

The Rotary Club of Bellingham D 5050 and the Rotary Club of Bweyogerere Namboole D 9211 “Excites” Buffujja Community

Bweyogerere Namboole Rotary Club “sells” Buffujja community in Eastern Uganda to Bellingham Rotary Club in Washington USA.

3 Members from Bellingham Rotary Club Washington USA travelled to Buffujja in Eastern Uganda for the celebrations upon the completion of Buffujja water sanitation and hygiene project that their Club co-sponsored. This was also to track and appreciate the success of the project and to establish the resultant impact that can be capitalised on to initiate yet another project in this community. The community was very happy to see their guests.

The visitors were led by the Bellingham Rotary Club’s Primary Contact for the project, Rotarian Robert Trunek with other two Rotarians; Dominique Zervas and Lisa Saar. The team arrived at Entebbe airport on June 25th, 2015 at 9.45pm. They were met by Rotarian Peter and Moses. While in Uganda, the team hosted some Rotarians from Bweyogerere Namboole Rotary Club to a Dinner before travelling the next day to the project site 250Km to and fro to Buffujja Community. This travel took the team a whole day starting off at 7.00am and getting back to their Hotel at 9.00pm, quite a marathon of activities. The team also had an opportunity to visit the only developed Cultural centre; Ndere troupe cultural village where they were entertained to various Ugandan culture through music ,dance and drama. They also attended fellowship with some Uganda Rotary Clubs , Our own Bweyogerere Namboole fellowship inclusive.



Arrival at Entebbe Airport, this was at about 10.00pm. The Guests were driven straight to Africana Hotel where they booked. They rested for the bigger part of the next day and had the evening reserved for the Dinner.



Dinner was at Fang Fang Restaurant, one of the leading units for Dinner reservations in Uganda. Considering the tight scope visit period, the Dinner doubled as the entry meeting between the Rotarians of Bweyogerere Namboole and the visiting Bellingham RC Guests. At this function, Summary presentations about the project were made right from the application stages, through the project approvals and the subsequent Implementation.



Leaving Hotel Africana to the project site— Buffujja



The team had a brief at Mamerito Hotel where they were met by President Moses.



This was at about 7.15 am



Group Transport for Bweyogerere Namboole Club members who accompanied the Guests to the project site



The community youth and the School children well coming the Guests 8 Km to the project site accompanied by their traditional Cultural dance



Movements occasionally halted. Vehicles could hardly move because of the excited community members. Here the community leaders demanded that the Guests disembark so that they could be officially welcomed by the cultural dance that initiates the visitors in their community!





Vast area where the perennial over flooding forced the community members to relocate to slightly higher places.



Effort of the Government intervention in Controlling the flooding



The Guests visited one of the open wells where the Community used to collect the water.



Curious school children raced for over 10Km leading the Guests and at times following



The Guests toured the entire Buffujja community. They were overwhelmed by the excited waiting groups at every point they visited in the community! At every Kilometre , there was a stop over with dancing ululations as the order of the day! It took the team over 2 hours to finally settle at the prepared venue.



The team finally reaches the prepared venue for the function almost tired but not out because of the interesting entertainment all through . As if the trekking was not done, we again met traditional dancers at the venue!



Buffujja community was on real fire! All in appreciation of Rotary's Intervention with the provision of safe drinking water, improvement of sanitation and improved cooking stoves. Clusters within the community have since dropped their village names and have adopted Bellingham Rotary Club and Bweyogerere as their new names!



Several traditional and urban music were the order of the day punctuated with occasional trade mark cultural ululations filling the air with excitement !



The community leaders in their memorandum to the visitors expressed great gratitude to Bellingham Rotary Club and Bweyogerere Namboole Rotary Club for their partnership that has transformed their community opening up new opportunities for them.

The visitors described their experience in Buffujja as fascinating! They had previously done projects elsewhere but had not been so close to the project as they were with Buffujja and by this they could not resist visiting Buffujja, which they said has a lot to offer and were now going to sell the community needs better.



After the welcome tunes, The visitors were taken for the project installations scope's inspection tour. They were led by the elected community committee chairperson and other committee members. The visitors were impressed by the project outcomes and they commended the host club for their keen interest in the project implementation. There will be no expiry date for Buffujja's new dimension!



The Community members with little information about Rotary have now adapted the word Rotary in most of their day to day. They have even spiced up their Church hymns with Rotary foundation lyrics ! Men now call themselves Rotarians in a way of distinguish themselves from the crowds. Quite amazing! Thanks to Rotary Foundation for its many hands in helping the needy. Many thanks to Bellingham Rotary Club for taking the lead in mobilising for the Project funding.



Rotarian Robert in his remarks in respect the project's scope trainings, emphasised that if you want to change the word, start with the young generation, If you want to improve water and sanitation in an area, start with the children. He was referring to the huge crowd led by the youth and the School children who lined up to welcome them from a distance of about 8 Km in a procession that was commanded by their Circumcision ceremony cultural drums! Popularly called 'Kadodi'! Leading the Guests in a procession for the entire distance up to the prepared meeting venue. They disclosed that they had never experienced such joy, happiness in their lives! Dominique said they were delighted to have made the trip to witness the joy Buffu-jja community is having because of the availed safe drinking water. She encored access to clean water is not just a right but a matter of life and death. You cannot get a substitute for water, it must be only water! And nothing else!



The visitors had the opportunity to distribute free re usable sanitary pads to the community women and school going girl children of age.



Rotarian Dominique Zervas and Lisa Saar had an opportunity to attend fellowship with Bweyogerere Namboole Rotary Club at their fellowship venue.



The day's fellowship was packed with events. We had Bellingham RC Members; Rotarian Dominique & Rotarian Lisa making up for the first time in our Club, being our last fellowship this Rotary year, there was hand over of Offices by Our Club Directorates to the incoming teams and the ceremonial change of Club President. Rotarian Dominique in a way of appreciation commended the Rotaractors for their keen participation during the execution of Buffujja Water Sanitation and hygiene project. Above she was presenting their Club Burner to the Rotaractors of Bweyogerere Namboole Rotary Club.



Wawo! What a packed visit this was for Rotarian Robert, Dominique & Lisa! It was indeed humbling to us . Going forward we are sure the visiting team has an idea of the needs of Buffujja community and can now sell better with informed mind about any of the Adopt a Village components. We at Bweyogerere Namboole Rotary Club can not take the visit lightly, it really took a lot of commitment and we can not let you down. Thank you Robert, Dominique and Lisa for sparing your precious time for Buffujja Community's cause. To all the members of Bellingham Rotary Club thank you for the facilitation. Bweyogerere Namboole Rotary Club, the future for partnership is now brighter. To all those who participated in one way or the other during the Project appraisal, initiation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Buffujja water sanitation project **THANK YOU. Regards Peter Kasango**