

EYE ON AFRICA



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Speaker:	Dr. Jean Bosco Niyonzima
Topic:	Working With, Through, and From Ubuntu: Toward an African Science of Healing People, Communities, and Places
Date:	Thursday, Sept 10, 2026
Time:	12:00 - 1:30 PM (EST)
Place:	Zoom Webinar: Register Here

ABOUT THE TALK

What might an African understanding of human intercomeedness contribute to the science and practice of healing?

Drawing on more than a decade of community healing work in post-genocide Rwanda, this lecture explores Ubuntu, not simply as a philosophy, but as a framework for understanding, practicing, and generating knowledge about healing. Through the expansion of Ubuntu Center for Peace (UCP), I reflect on a journey of working collectively and related with communities affected by internal conflict, while using individual, relational, and community-level evidence to understand what healing makes possible.

This experience suggests that healing cannot be fully separated from the relationships and communities in which people live. Trauma can affect individuals, families, relationships, and communities; healing, therefore, may involve restoring connection, dignity, trust, belonging, and collective agency.

The lecture explores Ubuntu as simultaneously a worldview, method, and outcome of healing, and considers how this may open a pathway toward a more holistic understanding of wellbeing—connecting the healing of people and communities with the healing of the places and environments in which they live. It asks whether Ubuntu can contribute to an emerging African science of healing-centered development.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Dr. Jean Bosco Niyonzima is the Founder and Executive Director of Ubuntu Center for Peace (UCP), a Rwanda-based organization advancing community-based approaches to trauma healing, peacebuilding, and collective wellbeing. A physician and public health practitioner by training, he holds graduate degrees in public health, sustainable development, and psychosocial approaches to peacebuilding.

For more than two decades, Dr. Niyonzima has worked at the intersection of trauma healing, community development, and peacebuilding in Rwanda. His work has contributed to the development of UCP's Community-Based Social Healing model, an Ubuntu-informed approach that integrates embodied healing, relational restoration, and collective processes of healing and social connection.

Dr. Niyonzima is increasingly focused on the development of Ubuntu science: an interdisciplinary effort to explore Ubuntu as a framework for understanding human wellbeing, healing, and collective flourishing, and its potential contribution to mental health, peacebuilding, development, and broader approaches to health.

