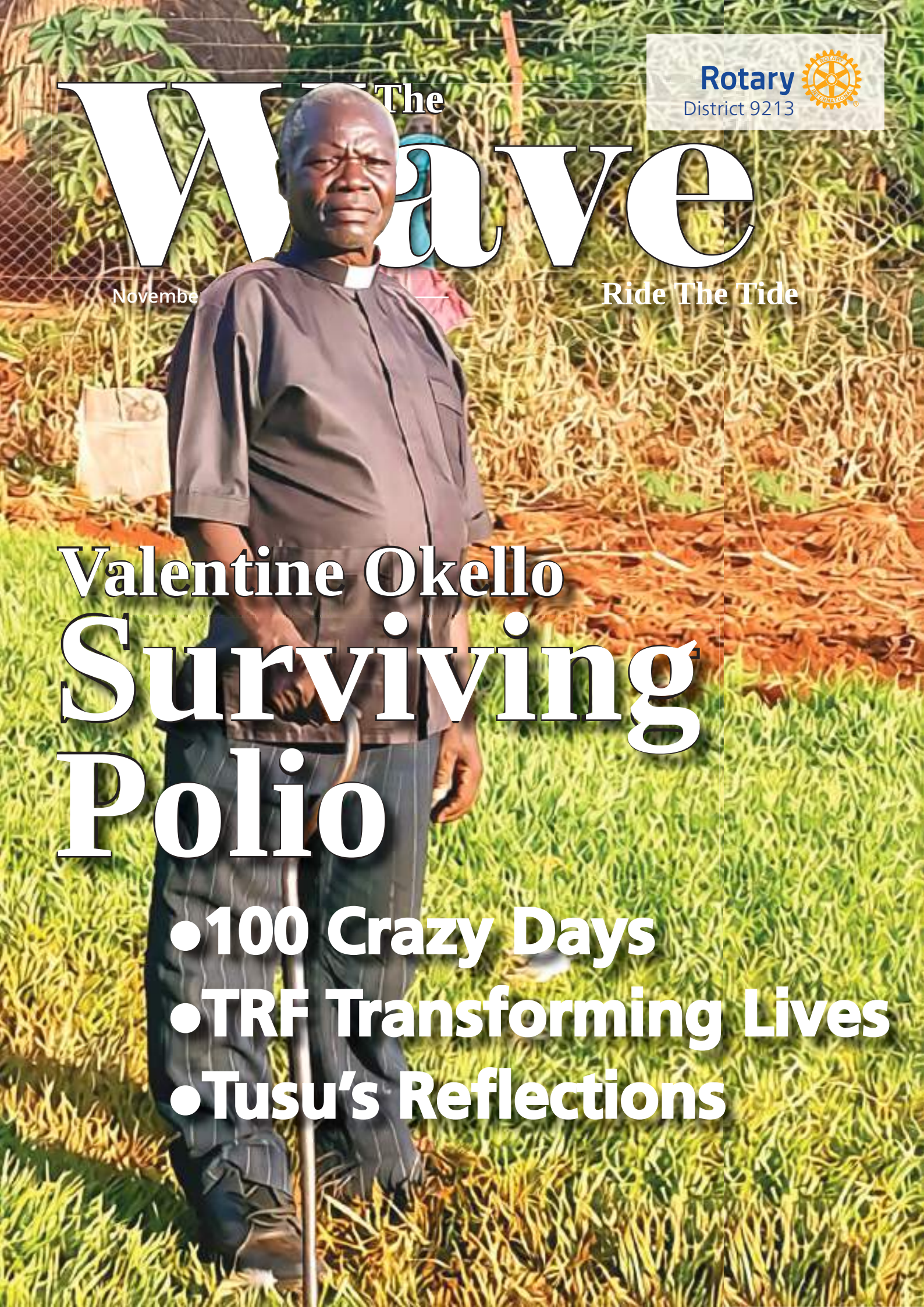


# The Wave

Rotary District 9213

Novembe

Ride The Tide

## Valentine Okello

# Surviving Polio

- 100 Crazy Days
- TRF Transforming Lives
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## EDITOR'S NOTE

# The Fight Against Polio Is One Rotary Can Win

A colleague asked me why Rotary is paying so much attention to and raising a lot of money for the fight against polio, while malaria is so rampant in Uganda. She pointed out that while 200,000 Ugandans die from malaria each year (especially children below the age of 5), there have been no recorded polio cases in the country for 30 years, and Uganda was officially declared free of polio in 2006.

The simple answer is that while polio is eradicable, malaria is not. One cheap vaccine can give lifelong immunity against polio, but the existing malaria vaccine only gives around 36% immunity. Also, malaria has 5 different parasites, more than 40 mosquito vectors, it mutates, and it hides in the liver.

Like a Rotarian put it: "You cannot eradicate malaria with volunteers going door-to-door with a cooler box, but we can eradicate polio that way."

When Rotary joined the fight against polio in 1979, there were 350,000 cases of polio a year in 125 countries. 350,000 children were paralysed for life every year. In contrast, by 2025 there were fewer than 30 cases of wild polio in 2 countries (Afghanistan and Pakistan). That's a 99.9% reduction.

The question is not which disease is worse than the other, it is where Rotary can have the most impact. A $3 vaccine can immunise a child against polio, preventing a lifetime of paralysis, stigma, inability to go to school, and dependency (see Rev Valentine Okello's story on surviving polio, page 28).

The alternative? In a world where a wheelchair costs around UGX500,000 and disability often brings stigma, polio is not just a disease, it's a life sentence of poverty.

The fight against malaria is real. Estimates indicate that the global fight against malaria needs US$10bn a year, while the so-called 'malaria tax' accounts for about US$12bn through lost productivity, health care costs, and diminished foreign investment.

The Gates Foundation estimates that eradicating malaria would cost about US$129bn over 25 years, assuming science develops the right tools. By contrast, about US$50bn would be enough to eradicate polio, with other factors staying constant.

But Rotarians are not just fighting polio, they are also active in the fight against malaria. Providing clean water to communities under WASH reduces breeding sites and contributes to malaria prevention. Rotary clubs also regularly distribute mosquito nets to vulnerable communities, especially during the Rotary Family Health Days.

In addition, if polio were eradicated, that money could readily be re-routed to the fight against malaria. So, to answer my colleague, it is not a matter of which disease is worse than the other, and so we should start fighting that. The fight to control malaria, let alone eradicate it, will go on for a long time. But polio is a disease that we can end soon, and forever.

No one said it is going to be easy, but it is a fight that Rotary and partners can win, so no child should ever be told they will never walk at all.

**Kalungi Kabuye,**
**RC Lugogo-Mango Tree**


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# *District Calender*
# *November 2026*


03 RC Iganga

04 RC Bugiri &Bugiri Municipality

05 RC Busia & Busia Lumino & Busia Borderline

06 RC Tororo & Tororo Sam Owori

08 RC Mpererwe DGs visit

09 RC Njeru DGs Visit

10 RC Jinja City DGs visit

11 RC Jinja City DGs visit

12 Meeting with Rotaractors
RC Source of the Nile

13 RC Jinja Metro

14 RC Kampala Metropolitan Butoolo Project

15 RC Naalya States DGs visit, Sunday,

17 RC Lugazi Central DGs visit

18 DGs Visit at RC Kira

19 RC Seeta DGs visit

20 Cheza n' Afrigo
RC Ntinda DGs visit

21 FOR outreach at Kawempe Home care for children battling cancer
Mukono clubs Road Safety project

22 Kampala South Recognition Fellowship

23 Kampala South Recognition Fellowship

24 TRF Recognition Fellowship

24-28 All Africa Zone Institute

28 RLI

29 All Africa Zone Institute



# More members, more impact

Change within ourselves is the first step toward the impact we seek to make in the world. I remember my first encounter with Rotary. I saw a Rotarian on television. I was a teenager with my thoughts elsewhere, when suddenly my full attention was on this man. I did not know it then, but that moment would change my life.

That is the thing about impact. We often imagine it as something we create out there, in a community we visit or in a project we fund. But that impact is brought about through the change within us as well.

Increasing our impact is the first priority of Rotary's Action Plan, and it asks us not only to do good but to do good that lasts and can be measured. It means choosing sustainable, needs-based projects over comfortable ones and asking honestly whether a project will still be serving people five years from now without us in the room.

When I say we must Create Lasting Impact, I do not mean impact that fades once the ribbon is cut or the well is dug. I mean the kind of impact that changes the person doing the work as surely as it changes the person benefiting from it. Rotary changes all of us. It changed a teenager watching a television broadcast.

It has changed millions of Rotarians and Rotaractors since 1905. And it will keep changing people, long after this Rotary year, if we do the work now to make sure it can.

That work starts with membership. Impact scales with people. Every hand we add is another hand that can dig a well, teach a child to read, deliver a vaccine, or simply show up for a neighbour in need. As we approach our 125th anniversary in 2030, our goal is to reach 1.25 million Rotarians and 125,000 Rotaractors worldwide. That is not a number for a banner. It is a measure of how much more good we can do together, and how many more lives, including our own, Rotary still has the chance to change.

I have often challenged you to do better than your best. Growing our membership is where that challenge lives most urgently. Invite the colleague who keeps asking what Rotary is about. Welcome back the member who drifted away. Partner with the Rotaract club down the street. Every one of those conversations is a small act with lasting consequences.

We have 125 years behind us and a great deal of work still ahead. Let us build the kind of Rotary that keeps changing people the way it changed me, one member, one project, one act of service at a time.

Together, let us Create Lasting Impact.

**YINKA**
**President, Rotary International**



# Small actions, pooled together, become miracles

Friends,

I greet you in the spirit of Rotary, in the spirit of service, in the spirit of our shared calling to do good in the world.

When Paul Harris founded Rotary 121 years ago, he never imagined a network of over one million problem solvers. When Arch Klumph started The Rotary Foundation in 1917 with just $26.50, he never imagined it would become one of the most impactful humanitarian foundations in human history, with over $5 billion invested in life-changing projects. That is the power of Rotary: small actions, pooled together, become miracles.

November is Rotary Foundation Month. This is the month we stop and ask ourselves a simple but profound question: What has The Foundation done for me, and what am I doing for The Foundation?

Let me answer the first part.

If you have ever seen a child walk because we funded a corrective surgery, that is The Foundation. If you have ever seen a community drink clean water from a borehole in Gulu, Luwero or Fort Portal funded by Rotary, that is The Foundation. If you have ever seen a young mother survive childbirth because we equipped her health centre at Kikandwa, that is The Foundation. If you have ever watched a child receive two drops of polio vaccine that will protect him for life, that is The Foundation.

The Foundation is not in Evanston, USA. The Foundation is not an office. The Foundation is you and me. It is YOUR heart. It is MY hands. It is OUR collective promise that we will not stand by and watch suffering when we have the power to change it.

This is why I am making a personal, passionate appeal to every Rotarian, Rotaractor and friend of Rotary in District 9213 this November.

Let us donate. And let us donate generously to The Rotary Foundation.

Our district target this year is bold because our needs are bold. If each one of us gives at least $200, we shall achieve our targets. To those who are yet to give to the foundation, let us start by becoming Every Rotarian Every Year (EREY) donors with at least $25 to the Annual Fund. Twenty-five dollars is less than a lunch for two in Kampala, but it can vaccinate 60 children or provide dignity to a family.

For those who can give more, one hundred dollars makes you a Sustaining Member. One thousand dollars makes you a Paul Harris Fellow, and ten thousand dollars makes you a Major Donor. But more importantly, it makes you a lifeline to a community you may never meet, but who will forever remember that Rotary came. Second, I am asking you to join the history-makers. Our determination to eradicate polio remains firm. From over 350,000 children paralysed by polio every year 40 years ago, today, we are down to a handful of cases in just two countries. Rotary has led this fight from day one. I call upon us to give $100 to PolioPlus and become a certified PolioPlus Society Member of District 9213.

For decades, we have said - drops, not tears. Now let us finish it. You can give easily and securely on trf.rotaryd9213.org. No amount is too small. Every dollar counts.

But Foundation Month is not just about giving money. It is about continuing to serve.

I want to thank you. Since July, I have travelled this beautiful district: from the plains of Lira where I was born, to the hills of Kabarole, to Arua, to Gulu, to Mubende, to Hoima. I have seen clubs building teachers' houses in Kyenjojo, distributing mosquito nets in Mubende hospital, planting trees, mentoring youth, and running medical camps. You have embodied our theme: Create Lasting Impact.

The need is still immense. Uganda's maternal mortality is still high. Youth unemployment is still a crisis. Climate change is threatening our farmers. And yet, Rotary remains the hope of many communities.

So I ask you: Do not grow weary in doing good. Continue to serve.

Continue to visit that school and teach a child to read. Continue to support that young entrepreneur with seed capital. Continue to fund that water project so we have more Kasozi Health Centres or Gayaza Primary schools. Continue to show up for your community because Service Above Self is not a slogan for a T-shirt. It is a way of life.

As we head into November, let your club be 100% EREY, let your club grow its Paul Harris Fellows and Major Donors, and let your club be remembered as a club that gave its best for humanity.

Let us build a Foundation that will outlive us. Let us continue to serve humanity with love and humility.

My family and I thank you for your friendship, your generosity, and your unwavering commitment to Rotary.

God bless Rotary.

**Gerald Obai**
**District Governor**






# From Intent to Impact

**On 10th October, the Rotary District 9213 marked its first 100 days of service for the Rotary Year 2026/27 at a ceremony held at the Silver Springs Hotel in Bugolobi. GOVERNOR GERALD OBAI gave the keynote address that morning. Excerpts:**

Every single day, millions of people around the world silently cry out for help. And every day, as Rotarians, we respond by assuring them that they will never walk alone. We listen, we care, and we act.

On July 1, we renewed our commitment to stand with those who need us. We said yes to early mornings, late-night calls and serving where others might choose to walk away.

Today, we are not here to boast about our service. We are here to account for what we have done in our first 100 days and reflect on the journey ahead.

Fellow Rotarians, in these 100 days, we have built our membership because we know that the more hands we have, the more lives we can touch. Through The Rotary Foundation, we have given more than money; we have given hope, health, livelihoods and brighter futures.

We have demonstrated that Rotary works. Every story of lives transformed helps more people understand, appreciate and join us. But 100 days is not the end of our journey. It is proof that, working together, we can achieve lasting impact.

**We are here to account for what we have done in our first 100 days and reflect on the journey ahead.**

Our belief has been simple: embrace bold ideas, encourage innovation and never forget the little things that matter. We have seen clean water reach communities that had waited generations for it. We have provided medical care, mentored young people, supported children's learning and helped save lives through road safety campaigns.

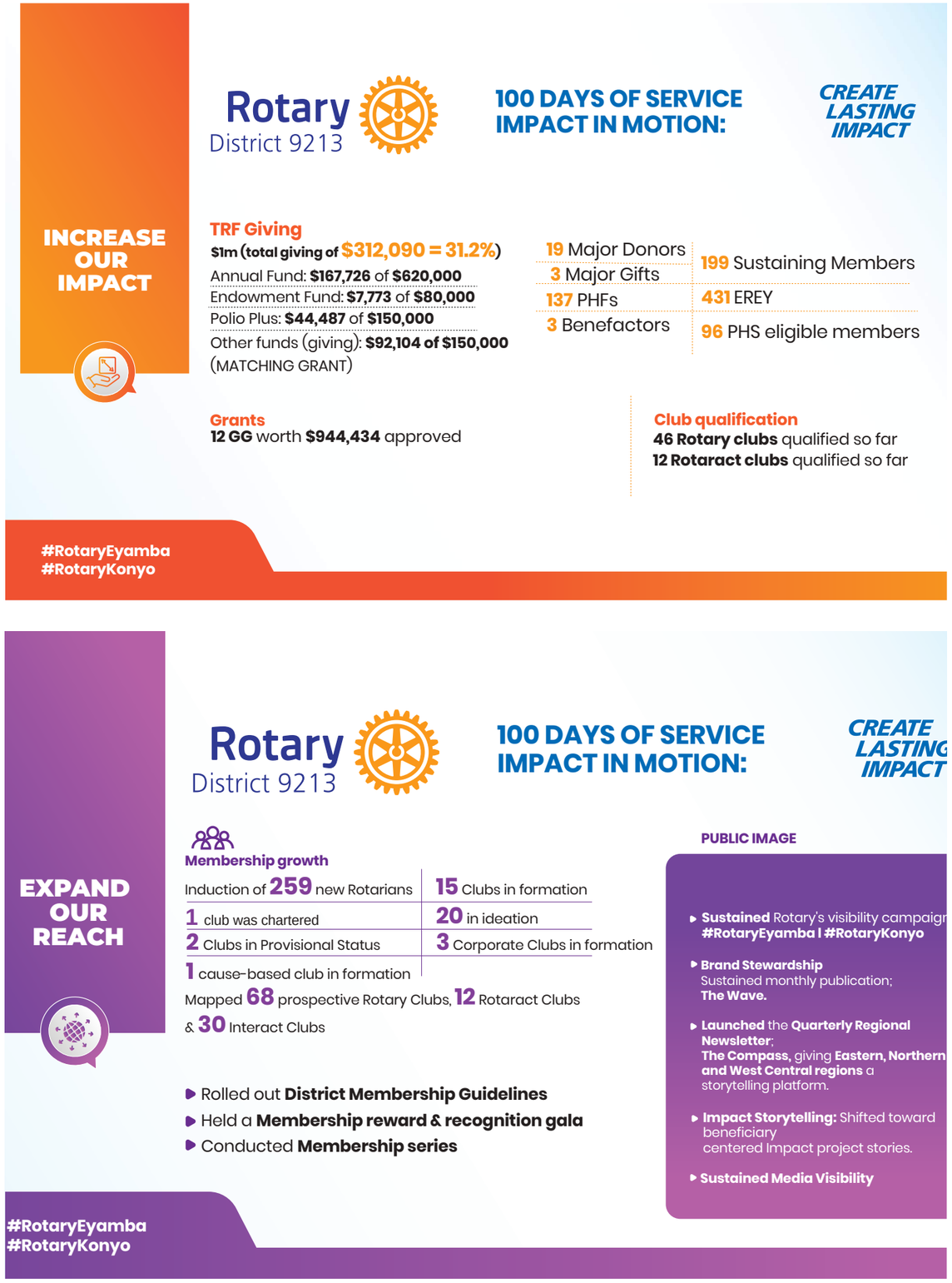
These are the things that give meaning to Rotary.

As we look ahead, I ask each one of us to make every day count. Every day we lose is a day someone's life could have been changed. When we work together, what seems impossible becomes possible.

Fellow Rotarians and Rotaractors, allow me to share some highlights of our first 100 days.

We have contributed $380,000 to The Rotary Foundation, including $170,000 to the Annual Fund, $44,000 to PolioPlus and more than $92,000 towards other








DG Gerald Obai greets guests at the 100 Days function last month

From page 11

approved grants. We have registered 20 Major Donors, and I commend all the clubs and individuals whose generosity is making this possible.

We have also approved 12 Global Grants worth $944,434, with more than $600,000 already disbursed. Forty-six Rotary clubs and 12 Rotaract clubs have qualified for Global Grants. Our ambition remains to mobilise $5 million, and we must continue strengthening our stewardship and project implementation capacity to achieve this.

Membership growth is equally important. We have recorded a net increase of 259 Rotarians and welcomed the Rotary Club of Kampala Islanders, bringing our total to 152 Rotary clubs.

However, growth must be meaningful. Let us bring in people who understand Rotary, embrace its values and are committed to serving. We need active members, not just numbers.

We are also strengthening our clubs through better governance, accountability and engagement. Seventy-five per cent of our clubs are reporting monthly, and our target is to have every club doing so by the end of this Rotary year. Our Governance and Ethics team has supported 14 clubs, conducted nine awareness interventions and helped manage 85 club risks. These efforts have helped address internal challenges and strengthen our unity.

We must also tell our stories. Through #RotaryEyamba, #RotaryKonyo, The Wave and our new quarterly regional newsletter, The Compass, we are making our work more visible. I thank NBS and Next Media for their continued support. Let us ensure that our storytelling places the people we serve at the centre, showing not simply what we do, but the difference it makes.

Fellow Rotarians, I have visited 70 clubs in these first 100 days, and I have seen enormous potential. I look forward to visiting the remaining 80. We must continue building strong clubs, supporting one another and creating an environment where every member feels valued. Our mental health and wellbeing matter just as much as our ability to serve.

As we enter the next 100 days, let us recalibrate our efforts.

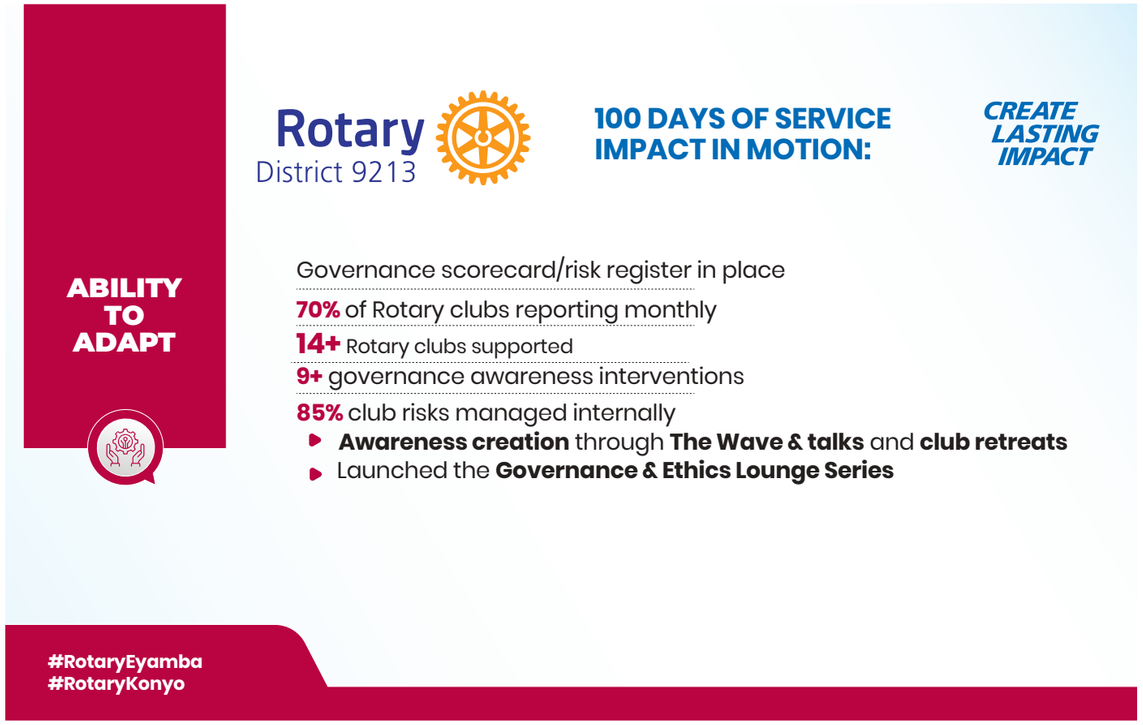
Let us increase our contributions to The Rotary Foundation, grow our membership and work with greater focus and teamwork. Above all, let us take Rotary into our communities.

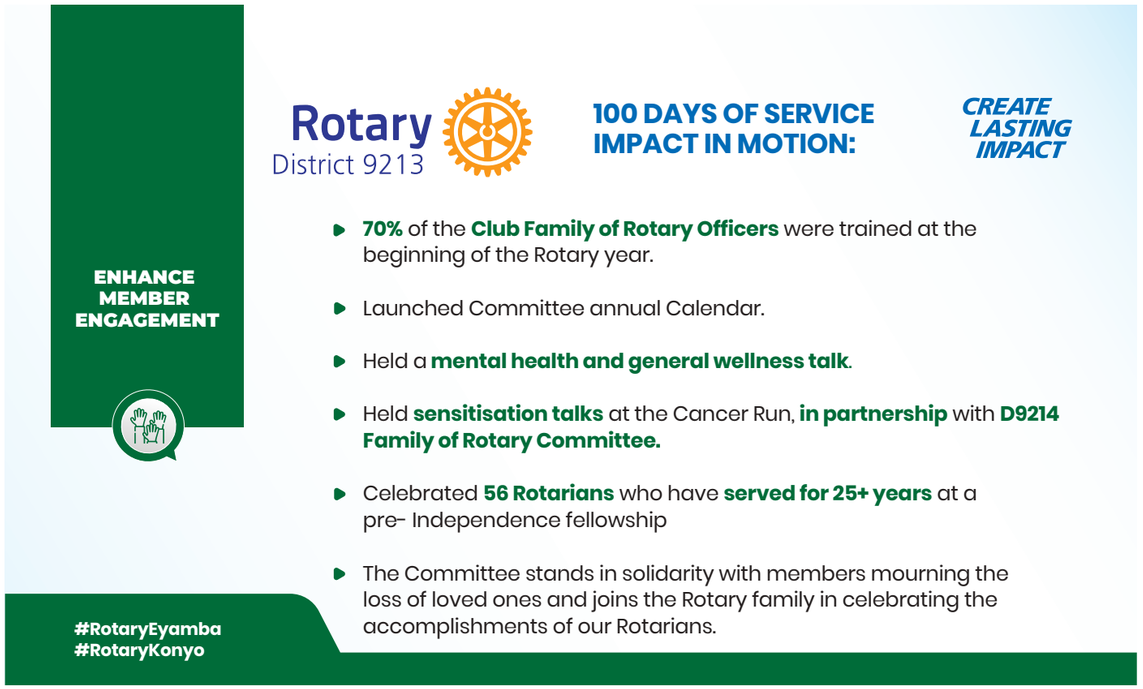
Rotary has little meaning if it exists only in our meeting places. True relevance is found in the villages where clean water flows, in the schools where children learn, in the hospitals where lives are saved and in the communities where hope is restored.

My call to action is simple: let us move from intent to impact, and from pledges to action. Let us remain united as a family, speak openly when we face challenges and support one another through difficult times.

Together, we can do more. Together, we can reach more people. And together, we can ensure that those who need us will never walk alone.

Thank you, and I wish you all the very best for the second quarter of the 2026–2027 Rotary year.





One of the toilet blocks in Bugiri, built with the help of a Global Grant

# The Rotary Foundation is Transforming Lives and Communities in Uganda

**By The Wave Team**

For decades, Rotary clubs across Uganda have supported initiatives that address some of society's most pressing challenges. Behind many of these is The Rotary Foundation, the charitable arm of Rotary International, which provides financial support for sustainable projects that improve lives and strengthen communities.

Established in 1917, The Rotary Foundation has grown into one of the world's major philanthropic organisations, mobilising resources from Rotarians, Rotary clubs, corporate partners and other donors to support humanitarian initiatives around the world.

## FIGHTING POLIO AND IMPROVING HEALTHCARE

One of The Rotary Foundation's most recognised global contributions is its support for polio eradication. Through Rotary International's partnership with the World Health Organisation, UNICEF and other partners, Rotary has helped mobilise funds, raise public awareness and support immunisation campaigns.

Through Foundation-supported global grants, Rotary clubs work with international partners to design projects that respond to community needs. This allows local knowledge to be combined with financial resources and technical expertise, increasing the potential for sustainable results.

## CLEAN WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

Safe water and adequate sanitation remain essential to public health, education and economic development. In communities where families travel long distances to collect water, the consequences extend beyond thirst. Children may miss school, women spend valuable hours fetching water, and preventable waterborne diseases place additional pressure on households and health facilities.

The Rotary Foundation's grant programmes help clubs finance projects that go beyond the installation of infrastructure. The true measure of a water project is not the number of boreholes drilled or water points installed, it is whether communities continue to enjoy reliable access to safe water years after the project has been completed.

## EDUCATION AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Across Uganda, Rotary clubs have participated in projects that improve learning environments, provide educational materials, support literacy and strengthen opportunities for young people.

Foundation grants support initiatives that address specific barriers to education, incorporate vocational training, professional development and skills-building programmes designed to help young people become more employable.

These investments are important in a country with a large youth population, where expanding access to practical skills, meaningful employment and leadership opportunities remains a significant development priority.

## ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

In Uganda, projects have addressed challenges ranging from limited access to financial services to inadequate opportunities for women and young people. Some initiatives combine practical skills training with savings groups, entrepreneurship education and support for small businesses.

## THE CHALLENGES AND THE ROAD AHEAD

**Despite its achievements, the work of The Rotary Foundation faces challenges. Community needs are extensive, while available funding is finite. Projects also require careful planning, transparent financial management, monitoring and evaluation, and sustained engagement with beneficiaries.**

**Infrastructure can deteriorate when maintenance arrangements are weak. Training programmes may have limited impact if participants lack the resources or opportunities to apply their skills. Similarly, a project that meets an immediate need may fail to produce lasting change without wider institutional support.**

## TANGIBLE IMPACT

In Bugiri, the Toilets 4 Life initiative has delivered sanitation infrastructure at schools, a hospital, a bus park and a market. Its first phase, completed in 2023, included five septic toilet blocks and the acquisition of a cesspool-emptying truck, alongside training for water, sanitation and hygiene committees and facility staff. A second phase, launched in August 2026, expanded the initiative to five additional locations.

The Butiiti Adopt a Community Global Grant Project combines school rehabilitation, water and sanitation infrastructure, and economic empowerment at Belepe Butiiti Girls Primary School. The project illustrates how coordinated interventions can address several interconnected community needs rather than treating each challenge in isolation.

A project at Wangkawa Primary School in Pakwach District identified serious sanitation deficiencies, inadequate water-harvesting infrastructure and overcrowded classroom furniture.

These examples illustrate the breadth of Rotary-supported development work.

## BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS AND STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

A defining feature of The Rotary Foundation is its ability to connect local Rotary clubs with international partners. Through global grants, clubs pool financial resources, professional expertise and volunteer time to undertake projects that might otherwise be beyond the capacity of a single club.

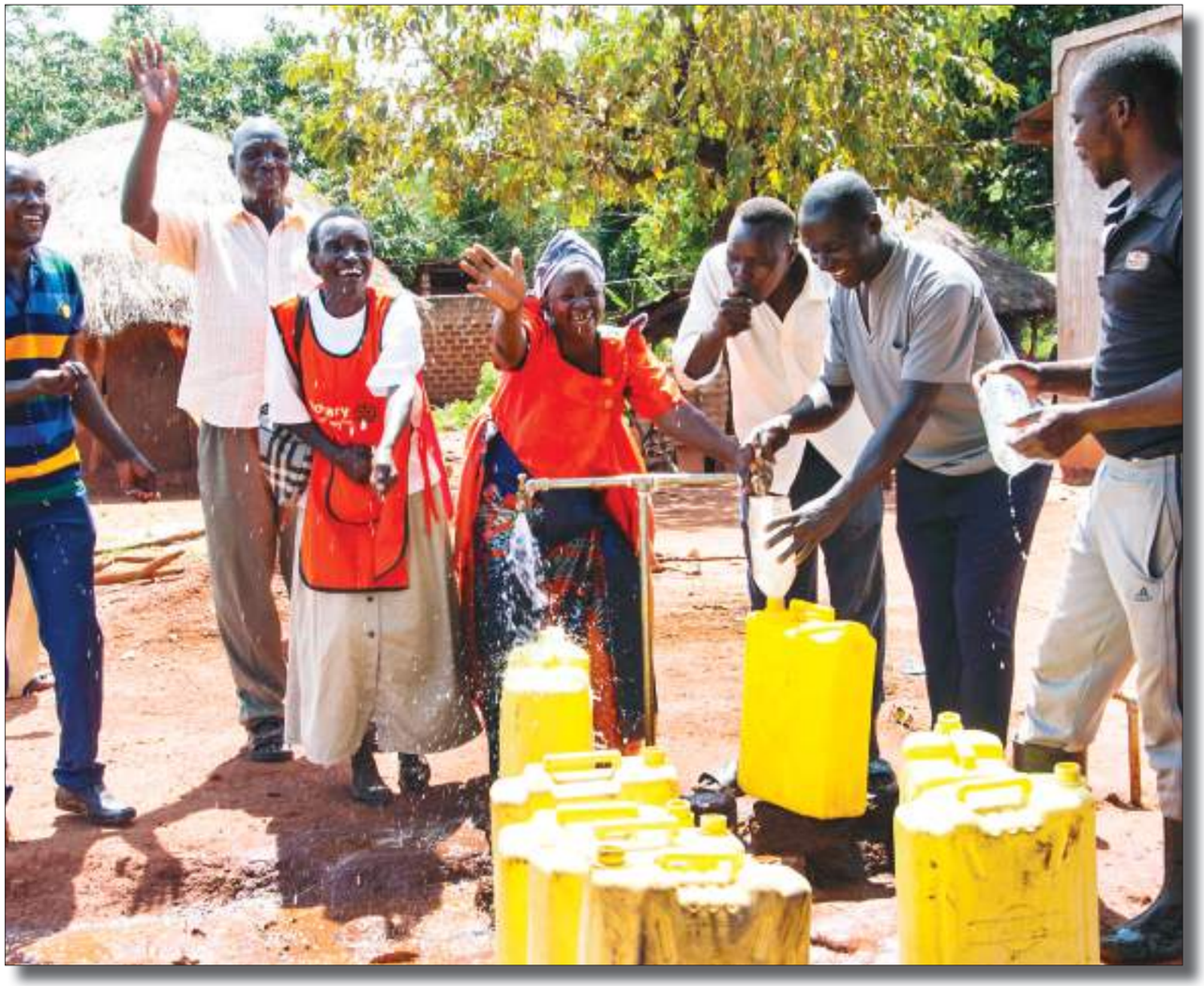
The Foundation's contribution is not limited to funding physical infrastructure. It also supports the development of local leadership, project-management skills and networks that can continue working together long after a particular intervention has ended.

By involving beneficiaries in identifying problems, implementing solutions and maintaining facilities, Rotary helps strengthen community ownership. This is essential to ensuring that development projects deliver lasting value.

## A LEGACY MEASURED IN LIVES CHANGED

The Rotary Foundation's contribution to Uganda is best understood not simply in the money raised or the number of projects completed, but in the difference those investments make to people's lives.

It is reflected in children learning in healthier environments, families gaining access to safer water, health facilities acquiring essential equipment, and individuals gaining opportunities to improve their livelihoods.



# How The Rotary Foundation Is Driving Lasting Impact in District 9213

**By Maureen Birungi**

The Rotary Foundation (TRF) stands as the engine room of our service, transforming the generosity of Ugandan Rotarians into life-altering community solutions. Under the leadership of District Governor Gerald Obai and the current guiding vision to 'Create Lasting Impact' through Crazy Small Ideas, D9213 has seen remarkable footprints of change.

Backed by more than US$350,000 in recent Foundation contributions, and close to US$1m in newly approved Global Grants, TRF continues to empower our clubs to change lives across Uganda.

Here is how The Rotary Foundation is making a visible, sustainable difference across our Seven Areas of Focus:

## PEACEBUILDING AND CONFLICT PREVENTION

Uganda holds a place of global distinction as home to Africa's first Rotary Peace Centre at Makerere University. Funded directly through the vision of the Foundation, this prestigious centre acts as a peace machine. Each year it trains leaders and development practitioners from all over the world, equipping them with the tools to resolve conflicts, promote social justice, and act as lifelong ambassadors for sustainable peace.

Some of the Peace Fellows have partnered with Rotary clubs in Uganda to carry out various projects through Global Grants, like the 'Dignity Kit Global Grant GG2579763 that was launched by the District Governor Gerald Obai on 30th September at Nakivubo Blue Primary School. The project objective is to train young ladies on making reusable sanitary towels and other materials to stop stigma during their period. The Project will train over 100 ladies and, through community sensitisation, distribute at least 1000 kits.

## DISEASE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

Our district has made monumental strides in healthcare. The Foundation heavily supports national landmark initiatives, most notably the Rotary Family Health Days Program. The Program supports various clubs to implement Free medical camps in different underserved communities within the country. Through Rotary Foundation contributions and Global Grants, clubs have been able to equip health centres and provide free essential medicines to the communities, reducing the disease burden and improving access to medical care through these medical outreaches

## WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE (WASH)

Through massive collaborative investments, such as the multi-million-dollar Rotary USAID partnership, the Foundation has altered the landscape of rural sanitation. Over 400 vulnerable communities, schools, and healthcare facilities across Uganda have been outfitted with deep boreholes, high-capacity water tanks, and modern sanitation infrastructure, moving thousands of families away from drawing contaminated water from swamps.

## MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

No mother should lose her life while bringing forth another. District 9213 recently expanded its reach with US$500,000 (UGX1.8bn) 'Mama Toto Care' Program of Scale, targeted at radically improving neonatal and maternal healthcare. Alongside structural projects like the modern maternity wing at Mukono Hospital, clubs deploy essential equipment, Neonatal incubators, and medical consumables to rural health outposts to guarantee safe deliveries.

## BASIC EDUCATION AND LITERACY

Guided by the Basic Education and Literacy Enhancement Program (BELEP), the Foundation turns classrooms into spaces of true opportunity. Rather than supporting rote learning, TRF grants fund the infrastructure for active learning. This includes the construction of community libraries and resource centres, school renovations such as the adopted school model at Bulindo Primary School and the distribution of supplies to over 15,000 students annually.

## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Rotary Foundation contributions also address the structural roots of poverty by financing local enterprise and financial inclusion. In rural areas like Soroti, Kitgum, and the Butiiti community, Foundation grants train women farmers and youth in modern vocational skills. Even in urban slums like Kisenyi the Foundation's contributions are empowering ladies to become economically empowered to transform their communities through vocational skilling.

In Kyaka II refugee settlement, TRF funding helped set up local cooperatives that convert organic waste into eco-briquettes, directly fuelling self-sufficiency and communal saving systems.

The scale of these projects proves that sustainable service is never a one-off moment; it is a lifetime commitment. Every shilling given to The Rotary Foundation is multiplied into systemic change right here at home.

As we mark our milestones this year, let us continue to put our Goodwill into financial action, ensuring that the Rotary Foundation remains well funded to create lasting impact for generations to come.




Participants of the Rotary Youth Exchange

**How Rotary Youth Exchange is transforming young lives, strengthening families and connecting Uganda to the world.**

# One Year Abroad, A Lifetime Of Possibilities

**By Rtn. Mark Asiimwe, RYE Chair, Rotary District 9213**

Every parent dreams of giving their child opportunities to grow and build a better future. For Diana Aletiru, a single mother in Arua, northern Uganda, watching her son Alvin Xavier Dakar leave for the United States was her dream come true.

On August 9, 2025, Alvin, a student at St. Joseph's College Ombaci, Arua, travelled to California as part of the Rotary Youth Exchange, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Arua Eco City. At Windsor High School, where unfamiliar surroundings and different ways of life became his classroom.

He returned to Uganda on July 13, 2026, with lasting friendships, greater independence and a deeper understanding of what it means to represent his country. He joined the school's Interact Club, played soccer and scored his first goal of the season.

His experience also brought unexpected generosity. The Rotary Club of Windsor committed to supporting school fees for Alvin and his sister, Ciara, up to US$4,000 annually each until they complete Senior Four. This was a special outcome of his exchange, not a standard programme benefit.

For Diana, the experience demonstrated how an opportunity offered to one young person can benefit an entire family.

More than a passport stamp

For Martinah Faith Kitiibwa, who participated in the 2022–2023 Rotary Youth Exchange programme, living abroad was a turning point. It helped her build relationships across cultures, develop leadership skills and discover a new level of independence.

Her experience also highlighted the trust and courage required of parents who allow their children to spend a year abroad. Martinah returned with a stronger sense of self and renewed gratitude to her mother, the Rotary Youth Exchange team and Rotary International.



Alvin Dakar

Finding a home far from home

Rayhan Isaak Tendo's exchange took him to Argentina during the 2025–2026 programme. Sponsored by Rotary District 9214 and the Rotary Club of Entebbe Base through the Power of One initiative, he arrived knowing little Spanish.

Gradually, he adapted to his new environment. Three host families welcomed him as a son, while school and community activities helped him learn the language and build friendships.

During Students' Week, his school won its first volleyball championship. Rayhan also met a city mayor, spoke on local radio and gave presentations about Uganda, becoming an ambassador for his country.

Leaving his host families was among the most difficult parts of the experience. Yet the friendships, confidence, resilience and cultural awareness he gained broadened his understanding of the world.

Who will your club recommend?

These experiences reflect the purpose of Rotary Youth Exchange and the collaboration between Rotary Districts 9213 and 9214 through the Power of One initiative. One student can become a bridge between communities, a future leader and a lifelong friend to people thousands of kilometres away.

Applications are now open for the 2027–2028 Rotary Youth Exchange programme, with a deadline of November 30, 2026.

Applicants must be aged 15–17 as of July 2027 and enrolled in secondary school or Grade 10 and above. The opportunity is open to children of Rotarians and non-Rotarians, provided each applicant is recommended by a Rotary club. Participants must be willing to serve as ambassadors for Uganda and return home after the one-year programme.

Students can gain language skills, leadership experience, international friendships and the opportunity to live with host families. Destinations will depend on available exchange places.

Parents or guardians should budget for airfare, insurance, passports, visas and required vaccinations. Applicants and their parents or guardians must also attend a mandatory physical seminar, with sessions scheduled in Uganda and Tanzania during December 2026 and 2027, as communicated by the organisers.

Rotarians are encouraged to engage schools and families and identify young people who are curious, responsible and ready to learn from the world.

Diana's story shows how one opportunity can reach an entire family. Martinah's journey demonstrates the value of independence, while Rayhan's experience shows how strangers can become family and how young Ugandans can represent their country internationally.

The next story could begin in your club or community.

**For information and applications:**
**Phone: 0708 583358**
***Email: d9213rye@gmail.com***
**One student. One opportunity. One year that could change a lifetime. Who will your club recommend before November 30, 2026?**




# Rotary Clubs Creating Safe Spaces for Mental Health Support in Schools and Communities

**By Rtn Sylvia Nankya, RC Kampala Naalya**

Although often invisible, mental health challenges have profound effects on learners and community members in the absence of support and professional care. Yet, in many communities, mental health remains a difficult subject to discuss. Stigma, fear of judgement, limited access to professional services and misconceptions about mental illness can prevent people from seeking help, leaving many to confront their struggles in silence.

Several Rotary clubs across District 9213 are creating safe spaces for young people and vulnerable communities to speak openly, seek support and access essential health services as a way of addressing mental health challenges.

**The programme addresses issues including anxiety, peer pressure, substance abuse...**

The Rotary Club of Mukono Central is leading efforts to make mental health awareness an integral part of young people's lives through the 'Your Voice. Your Mind. Your Power Mental Health' Initiative.

The initiative brings together seven Rotary clubs and eight Rotaract clubs, alongside schools, professional counsellors, peer educators and young people, to promote emotional wellbeing and create safe spaces for honest conversations about the challenges affecting adolescents.

"Through school outreaches, the programme addresses issues including anxiety, peer pressure, substance abuse, sexual abuse, family challenges and emotional stress," said Catherine Namoma, the President of the Rotary Club of Mukono Central. "These experiences can affect students' confidence, relationships, academic performance and overall development."

More than 1,800 students have already been reached at Seeta High School Main Campus and Seeta High School Mbalala Campus, St Charles S.S., Bukeerere, St. Joseph S.S Namagunga, with an additional outreach planned at Seeta High School A Campus, all in Mukono District.

During the sessions, the Rotarians encountered stories of students struggling with anxiety, teenagers facing peer pressure, and young people battling substance abuse, among several other issues.

Nasur Wananda, the President of the Rotary Club of Mukono, says that beyond sharing information, the initiative encourages students to recognise mental health challenges, speak openly about their experiences and understand when and where to seek help.

"The clubs are working with a team of professional counsellors and peer educators to help young people understand that asking for support is not a sign of weakness but a positive step towards wellbeing," Wananda said.

He shared three cases that laid bare the devastating experiences some young people carry in silence, and underscored the urgent need for sustained intervention. In one case, a female student disclosed that she had been sexually abused by her father, resulting in pregnancy and was now engaging in transactional sex during school holidays to provide for her child, a desperate situation that had left her contemplating suicide.

In another case, a male student revealed his involvement in the killing of a rival alongside a group of peers. He wrote, in confidence, that he was being haunted by the act, but could not seek help before because he feared being reprimanded both by his parents and the school authorities.

In the third case, a student recounted witnessing their father sexually abuse their mother, an experience that had exposed them to deeply distressing domestic violence.

According to President Wananda, the revelations reinforced the need for mental health outreach in schools to go beyond awareness sessions, but to incorporate trauma-informed counselling, clear safeguarding and referral pathways, and sustained psychosocial support. He explained that the ongoing efforts are helping young people understand their emotions, recognise potential risks and learn how to seek support.

The school-based outreaches are conducted jointly by the Rotary Clubs of Mukono, Mukono Central Kyaggwe Heritage, Mukono-Namilyango, Bukeerere, Namugongo, Kayunga and Lugazi Central; working alongside Rotaract clubs associated with Seeta, Bukerere, Naggalama, Uganda Christian University, St. Francis Namataba and Namugongo.

Meanwhile, in Kampala's Banda1 community, the Rotary Club of Kampala Naalya is addressing this need through the Mental Health Support for Adolescents in Ghetto Communities (MHSAG) project. The club officially launched the initiative through a mental health and medical camp held at Acholi Quarters Football Ground, bringing essential health and psychosocial services closer to residents of an underserved urban community.

For some residents, the initial motivation was access to free medical care. However, the availability of counselling and psychosocial support alongside general health services created opportunities to introduce mental health conversations in a more familiar and less intimidating setting.

Rtn Mathias Mulumba from the Rotary Club of Kampala-Naalya says that the approach revealed that people find it easier to take the first step towards seeking help when services are accessible, integrated and delivered in a respectful environment,

Rtn Mulumba also observed that the setup encouraged the participation of young men, particularly those who may be reluctant to attend public health activities because of stigma and negative community perceptions associated with substance use or unemployment.

District Governor Gerald Obai commended the initiatives for addressing the growing challenges affecting young people.

"Rotary's relevance is measured by the impact we create in our communities. I commend the work done by Rotary and its partners for this timely Mental Health Initiative in schools and communities, which addresses growing challenges among young people, including drug abuse and emotional wellbeing. Through awareness and open conversations, we are helping create safer environments where young people can thrive," he said.

# Our Foundation: From Confusion to Connection



I have come a long way since 1990, when my friend Abel Katahoire finally persuaded me to visit the Rotary Club of Kampala North. Back then, my classification was Construction Services, and my first opportunity came through renovating a small building in Mulago to house female anaesthesia students. I was told this was funded by a matching grant, whatever this was, from the Rotary Foundation. That was my first lesson: The Foundation provides funding where there is need.

We worked alongside Fellows, a Rotarian from the USA. Dr Carol Fellows, a Rotarian from the USA and her husband Tim. I learned my second lesson: Grants connect clubs from different countries, creating a channel for goodwill and understanding across countries. At the project's end, we bought a large 'Thank You' card, signed by all members, and sent it to the Rotary Club of Klamath County, Oregon. Carol became a lifelong friend. Some of you may know Carol and Tim through the LN-4 artificial hand. That taught me lesson three: The Foundation creates opportunities for making friends around the world.

I did not see Carol for 15 years until I ran into her at Heathrow Airport. She still remembered that Thank You card and shared the story with her fellow Rotarians. That card had made our relationship personal. It reminded me of lesson four, which we all learned as toddlers: always say Thank You to the community, to partners, and to TRF. To anyone who gives a hand in a service project or contributes even $5 to the Foundation. I started trying to learn more about the Foundation and was completely bewildered. Talks were filled with words like Share and DDF and Investment, complicated diagrams, Polio and PolioPlus, grants in all shapes and exclusions, and names I could not pronounce. My engineering mind was stumped. I had finally found a subject I could not understand.

When I joined Kampala North, there was not a single Paul Harris Fellow in the club. Dominic Kavutse was a Paul Harris Sustaining Member (give $100 or more per year), while George Kasedde Mukasa from RC Kampala was a Triple Paul Harris Fellow. I eventually asked what all this meant: George had given $3,000 to the Foundation. I decided he was either super rich or soft in the head.

Eight years later, Kampala North had its first Paul Harris Fellow - Dominic. That taught me lesson five: The Foundation can fund grants only because Rotarians give, each according to their ability and generosity.

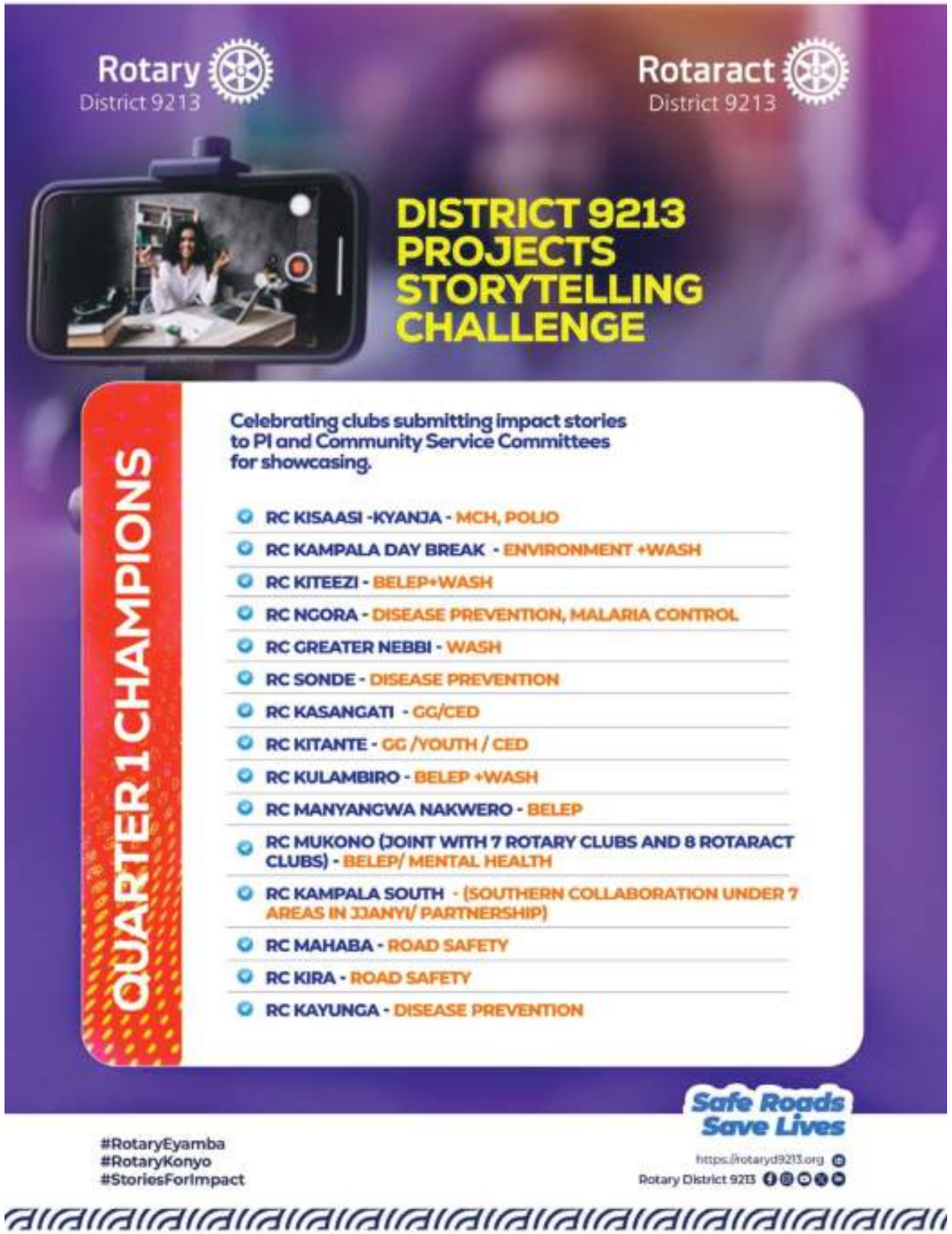
In the early nineties, Kampala North pioneered the Jaipur limb in Uganda. But the Orthopaedics workshop refused to accept the plastic tubing technology. We had a container full of pipes and plastic feet, and money sitting unused.

Tom Kajumba, who led the project, kept explaining to our partners in the UK (the Rotary Club of Hamble Valley and the Jaipur Limb Trust) and TRF that the funds were safe and the delay was due to challenges. They sent someone to investigate, who confirmed Tom's honesty. The project eventually succeeded.

Today, I communicate to you as a changed person. From confusion to conviction. From bewilderment to belonging. The Rotary Foundation is not a distant institution - it is us. It is our hands, our hearts, our dollars, our thank-you cards, and our friendships across continents.

Give. Not because you understand everything. Give because you trust. Give because you care. Give because the Foundation transforms lives, starting with your own. It captures the very essence of Service above Self.

**Rtn Tusu, RC Kampala North**
**Rotary, Foundation Trustee, 2026-2030**



# A Global Mission That's Closer Than Ever to Victory




**Rotary also continues to utilise World Polio Day, observed every year on 24 October, to remind the world that the mission remains unfinished.**

**By Rtn. Michael Agaba, PP RC Kyanja-Metro**

For millions of children around the world, the threat of polio has become a distant memory. Yet behind this remarkable achievement lies one of the most ambitious public health campaigns in history, one in which Rotary International has played a leading role for nearly four decades.

Polio, or poliomyelitis, is a highly infectious viral disease that primarily affects children under five years of age. While many infected people experience no symptoms, the virus can attack the nervous system, causing permanent paralysis and, in some cases, death. Since the polio virus destroys the nerve terminals within the spinal cord, leading to permanent nerve damage which eventually results in paralysis of the limbs, there's no cure for polio. But polio can be prevented through vaccination.

For Rotary, the fight against polio is more than a health initiative. It's a commitment to protecting children, strengthening communities and ensuring that no child suffers from a preventable disease.

## FROM A BOLD CONCEPT TO A GLOBAL MOVEMENT

Rotary began supporting polio immunisation efforts in 1979, launching vaccination projects in the Philippines. In 1985, it established PolioPlus, an ambitious programme aimed at protecting children worldwide against polio and other preventable childhood diseases.

Three years later, in 1988, Rotary joined the World Health Organisation (WHO), UNICEF and the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in establishing the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI). The partnership subsequently expanded to cover the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and other supporting partners.

At the time, polio paralysed an estimated 350,000 people annually across more than 125 countries. Although the ambition to eradicate the disease was enormous, Rotary and its partners believed that a world free of polio was achievable. That belief has since translated into one of the greatest public health successes of our time.

## HOW FAR HAS THE WORLD COME?

The progress is extraordinary. Since 1988, global polio cases have declined by more than 99.9%. Wild poliovirus remains endemic in only two countries: Afghanistan and Pakistan. Two of the three types of wild poliovirus, types 2 and 3, have been declared eradicated worldwide.

According to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, vaccination efforts have helped block paralysis in an estimated 20 million people who might otherwise have been affected. Approximately three billion children have received polio immunisation through the global eradication effort.

Rotary's contribution has been large. By 2026, the organisation had contributed around US$3 billion towards global polio eradication, alongside decades of advocacy, fundraising, and volunteer service. Its members have helped mobilise governments, donors, health professionals and communities around a common goal.

These achievements demonstrate what sustained international cooperation, scientific innovation and community participation can accomplish.

## THE FINAL MILE: WHY THE FIGHT ISN'T OVER

Despite the remarkable progress, the world hasn't yet eradicated polio. The final stage of the campaign has proved particularly difficult because the virus continues to circulate in communities affected by insecurity, weak health systems, limited access to healthcare and vaccine hesitancy.

In Afghanistan and Pakistan, reaching every child remains a major obstacle. Cross-border movement also makes it difficult for either country to eliminate the virus in isolation.

The lesson is clear: progress in one country can't guarantee safety for another. As long as polio exists anywhere, children everywhere remain at risk.

The Global Polio Eradication Initiative has hence extended its strategic timelines, targeting the certification of wild poliovirus eradication by the end of 2027 and the elimination of circulating type 2 variant poliovirus by the end of 2029. Achieving these goals will require renewed commitment, adequate financing and continued cooperation.

For Uganda and its neighbours, the priority remains ensuring that every eligible child receives the recommended doses, strengthening routine immunisation and responding rapidly to any suspected case. Rotary clubs are helping bridge the gap between national health programmes and the communities they serve by promoting accurate information, mobilising local leaders and encouraging parents to vaccinate their children.

Rotary also continues to utilise World Polio Day, observed every year on 24 October, to remind the world that the mission remains unfinished. It's an opportunity to celebrate achievements, honour frontline health workers and renew public commitment to a polio-free future.

For Rotary, the promise remains simple: End Polio Now. Until polio is eradicated everywhere, that promise must continue to inspire action.

*This article first ran in the Daily Monitor*




District Governor Gerald Obai joined other Rotarians in marking the World Polio Day in Kira

# Rotary clubs renew call to end polio during World Polio Day 2026

**By Victoria Bugembe Nampala, RC Bweyogerere-Namboole**

Rotary clubs in Uganda have renewed their commitment to ending polio, urging parents to complete their children's immunisation schedules and communities to reject myths that discourage vaccination.

The call was made on October 24 during World Polio Day commemorations at Bweyogerere Health Centre III in Kireku, bringing together the Rotary clubs of Bweyogerere Namboole, Najjera, Manyagwa, Kira and Nakwero, alongside district leaders and health officials.

Held under the theme 'One Day, One Focus: Ending Polio for Good', the event highlighted the importance of sustained vaccination, community mobilisation and stronger health services in protecting children from the preventable disease.

Rotary District 9213 Governor Gerald Obai presided over the event. He cautioned the public against polio vaccination myths, emphasising the importance of immunising children to protect them from the disease.

Polio is a highly infectious viral disease that mainly affects children under five. It can invade the nervous system and cause irreversible paralysis. Although there is no cure, vaccination offers effective protection.

The World Health Organisation estimates that about one in 200 infections results in irreversible paralysis, while between 5% and 10% of people paralysed by the disease die when their breathing muscles become immobilised.

## SUSTAINING THE GLOBAL FIGHT

The global polio eradication campaign has made significant progress. Since 1988, cases caused by wild poliovirus have declined by more than 99%, from an estimated 350,000 annually to transmission endemic in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

However, the virus remains a threat, particularly in communities with low immunisation coverage. Outbreaks of vaccine-derived poliovirus also demonstrate the importance of maintaining high levels of population immunity.

The Global Polio Eradication Initiative reported 48 wild poliovirus cases worldwide by October 20, 2026, comprising 42 in Afghanistan and six in Pakistan. The figures reinforce the need for continued surveillance and routine immunisation, even in countries where wild poliovirus transmission has been interrupted.

Edith Mujwisa, Polio District Officer for Rotary District 9213, said Rotary remains a key partner in the global campaign through its humanitarian work and collaboration with other stakeholders.

Through its PolioPlus programme, Rotary has contributed more than US$2.9 billion towards eradication efforts and helped protect more than three billion children in 122 countries. Its advocacy has also helped mobilise more than US$11 billion in contributions from governments.

"Members raise funds, mobilise communities, support vaccination campaigns and press leaders to sustain commitments, and ensure services reach underserved and mobile populations effectively," Mujwisa said.

## TURNING COMMITMENT INTO COMMUNITY ACTION

Beyond the global campaign, Rotarians at Bweyogerere highlighted the need to support local health facilities that serve growing communities.

Lillian Bakko, president of the Rotary Club of Bweyogerere Namboole, urged members to contribute towards improving healthcare in the communities where they live and work.

"Fellow Rotarians, we can do this again and over again. Let's check out the pocket change and make our community better through quality health care services," Bakko said.




DG Obai gives a baby a Polio Vaccine during events to mark World Polio Day

Dr Keneth Mugume, a public health and epidemiology professional working with the Ministry of Health's Uganda National Expanded Programme on Immunisation, urged parents to ensure their children receive all recommended vaccine doses.

"It's a precious gift a parent can give to a child when they get immunised and complete the schedule," Mugume said.

He encouraged parents whose children had missed a dose to return to health workers for guidance and catch-up vaccination rather than abandon the schedule. He also noted that immunisation is provided free of charge.

## CALLS FOR BETTER HEALTH SERVICES

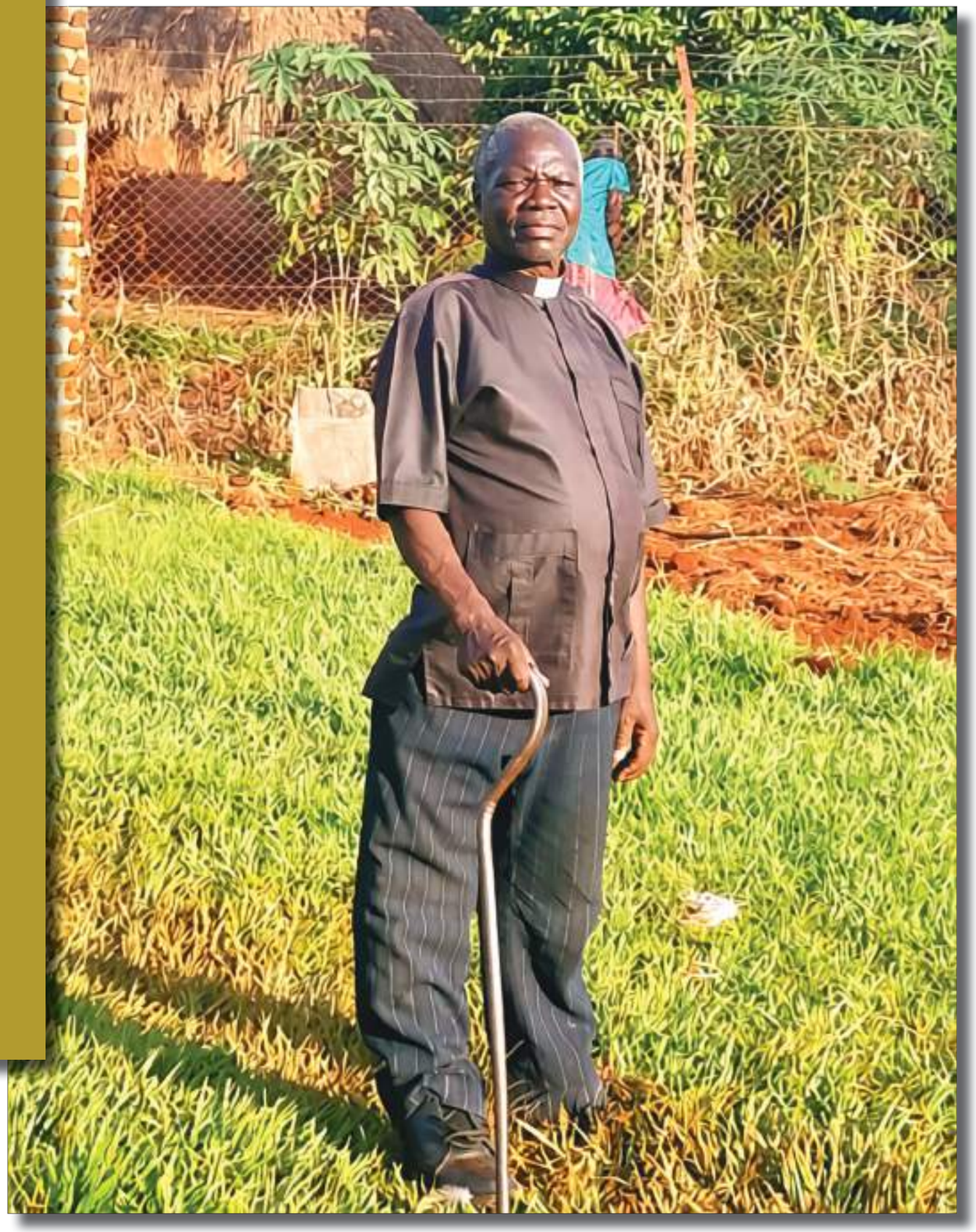
Mugume said Bweyogerere Health Centre III was expected to be upgraded to a Health Centre IV, a move that could expand services for the growing population.

Dr Samuel Mukasa, principal municipal medical officer in Kira Municipality, said the facility handles a heavy patient load and that the proposed upgrade could improve service delivery and create employment opportunities.

Bweyogerere Mayor Dickson Hakiza welcomed the plans, saying the centre was overwhelmed. Some patients are referred to Kira Health Centre III or facilities in Goma, Mukono district, creating challenges for pregnant women and critically ill patients, particularly when an ambulance is unavailable.

Local leaders asked the Rotary Club of Bweyogerere Namboole to help lobby for an ambulance to support referrals, including emergencies at night. Obai encouraged the club to prepare a grant application covering an ambulance and medical equipment needed for the planned upgrade.

Observed annually on October 24, World Polio Day recognises the efforts of health workers, volunteers, families and partners in the fight against polio.



Valentine Okello, a retired reverend of Namirembe Diocese in Kampala

# A polio survivor's journey: From surgery to the struggle for dignity

**From a childhood marked by limited mobility to corrective surgery, education and ministry, Valentine Okello's story is one of resilience. Today, the retired reverend is calling for better support for polio survivors who continue to face the high cost of mobility aids and barriers to independent living. He told his story to VICTORIA BUGEMBE Nampala.**

### A FATHER WHO REFUSED TO GIVE UP

My name is Valentine Okello. I am a retired reverend of Namirembe Diocese in Kampala, a husband to Elizabeth Tusaba Okello and a father of four. I was born in 1955 in Tororo District and now live in Wakisi Division, Njeru Municipality.

I realised in childhood that I could not walk like other children. My right leg was weak, bent, and often cold. I depended on a walking stick and could not wear ordinary shoes. Simple activities that other children took for granted became daily struggles.

I was fortunate to have a father who believed in me. My father, Domiciano Zedekia Oana Onyangu Dalit, was a catechist in the Roman Catholic Church. Despite discouragement from people who thought educating a child with a disability was a waste of money, he refused to give up on me.

I attended primary school in Kirugu before proceeding to Nyenga Boys and later Jinja College.

### THE OPERATION THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

School life was not easy. In 1969, while at Jinja College, I struggled with the daily indignities of living with a disability. I could not wear shoes, and walking barefoot through dirty floors near the washrooms was particularly difficult.

One day, as I left the washrooms, I met the school headteacher, the late Reverend Father Joseph Johns. He noticed my condition and took an interest in my well-being.

The following day, he took me to Jinja Hospital, where a doctor examined my leg. The doctor said corrective surgery could help straighten it, improve my walking and enable me to wear shoes.

When the operation was scheduled, my parents were unavailable to sign the consent papers. It was postponed until the following day. With time running out, the headteacher consulted the doctor and signed the papers.

That operation marked a turning point in my life.

### LEARNING TO WALK WITH A NEW LEG BRACE

I remained in hospital for about 28 days until the cast was removed. My leg was then fitted with a caliper, a supportive brace that helped me stand and walk. For the first time, I also wore clogs, simple wooden sandals.

The surgery, medication and caliper were provided free of charge by the Government.

In 1970, while in Senior Two, I finally wore my first pair of shoes, bought by my parents. It was a moment I had long hoped for.

The caliper continued to support my walking, and whenever I outgrew it, I returned for a replacement. The appliances that I needed for walking were free.

When the support disappeared

But things began to change in the 1980s. Orthopaedic workshops that had provided braces and other appliances became non-functional or struggled with shortages of

**Turn to page 30**

From page 29

materials. Accessing a replacement caliper became increasingly difficult and expensive.

Today, if you want a caliper made for you, you have got to negotiate with the workers there so that they go and buy the materials from outside.

It can cost hundreds of thousands of shillings, sometimes more than one million, excluding the shoes needed to use it comfortably. For someone who depends on these appliances every day, replacing a broken or worn-out brace is not a luxury; it is essential.

As we grow older, the challenges become greater. Our bodies change, our weight increases, and the appliances we depend on wear out more frequently. Without affordable replacements, independent movement becomes difficult.

**A CALLING THAT MOBILITY MADE POSSIBLE**

Despite these obstacles, I managed to pursue higher education at Uganda Christian University, where I obtained a Bachelor of Divinity and began further studies in theology.

My faith and education enabled me to serve in ministry. For a time, I used a modified motor scooter that helped me travel to church, work in my garden and respond to calls to minister in different places.

It gave me greater independence. However, I can no longer manage the scooter as I once did, and I now struggle to move around.

Things are not easy. Things are not easy at all.

The difficulties extend beyond mobility. People with disabilities often have to work twice as hard to access education, employment and opportunities that others may take for granted. Families also face financial pressure, particularly when they must pay school fees and provide for their children without adequate support.




**I share my story because I know what it means to struggle, to receive help.**

**A CALL FOR DIGNITY AND PRACTICAL SUPPORT**

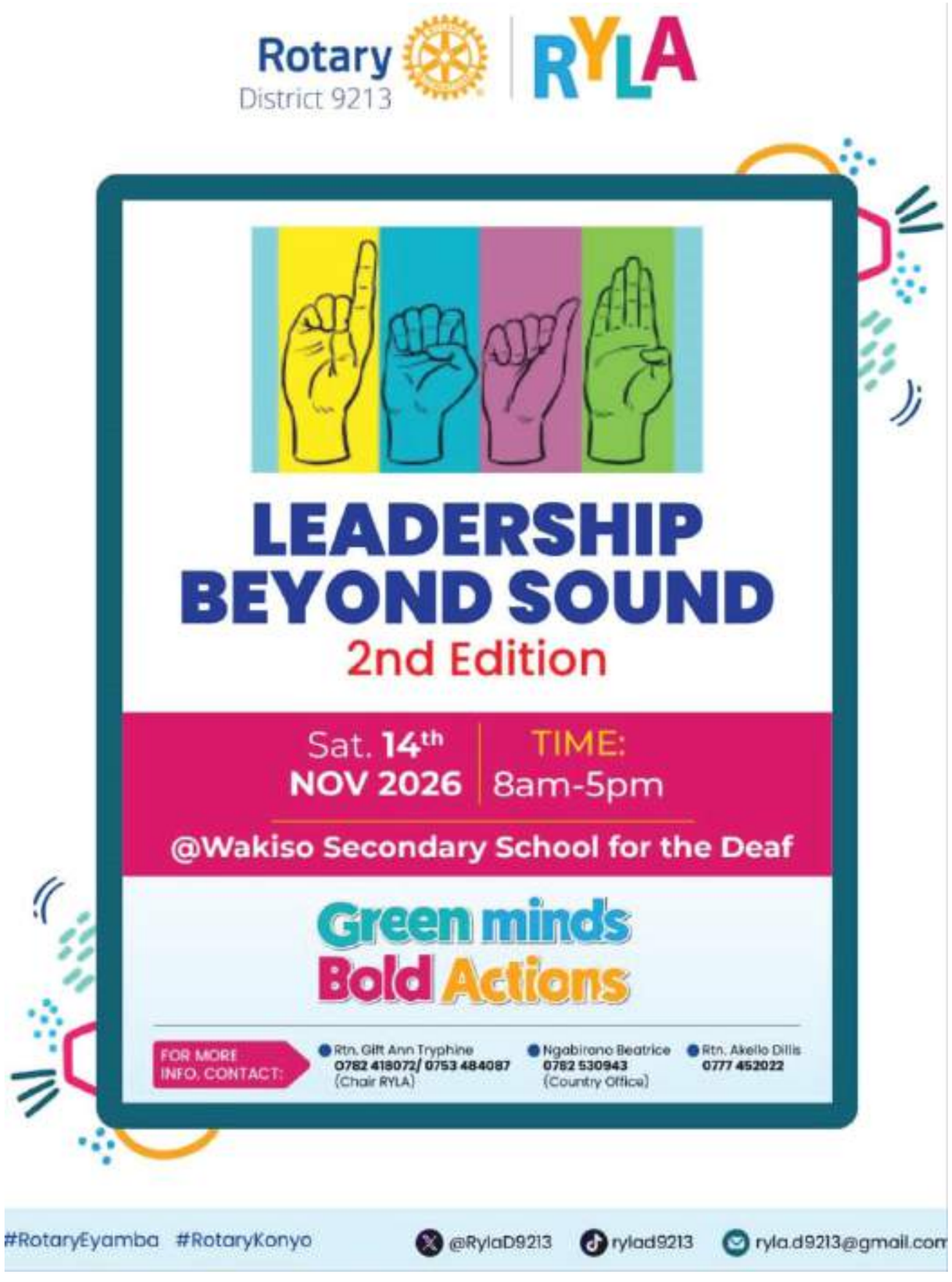
My experience has taught me that living with a disability requires resilience, but resilience alone cannot replace functioning health services, affordable mobility aids and meaningful government assistance.

I remain grateful to God for my parents, especially my father, whose determination helped me receive an education and build a life of purpose. I also remember the people who made my surgery possible and allowed me to walk with greater independence.

Polio prevention remains essential because no child should have to endure what survivors have experienced. But the responsibility does not end with vaccination. Those already living with the consequences of polio deserve care, inclusion and opportunities to participate fully in society.

I share my story because I know what it means to struggle, to receive help and to lose access to support. I want future generations to be protected from polio, and I want survivors to live in a society that recognises their dignity and responds to their needs.

For me, the fight is not only about walking. It is about the freedom to work, serve, provide for my family and live with dignity.



# Africa Rising - Why the Zone Institute Matters to Rotary's Future

## 7TH ALL AFRICA ZONE INSTITUTE (NOV 26-28TH, 2026)

***Theme: Africa Rising – Grow to Serve***

Rotary's strength lies in its ability to bring people together around a common purpose: serving communities and creating lasting change. Against this backdrop, the 7th All Africa Zone Institute 2026, under the theme 'Africa Rising – Grow to Serve', seeks to bring together members of the Rotary family for learning, reflection, collaboration, and celebration.

The Institute is an important gathering on the Rotary calendar, providing an opportunity for members to examine the organisation's priorities, share experiences and explore ways of strengthening its work. For Uganda, hosting the gathering offers an opportunity to welcome Rotary leaders and members from across Africa and beyond.

### A MEETING OF THE ROTARY FAMILY

To understand the significance of the Zone Institute, you first have too appreciate Rotary's organisational structure. Clubs come together to form districts, districts form zones, and zones operate within the wider framework of Rotary International.

While clubs hold assemblies and districts organise conferences, the Zone Institute provides a platform for engagement at the zonal level.

Rotary International has 34 zones, with Africa represented in Zone 22. The All Africa Zone Institute creates an opportunity for members from across the continent to engage with the wider Rotary community, learn from one another and build relationships that can support service beyond individual clubs and districts.

Although the Institute traditionally served as a training ground for incoming and nominated district governors, participation has since expanded to include all Rotarians. This wider access reflects the importance of equipping members at every level with the knowledge and skills needed to build stronger clubs.

### LEARNING TO SERVE BETTER

Beyond the leadership engagements, practical training is central to the Institute's purpose. Participants are expected to benefit from sessions covering The Rotary Foundation, membership, polio eradication, international service, the Council on Legislation and Rotaract.

These areas are critical to Rotary's continued relevance and effectiveness. Membership development, for instance, helps clubs attract and retain people who share their commitment to service. A stronger understanding of The Rotary Foundation can help members mobilise resources for community projects, while international service creates opportunities to collaborate across borders.

Engagement with Rotaract is equally important in nurturing the next generation of service leaders and building stronger connections between young professionals and the wider Rotary family.

The Institute also provides an opportunity to celebrate achievements in Foundation giving, recognising the contributions that make humanitarian projects possible.

### LEADERSHIP AND AN AFRICAN MOMENT

**The Institute's convener, Rotary International Director Emmanuel Katongole, brings a significant perspective to the gathering, including his role as an African representative on Rotary International's re-zoning committee.**

**The confirmed attendance of Rotary Foundation Trustees Pearl Ijeoma and Francis Tusubira further underscores the importance of the event as a meeting point for leadership, service and philanthropy.**

**For participants, the presence of current and former Rotary International leaders offers opportunities to exchange ideas, learn from their experiences and strengthen professional and personal relationships within the organisation.**




Ugandan Rotarians at the 5th All Africa Institue in Lusaka Zambia

### BUILDING CONNECTIONS, EXPANDING IMPACT

The value of the Zone Institute extends beyond the sessions themselves. By bringing together Rotarians from different countries, professional backgrounds and service experiences, the gathering creates opportunities for partnerships and the exchange of ideas that can be adapted to local communities.

For Ugandan Rotarians, it is an opportunity to learn, network and demonstrate the country's contribution to Rotary's work across Africa.

**Africa Rising is about more than representation. It is about building the capacity, connections and commitment.**

With its combination of leadership engagement, practical learning, fellowship and celebration, the 7th All Africa Zone Institute presents an opportunity to reflect on what it means to grow in order to serve.

Ultimately, Rotary's success is measured not simply by the number of meetings held or people gathered, but by the difference its members make in the lives of others. If the Institute equips more Rotarians to build stronger clubs, develop meaningful partnerships and deliver greater community impact, its influence will extend well beyond the gathering itself.

Africa Rising is about more than representation. It is about building the capacity, connections and commitment needed to serve more effectively—and ensuring that Rotary's promise of service translates into lasting change across the continent.

# A Discon Five Hours From Kampala, Who Would Miss It?



**By Rtn Sheila Naturinda, PP, Rotary Club of Kampala Central**

Many of us first encountered Gulu long before setting foot in the city. In Song of Lawino, we read the bold, aching voice of Lawino as she defends her people's ways against a husband who has turned his back on their traditions. Somewhere between literature lessons and examinations, many of us wished to visit the land that shaped Okot P'Bitek, the Acholi poet who gave her that voice.

Gulu is that land. Walking its streets brings to life the dances, songs, food and wisdom Lawino fought so fiercely to preserve. Her plea echoes an old Acholi proverb: 'The pumpkin in the old homestead must not be uprooted'.

The first time I drove to Gulu, I expected a long, tiring journey. Instead, the five-hour drive from Kampala became part of the adventure. Crossing the River Nile at Karuma was unforgettable. The whitish water crashing against the rocks is such a spectacle that I always close my eyes as I cross. Beyond the bridge, baboons line the road, crossing at their leisure or sitting in the middle as though they own it. It is a delightful sight.

I have lived, worked and visited Gulu many times, and I know why people fall in love with it. This is a city that refused to die, even when conflict inflicted deep and painful wounds. Today, Gulu has rebuilt, healed and blossomed. Isaiah 61:4, about rebuilding ancient ruins and restoring devastated cities, aptly describes its remarkable journey.

As Gulu prepares to host the 102nd Rotary District Conference (DISCON), I want every delegate to experience the city as I have. About 500 delegates have committed to attend, but there is still room for many more.

Gulu welcomes visitors with the words *Apwoyo bino*, a warm expression of welcome and gratitude. I have never felt like a stranger here. Market vendors engage me as though we have known each other for years, while boda boda riders offer directions patiently. For a gathering built on fellowship, I cannot imagine a warmer host.

Since attaining city status, Gulu has grown remarkably, with improved roads, bustling commercial streets and a changing skyline. Its hotels offer comfortable accommodation, conference facilities and gardens ideal for evening networking. Gulu University and the many institutions operating here also make it a hub for learning, ideas and partnerships.

While in Gulu, delegates should make time for these experiences:

## TASTE ACHOLI CUISINE

Try *malakwang*, the tangy sour leaves cooked in groundnut paste and served with millet bread (*kwon kal*) or sweet potatoes. Other favourites include boo (cowpea leaves in groundnut sauce), *lapena* (pigeon peas), and smoked fish or meat stews. Groundnuts feature prominently in Acholi cuisine, and deliciously so.

## ENJOY A MORNING OR EVENING JOG

Gulu's improved urban infrastructure, quiet streets and pavements make it an inviting place for delegates who enjoy keeping fit while exploring a city.

## VISIT FORT PATIKO

Located about 30 kilometres north of Gulu, this historic site, also known as Baker's Fort, sits among enormous granite rocks. Once a slave-trading post in the 19th century, it was later associated with explorer Samuel Baker. Local guides bring its sobering history to life, while climbing the rocks rewards visitors with sweeping views of the Acholi plains.

## EXPERIENCE ACHOLI CULTURE

Culture here is not confined to museums, it is alive and thriving. Delegates can experience the Bwola, the royal dance of Acholi chiefs, with its drums, feathered headdresses and synchronised movements, as well as the joyful Larakaraka. The Ker Kwaro Acholi cultural institution continues to preserve these traditions.

## EXPLORE THE CITY AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

Walk through the main market for fresh produce and local shea butter, known as *moo yao*. Gulu also has cafés, restaurants, bars and spas. For those with more time, Aruu Falls, near Pajule, about two hours away, offers an excellent day trip.

Above all, Gulu's story speaks directly to Rotary's heart. This is a community that has risen from years of conflict and rebuilt itself through resilience, peace and service. Each visit reminds me of our ideal of Service Above Self, reflected in the spirit of its people.

As Okot P'Bitek reminds us through Lawino, heritage matters. In Gulu, it is not merely a memory; it lives in the rhythms, dances, food and everyday lives of the Acholi people.

So, pack your bags, make the journey north and let Gulu say Apwoyo to you, too.

Five hours from Kampala is a small price to pay for an unforgettable DISCON experience. Who would want to miss it?



**"I have lived, worked and visited Gulu many times, and I know why people fall in love with it. This is a city that refused to die, even when conflict inflicted deep and painful wounds."**




# Leadership Has No Limits: Rotary's Commitment to An Inclusive RYLA



**By Tina Wamala, PI Director, RYLA 2026-2027**

**By creating spaces where every young person can lead, Rotary District 9213 is championing a powerful message: leadership is not defined by ability, but by potential, purpose and the opportunity to make a difference.**

Who gets to be a leader? Is it the young person who speaks confidently before an audience, the student who excels academically, or the individual who naturally takes charge of a team? Or could leadership also be found in the young person who communicates differently, navigates the world with a disability, or has never been given the opportunity to discover their own potential?

At Rotary, we believe leadership should have no barriers. Every young person, regardless of disability, background or circumstance, has the potential to inspire others, solve problems and contribute meaningfully to their community. What they need is an opportunity, an enabling environment and someone willing to believe in them.

It is this belief that informs the planned Inclusive Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA), scheduled for 14 November 2026 at Wakiso Secondary School for the Deaf. The initiative seeks to extend the transformative experience of RYLA to young people who are often overlooked in conventional leadership development spaces.

RYLA is more than a leadership training programme. It is an opportunity for young people to discover their strengths, develop their confidence, sharpen their communication skills and learn how to translate ideas into meaningful action. By taking this experience to a school for learners who are deaf, Rotary District 9213 is affirming that leadership development must be accessible to all young people, not just those who fit traditional expectations.

The significance of this initiative goes beyond the venue. It challenges us to reconsider how we identify, nurture and celebrate leadership potential. A disability does not diminish a person's capacity to lead. Rather, the barriers created by inaccessible environments, limited opportunities and societal assumptions can prevent that potential from being recognised.

An inclusive RYLA provides an opportunity to change this narrative. Through accessible and engaging activities, young people can explore their leadership styles, build relationships, share ideas and appreciate the value of teamwork. With appropriate communication support and thoughtful programme design, learners can participate meaningfully, demonstrate their abilities and recognise that their voices and contributions matter.

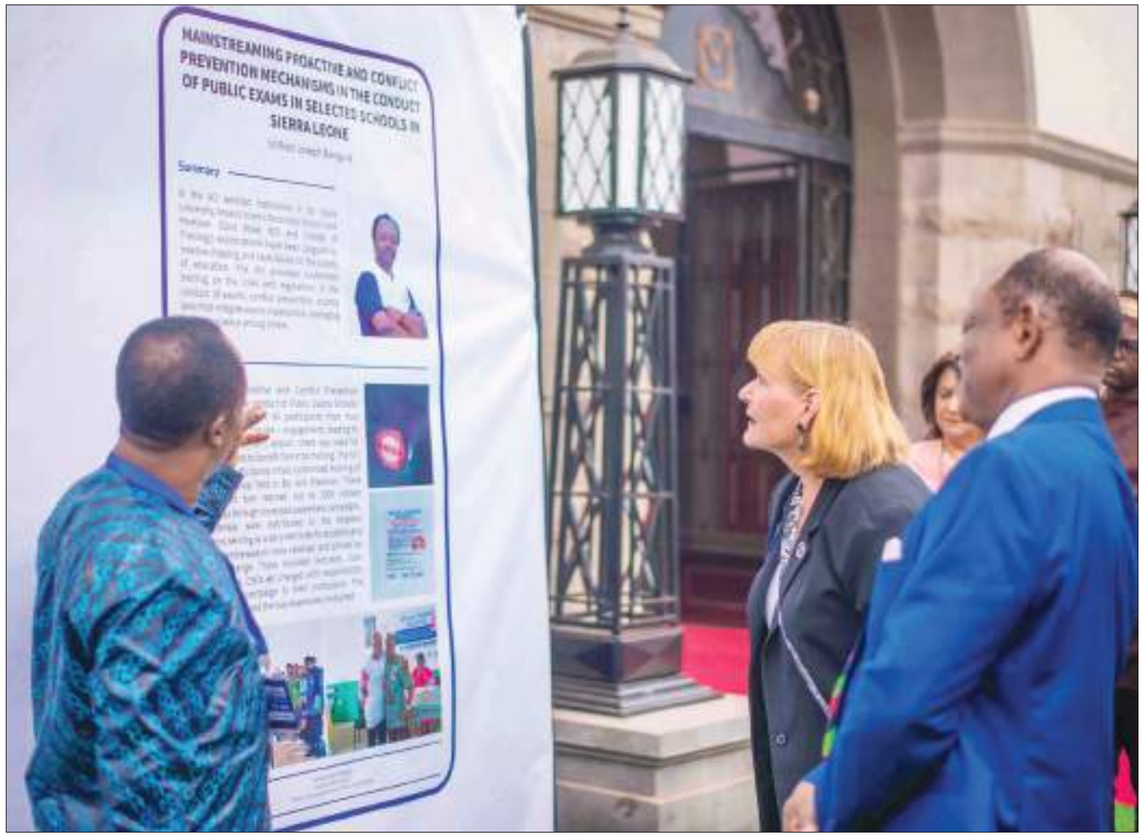
The initiative also offers an important lesson to the wider Rotary family. Inclusion is not simply about inviting people into existing spaces; it is about ensuring those spaces are designed to welcome, accommodate and empower everyone. It calls on us to listen, adapt and create opportunities that respond to the diverse needs of the communities we serve.

As Rotarians, our commitment to service must include investing in young people whose leadership journeys may look different from our own. The leaders of tomorrow are found in every school, every community and every circumstance. Some may become entrepreneurs, educators, advocates, public servants or community champions. What matters is that they are given the opportunity to grow and lead.

As we prepare for the Inclusive RYLA on 14 November, the message is clear: leadership is not a privilege reserved for a select few. It is a potential that exists in every young person and a responsibility we all share to nurture.

Because when we expand access to leadership development, we do more than change individual lives. We build more inclusive communities, stronger institutions and a future in which everyone has the opportunity to make a difference.

Leadership has no limits. Neither should opportunity.




Former RI President Stephanie Urchick inspects works by Maklerere Peace Centre Fellows during her visit to Uganda in January 2025

# How the Makerere University Rotary Peace Centre Is Shaping Africa's Future

Lasting peace requires more than ending violence. It depends on people who understand conflict, bring communities together, and develop sustainable solutions. At Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, the Rotary Peace Centre actively prepares experienced professionals to contribute to peacebuilding across Africa and beyond.

**So far, 186 Social Change Initiatives have been completed.**

### THE CENTRE AND ITS FELLOWSHIP

Established by Makerere University and Rotary International, the Centre was launched on 9 January 2020. It became Africa's first Rotary Peace Centre, and the seventh globally at the time. It is hosted within Makerere University's College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS) through its Peace and Conflict Studies programme.

The first cohort arrived in February 2021, beginning a fellowship that connects professionals across countries, disciplines and sectors. Fully funded through Rotary support, the programme enables mid-career practitioners from public service, civil society and international organisations to strengthen their peacebuilding practice.

The Centre's growth is reflected in 12 cohorts, 223 fellows and representation from 52 countries. So far, 186 Social Change Initiatives have been completed, and these span several thematic areas, including peace and security, governance, education, health, livelihoods and refugee empowerment.

Fellows study peacebuilding, conflict transformation and development, including the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) Positive Peace framework. This approach examines the institutions, relationships and social conditions that help societies sustain peace. Field visits, cohort discussions and residential life at Mugenyi Flats connect these ideas with practice while fostering exchange across cultures.

### FROM LEARNING TO COMMUNITY IMPACT

Through Social Change Initiatives (SCIs), fellows respond to challenges in their communities and professional environments. Projects address youth participation, refugee inclusion, disability rights, conflict-sensitive journalism, women's empowerment, community development, and cultural preservation. Others explore climate change and food security, maternal health, land rights, refugee education and youth conflict prevention.

These initiatives reflect the understanding that peacebuilding involves more than preventing violence. It also requires addressing exclusion, strengthening institutions, and creating opportunities for meaningful participation. Fellows apply their experience to local needs and share lessons that can inform other practitioners.

The Centre's Capstone Conferences provide a platform for this exchange. Fellows present initiatives, reflect on implementation challenges, and engage with academics, practitioners, Rotarians, and partners.

The conferences also connect graduating and incoming cohorts through mentorship and shared learning. On 22 October 2026, the tenth Capstone Conference celebrated 16 fellows from 13 countries.

The Centre's connection to Rotary extends this learning beyond Makerere. It has welcomed Rotary International Presidents Shekhar Mehta, Jennifer Jones, Stephanie Urchick and Francesco Arezzo. Other notable visitors include Bryn Styles, former Chair of the Rotary Peace Centres Committee; Jill Gunter, Manager of the Rotary Peace Centres Fellowship Program; and Brenda Cressey, Rotary Foundation Trustee.

While in Uganda, fellows participate in local Rotary Club fellowships, sometimes as speakers or panellists, sharing their professional experiences and peacebuilding work. The Centre also participates in the Africa Peace Concert series, combining music, cultural performance, peace advocacy and fundraising.

On 11 January 2025, its Peace Walk brought fellows, Rotarians, Rotaractors and members of the University community together around peace and unity.

The Centre's wider network includes Amani Communities Africa, the Julius Nyerere Leadership Centre (JNLC), CivSource Africa, the Uganda Police Force, the Uganda Prisons Service and academic partners. These relationships support exchange beyond the classroom. Alumni carry their experience into peacebuilding, governance, humanitarian action and development.

The University's spaces help sustain this community. Offices at Plot 146, Pool Road, coordinate programme activities; Mugenyi Flats support residential and cross-cultural exchange; and the Board Room hosts classes and meetings with University leadership and partners.

## LOOKING AHEAD

**Building on this foundation, the Centre plans a Peace Park for reflection, dialogue and community healing, an outreach bus for training and community engagement, and a purpose-built Peace Centre to strengthen its programmes and partnerships. These proposed developments would expand its ability to bring people together and take peacebuilding activities beyond the University.**

**As conflict challenges persist, preparing professionals to understand disputes, strengthen relationships and develop practical solutions remains essential. From Makerere to communities across Africa and beyond, the Centre's work continues through the people it equips, the initiatives they lead and the relationships they build.**




# What you missed at the Governance Lounge



**By Rtn Flavia Serugo, District Governance & Ethics Committee**

When our District Governor challenged us to consider "Little things" and "Crazy ideas," the Governance Committee envisioned a fresh space: The Governance Lounge. Designed not as a formal lecture, but as a safe, intergenerational fireside dialogue, the Lounge was created for open, candid conversations about high-stakes topics. Guided by our mantra: Doing things Right, Doing the Right thing, the Lounge provides a safe space for those necessary, "unsafe" conversations.

On 27th September, the inaugural session brought together seasoned Rotary leaders, corporate advisors, governance experts, and young corporate professionals to tackle a pivotal theme: "Back to the Badge: Reclaiming the Spirit and Ethics of Rotary." Moderated by Rotaractor Blessing Owomugisha (Kampala South), the panel featured Dr Peter Kimbowa (Past Assistant Governor from RC Muyenga, D9214), Past President Stephen Lwanga (Senior Rotarian from RC Kampala) and Past President Robinah Namusisi (Former Rotaractor and first Female President of RC Kampala).

## THE BADGE AS A SYMBOL OF RESPONSIBILITY, NOT PRIDE

Past President Stephen Lwanga reflected on how the Rotary badge has evolved. While it originally represented belonging to a community of service, today it stands as a badge of accountability and responsibility rather than pride.

"Although the Rotary badge is small, what it represents is large," he said. "Wearing it as a Rotarian is a commitment to give time, knowledge, and resources to meet others' needs. It's not all about taking selfies at projects, but rather spending more time with the people and reclaiming the pride in service, reclaiming the spirit of less entitlement, ownership and responsibility."

While technology, demographics, and society continue to evolve, the moral compass of the Rotary Four-Way Test must remain unshakeable. PP Stephen reminded us that Rotary is an organisation to truly belong to, requiring genuine commitment, reliability, integrity, and personal engagement rather than surface-level participation or social media photo-ops. Reclaiming the spirit of Rotary means choosing ownership over entitlement, personal service over vanity, and active mentorship between older and younger members.

## THE BADGE AS THE TAPROOT OF CHARACTER

Dr Peter Kimbowa(PK) emphasised that "talent will take you where character cannot keep you". In Rotary, the badge must represent a deep taproot of character, duty, and living out the Four-Way Test.

## GOVERNANCE, ROTARACT TRANSITION, AND STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY

**Drawing from 38 years of experience, including her Rotaract days, PP Robinah Namusisi noted how Rotaract had transformed over the years from one institutional Rotaract club to over 200 clubs. She further highlighted how Rotary and Rotaract's expanding footprint, virtual fellowships, and diverse professional membership require stronger governance foundations. She noted that while Rotaract has evolved from a program into full partners in service, Rotary clubs must be intentional when onboarding transitioning Rotaractors to ensure smooth, non-intimidating landings. Recruitment should be more in groups rather than individuals**

**Furthermore, she addressed critical governance challenges facing clubs today, such as missing bylaws, financial opacity and unaddressed conflicts. Structural conflicts often stem from weak governance practices rather than mere personality clashes. To maintain momentum and preserve member trust, clubs must operate transparently with clear strategic plans, updated bylaws, and open club assemblies, avoiding "kitchen cabinet" decision-making.**

Leaders should look beyond professional titles and status during recruitment, prioritising personal integrity, alignment with Rotary values, and long-term commitment.

Dr PK urged clubs to create spaces that challenge self-delusion and encourage continuous learning and humility.

He called for elevated decorum, proper etiquette, and intentional lead Rotarians ("sheriffs") in clubs who help safeguard fellowship culture under pressure. Ultimately, the badge should be:

- The taproot of our Character/ Behaviour. The deeper the better.
- The Compass giving us direction whether the terrain is rough.
- A ruler measuring our values (i.e. Integrity, Service Leadership, Fellowship, Diversity) all the time
- A thermometer checking our temperature, whether we are Hot. or cold
- A mirror for every Rotarian, not to flatter appearance
- An anchor and a bridge connecting people
- A lighthouse giving a ray of hope
- A Covenant, Commitment and Contract

## THE KEY TAKEAWAY

We extend our deepest gratitude to the leaders and members from the 29 Rotary and Rotaract clubs who answered the call and participated in this landmark session.

We learnt that though society and technologies change, the Four-Way Test and our core values remain fixed. The Governance Lounge reminded us that the badge may be small in size, but what it represents is immense.

Let us carry it with character, accountability, and a renewed dedication to Service Above Self.

**Look out for the next session in the Lounge series, on 21st November, which will focus on LEADERSHIP AND SUCCESSION PLANNING**




# Agenda 777: Turning Platinum Ambition Into Lasting Community Impact

As the Rotary Club of Kampala celebrates its Platinum Year, marking 70 years of service, the club is embracing an ambitious vision for the future through its 777 agenda: 70 new quality members, 70 impactful community projects and US$70,000 in fundraising. Under the leadership of President Shem Nnaggenda Nsubuga, this strategic agenda reflects a commitment to translating the spirit of Service Above Self into measurable, sustainable change.

The 777 agenda is a call to deepen the club's impact, strengthen its membership and mobilise resources to address pressing community needs. By aligning membership growth, service delivery and fundraising, the club aims to build a stronger foundation for the next chapter of its distinguished history.

## 70 NEW MEMBERS

At the heart of the agenda is the ambition to welcome 70 new quality members who share Rotary's values and commitment to service. The club recognises that membership growth is about attracting people whose skills, networks, professional expertise and passion for community development can expand its capacity to serve.

Equally important is strengthening fellowship and reconnecting with members who have been less active. Through a culture of inclusion, meaningful engagement and shared responsibility, the club seeks to ensure that every member has an opportunity to contribute to its mission. The recent induction of three new members signals encouraging progress towards this goal.

## 70 NEW PROJECTS

The second pillar focuses on implementing 70 meaningful projects that address real community priorities. Guided by the Rotary areas of focus, the club is advancing initiatives that connect local needs with practical, sustainable solutions.

One promising initiative is the partnership with Terrenova to assess 14 centres across Uganda for potential Starlink connectivity. The proposed interventions include telemedicine support for antenatal care, ICT laboratories and mobile dental camps, with the potential to improve access to essential services in underserved communities. The club is also exploring opportunities to extend its successful Bake for Life initiative to additional communities, supporting economic empowerment and livelihoods.

These efforts demonstrate the importance of partnerships in expanding the reach of Rotary projects. By collaborating with institutions, development partners and community leaders, the club aims to create interventions that deliver lasting benefits beyond the immediate project cycle.

## US$70,000 RAISED

The third pillar is a fundraising target of US$70,000 to strengthen the club's capacity to implement its service agenda. The target reflects an understanding that sustainable community impact requires both financial commitment and the ability to mobilise external resources. The Rotary Foundation presents a significant opportunity in this regard. In Uganda, Rotary-supported projects have attracted substantial grant funding, multiplying the value of local contributions. For the Rotary Club of Kampala, the priority is to deepen community assessments, develop strong project proposals and position its initiatives to access available district and global grant opportunities. Members are therefore being encouraged to contribute to The Rotary Foundation, support ongoing initiatives such as the Little Hearts project, and work collectively to build a stronger culture of giving.

## A LEGACY OF SERVICE, A FUTURE OF IMPACT

As the club advances its Platinum Year, the 777 agenda provides a clear framework for turning ambition into action. Its success will depend on active membership, strategic partnerships, disciplined resource mobilisation and a shared commitment to delivering results.

For President Shem Nnaggenda Nsubuga and the Rotary Club of Kampala, the ultimate measure of this milestone is not simply the celebration of 70 years, but the lives transformed and communities strengthened in the years ahead.

Through the 777 agenda, the club is reaffirming that its legacy is not only something to honour, but something to build upon.

**"By collaborating with institutions, development partners and community leaders, the club aims to create interventions that deliver lasting benefits beyond the immediate project cycle."**

# Why Giving to The Rotary Foundation Matters: Fuelling Change in Gulu and Beyond



**These projects are not just one-off donations; they remain impactful, long-term interventions.**

**By Rtn Akademia Wandibba, RC Gulu**

Every year, our members generously support The Rotary Foundation (TRF). On the face of it, that contribution may seem like just another annual commitment. But it is much more than that. The Foundation gives the Rotary Club of Gulu a powerful way to turn local generosity into far-reaching change. A few hundred dollars raised here can grow through grants, matching funds, and partnerships into projects worth thousands, or even millions, with an impact felt around the community.

One of the most significant milestones in our club's journey this year came through the generosity of our member, also the District Governor, DG Gerald Obai. His commitment to service is matched by his unwavering belief in TRF. In September, he attained Major Donor status, a distinguished recognition earned through his sustained and substantial cumulative contributions to the Foundation over time. This achievement stands as a testament to his dedication to advancing Rotary's mission and creating lasting impact in communities around the world.

## WHERE WE'VE BEEN: THE PROOF IS IN OUR PAST

We don't have to look far to see the Foundation's compounding power in action. Over the years, our club has successfully leveraged Global Grants to bring massive projects to life. Through funds from the Foundation and other Rotary Clubs, RC Gulu has been able to implement projects to the tune of approximately $1,336,000 (over UGX 5.3 billion).

These projects are not just one-off donations; they remain impactful, long-term interventions. As a result, the impact of Rotary in action can be witnessed across Northern Uganda. Communities have benefited from clean water projects, health interventions, disease prevention campaigns, educational support, and livelihood initiatives. Because of the global grants from the funds of the Foundation, every dollar our members contribute is multiplied and maximised.

We see first-hand how localised efforts ripple outward to achieve a massive, wide-ranging reach. At the moment, our club is looking ahead to the next horizon. We have conducted comprehensive community needs assessments to identify the most critical, unaddressed gaps in our area. A needs assessment ensures we are not just making assumptions of what our community needs; it ensures we are listening directly to stakeholders, local leaders, and residents.

## WHY GIVING MATTERS

**As we bring our project ideas to life, how often do we pause to think about the support that makes them possible, or where the funding will come from? Do we ever wonder what we would do, or how many hopes might remain unrealised, if The Rotary Foundation were not there to help turn our vision into action?**

**These questions rarely cross our minds because we have grown accustomed to the quiet reassurance of knowing that the Foundation will be there, providing a vital avenue through which our ideas can attract support and become meaningful action.**

**Yet that confidence is made possible by the generosity of Rotarians who choose to give. Every contribution, whatever its size, helps sustain this remarkable avenue of hope and ensures that future projects can continue to change lives, strengthen communities, do good and create lasting change in the world.**

## WHY THE FOUNDATION IS OUR ESSENTIAL ENGINE

This is exactly where The Rotary Foundation becomes indispensable. Big community needs require big resources. When our club identifies the roadmap for our next project, the Foundation is the engine that helps us drive it forward to fruition. Through the Foundation's grant structure, we are assured of:

- The Financial Multiplier: The Foundation effectively turns our localised fundraising into massive capital. It is the only place where a relatively small club investment can join forces with international partners to fund large-scale, sustainable transformations.
- Credibility and Stewardship: Because the Rotary Foundation grants require strict community assessments and financial oversight, we can look our donors and members in the eye and guarantee that their money is being spent efficiently and transparently. The Four-star charity navigator rating, the highest possible distinction earned by Rotary International for 17 consecutive years, is evidence of credibility and stewardship.

## THE NEXT STEPS

When the time comes to fund projects, remember that your gift to The Rotary Foundation isn't just a donation; it is fuel for the engine that empowers your club to punch far above its weight class. Together, we will continue turning small contributions into life-changing, million-dollar realities.

If you have not yet begun contributing to TRF, make today the day you start. If you already give, do not stop there. As we approach November, The Rotary Foundation's designated month, renew your commitment, deepen your impact, and help Rotary ensure that even more dreams become realities and even more communities experience lasting change.




PP Victoria Kayaga Kiggundu makes remarks during the donation exercise

# From One Shared Computer to New Possibilities

## ISACA KAMPALA CHAPTER AND ROTARY KAMPALA EARLY BIRD SUPPORT ST JOHN BUJJO

**By Rtn Kadlah Nabakembo, RC Kampala Early Bird**

For 19-year-old Yasin Kabugo, studying ICT at St John Bujjo Senior School, Mpigi district, meant using a computer once a week for just 15 minutes. The school's only computer was old, kept in the library and shared by learners and teachers. Access had to be carefully managed; if it broke down, the entire school would lose its only computer.

In a class of 16, Yasin and fellow Senior Four candidate Ssebalamu Steven were the only two pursuing ICT, preparing for national examinations despite their limited opportunities to practice.

On 3 October 2026, their learning opportunities expanded when the Information Systems Audit and Control Association (ISACA) Kampala Chapter, in partnership with the Rotary Club of Kampala Early Bird, donated six computers, a three-in-one printer, scanner and photocopier, maintenance equipment, and an uninterruptible power supply (UPS) to the school.

The support builds on an existing Rotary commitment to the community through the Rotary 7 by 7 collaboration. Seven clubs began working together: Kampala Impala, Kira, Nsasa, Sonde, Kampala Morning Stars, Kampala Early Bird and Saturday E-Jazz. Their shared commitment provides the foundation on which partnerships such as this can continue to grow.

### DETERMINATION, 15 MINUTES AT A TIME

For Ssebalamu, choosing ICT was a decision driven by interest and encouragement from the headteacher, Miss Olivia Wanyana

"I chose to do ICT because I love it and I was encouraged by the HM, who tells me that I can make it no matter the limited access to a computer," he said. "But practical learning was difficult. Since it's a shared facility, I had to wait for my turn before I could do a practical lesson."

Yasin's enthusiasm was equally strong.

"ICT is in my blood," Yasin said. "Even if I were the only student, I know that I would still do it, with or without a computer. I have a big dream of developing a software company just like Ed Johnson, an American software developer whom I look up to."

Power interruptions further reduced their already limited practice time. During holidays, Yasin found another way to keep learning.

"At school I touch the computer once a week for 15 minutes. During holidays, I go to a friend who has a video library. He allows me to touch, and I use that as an opportunity to practice what I have learnt at school."




Inspiring the next generation: ISACA Kampala Chapter members share their experiences with St John Bujjo learners, encouraging them to pursue their education and believe in their potential to achieve their dreams



The new computers mean more opportunities to put classroom knowledge into practice.

"I'm happy for the new computers. We now have a chance to learn practical lessons with them without a hurry. I'm happy for the pupils in general because this is a big motivation for the ones in lower classes," Yasin said.

### OPENING OPPORTUNITIES FOR 197 CHILDREN

Although Yasin and Steven's experiences bring the need into sharp focus, the benefits extend across the school. The new equipment will support 74 secondary ICT learners: two in Senior Four, 12 in Senior Three, 25 in Senior Two and 35 in Senior One.

A further 123 children in Primary Five to Primary Seven will also access computers for the first time. For these younger learners, the laboratory offers an opportunity to begin developing digital skills early, while those in secondary school gain more time to practise what they learn in class.

### A PARTNERSHIP WITH ROOM TO GROW

The collaboration began with a letter from Victoria Kayaga Kiggundu during her tenure as President of the Rotary Club of Kampala Early Bird. She approached the ISACA Kampala Chapter about supporting the school, and the proposal aligned with the chapter's community service plans.

At the handover, ISACA representatives emphasised that the equipment should benefit both the school and the surrounding community.

"We pledge to give you all the support on how to use, maintain, and even give a refresher computer course to the two computer teachers so that the pupils can benefit."

Further support discussed included a fan or air conditioning, a larger uninterruptible power supply and a server, depending on how well the equipment is maintained and used.

# PRESIDENTS' RETREAT

**DG Gerald Obai hosted a Presidents' Retreat in Gulu City, which brought together Rotary Club Presidents and district leaders to reflect on achievements from the first 100 days of the Rotary year and renew their commitment to delivering greater impact in the months ahead. The retreat served as both a celebration of progress made and a rallying call for club leaders to accelerate action towards the district's ambitious goals.**


















# DG'S VISIT — RC KIWENDA









# DG'S VISIT — RC KABAROLE












# DG'S VISIT RC LUGOGO — MANGO TREE














# DG VISIT - RC KANYANYA











## ROTARY PARTNERSHIP WITH DAVIS & SHIRTLIFF














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