
But if it is a bad dream
like a lion is chasing you will
you like to continue it?



untitled

When I first saw
a man in the
market, with half of
his face painted yellow
I found it very
difficult to identify him.

After the paint has
been washed away, it
was then I realized
that he was my
uncle. We should always
put on real faces.

untitled

In a local village
called Nanton in Tamale
Where it rained heavily
all houses chocked with
water everyone come out
of their rooms standing

outside is public disturbed
thinking of where to
lay their heads. Then
climb a ladder to
sit on top of
a building to rest.

untitled

The world is big
a house built with
saliva, if you use
a saliva to build
a house, moist will
pull it down

Don't trust the world
one will not live
In this world forever
Time will come when
you will be no
more. It is indeed
build with a saliva.

Thank you.



Gupe Town

There was a town where
many people were living
And one day, it was
raining whiles wind too
was blowing and the
people there were helpless.

The rain really destroyed
the town which some
of them couldn't survive.
Some survived but
there was no houses
for them to live

untitled

There I saw paper
They drown toys on
It's a cloth which people
wear to cover themselves
some people use to,
celebrate festival like Damba

I saw a head
of a human being
It has been half
painted and half not
It's usually drawn on
cloth as culture or tradition

Wish everything was Fine

Sitting on her lap
my head against her
chest.

Sleeping eyes still awake
on my mother lap

The world was far
From me but my
mother was near me
I was sitting on her lap
wish my mother was
here today for me
to Sleep on her
lap.

untitled

This is a Village
Living in great Proverty
Houses build in sand
with no good education
The Village is crowded
They have no electricity

This is a City
Houses build in Order
They have good electricity
They have good roads
Houses not too crowded



The Bird

I have my bird

I live with my bird

I move with my bird

I sleep with my bird

I play with my bird

I love my bird

one day I went out

But when I came back

my bird was nowhere to

be found.

Petty cat

This is the first

time I see this

cause I never go

to such an occasion

I can see a cat

with only one leg

So I was so

sad and felt petty

for it because of

the one leg is

missing it is good to

have petty for it

I have visited a bush

I have visited a bush

where there was so many

animals in the bush

that was my first time

I went there.

The day we went to

the bush I saw an

animal who have a

horse and the horse

grow every year and

that animal is called bush

cow.

In the bush it is the

most wild animal in

the bush.

In Ghana



Our local cloth

It was difficult for me to identify,
but now I realised it was our local dress.

 Hmm what a local cloth,
 Shining like a diamond star,
 face all over
I wished I could have some to wear
 for my special day
 Hmmm what a local cloth.

The old local house

 The old local house
 Sited behind a tree
 Away from the tap
And near the building
 Hmm what a house
 With lots of people

Who shares common thoughts
 And love on another
 What an old building
 With lot of windows
But with many insects
 Ohhh Poor old house.

WAR WAR WAR

WAR

WAR

WAR

WAR is the fighting between two or more countries

WAR is the most dangerous thing in the world

WAR,

WAR,

WAR,

WAR leads to poverty

WAR leads to death

WAR leads to hunger

WAR can also leads to lack of development

So Africans let's avoid that dangerous thing

let's come together and drive war away

My fathers, my mothers, my sisters and my brother

WAR, WAR, WAR

Say no to war

Say bye to war

Malaria

Malaria is a disease.

It is caused by the female mosquito.

Mosquito is a small insect.

It parasite on the human body,
and transfer malaria into the system.

When you are attacked by malaria,
There is something you should know.
The symptoms.

Symptoms of malaria include,
headache, vomitting, high temperature,
these are the symptoms of malaria.

Poverty

Oh people of the world

Why did you leave me so lonely?

Nobody wants to hear my name

No one wants to come near me

Nobody wants me to be part of his/her life

Oh people of the world

Why only me?

Nobody ever asks me for help

and if I give, no one world like to collect

Nobody in the world ever asks me to take
part in their decision-making

Those who are rich fear me and

those who are poor also fear me

Why only me people of the world?

Many people in the world describe me as evil

Others said I'm troublesome

Everybody in the world describe me as the way
they wants but I never mind

Because I will always take part in your life



