

# THE WAVE

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The Editor's Note

# The Foundation of Peace: A Divine and Service-Driven Mandate



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In Matthew 5:9, the Bible reminds us: **“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”** This elevates peacebuilding from a passive wish to an active pursuit. It calls us to live justly and intentionally, to mend whatever is broken. Remarkably, this biblical framework for peace aligns closely with the Rotary mission of Service Above Self.

February is the month of Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention in the Rotary calendar. In Uganda, this February has found us healing from the wounds of elections; the fatigue, the disappointments, and the unfulfilled dreams of those whose journeys ended at the ballot box. To all who did not make it, we say: it is well; there is always a next time, and it can be better.

For this edition of the WAVE, I sat down with Asan Kasingye, an amiable, amazing, and humorous decorated retired policeman. He carried the gun; he commanded coys and cantonments; yet he never lost himself to the airs that sometimes come with the pips on one's shoulders. Kasingye shares what he has done with the lessons learned over decades in the forces. There is no one, absolutely no one, who should not sit with Kasingye or listen to him speak; he is full of wisdom.

We also visit the home of RC Sonde, a club whose charter story was not just about the document itself, but about the numbers behind it. At some point, the walls crumbled.

But, oh, how they rose again, and stronger than before. We bring you that story too.

Then there is the Makerere Rotary Peace Centre. Have you ever visited the facility? Do you know any Peace Fellows? As a Rotarian, you need to pay a visit, witness the goodness taking place there, and keep tabs on the 130 fully funded Rotary fellowships awarded each year to dedicated leaders from around the world who study in these peace centres.

In this issue, we also share our regular dose of Rotary Foundation insights, Governance Advisory, and the story of the most recent and impactful project in Busesa, among many other articles worthy of your time. Please, be our guest.

In all these efforts, let us use February to renew our vows to build bridges where walls have been erected. We can do this by leaning into timeless truths, ensuring that our legacy is not just one of service, but one of lasting, sustainable peace.

So, friends, let us revisit Romans 12:18 and recite together: **“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with all people.”** This is a call to radical accountability. It asks us to examine our own roles, whether in our boardrooms, our Rotary clubs, our communities, or our great country, and to be the first to extend the olive branch. Good Rotarians do that.

**Rtn. Sheila Naturinda,**  
**Rotary Club of Kampala Central**



## RI PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: ▶



# Let action define us

**At last month's International Assembly, President-elect Olayinka "Yinka" Hakeem Babalola called on members of the Rotary world to live out our presidential message for the 2026-27 Rotary year: Create Lasting Impact.**

**T**his February, as we observe Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention Month, we have an opportunity to channel Yinka's call to action into real change.

Peace is not simply the absence of war. A life free from conflict but marked by hunger, instability, or the inability to care for one's family is not true peace. Peace requires liberty, opportunity, and respect for human dignity. Yet fear often blocks that path — fear of change, of cultural loss, of people we don't understand.

Fear isn't defeated through avoidance or aggression. Knowledge is the first step toward peace. Rotary embraces this idea. Our Rotary Peace Centres and their peace fellows, along with other peace education initiatives, demonstrate how knowledge builds trust and helps communities find solutions to conflict.

In Colombia, decades of conflict have left deep wounds. The 2025 Rotary Foundation Programs of Scale awardee, Pathways to Peace and Prosperity, partners with

the United Nations World Food Programme to expand opportunity, improve conflict resolution, and connect people with social services. Its goal is to break cycles of violence, poverty, and food insecurity so peace can take root.

In Maharashtra, India, People of Action honoree Swati Herkal built peace through prosperity. Her project confronted farmers' declining soil health, rising debt, and illness caused by chemical fertilizers. She and her Rotary partners launched a regenerative agriculture program that revitalized the land, lowered costs, and restored stability. More than 1,100 farmers now participate and over 50 villages have adopted the model.

Rotary also advances peace by restoring dignity. In Chad, Rotary Peace Fellow Domino Frank discovered that more than 1,500 women who fought in a rebellion had been erased from reintegration programs. His advocacy led to Chad's first Rotary Foundation global grant and the creation of Corridors of Peace. More than 100 women — triple the

goal — completed literacy and vocational training and formed a cooperative to support their families.

From Colombia to India to Chad, the lesson is clear: Peace is not a dream. It is the result of sustained action with a focus on true, lasting impact. To replicate these successes, Rotary clubs can take three steps: Learn from peace fellows and other peace experts in our organization, apply a peacebuilding lens to community assessments, and prioritize impact over ceremony.

In a world filled with fear, Rotary cannot be satisfied with half-measures and empty words. If we are truly people of action, then action must define us.

Together, we can Create Lasting Impact — across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves.

**FRANCESCO AREZZO**  
President, Rotary International

**DISTRICT  
GOVERNOR'S  
MESSAGE:** ▶



aryD9213 | McKenzie

## When there is Peace, our communities thrive

**Fellow Rotarians, Uganda's peace story is still being written. Challenges remain, but so does our responsibility. The impact we have made shows that peace is not beyond our reach when communities are empowered and values are lived. Let us continue to strengthen dialogue, invest in youth, address inequality, and model ethical leadership. In doing so, we do more than serve; we secure peace for future generations.**

Uganda, like many nations, has known both the pain of conflict and the promise of peace. Our history reminds us that conflict leaves scars, not only on land and infrastructure, but on opportunity, and human dignity. Yet our story also shows something remarkable: **the resilience of people and the power of reconciliation as we have seen in Northern Uganda.**

Peace is often misunderstood as the absence of war. But true peace is much more than silence after guns fall quiet. Peace is **justice, inclusion, dialogue, and opportunity.** Peace is when young people see a future worth building. Peace is when differences, of tribe, religion, politics, or opinion; are managed not with violence, but with respect. Peace is when one gender respects the other to end Gender based violence.

Disagreement is natural. What turns disagreement or conflict destructive is how we handle it. When dialogue fails, when inequality grows, when fear replaces understanding, conflict becomes dangerous. That is why **conflict resolution is not a reaction; it is a skill and a commitment.** And this skill has to be passed on to our communities.

In Uganda, **Rotarians have been quietly and consistently shaping peace where it matters most at community level.** Our impact is found in changes in lives, tensions reduced, and futures restored. Across communities, Rotary clubs have brought together people of different tribes, faiths, professions, and political views. By creating neutral spaces for conversation through Rotary Community Corps, vocational meetings, and service projects, Rotarians help transform mistrust into understanding. Dialogue is often the first step away from conflict, and Rotary has made that

step possible.

In our communities, many conflicts are fueled by poverty, unemployment, and limited access to basic services. Rotary projects in clean water, sanitation, health, education, and economic empowerment have reduced competition over scarce resources. When communities have water, livelihoods, and hope, conflict loses its fuel.

Through Interact and Rotaract clubs, leadership training, mentorship, and community service, Rotary equips young people with values of tolerance, service, and responsible leadership. Youth who feel included and empowered are far less likely to be drawn into violence and far more likely to become peacebuilders in their communities.

In post-conflict and vulnerable communities like Northern Uganda, Rotary-supported initiatives in health, education have helped restore dignity and rebuild trust. Healing is a critical but often overlooked part of conflict resolution. I was impressed by Rotary Club of Gulu City that supports young ladies that were affected by years of conflict in Northern Uganda. Rotary understands that peace must reach the heart as well as the mind.

Our strength as Rotarians lies in partnership. We work with local leaders, civil society, faith institutions, government agencies, and international Rotary networks. The **Makerere University Peace and Conflict Studies Centre (often called the Makerere Peace Center)** has been helpful in several **practical, long-term ways** to Uganda and the wider region especially in strengthening peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and evidence-based policy.

The Makerere Peace Center has contributed to **healing and rebuilding**

**efforts,** especially in post-conflict communities. By engaging with local leaders, traditional institutions, and civil society, these partnerships multiply impact and ensure that peace efforts are locally owned and sustainable.

I thank Rotarians for leading by example. The way we conduct our meetings, resolve disagreements, and treat one another demonstrates that conflict can be managed respectfully and constructively. The Rotary Four-Way Test remains a powerful guide for peaceful engagement in both public and private life.

As Rotarians, we are uniquely positioned to be peacebuilders. Let us also remember that **peace is not someone else's responsibility.** Governments, institutions, and international bodies matter but lasting peace is sustained by citizens, by families, by community leaders like us Rotarians.

For now, the next generation is watching us and learning how to disagree by watching how we disagree. They are learning how to lead by watching how we lead. Let us therefore show them that strength is not found in domination, but in dialogue, not in revenge, but in reconciliation.

Let us commit, through our clubs, our projects, and our personal conduct to be **ambassadors of peace.** Let us resolve conflicts with wisdom, build bridges where walls once stood, and leave behind communities that are more united than we found them.

Because when Rotary works for peace, peace works for everyone.

**#RotaryEyamba**

**Geoffrey Martin Kitakule**

**Rotary District Governor District 9213**

# Makerere University Rotary Peace Centre Fostering Holistic Peace

When Rotarian Prof. Hellen Nambalirwa Nkabala speaks of peace, she doesn't refer to it merely as one of Rotary's Seven Areas of Focus.

"Peace building is the anchor," she says. "Because you cannot talk about the other Areas of Focus if the environment you live in is not peaceful."

By Rtn Peter Nyanzi

Launched on January 9, 2020, and welcoming its first Peace Fellows in February 2021, the Centre has quietly become one of Rotary's most strategic investments – training what describes as an "army of peace builders" now spanning 48 countries, soon to reach 52.

As Director of the Rotary Peace Centre at Makerere University, Africa's only Rotary Peace Centre, Prof. Nkabala understands the impact that the centre has made over the last five years.

The Centre is admitting 40 fellows annually in two revolving cohorts for a postgraduate diploma in Peace Building and Conflict Transformation. However, Helen says its real impact lies in what happens when these fellows return home. Each implements a nine-month Social Change Initiative, a tangible peace project rooted in their community's realities. From Uganda to Papua New Guinea, from Sierra Leone to Poland, these projects are transforming communities.

Helen is clear about their expectations: "What we examine at Makerere is not just the coursework but the projects our fellows would execute when they return home. These projects are rooted in peace and development, and they ensure that our fellows leave a tangible impact on their communities."

The Centre challenges conventional definitions of peace. Helen rejects the narrow view that equates peace with the mere absence of war – or what scholars call "negative peace." Instead, they champion "positive peace" – a holistic state where governance functions, resources are



Rotarian Prof. Hellen Nambalirwa Nkabala

accessible, and health flourishes, etc. "Peace is not just the absence of war," she stresses. "Positive peace is a holistic approach that includes governance, health, access to resources, and even mental well-being."

Drawing from African wisdom, Helen explains how communities traditionally speak of "peace in my tent" and "peace in your bones." Fellows begin by describing how peace was historically maintained in their communities—through totems protecting wildlife, sacred trees, or ancestral customs. "By protecting your totem," Helen explains, "You're not just preserving heritage, but also fostering peace between humans and nature."

**"The impact is already evident. Fellows are winning Rotary grants to scale their initiatives and joining Rotary clubs themselves—creating powerful synergy for sustained peacebuilding."**

## Thankful to Rotarians

Strategically positioned in the Great Lakes region, the Centre leverages its location as a classroom. Fellows visit Rwanda to witness post-

genocide reconstruction. "Rwanda is a clear example of what peace and development can achieve. Seeing this transformation inspires our fellows and equips them to implement similar interventions in their own communities."

But Helen issues an urgent challenge to Rotarians worldwide: "Pick interest in each and every peace fellow. Pick interest in what the fellows are doing when they return to their countries. By supporting them, you also contribute to peace and development on a global scale." "Every Rotarian is a sponsor," she reminds us. By engaging with fellows' projects, clubs don't just monitor impact; they multiply it.

The Centre's vision extends beyond academic training. Helen envisions Makerere as a 'go-to' institution for peacebuilding expertise, establishing a mediation hub for alternative dispute resolution for the entire continent. "Many of the conflicts can be resolved outside the courts of law, saving time and resources," she notes.

## Praying for a home

However, ambitions are constrained by lack of adequate infrastructure. Currently able to house only one cohort at a time, Helen is praying for an intervention. "We have artistic impressions and costings ready for a new facility that we shall call our home. If we build this home, it can serve as a physical and virtual hub for peacebuilding activities across the continent." The envisioned centre would include mediation rooms, archives, a museum, and accommodation for fellows and visiting Rotarians.

“

**The Centre is admitting 40 fellows annually in two revolving cohorts for a postgraduate diploma in Peace Building and Conflict Transformation. However, Helen says its real impact lies in what happens when these fellows return home. Each implements a nine-month Social Change Initiative, a tangible peace project rooted in their community's realities.**

The impact is already evident. Fellows are winning Rotary grants to scale their initiatives and joining Rotary clubs themselves—creating

powerful synergy for sustained peacebuilding.

Helen concludes with a reminder that resonates deeply: "Peacebuilders often forget themselves while working for others, but self-care is essential. You cannot give what you don't have. Peace begins with us."

For Rotarians in Uganda and beyond, the call is clear. Engage with the Makerere Peace Centre, support its fellows, and invest in its future. As Helen aptly puts it; "This is not Uganda's centre; it's a global centre. Let us all own it."

Indeed, the Makerere Rotary Peace Centre is more than a training institution. It is a movement, a bridge connecting communities, and a testament to what is possible when Rotarians unite for peace.

**The writer is a member of the Rotary Club of Kampala Naalya**



## Rotary Peace Centers worldwide:

### Region Host University / Location

1. N. America- Duke University & University of North Carolina, USA
2. Asia - International Christian University — Tokyo, Japan
3. Asia - Chulalongkorn University — Bangkok, Thailand
4. Europe - Uppsala University — Uppsala, Sweden

5. Europe - University of Bradford — Bradford, England
6. Oceania- University of Queensland — Brisbane, Australia
7. Africa - Makerere University — Kampala, Uganda
8. S. Asia - Symbiosis International University — Pune, India
9. Asia - Bahçeşehir University — Istanbul, Turkey

# From Law Enforcement Frontline to the Heart of Service; Rtn. Asan Kasingye Talks Championing Peace

**F**or decades, the name Asan Kasingye has been synonymous with the badge, and his career defined by policing, public order, and national security. Today in the Rotary family he is a dedicated servant-leader focused on the transformative work of peace building, using lessons learned from the Uganda Police Force.

In this exclusive feature for *The WAVE*, the retired Assistant Inspector General of Police explores the intersection of enforcement and empathy. Kasingye shares how the Four-Way Test can serve as a blueprint for resolving stubborn conflicts, trading the tactical for the communal. He sat with the Magazine's Editor- Rtn Sheila Naturinda

In a world increasingly divided, Kasingye reminds us that peace is not merely the absence of tension, but the presence of justice and understanding.



## How have you used your previous vocation of policing, and your expertise in security to propagate peace in Uganda?

I believe it is vital for someone with a background like mine to leverage that experience. Since retiring three years ago, I have continued to preach the promotion of peace in communities, within families, and in online spaces; reaching people I may never meet, particularly on X (formerly Twitter).

I was the champion of community policing in the country. Today, I continue to use my experience to build trust and relationships within communities to reduce conflict. I engage with young people and young married couples to discuss Conflict resolution, Domestic violence prevention and Personalized counsel.

I maintain the ability to contact any police officer across the country to report what I have seen or heard. Because people frequently call or tag me in social media posts providing evidence of violence, and officers gladly act on these issues.

I have been invited to the Parliament of Uganda three times to assist committees focused on reforming Police Leadership and Governance,

Welfare and Human Rights, and Accountability and Public Treatment. By sharing my expertise, I aim to strengthen the police force's commitment to accountability and human rights, both of which have a direct impact on peace, respect, and conflict resolution.

I have partnered with various NGOs to support peace-building initiatives, serving as a champion for change management campaigns. My work focuses on addressing violence in homes and the HIV scourge,

particularly at landing sites such as Kasenyi and Nakiwogo. By leading these efforts, I facilitate community dialogues that directly support long-term peace.

Additionally, I serve as Chairman of **MAN CAGE UGANDA**, a program hosted via X spaces, in which we Educate men on their roles and responsibilities, Mentor young people who are beginning their families, and promote healthy dialogue to strengthen the social fabric.



Peace Champion organizing a sensitization and public awareness campaign against domestic violence and HIV in communities of Gaba in Kampala and Kasenyi in Entebbe



With Archbishop Emeritus Luke Orombi at the Ankole Western University conference on peace last year

“

**Rotary and the Uganda Police are strong and big brands. If they could start organising joint community outreach programs, organise peace campaigns, cultural activities that promote unity and reconciliation, it would make a big impact in Uganda. Every corner in this country has both Rotary and has police. So, its doable.**

Within the church, I from time to time serve as a trainer for young people including young marrieds in different church organised events. I did one for young marrieds in Mbarara Diocese where we focused on resource management, investments, and money; critical topics that help mitigate conflicts within families and the broader community. I also addressed young people at their Annual conference in North Ankole Diocese, Ankole Western University in West Ankole and other such related meetings in Entebbe.

My work with young people continues through engagements that promote a culture of peace, tolerance, and non-violence. To combat extremism, I was appointed by the MP for Sheema Municipality to train leaders from different denominations and the youth on radicalization and extremism. Additionally, I am frequently invited

by Rotaract clubs to speak on peace and conflict resolution, encouraging them to give peace a chance.

These initiatives, among so many others, represent how I have used my vocation to serve. I believe that impact is greatest when people see you as a peaceful man, one who never fomented wars or unwarranted conflicts.

**Given the situation we face now after elections, how can we as Rotarians contribute to cultivating peace and resolving conflict in Uganda today?**

Given the post-election situation in the country, Rotarians can be significant players in the following ways:

- **Community Engagements:** Clubs can organize community dialogues, town hall meetings, and peace caravans to bring people together and foster peace understanding.
- **Voter Education:** Rotarians can collaborate with NGOs on the importance of peaceful elections and the voting process. By engaging youths, schools, and churches, they ensure people have the necessary information to prevent problems.
- **Peace Building Initiatives:** Rotarians can address underlying issues like poverty, which can lead to electoral violence when people are hungry. For example,

the Rotary Club of Entebbe supports Vision Fund; through our seed project, we invested in Old Mutual Unit Trust to lend capital to young people. This reduces inequality and unemployment by engaging them in productivity.

- **Mediation and Conflict Resolution:** Clubs can use Rotary platforms to support conflict resolution methodologies. Our club led the re-planting of the Kitubulu forest reserve—which had been destroyed through illegal sales—resolving the resulting community conflicts through the “Plant Your Balance” initiative.
- **Peace-Themed Events:** Rotary clubs can organize peace walks and concerts or launch social media campaigns to promote tolerance.

**How easy is it for an armed officer, also a Rotarian to practise the 4-way test as they go about their duties?**

The Four-Way Test serves as a vital framework for integrity, especially when the law meets the street.

- **Truth:** Officers are legally and ethically bound to be truthful. When they prioritize honesty over expediency, they uphold the true spirit of the law.
- **Fairness:** By eliminating prejudice and bias, officers ensure justice is served without being overzealous.
- **Goodwill & Mutual Benefit:** Prioritizing de-escalation over maximum force fosters community trust and improves officer safety.

My club recently partnered with traffic police to reduce motorcycle crashes in Entebbe. By providing training, helmets, and reflectors to riders, we directly supported the police's mission. This collaboration allowed officers to see Rotary's values in action, encouraging them to mirror that integrity in their own official reports and testimonies.

The Four-Way Test can empower law enforcement officers to make tough decisions while staying true



to their values. When Rotarians and police work together, we foster a culture of integrity that transforms 'maximum force' into 'mutual benefit,' ultimately creating more peaceful and harmonious communities.

**What is your most remarkable and impactful moment you have had in Rotary so far?**

Being at the heart of driving impactful projects across health, environment and education is both exciting and momentous. Reflecting on my journey so far, several highlights stand out: **Public Safety Partnerships:** Collaborating with the **Uganda Police** and **St. John Ambulance** to train boda boda riders remains a defining achievement for me, **Youth Engagement** Visiting educational institutions to speak with Interactors allows us to mentor the next generation of leaders, **Environmental Stewardship:** Integrating conservation by providing trees to schools ensures our impact is both human and ecological.

When I served as Club Secretary, we spearheaded a project for Hydrocephalus and Spina Bifida, raising funds to support surgeries and treatments at Mulago Hospital for children suffering from these conditions and heart complications. Moments like those move me deeply.

I also recall a powerful instance where our club intervened using Interpol to rescue a young woman being abused in Saudi Arabia. When she finally returned home and visited our club to share her harrowing experience, the room was in tears. Realizing we had saved her from that nightmare remains a profound

moment in my Rotary journey. Now, as Club President, I am leading a project close to my heart at my alma mater, Kibingo Primary School in Sheema. We are providing books and constructing a library for a school that was on the verge of closure, effectively bringing it back to life. On 22nd February, we will officially launch and commission the library. This project is deeply personal; it reminds me of the young version of myself who once needed that very same hand up.

**How can the security forces work with Rotarians to spread the message of peace in communities especially at this time?**

Rotary and the Uganda Police are strong and big brands. If they could start organising joint community outreach programs, organise peace campaigns, cultural activities that promote unity and reconciliation, it would make a big impact in Uganda. Every corner in this country has both Rotary and has police. So, its doable.

Peace messaging is also what they can do together. The police personnel can amplify rotary's peace messages. In Youth engagement, the two can partner on initiatives that focus on mentorship where the youth can be given lessons in peaceful coexistence, conflict avoidance and resolution among others. The weekly Rotary meetings can always feature police officers to speak about the same.

And finally, information sharing is key. The police can share information (not intelligence) on potential hotspots to Rotarians so that a collaboration is organised to build trust, reduce tensions and foster a culture of peace in those highlighted hot spots.

**What is your ideal dream for Uganda as far as attaining peace and resolving conflicts is concerned?**

My ideal dream is having a Uganda which is mature in democracy, where Ugandans have participated fully and there is clear transparency in all we do.

Secondly, I dream of a Uganda where policing is in tandem with the ideals of community policing; always working in partnership with communities, groups and agencies which are on the ground, as a partnership to find out what people want and resolve them together.

Thirdly, I dream of a Uganda where the good police has an improved welfare, their wages are enhanced and paid well, they have hospitals for their families and schools for their children and we give them very good medium income generating projects because these are the kind of things that challenged me when I was still in the police force.

Lastly my dream is to see people appreciate their own country because Uganda is one of the most beautiful countries, but everyday people are struggling and are pushing to be out of this country. This is very unfortunate because all those leaving, ought to stay and be part and parcel of keeping Uganda safe, work together to remove the challenges that lead them to relocate.

**After all is said and done, how would you like to be remembered?**

I would like to be remembered not merely for the positions I held, but for the tangible hope I helped create. I want to be remembered as the officer who believed in community engagements, the father of community policing which is a huge block to building peaceful societies

I want to be known as the person who stood at the intersection of integrity and action; one who respected his uniform as an example of a good police officer, the one who brought the Four-Way Test to the front lines of law enforcement, who turned a struggling school into a sanctuary for learning, and who used every professional tool and personal passion to rescue the vulnerable and heal the sick.

Finally let everyone remember Asa Kasingye as the man who believed that peace isn't the absence of fear, but about having a peace of mind and internal status.

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- Psychosocial Support to Organisation
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- Counseling Services



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# How Rotary and Rotarians can Propagate Peace in Uganda's Election Aftermath



By Rtn. Dr. Samson Barigye,

*Rotary International focuses on seven key thematic areas to drive global impact, one of which is peacebuilding and conflict prevention. However, this element is given the least attention by rotary clubs worldwide, yet the importance of sustainable peace need not be emphasised. Rotarians have the potential and opportunity to take a central place in promoting peace. This peace would facilitate the achievement of the objectives of the service projects implemented in the communities.*

## The absence of positive peace during the 2026 general elections

Uganda held general elections on January 15, 2026 during which, Ugandans voted the President and Members of Parliament. On January 22, they voted the District Chairpersons, the Lord Mayor of Kampala Capital City and other urban local governments. Elections for lower-level leaders will be held in due course. For some, the elections were more peaceful, free and fair than the past two election cycles.

During the elections, there were reports of political violence, which resulted in the destruction of

property, injury and deaths. There were also reports of kidnap and disappearance of some political actors. Some political leaders are reportedly in hiding for fear of arrest by security agencies while some have been arrested, detained and produced in courts of law for reportedly promoting political violence.

A few weeks to the elections, operations of ten Ugandan CSOs were suspended. On January 13, the Uganda Communications Commission ordered the internet service providers to suspend internet connection, leading to anxiety among the population and significant disruption of business and communication. The internet was restored partially on January 17 and fully on January 26, respectively. These developments led to frustration, uncertainty, tension, anxiety and the absence of positive peace.

## Can Rotarians in Uganda promote peace after the elections?

Rotary is an influential humanitarian organisation with the potential to leverage its membership and partnerships. However, to what extent can it use this influence and leverage to promote peace, unity and reconciliation after the divisive elections? How can Rotarians promote unity among Ugandan voters when some are dissatisfied with the election outcome? How can Rotarians persuade Ugandans to embrace dialogue, forgiveness; to reconcile and bring about harmony? In my view, Rotary in Uganda can leverage the 8,441 Rotarians spread across the 230 Rotary clubs, the 5,020 Rotaractors belonging to the 223 Rotaract clubs, the 104 active Interact clubs and the trust it has gained through its estimated

impactful service projects over the past seven decades.

## What Rotary can do to promote post-election peace and reconciliation

Rotarians can work through their clubs and use their influence to support community initiatives, collaborate with cultural and faith leaders, plus other community structures to promote healing and reconciliation. Rotary in Uganda can leverage the Rotary, Rotaract and Interact Clubs; the Rotary Peace Centre at Makerere University, plus the 19 Ugandan Rotary Peace Fellows who have completed their Fellowship at Makerere University. Rotary can also leverage its international structures to learn from the experiences of countries that have experienced larger scale political violence.

Rotarians should take a central place in propagating peace in communities. They should bring to bear their non-partisan character; their solidarity, connections and engagement with the communities they serve; their linkages with professional networks; and the connections which give them global solidarity and international experience. This will enable them to restore the eroded dignity and relationships.. Any intervention should lead to positive peace, which will create conditions that prevent future violence. In addition, Rotary's service projects will address some of the grievances causing conflicts.

## The desirable non-partisan role of Rotarians

While nearly everyone in the country is taking a partisan stance in the immediate post-election period, Rotarians should be the positive deviants, modelling objective political discourse; rejecting hate speech

that can lead to incitement; and promoting reconciliation. This can be through the Rotarians' integrity in business and public life, as well as their personal conduct in the communities they serve. Rotary's Four-Way Test can be an entry point to reestablishing normalcy after the elections.

Rotarians need to ensure that the spoken work is the truth, is fair to all concerned, builds goodwill and better friendships, and is beneficial to all.. Using the Four-Way Test during media engagements, conversations with political leaders and other stakeholders will bring the Rotary values to bear, and in that way promote peace.

Rotary clubs in Uganda can organise events, which bring together political, cultural and religious leaders and engage them in respectful dialogues in their capacities as citizens. Rotary can partner with schools, universities, and CSOs to promote peaceful approaches to the resolution of conflict. Rotary can engage in civic and voter education, with a focus on promoting inclusive democratic processes, human rights observation, tolerance, and the rule of law.

In order to promote a culture of peace, Rotarians can contribute to the development of peace curricula, establish or strengthen existing peace clubs, and conduct youth leadership programmes. In particular, Rotaract clubs can be instrumental in promoting peace through youth peace and leadership initiatives that attract young people into peace activities, thereby reducing their likelihood of engaging in violence and unrest.

Through Rotaract and Interact clubs, Rotary can engage the youth to ensure that they are misled due to unemployment, political and economic exclusion, and other forms of vulnerability. Rotaract and Interact clubs can convene forums in which the youth can express their political opinions and frustrations nonviolently. Through Rotaract and Interact Clubs, Rotary can implement youth peace leadership programmes and mentor young people into peaceful leaders.

Initiatives such as the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) can be scaled up to promote sustainable peace through youth leadership.

At the community level, Rotarians can leverage the multiple networks to which they belong: business, religion, government, culture, and academia to mediate informal disputes; resolve tensions through private diplomacy; and advocate for restraint among influential actors. This kind of quiet peacebuilding is often the most effective and sustainable. These strategies would be important for preventing the recurrence of violence and building structures of peace before the next election.

## Senior Rotarians can leverage their positions and lead the Peace efforts

Rotary Uganda has 16 Past District Governors (DGs) – all leaders with high moral standing internationally. They have been instrumental, and continue to drive major rotary initiatives in Uganda and globally. They work closely with the government on strategic interventions; with cultural institutions, the academia; professional bodies; donor agencies; the diplomatic community; senior political leaders; senior religious leaders; the private sector and business community; and with the local population through the service projects. .

In my opinion, in the area of focus of peace and conflict resolution, Rotarians are an under-utilised group of eminent men and women. In times such as these, where many formal and informal mechanisms of conflict resolution have collapsed and have lost legitimacy, trust or become partisan, Rotary can fill the gap, guided by its core values and the four-way-test.

With another election cycle just five years away, Rotary in Uganda, under the leadership of past and current district governors, can become a proactive and trusted partner in promoting peace and resolving conflicts before, during and after the elections, starting with 2031.

To do this well, Rotary would need to establish an agile mechanism. The governors could constitute a group of respected and impartial observers, mediators and negotiators with the capacity to speak to any political actor in the country, region and internationally. This mechanism would cascade down to the community through the rotary clubs across the country. Through integration, local communities can be reached with peace messages through activities of Rotary clubs in the communities. Here, objective and non-partisan conversations, as well as inclusive community dialogue will facilitate conflict resolution.

## Possible peace initiatives by Rotarians in Uganda

At community level, the 'Rotary peacemakers' initiative' would promote friendship, mediate conflicts and serve as a bridge across political, ethnic, religious and other divides. The peace initiative would remind communities that political competition must not destroy community cohesion. In the event of political violence, the Rotary Peacemakers' Initiative would provide psychosocial support in conflict hotspots by partnering with counselors, faith leaders, and NGOs that are already working in this space. The initiative would support trauma healing and reconciliation.

Finally, Rotary's greatest attribute is its moral credibility. This credibility will enable Rotary to provide an alternative mechanism for preventing, mitigating and resolving election-related conflicts nonviolently. This credibility would transform fear into trust, division into dialogue, and violence into cooperation, thus serving humanity by safeguarding peace. This credibility would allow Rotarians to act where political actors have failed, and to rally Ugandans around shared values rather than political party narratives.

*The Writer is a member of the Rotary Club of Sunrise Kampala/ Makerere University Rotary Peace Centre.*

# RC Kampala South Takes Healing Hands to Busesa

By Rtn. Innocent Ndawula

**Last Mile.** For years, healthcare in Busesa has meant long walks, empty referrals and unaffordable scans. On January 24, that distance collapsed. At Busesa Mixed Primary School, the Rotary Club of Kampala South delivered a mega medical camp that brought maternal care, eye services, financial literacy and dignity back to the centre of the community - free, coordinated and human.

## The Numbers



**General consultations**  
868 patients (639 female & 229 male)



**ANC services**  
118 expectant mothers



**Optical care**  
218 patients



**Financial literacy**  
62 participants



**Health education**  
121 women



**Mama kits**  
250



**Sanitary pads**  
400



**Trees distributed**  
2,000



**Participants**  
70 (44 Rotarians & 26 Rotaractors)



chance at an ultrasound; for others, the first time a doctor listened without asking for money.

“It is not all about having money, it is about having a heart that serves—and that is what Rotary is about,” said Faridah Namutebi Mpulumba, President of the Rotary Club of Kampala South.

### The care gap

Bugweri District has one Health Centre IV with a single sonographer serving over 211,000 people. Private scans cost up to Shs50,000—out of reach for most families. That reality explains the turnout.

By mid-day, queues wrapped around classrooms as mothers, elderly residents and youth sought services that ranged from general consultations and antenatal care to optical services, dental care, laboratory testing and pharmacy support.

On that Saturday morning, Rose Namukose walked into Busesa Mixed Primary School unsure of how far along her pregnancy was. She walked out knowing she was eight months pregnant—and holding her first-ever ultrasound scan.

Namukose’s experience mirrored that of hundreds who turned up for the Busesa Mega Medical Camp, organised by the Rotary Club of Kampala South under its Maternal and Child Health Global Grant. For many women, it was their only

### More than medicine

Beyond treatment, the camp tackled prevention and empowerment. Girls and women were trained in menstrual hygiene management, learning how to make reusable sanitary pads. Others attended financial literacy sessions, where saving, spending and business discipline were demystified.

“When we say **Rotary Eyamba**, this is exactly what we do—identify problems and solve them,” said Abesaga Nahabwe, DRR Rotaract District 9213.

One particular participant - Amlam Bernard - left with a simple but life-changing lesson.

“I earn Shs5,000 a day but spend Shs7,000. Now I know how to spend Shs3,000 and save Shs2,000,” he said.

### Purpose met

According to Service Projects Director Creven Emmanuel

Mukwenda Mugisa, the camp deliberately targeted Rotary’s areas of focus—maternal and child health, disease prevention, economic empowerment, education and environmental sustainability.

“This was about last-mile healthcare—services at no cost, delivered where people live,” Mukwenda said.

By sunset, over 1,500 residents had been served.

### Partners make it work

The impact was powered by partnerships. Support came from ASA International, DFCU Bank, Centenary Bank (Rotary FinLit Program—RC Bulindo), Christian Blind Mission, Maisha Meds, Prudential Uganda, Good Samaritan, Hope Children’s Clinic Busesa, Rotary Club of Des Moines A.M, Rotary Family Health Days, Roofings Uganda, C-Care and Joint Medical Stores, alongside 11 Rotary and six Rotaract clubs.

District Governor Geoffrey Martin Kitakule, who was born and schooled in Busesa, called the day “deeply personal”.

“This is about making a difference—health, education and dignity together,” Kitakule said.

**Beyond Camps.** While the camp delivered relief, it also exposed the gap. As Mukwenda noted, healthcare cannot rely on occasional



A Rotarian takes height measurements for one of the beneficiaries of the medical camp.

outreaches. The numbers underline both Rotary’s impact—and the urgency for sustained rural health investment. The biggest take away was that for one day, Busesa felt seen. The challenge now is turning that day into continuity—where access to care is routine, not remarkable.

### The Rotary Clubs Present were

1. Kampala First Aid and Emergency Care, 2. Morning Tide Bugolobi, 3. Upper Kololo, 4. Acacia Sunset, 5. Kampala North, 6. Kamala Metropolitan, 7. Naguru, 8. Bulindo, 9. Kampala Central, 10. Bukoto, 11. Saturday E-Jazz

### Rotaract Clubs Present:

1. Makerere, 2. Mulago, 3. Upper Kololo, 4. Kampala South, 5. Bukoto, 6. Nangabo

### Partners:

1. ASA International, 2. DFCU, 3. Centenary Bank (Rotary FinLit Program-RC Bulindo), 4. Christian Blind Mission, 5. Maisha Meds, 6. Prudential Uganda, 7. Good Samaritan, 8. Hope Children’s Clinic Busesa, 9. Rotary Club of Des Moines A.M, 10. Rotary Family Health Days Program, 11. Roofings Uganda, 12. C-care, 13. Joint Medical Stores, 14. The Kitakule Foundation.

**The writer is a member of Rotary Club of Kampala South**



Rotarians and volunteers at the registration desk taking patient information before they proceeded to the Triage area.

# Reaching the last mile: Why polio eradication still matters



By Rtn Immy Nakyeyune

In October last year, as we commemorated World Polio Day, members of the Rotary Club of Uptown Kampala, in partnership with Vine General Medicare, carried out an immunization outreach in Pajaba slum, located in the Bugolobi Industrial Area. The exercise reached over 102 community members, including children under the age of five, who received life-saving vaccines. Beyond polio immunization, the outreach also provided yellow fever, tetanus, and HPV vaccinations, alongside Vitamin A supplementation, deworming and family planning services.

Pajaba is a densely populated settlement with a high number of young children, compounded by poor drainage and sanitation systems. Walking through the narrow pathways of the slum, it became evident how quickly disease can spread in such an environment. Polio is transmitted primarily through the faecal-oral route, often as a result of inadequate hygiene and sanitation. In communities like Pajaba, the risk is not theoretical, it is immediate and real.

As we moved from household to household, accompanied by the VHT Coordinator calling out for children under five to receive vaccines, we encountered mixed reactions. Some men, many visibly intoxicated, shouted accusations that we had



come to administer family planning to “stop their women from giving birth.” Others were hesitant or outright resistant to immunizing their children, largely due to misinformation, fear, or lack of proper sensitization. These moments were challenging, but they revealed an even deeper truth: access alone is not enough. Education, trust and continuous engagement are just as critical.

This experience reinforced a clear call to action for us as Rotarians. Our work is not done. We must continue to show up in underserved communities, not once, but consistently, to emphasize the importance of immunization and broader public health practices that enable communities to live healthier, more dignified lives.

While 99.9% of the world is now polio-free, the remaining 0.1% is the hardest to reach. As long as poliovirus exists anywhere, children everywhere remain at risk. Recent alerts from South Sudan remind us how quickly the virus can resurface. The adults living with polio-related disabilities in our communities stand as daily reminders of the lifelong consequences of a disease that is entirely preventable.

Through sustained commitment, community engagement, and collective action, we can finish the fight. We can ensure that no child anywhere ever suffers from polio again.

**The writer is the Charter President, Rotary Club of Uptown Kampala**



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DRESSCODE: MONOCHROME BLACK



**ROTARACT Night**  
17TH APRIL 2026  
FRIDAY NIGHT  
DRESSCODE: AFRO-MODERN ELEGANCE



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# Mediation: Rotary's Strategic Pathway to Peacebuilding



By Rtn Dianah Kagere

Conflict in a group setting or community is not a sign of failure. In fact, in organisations driven by passion, service, and strong convictions like Rotary conflict is often evidence that people care deeply. What determines success or decline is not the presence of disagreement, but how it is handled. Mediation offers Rotary and our wider Ugandan society a practical, values-based way to resolve disputes while preserving relationships and institutional strength.

Globally, Rotary clubs bring together professionals from diverse sectors, generations and perspectives. This DIVERSITY is a strength, but it can also generate tension especially around leadership transitions, project ownership, financial accountability or communication breakdowns. Left unresolved, such tensions quietly erode trust, reduce participation, and weaken service impact.

**Mediation provides an ALTERNATIVE to escalation.**

Mediation is a voluntary, confidential and structured process in which a neutral third party assists individuals or groups in

conflict to communicate effectively, understand one another's perspectives and reach mutually acceptable solutions.

Unlike adversarial processes that focus on determining fault or imposing decisions, mediation emphasises dialogue, collaboration and shared ownership of outcomes. The mediator does not judge, decide or take sides. Instead, they guide the conversation, manage the process and help parties explore underlying interests, clarify misunderstandings and identify practical options for resolution. It is a structured, neutral process that prioritises dialogue over blame and understanding over entrenchment.

In Rotary settings, mediation can take the form of facilitated conversations between members who have fallen out, guided dialogue following contentious elections, or reconciliation processes after misunderstandings that threaten club unity. The aim is not to declare winners and losers, but to restore functionality and shared purpose.

Leadership transitions offer a particularly relevant example. Across clubs in Uganda, incoming leaders sometimes assume office amid unresolved tensions inherited from previous terms. Without deliberate intervention, these issues resurface later often at greater cost.

Early mediation during such transitions allows grievances to be aired respectfully, expectations clarified and relationships reset.

## When Should a Club Consider Mediation?

A Rotary club does not need to be in crisis to benefit from mediation.

In fact, the most effective mediation often happens before conflict escalates. Clubs should consider mediation when:

**Communication has broken down:** Members are no longer speaking openly, discussions are tense or avoidant and issues are being discussed in side conversations rather than formal forums.

**Disagreements persist beyond a single meeting or term:** When the same issues resurface repeatedly without resolution, it signals underlying interests or grievances that require structured dialogue.

**Leadership transitions are strained:** Incoming leaders inherit unresolved tensions, contested decisions, or lingering dissatisfaction from previous terms.

**Member engagement is declining:** Reduced attendance, withdrawal from committees or quiet disengagement often reflect unresolved conflict rather than lack of interest.

**Disputes are becoming personal rather than issue-based:** When conversations shift from what is being discussed to who is involved, mediation can help reset boundaries and refocus on shared goals.

**The club's service mission is being affected:** Conflict begins to delay projects, weaken partnerships or undermine the club's public image.

## District 9213's Commitment to Mediation:

In Rotary Year 2024/2025, District 9213 established a Governance Committee chaired by Rtn Francis Gimara, with one of its key deliverables being the training of

Rotary mediators. This initiative successfully equipped over 40 Rotarians with certified mediation skills, forming a pool of resource persons ready to support any individual or club in need of mediation services.

This proactive approach ensures that conflict resolution is institutionalised, accessible and embedded in district leadership structures. Clubs facing disputes now have trained professionals they can turn to, enabling early intervention, restoring trust and safeguarding fellowship while strengthening the district's capacity to practise peace through action.

Beyond Rotary, mediation has significant relevance in Ugandan workplaces and communities. In professional environments, mediation has helped resolve disputes between management and staff, tensions arising from

role overlap, and breakdowns in communication that formal disciplinary processes would only harden. Organisations that choose mediation often retain skilled personnel, preserve morale, and avoid reputational damage.

In community settings, mediation has proven effective in land and succession disputes, disagreements within faith institutions, and conflicts among neighbours. These are matters where litigation is expensive, slow, and frequently divisive. Mediation respects cultural contexts, allows parties to tell their stories and supports solutions crafted by those most affected. Because agreements are jointly developed, compliance is higher and relationships are more likely to endure.

It is important to note that mediation is not about avoiding

accountability or silencing difficult conversations. On the contrary, it requires honesty, discipline, and courage. Parties must be willing to listen actively, speak responsibly and confront uncomfortable truths.

As Rotarians and professionals, we must normalise mediation not as a last resort when relationships have already collapsed, but as an early, proactive leadership and peace building tool. Choosing mediation signals maturity, confidence in dialogue and commitment to Peace.

In a world, and indeed a society, increasingly quick to polarise, mediation reminds us of an enduring truth: lasting peace is not achieved by winning arguments but by restoring understanding and rebuilding trust.

**The writer is from the Rotary Club of Sonde, and also a Certified Rotary Mediator.**



# Peace in the Home: A Man's Responsibility



By Rtn. Emmanuel Mwaka

Irish playwright and Nobel laureate George Bernard Shaw once said, "A happy family is but an earlier heaven," while Mother Teresa stated, "What can you do to promote world peace? Go home and love your family." These two powerful quotes illustrate the significance of a man's responsibility in creating peaceful and enjoyable homes. Shaw emphasizes that the joy, love, and connection within a loving family provide a sample of heavenly bliss right here on Earth. When a man prioritizes peace over confrontation and empathy over authority, he creates this "earlier heaven," setting a standard that trickles down to his spouse and children in such a home, just like in heaven. In this article, SP Ogweng Francis examines the fundamental role men play in cultivating domestic harmony and the likely effects of neglected families and children.

In modern homes, a widening gap is emerging between traditional fatherhood and the aspirations of Gen-Z youth. While many fathers were raised in an era of silence and command, today's young people crave dialogue,

digital connectivity, and emotional validation. This disconnect often creates a peace vacuum, where the lack of relatability leads to friction rather than harmony.

However, addressing this gap is where a man's responsibility truly shines. Men must now realize that to lead a Gen-Z household, they must adjust their roles not as distant authority figures, but as active peacemakers. This transition is vital because, as Mahatma Gandhi wisely stated, "There is no school equal to a decent home and no teacher equal to a virtuous parent." For a child to know peace in a fast changing world, they must first see it modelled by a virtuous father who is willing to listen as much as he leads.

The First Lady of Uganda, Mrs. Janet Kataha Museveni, is a strong advocate for children's welfare and peace at home. She has often emphasized the importance of nurturing a generation that values peace and understanding starting from the home, highlighting that the stability of the nation begins with the stability of the family unit.

## What happens when men don't take responsibility as peacemakers and nurturers

When men are absent, emotionally withdrawn, or overwhelmed by money problems, cultural pressures, or unhealthy family patterns, they fail to create peace and care in the home. Instead of being a safe place, the family can become harmful. Children in these families often suffer abuse, neglect, chaos, or lack of guidance. Many spend the rest of their lives healing from that pain and trauma.

In such families, children feel unloved, rejected, or unsafe in

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**God created the family to be a safe place full of peace, safety, encouragement, acceptance, respect, and security. This environment helps people grow emotionally, mentally, socially, physically, and spiritually throughout life.**

different harmful ways. Some develop low self esteem and turn to bad behaviours like crime, fighting, or breaking rules. Others look for love in unhealthy ways, such as sleeping around, getting pregnant as teens, unstable relationships, or repeated failed marriages. Many try to escape the pain by resorting to drugs, alcohol, sex, or other things that feel good for a moment. Even in less extreme cases, people will carry fear, insecurity, distrust, negative thinking, jealousy, being too sensitive, and other issues that hurt their relationships and happiness for life.

God created the family to be a safe place full of peace, safety, encouragement, acceptance, respect, and security. This environment helps people grow emotionally, mentally, socially, physically, and spiritually throughout life. Families need to focus on building up each person. Men should lead by example to stop these bad effects and make the home a true safe haven again.

## Practical steps men can take to build peace at home

To fulfill this role as peacemakers, men can start with simple but powerful daily habits: actively listen without interrupting when family members speak, showing genuine interest in their thoughts and feelings; speak words of kindness, encouragement, and appreciation instead of criticism or harsh commands; resolve conflicts quickly and calmly by addressing issues early rather than letting anger build; spend intentional time connecting through shared meals, family prayers, or relaxed conversations that make everyone feel valued; model emotional control by staying patient during stress and apologizing when wrong; create routines that bring order and security, like consistent family time or helping with household tasks; and lead with humility by putting the family's well-

being first, making the home feel safe through presence rather than distance. These consistent actions demonstrate love in practical ways, turning potential tension into harmony and showing children what true peaceful leadership looks like.

The future of our nation is written in the living rooms of today. To ensure a peaceful family, we must continue to empower men with the emotional intelligence and conflict resolution skills necessary for modern leadership. True leadership in the home is measured not by how much a man is feared, but by how safe his family feels in his presence.

The man is the heartbeat of the home's peace. By embracing this responsibility with humility and courage, men can transform their households from mere dwellings into havens of hope. To every

man reading this: your greatest contribution to the world is the peace you cultivate within your own four walls.



SP Ogweng Obangamari Francis

Child and Family Protection Officer-Uganda Police Force

HerForShe Advocate

Wang-oo Forum Co-founder/Peace and conflict partner RC Sonde

**The writer is a member of the Rotary Club of Sonde**

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Rotary District 9213

# Run for the Nile 2026: When Small Footprints Become A River's Lifeline



By Rtn Pamon Prossy

On Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2026, the noise from the Rugby Grounds in Jinja will not just be cheering crowds or pounding music; it will be the steady rhythm of thousands of feet running for something far greater than a finish line.

## They will be running for the Nile

The 4th Annual Run for the Nile, organised by Promote Uganda together with the Rotary Club of Jinja, in partnership with those of Kampala Central, Jinja City, Jinja Metro, Kyadondo, Njeru and Source of the Nile, is more than a sporting event. It is a movement of hope, responsibility, and collective passion for one of the world's most iconic rivers, one that begins its long journey to the Mediterranean right here in Uganda.

## The River Gives Life, and Needs Our Support in Return

River Nile and Lake Victoria are life givers. They feed farms, power homes, sustain fisheries, drive tourism, and provide water

for millions. Entire communities, cultures, and economies flow with them.

## Today, these water bodies are under threat.

Plastic waste like bottles, bags, packaging and discarded everyday items is finding its way into streams, wetlands, and rivers that feed into Lake Victoria and River Nile. Once there, it does not just disappear. It breaks down, travels downstream, harms wildlife, clogs waterways, and eventually becomes part of a much larger, global pollution crisis.

Across the Nile Basin, countries are grappling with this growing challenge. Regional efforts, including those under the Nile Basin Initiative's action framework on plastic pollution monitoring, are

working to understand how plastics move along rivers and how much is accumulating. The message from scientists and environmental agencies is clear, we cannot manage what we do not measure and we cannot protect what we do not value.

## This is where the Run for the Nile comes in.

## Turning Sweat into Solutions

This year's run is a fundraising drive with a clear, practical mission; to raise funds that will be used to;

- Build trap gates that act as barriers to capture floating plastic waste before it travels further downstream. The impact of traps is powerful. Strategically placed, they intercept plastics at key points, preventing tonnes of waste from moving deeper into the river stream. Every bottle caught is one less threat to the natural habitat and communities that depend on the waterbody.
- Plant trees along the Nile's banks, restoring green buffers that stabilise soil, reduce erosion, and protect water quality. Tree planting adds another layer of protection. Healthy riverbanks reduce run off, filter pollutants, and create resilient ecosystems that can better withstand the pressures of urban growth and climate change.

Together, these actions move from awareness to impact; from talk to tangible change.

## A Community Answer to a Regional Call

What makes Run for the Nile so powerful is that it mirrors a bigger story unfolding across the Nile Basin. Regional bodies are working on monitoring plastic pollution, improving data, and shaping policies. However, policies alone cannot clean a riverbank, and data

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*Pollution that enters the Nile in one place affects communities downstream. In the same way, the protection that begins in Uganda sends benefits flowing across borders. By running in Jinja, participants are not just caring for a local riverbank; they are contributing to the health and life of a water body shared by millions across Africa.*

alone cannot pick up a plastic bottle.

It takes people to get this done; school children running their first race, parents jogging side by side, and corporate teams, athletes, Rotarians, environmentalists, and ordinary citizens choosing to show up.

The Run for the Nile transforms environmental protection from an abstract concept into a shared, physical act. Every registration fee becomes a seedling. Every kilometre run becomes part of a barrier that stops plastic in its tracks. Every participant becomes an ambassador.

## Jinja: Where the Journey Begins

There is something deeply symbolic about hosting this event in Jinja City, near the Source of the Nile. Here, the river begins its epic northward journey through multiple countries. Let us remember that what happens at the source does not stay at the source.

Pollution that enters the Nile in one place affects communities downstream. In the same way, the protection that begins in Uganda sends benefits flowing

across borders. By running in Jinja, participants are not just caring for a local riverbank; they are contributing to the health and life of a water body shared by millions across Africa.

## More Than a Run

As dawn breaks over the Rugby Grounds on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2026, the atmosphere will be electric. Bright-coloured running vests, laughter, warm-ups, camaraderie, and the nervous excitement before the starting whistle. However, beneath the energy will be a deeper truth,

## What does giving environmental stewardship a human face look like?

It looks like Rotarians joining hands across districts. It looks like a nation choosing pride over pollution. It looks like citizens deciding that the Nile is worth protecting not someday soon, but **NOW!**

The finish line will come and go. Medals will be handed out and photographs taken. However, long after the crowds disperse, the impact will remain in the trap gates holding back plastic, in the young trees taking root along the riverbanks, and in the growing movement of Ugandans who see the Nile not just as a landmark, but as a shared responsibility, and a lifeline.

On that day, every step run in Jinja will be towards a cleaner river, a healthier lake, and a future where the Nile can keep flowing, not just with water, but also with life.

**The writer is a chair Public Image committee of the Rotary Club of Kampala Central**



Rotarians at one of the trap gates

# The Busesa Library & Financial Literacy Project- Governor's Club Powers a Community for the Long Haul

## Knowledge That Stayed Behind After K'la South Busesa Project



By Rtn. Innocent Ndawula

*Lasting Change. After the tents came down in Busesa, something remained. Not only medicine—but knowledge. Through The Kitakule Foundation Library and financial literacy training, Rotary's January 24 intervention planted tools meant to outlive the camp.*

“

*By integrating education, financial literacy and health, Rotary covered five areas of focus in one coordinated intervention - ensuring the benefits did not end with treatment.*

### Impact Tools

- Library scholastic materials donated
- Financial literacy trainees – 62
- Partner foundation – Kitakule Foundation
- Banking partner – Centenary Bank (RC Bulindo)

Health was the entry point - but education was the promise.

Alongside the mega medical camp, the Rotary Club of Kampala South partnered with The Kitakule Foundation to strengthen the Busesa Community Library, donating scholastic materials and reinforcing the link between education, health and economic stability.

### A personal return

For District Governor Geoffrey Martin Kitakule, the intervention carried emotional weight. “I was born here. I studied at Busesa Mixed Primary School. This is about giving back in ways that change lives,” he said.

The library now stands as a community learning hub—supporting school children, youth and adult learners in a district



The Kitakule Foundation Community Library in Busesa

“

*Alongside the mega medical camp, the Rotary Club of Kampala South partnered with The Kitakule Foundation to strengthen the Busesa Community Library, donating scholastic materials and reinforcing the link between education, health and economic stability.*

where access to books remains limited.

### Money sense

Equally transformative was the financial literacy programme,

delivered in partnership with Centenary Bank–Rotary FinLit Program (RC Bulindo).

Participants learned budgeting, saving and planning—skills that immediately translated into daily life.

“Now I know how to spend less and save more,” said Jennifer Wamulongo, noting how the lessons eased school-fees planning and household pressure.

### Youth voices

For young people like Bernard Amlam, the session was a reset. Understanding cash flow, discipline and delayed gratification reshaped how he views work and income.

This, Mukwenda noted, was intentional.

“Health without economic empowerment is temporary. Knowledge makes impact sustainable.”

### Purpose met

By integrating education, financial literacy and health, Rotary covered five areas of focus in one coordinated intervention - ensuring the benefits did not end with treatment.

**After Care.** Medical camps heal the present. Libraries and financial literacy secure the future. In Busesa, Rotary deliberately did both. Service is most powerful when it stays. In Busesa, Rotary didn't just visit—it invested.

*The writer is a member of Rotary Club of Kampala South*



Amina Zawedde the PS Ministry of ICT receives a certificate of induction into the Rotary Club of K'la South.

“

*“Health without economic empowerment is temporary. Knowledge makes impact sustainable.”*

# How RC Sonde Navigated a Conflict that Paralysed the Club



By Rtn Dianah Mugerwa

Chartered on 29 March 2021 under the leadership of Charter President MD Kate Barasa, the RC Sonde made a bold and memorable entry into District 9213 as one of her largest clubs with a membership of 122 Rotarians. The club burst onto the Rotary landscape with energy, diversity and ambition. Its size enabled resource mobilisation, rapid project implementation.

CP Kate laid a solid and inspiring foundation, establishing a strong leadership pipeline projected to sustain the club for an extra next five years and setting a high bar for excellence and vibrancy before handing over the baton to President Connie Magomu Masaba, who sustained the momentum and later transitioned leadership to President Paul Nelson Sigombe.

But growth, when not carefully governed, can also amplify strain. The differences in leadership styles, communication approaches, conflict-management philosophies, group dynamics natural in any large and diverse organisation emerged.

With time as the club transitioned from formation to storming stage, the pressure to maintain and meet heightened district expectations and an award-winning streak began to take its toll. Unresolved disagreements escalated, widespread disengagement, leading to operational paralysis

and some member exits. It became increasingly challenging to manage a big club with diverse personalities.

It was into this fragile environment that Dr. Charles Olaro assumed the presidency. In an interview with Rtn Dianah Kagere, Dr. Charles reflects on the deliberate choices, leadership approaches and quiet strategies that worked rebuild the club.

As a charter member, Dr. Olaro had served Sonde in multiple leadership roles, including two terms as Vice President and as President-Elect. Still, nothing prepared him for the depth of the crisis he inherited. "I had led large teams before from university leadership to my work at the Ministry of Health. But leading volunteers in a fractured environment was a new challenge and one I knew would stretch me." Dr. Olaro reflects.

Early in his tenure, Dr. Olaro focused on understanding the roots of the conflict. "One of the major gaps I identified was that the club did not have clear governance policies at formation. Many decisions were therefore not fully internalised by members, which made managing



**Even as the club healed internally, service did not stop. The stalling of the Bukerere Global Grant forced the club to think creatively, giving rise to the Cerebral Palsy project, now one of RC Sonde's signature initiatives. The Global Grant was later revived, fundraising completed and approval successfully secured within the same year.**

disagreements extremely difficult."

This governance gap compounded the group dynamics at play. Trust had eroded and fear had taken root. His first major test came when he attempted to form a leadership team.

"That was one of the toughest hurdles. I submitted my leadership list late to the district because many members declined to serve. People were afraid of the environment the club had fallen into. The district had been notified that RC Sonde incoming leadership team was not going to attend District Trainings. However, many were surprised to see us attend all planned incoming leaders training. Through persistent one-on-one engagements, I slowly built a "coalition of the willing." Even then, challenges persisted. My proposed team was rejected by the board on grounds that some members had served for too long. I knew continuity mattered. For the sake of the club and overcoming the stalemate, I made a principled decision as president and I owned it."

Rather than deepen divisions, Dr. Olaro deliberately adopted a peacebuilding approach anchored in Rotary values.

"The Four-Way Test guided us through every difficult conversation. Our club slogan: 'We Care, We Share, We Do It! Our Club, Our Responsibility' became more than words; it was the compass that shaped our conduct, decision-making, and collective accountability. My people-management experience taught me that disagreement does not require falling out. Every opinion deserved respect, even when I did not agree with it. My priority was to depersonalise conflict, ensuring meetings focused on issues. I also reached out personally to members who had withdrawn including CP.



RC SONDE when they won 8 awards of good performance from the Discon in Jinja in 2024

It was painful that some still chose to leave but peacebuilding is about offering the door, not forcing people through it."

Amid district concerns and negative perceptions that the club was collapsing, Dr. Olaro remained resolute. The recovery process was deliberate and multi-layered. He prioritised creating safe spaces for dialogue, revising and disseminating governance documents and ensuring Sonde remained visible at district events to demonstrate recovery.

He leaned heavily on delegation and teamwork, drawing support from experienced past leaders and incoming leadership to ensure continuity and shared ownership of recovery. Because of the shift in membership, he focused on delegation as a tool for membership engagement in club activities while he provided leadership direction.

"It would have been failure on my part to walk away. Membership docket suffered the most; members were losing focus and further detaching themselves. While some viewed delegation as a weakness, I saw it as a deliberate strategy to engage members, harness their skills and expertise and draw them back through involvement in club management. The results spoke for themselves: from barely five to

ten members attending fellowship to over 70 active and engaged Rotarians. I enjoyed immense support from the District leadership, my team, PP Connie Magomu Masaba and PE Christine Alupo. Peacebuilding is never a solo act. Rotary Leadership Institute (RLI) training proved invaluable. Despite time constraints, I undertook both the undergraduate and graduate programmes, strengthening my leadership, governance and conflict-management skills at a critical time for the club."

Even as the club healed internally, service did not stop. The stalling of the Bukerere Global Grant forced the club to think creatively, giving rise to the Cerebral Palsy project, now one of RC Sonde's signature initiatives. The Global Grant was later revived, fundraising completed and approval successfully secured within the same year.

"The team reached out to the district grant team; PDG Xavier Ssentamu, PAG Nelson Kabwama and later PAG James Nkooka to strategize how to revive the stalled grant. Through their guidance and support, the GG was later approved. Leading volunteers is both challenging and deeply rewarding. That year gave me immense inner satisfaction I am grateful to my leadership team and all members of RC Sonde for immerse support during my tenure.

Our Club Our responsibility."

The year also concluded with a powerful affirmation: nine awards at DISCON 100. Yet the greater achievement lay beyond recognition. RC Sonde had moved from paralysis to purpose, from fragmentation to fellowship.

Sonde's experience offers an important lesson for D9213 and beyond. Peacebuilding is not limited to community. It begins within Rotary through clear governance, leadership, respectful dialogue and a shared commitment to Rotary values. Conflict, as Dr. Olaro's tenure demonstrated, need not be destructive. When managed with intention and integrity, it can become a catalyst for institutional growth and renewal.

"It is my considered belief that each club member has great potential to contribute to the success of the club; members need to be valued, feel the belonging, respected, listened to, given opportunity to serve, need to develop personal acquaintance and build a performing team. Leaders should be open to criticism and take it in good faith to see how to do better. Need to explore free thinking and allow members to float ideas to improve club operation and avoid the syndrome that the leader knows it all. Members deserve accountability for any club resources and providing it is good practice. It encourages members to give and give more for any club project. Listening to everyone and adapting approach of all of us are winners. Conflict is healthy only and only if we are able to avoid individualizing it, getting stuck in it. RC Sonde is great brand in D9213 and we should be able to build on it. The club members have great potential which its leaders should harness harmoniously to impact community service. RC Sonde has many potential leaders, some of them are already emerging and what they need is mentorship to move the club to future."

**The writer is the chair Public Image, Rotary club of Sonde**

# Advising The Rotary Foundation: A Cadre of Technical Community- Oriented Volunteers

“Be happy. Be who you want to be. If others don’t like it, then let them be. Life isn’t about pleasing everybody”  
--EzuieQuotes



By Rtn Peter Isabirye

Our purpose?:

A group of volunteer Rotary and Rotaract members who for well over 30 years now, work to increase the impact of Rotary projects worldwide. They use their vocational expertise in Rotary’s areas of focus or financial auditing to help steward Rotary Foundation grant funds and strengthen the capacity of members in project planning, implementation and evaluation.

The cadre includes more than 500 members from 80 countries who speak more than 80 languages.

What we do?

Cadre advisors are part of Rotary’s district resource networks. In addition to our technical and regional expertise, we are regularly learning about the latest grant requirements and policies, advising techniques, elements of sustainable projects and approaches to monitoring and evaluation. When a cadre adviser provides guidance on planning and implementation, the most common result is a high quality, sustainable project.

We serve Rotary members as:

- Consultants who offer clubs and districts guidance on:
- Understanding Rotary’s areas of focus.
- Designing community assessments.
- Considering cultural and environmental factors.
- Planning and implementing projects.
- Evaluating a project’s technical feasibility.
- Incorporating elements of sustainability.
- Measuring to demonstrate results.
- Using strong financial management practices.
- Navigating the global grant application process.
- Determining whether a programme is ready to scale.

“Keep it private until you know It’s permanent” --EzuieQuotes

Evaluators appointed by The Rotary Foundation to:

- Review applications for Foundation funding.
- Evaluate the quality, sustainability and management of approved activities funded by the Foundation including global grants, district grants, corporate social responsibility grants, disaster response grants, Programmes of scale, the Rotary Healthy Communities Challenge and other initiatives and partnerships.
- Oversee how Foundation funds are spent through financial reviews and audits.
- Make recommendations to help Rotary staff members

and Trustees make informed decisions about programmes.

- Offer guidance to project sponsors on how to address any challenges and make changes to have a larger impact.
- Learning facilitators at grant management seminars, club meetings, Rotary institutes, district conferences, and other Rotary events that involve topics in which we have expertise.

#### About sites visits

Cadre advisors conduct site visits during the evaluation and auditing process. In- person visits usually last three days, with the Foundation paying associated travel costs for the adviser. During the visit the adviser:

- Collects information by observing the project site and meeting with project sponsors, community members, cooperating organisations and others involved in planning and implementation to gain a comprehensive understanding of the project.
- Summarises their findings and discusses specific recommendations and resources with project sponsors at a feedback meeting.
- Aims to promote transparency, collaboration and learning among Rotary members and the community.

How to register for the TRF cadre of technical advisors:

“Don’t ask for permission to fly. The wings are yours and the sky belongs to no-one”

Determine how you best fit into the cadre

- The Rotary Foundation Cadre of Technical Advisers is composed of volunteer Rotarians/Rotaractors from around the world who are familiar with the Rotary grant programme, have professional experience in community development, and/or have professional expertise in one or more of Rotary’s six areas of focus.
- Determine how you can best serve in the cadre as a project development adviser, an area of focus adviser, or both. If you find that your expertise and background meet either of Project Development Adviser roles below, please list those skillsets on your application.
- You do not need to have the expertise listed below to become a cadre member. However, please note that if your experiences do not match any of the cadre roles outlined, it is unlikely that you will be selected for a cadre assignment.

“Life has no remote. Get up and change it yourself”—Mark. A. Cooper

Cadre Roles/prerequisites:

Project development advisors:

Rotary Grant Advisors:

Has application writing experience and has significantly contributed to the planning and/or implementation of at least five Rotary grant projects.

#### Project Development and Management:

Has at least two years of professional experience in community development projects. Emphasis placed on performing community needs assessments, monitoring and evaluation skills, and sustainable development.

#### Areas of Focus Advisors:

##### Basic Education and Literacy:

Has at least two years of professional experience working with basic education and literacy as a teacher, community educator, education consultant, education administrator education project manager, etc.



Rotarians attend to community members during a medical camp jointly organised by the rotary clubs of Kampala city, Kyaddondo and Kitante

Special emphasis placed on the following skillsets and experiences:

- Involving the community to support programmes that strengthen the capacity of communities to provide basic education and literacy to all
- Increasing adult literacy in communities
- Working to reduce gender disparity in education.

#### Disease Prevention and Treatment:

Has at least two years of professional experience working in the field of disease prevention and treatment as a doctor, nurse, midwife, epidemiologist, public health professional, etc.

Special emphasis placed on the following skillsets and experiences:

- Improving the capacity of local healthcare professionals.
- Promoting disease prevention programmes, with the goal of limiting the spread of communicable diseases and reducing the incidences of and complications from non-communicable diseases.
- Enhancing the health infrastructure of local communities. Educating and mobilising communities to help prevent the spread of major diseases.
- Preventing physical disability resulting from disease or injury.

#### Maternal and Child Health:

Has at least two years of professional experience working in the field of maternal, new-born and child health as a doctor, nurse, public health professional, and other related professionals

Special emphasis placed on the following skillsets and experiences:

- Reducing the mortality and morbidity rate for children under the age of five.
- Reducing the maternal mortality and morbidity rate.
- Improving access to essential medical services, trained community health leaders and health care providers for mothers and their children.

“I wish I met some people a little earlier, some a little later and some never at all” --@EzuieQuotes

#### Economic and Community Development:

Has at least two years of professional experience working with economic and community development as a community organiser, microfinance expert, agriculture and food production, entrepreneurial development, local project manager, etc.

Special emphasis placed on the following skillsets and experiences:

- Building the capacity of entrepreneurs, community leaders, local organisations, and/or community networks to

- support economic development in impoverished communities.
- Developing opportunities for productive work.
- Reducing poverty in underserved communities.
- Youth/leadership development and vocational trainings.

**“Don’t look back with regret, look forward with hope” -- @EzuieQuote**

Peace and Conflict Prevention/Resolution:

Has at least two years of professional experience working with peace and conflict prevention/resolution in a cross-sectorial capacity, or as a mediator, community advocate, lawyer, diplomat, social worker, etc.

Special emphasis placed on the following skillsets and experiences:

- Training leaders to prevent and mediate conflict;
- Working with civil society organisations to create community-based conflict prevention programmes;

- Supporting local peace-building in communities and regions affected by conflict.

**Water, Sanitation and Hygiene:**

Has at least two years of professional experience working with water, sanitation and hygiene as a civil or environmental engineer, public health specialist, biologist, watershed manager, hydrologist, hygiene/health educator, etc.

Special emphasis placed on the following skillsets and experiences:

- Providing equitable community access to safe water, improved sanitation and hygiene
- Strengthening the ability of communities to develop, fund and maintain sustainable water and sanitation systems.
- Supporting programmes that enhance communities’ awareness of the benefits of safe water, sanitation and hygiene.

**Financial Auditing:**

Has at least two years of professional experience working as an accountant

or auditor with experience in one or more of the following:

- Financial management.
- Project management.
- Vendor and inventory verification.
- All cadre members need to be registered on “My Rotary”. Go to your My Rotary account here: <https://www.rotary.org/myrotary/en/home> Click on the “Sign In / Register button”.
- If you are not registered on My Rotary, you can create an account in a few minutes by following the registration instructions.
- Once you have an account on My Rotary, email the cadre at [cadre@rotary.org](mailto:cadre@rotary.org) to inform us of your intention to register.
- Upon receiving a confirmation email, which should arrive within 1 – 2 business days, you can complete your registration.

**Peter ISABIRYE is a member of the DRFC of D9213 and a member of the cadre of technical advisors to The Rotary Foundation in 3 areas of focus.**



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**APPLICATION TO BE SENT TO :**

**ANNEMARIEMOUCHET@ORANGE.FR  
NATHALIE.HUYGHEBAERT@GMAIL.COM  
WEBSITE : [HTTPS://ROTARY-ICC.ORG/ICC-AWARD](https://rotary-icc.org/icc-award)**



# Why Your Rotary Club Needs Policies



By Rtn Irene Namuli,

In Rotary, good governance is the backbone of sustainability, trust, and service effectiveness. Clubs that thrive over time are those that move beyond personality-led operations to systems-led management. Policies are the instruments that make this possible. They define how a club operates, makes decisions, handles its resources, and treats its members. Without them, even the most vibrant club risks inconsistency, conflict, and reputational exposure.

## Why Policies Matter

Policies ensure that decisions are guided by principle, not preference. Whether approving new members, managing funds, or handling conflicts, policies create a consistent standard that every member can rely on.

We know that Rotary leadership changes every year. Having policies creates continuity and reduces the risk of mismanagement or abuse of discretion. Also a well-documented policy framework enables smooth leadership transitions and allows new leaders to understand their responsibilities quickly and operate efficiently without starting over.

Clear policies help ensure compliance with RI's Manual of Procedure (MOP), the District Constitution, and national laws.

In a nutshell, policies demonstrate accountability and strengthen stakeholder trust.

## How to get your club policies approved.

Start by identifying which areas need clarity, process alignment and clear guidelines of operation. Once done, ask the Chair of the affected committee to draft a policy alongside their committee members and present it to the Management Board for approval. Ensure that the draft aligns with Rotary International and D9213 standards. Once approved by the Board, have the same presented to the Club Members at a Club assembly for adoption by resolution. Once adopted, ensure that the policy is kept in a place where it is easily accessed by all club members. We also recommend that you notify the District where significant policies that could affect the club operations are enacted. The DGEC is available to review and advise.

## Recommended Policies Every Rotary Club Should Have

As the DGEC, we have identified the core policies every club MUST have. These are model MEMARTS which replaced the club constitution, the Finance Management Policy, the Procurement Policy and the risk management policy. We have provided templates that can be adapted for club use. Documents are available for download at; <https://rotaryd9213.org/50109/Page/Show?ClassCode=Page&Slug=d9213-key-reference-documents>

We recognize that the list above isn't exhaustive, That is why we propose the following additions which are in no way exhaustive but may lay a good foundation towards enhancing club efficiency and support sustainability. For Governance and Administration, alongside updated Bylaws, the club may also have a governance policy and a conflict-of-interest policy. When it comes to Financial Management, include a fundraising

and donations policy as well as an asset management policy. As part of managing membership, clubs should have a membership policy (if not already outlined in the Club Bylaws), code of conduct and ethics policy, a DEI Policy and an attendance and participation policy. Management of risk could also include a whistleblower and grievance policy, a child and vulnerable persons protection policy as well as a Data Protection and Privacy Policy. When managing service and community projects, consider having a project management and oversight Policy, a partnership and sponsorship policy and a Monitoring and Evaluation policy.

## Conclusion

Strong governance is not about bureaucracy—it's about clarity, integrity, and continuity. Policies are the building blocks of that clarity. They help every Rotary club operate predictably, protect its legacy, and deliver service with accountability. Every club is encouraged to develop and adopt a clear policy framework as one of the most powerful ways to ensure that Service Above Self remains sustainable for generations to come.

We, the District 9213 Governance and Ethics Committee, are mandated to oversee and support all club efforts geared towards good governance. Do reach out to the Chair, Rtn Constant Othieno Mayende ([constant.mayende@gmail.com](mailto:constant.mayende@gmail.com) or +256772590464) or the Vice Chair, Rtn Irene Namuli ([irenamuli@gmail.com](mailto:irenamuli@gmail.com) or +256782974878) for any support in developing, reviewing, and aligning policies with Rotary's global governance standards.

**The writer is a Vice Chair, D9213 Governance & Ethics Committee**



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