

WEEKLY RECAP | THU 13 AUG 2026

GoldenWagon

The Weakest Link
The Lost Sheep, and
**The Gold
That We
Have**



RCUpperKololo



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Rotary
Upper Kololo





Building the

(Except Ours Actually Worked)

The Rotary Club of Upper Kololo gathered at Hotel Lavena for a retreat that promised the usual mix of reflection, connection, and team-building; and delivered all three, plus an unplanned brush with structural engineering. After lunch, someone decided the best way to test a room of Rotarians who, if we're honest, don't often get to work together outside their usual small circles, was to hand us dry macaroni, tape, and an eggplant. What followed was a small masterclass in teamwork, with a biblical footnote nobody saw coming.

Hand a room of freshly-fed adults a pile of macaroni, a roll of tape, and twenty minutes to build something that won't fall over, and a particular kind of chaos sets in almost immediately. Randomly regrouped and mostly strangers to each other's working styles, we were no exception. But somewhere inside that chaos was one of the more honest lessons in teamwork I've come across outside of an actual Rotary meeting.

The brief was simple enough to fit on an index card: build the tallest tower you can, using only macaroni and tape, and crown it with an eggplant.

Twenty minutes. No phoning an architect friend. Groups were

assigned at random, so nobody could recruit "the engineer" or "the guy who did that DIY shelf once" structurally speaking, we were all equally unqualified.

And yet nobody seemed to mind. There was no scramble for the title of Head Builder, no debate about optimal load distribution while the clock ran down. Someone grabbed straws. Someone else started taping. A third person stood back and called out "that side's leaning." The tower simply happened. Under a ticking clock, theory lost to action every time; nobody had the luxury of being precious about their own idea, which turned out to be the secret ingredient nobody thought to write on the card.

By the time Rtn. Kenneth Mugumya - the judge cried "stop!" two towers stood apart from the rest, for very different reasons.

The first was, frankly, unglamorous. A dense, redundant mass of taped-together straws, the structural equivalent of a group project where everyone insisted on double-checking everyone else's work. No design awards were coming its way. But it was rigid, wide at the base, and entirely unbothered by the eggplant now sitting on top of it. It just stood there, smugly sound, for the rest of the session.



Tower of Babel

The second was the early crowd favourite: slender, elegant, deliberately leaning, built from thinner pillars, the kind of thing that looked like it belonged in an architecture magazine rather than a conference room. It held its eggplant too, for a while, drawing appreciative murmurs and at least one audible “ooh.” Then, slowly, under the weight of its own ambition, it began to lean further than intended. And further still. Eventually it did what leaning towers do when nobody has invented flying buttresses for macaroni.

It would be easy to end this story with “and that’s why you shouldn’t be flashy” but that’s not quite fair to the second tower, which was genuinely clever.

The real lesson sat somewhere else: in a room with no time to argue, competence mattered far less than participation. The tower that lasted wasn’t built by the most skilled hands in the room, because there weren’t any. It was built by everyone’s hands, all committed to the same unglamorous, over-taped idea, refined together as they went.

That’s a fairly good description of a functioning club too, come to think of it. Not one brilliant architect and a room of spectators, but

a lot of ordinary contributions, taped together without much ego, holding up something heavier than any one person could carry alone. The elegant, individually-driven ideas can look wonderful going up. But it’s usually the wide, slightly unglamorous foundation, built by many hands, nobody waiting for permission to pick up a straw, that’s still standing when the real weight lands on top.

Ours was a room full of non-builders who built something that held. If that isn’t a fair description of what Rotary does with an over-sized problem and twenty minutes, I don’t know what is.

The original Tower of Babel collapsed into confusion, the story goes, because everyone stopped understanding one another.

Ours, on 8 August at Hotel Lavena, did the opposite. A room full of Rotarians who know each other well enough by name, but rarely get the chance to actually work side by side, spent twenty short minutes speaking exactly the same language.

Perhaps that’s the real takeaway to carry back from Lavena: give a room enough trust and not too much time to overthink it, and even Rotarians with no business near a toolbox can raise something that stands — together, not just alongside one another.





**The Weakest Link,
The Lost Sheep, and
The Gold We
Already Have**

On August 8, 2026, the Rotary Club of Upper Kololo gathered for a retreat at Hotel Lavena, the result of a club health survey conducted the week before. The goal was simple but not small: to re energize and realign around what matters most; increasing our impact, expanding our reach, deepening participant engagement, and strengthening our ability to adapt.

The survey told an encouraging story on the surface. Over 70% of participants said they were confident in the club's direction, and just as many said they'd happily recommend a friend to join. But a good number of members hadn't responded at all, and in their silence was something worth listening to.

"The strength of a Rotary club, like a chain, lies in its weakest link," PDG Geoffrey Kitakule cautioned in his keynote. He urged the club to make a sustained effort to find and reconnect with the Rotarians whose voices have gone quiet, whose flame has dimmed. He pointed to the parable in Luke 15:3-7, where a shepherd leaves ninety nine sheep to search for the one that's lost, and rejoices greatly when he finds it.

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When every Rotarian brings their flavor, it's Rotary that wins

But he was quick to add a caution: fast growth can breed quiet overconfidence from within, even as it draws envy from without. There's no room for complacency — plenty of eyes are watching for cracks in the foundation.

When conflict arises, as it inevitably will, PDG Mwanjje advised that honesty — real, candid honesty, is what builds a healthy, lasting club culture, one where different opinions are welcomed rather than avoided. Make sure everyone in your club matters, and that every voice gets heard. As he put it: *"When every Rotarian brings their flavor, it's Rotary that wins. But bitter berries aren't flavorful."*

Two questions lingered in the room long after he sat down:

What have you contributed to the weakness of your club?

What are you contributing to its greatness?

PDG Xavier Sentamu closed by challenging every Rotarian to remember why they joined in the first place. It's true that what we expect when we join rarely matches the reality of membership — but that only makes it more urgent to stay engaged with a mission that has changed millions of lives worldwide.

When we don't put our members' talents and passions to use, we lose them. So let's keep recommending each other for roles and opportunities to serve in the places where their joy of service runs deepest.

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If that's the joy of finding one, how much greater the joy of bringing all 112 members back into a shared mission of service above self?

Rotary's work, he reminded everyone, is best done with as many hands on deck as possible.

"Appreciate the gold that you have," PDG Stephen Mwanje offered next. By the milestones it has hit in just five years, Upper Kololo stands as the top-ranked club in District 9213. Drawing on years of experience across Rotary clubs worldwide, he noted how rare it is for a club to grow this fast, this early.



**CANCER
RUN 2026**

Rotary
Clubs of Uganda



GGWANGA MUJJE

LET'S RUN TO RESTORE HOPE



SUN 30TH AUG 2026



6:00AM



**KOLOLO INDEPENDENCE GROUNDS AND
MAJOR TOWNS ACROSS THE COUNTRY**

All proceeds go towards the completion of
the Cancer Centre at **Nsambya Hospital**



CANCER'S ONE RACE
STARTING POINT

Registration Fees

UGX 30,000

Comes with a vest



**PARLIAMENT
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MAVD McCANN

