



# The Wave

September 2024

Ride The Tide



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Front line of  
Kiteezi Response



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100thDISCON

**Editor's Note:**

# Crisis Prevention Essential in Our Daily Lives



Rtn Joachim Buwembo  
RC Kampala Naalya

When the Kiteezi landfill crisis befell the country with the collapse of the garbage mountain that killed dozens of citizens on August 10th, our district leadership and RC Kiteezi moved swiftly to mobilize and boost the relief efforts. The other Rotary Clubs soon joined in the mobilization of resources to come to the help of the directly affected people, and the bereaved who camped on-site in the indefinite wait for the retrieval of the remains of their beloved ones. We salute all these truly commendable efforts.

In the spirit of Rotary, even after the mud settles, we shouldn't expect to return to business as usual. That would mean that another Kiteezi disaster would have to come in Katabi, Dundu and any other places that may be earmarked for Kampala's garbage dumping. With or without garbage handling projects, a waste management culture needs to be promoted in our society. While Rotarians may know

how to manage the waste generated in their homes and workplaces, the same cannot be said of the millions in the country.

As clubs continue with the efforts to support the response of the District and RC Kiteezi, we all need to be attentive to the direction from the District Governor and through the designated channels. But beyond that, Rotarians need to educate and update themselves on waste management at micro and community levels to be equipped to guide the communities around them on the basics of waste management, whose starting point is garbage sorting at household level.

Kiteezi means a place of ambush, but Rotary should not allow the country to be ambushed again for our people to be buried alive in such an undignified manner.

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## District Calender

# September 2024

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>01</b> DG official visit to RC Bulindo                                  | <b>12</b> DG visit to RC Mbale Metropolitan  |
| <b>03</b> DG visit to RC Sunrise Kampala<br>DG visit to RC Buloba          | <b>13</b> DG visit to RC Elgon Maisha        |
| <b>04</b> DG visit to RC Nansana   | <b>17</b> DG visit to RC Makindye            |
| <b>05</b> DG visit to RC Kampala<br>DG visit to RC Najjera                 | <b>18</b> DG visit to RC Kiwatule            |
| <b>06</b> DG visit to RC Kampala Morning Stars<br>DG visit to RC Kitukutwe | <b>19</b> DG visit to RC Ntinda Metropolitan |
| <b>10</b> DG visit to RC Mbale   | <b>20</b> DG visit to RC Kawempe             |
| <b>11</b> DG visit to RC Mbale City  | <b>21</b> DG visit to RC Kyambogo Kampala    |
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## Rotary International President's Message

# The Meaning of Family

Stephanie A. Urchick

*The magic of Rotary is belonging, and it's a feeling that can appear when you least expect it.*



Earlier this year, I was in Slovakia serving as a president's representative during a six-week trip through Europe. When I wrote to Katarina Cechova, governor of District 2240 at the time, I mentioned that my grandmother Veronica Zilka grew up in a small village in the area before settling in the U.S.

It wasn't long before Cechova tracked down my grandmother's village, Jakubova Vol'a. She even organized a visit for me, where I received an unforgettable Slovakian welcome. When I entered the community centre of Jakubova Vol'a, a small crowd of people dressed in traditional Slovakian clothing greeted me.

They sang with beautiful and powerful Central European voices that reminded me of my grandmother.

A lot of families play cards or games when they get together. When I was young, my father would pick up his accordion and lead my family in song. My grandmother would sing along with her impressive voice.

When I walked into the community centre and heard traditional music from my childhood — when I saw a woman play the accordion the way my dad played — I suddenly felt like a little girl sitting at my grandmother's house in Monessen, Pennsylvania. I burst into tears of joy at the memories.

But the magic didn't stop there. District Governor Cechova really outdid herself. A local genealogist worked with a videographer to make a short film about my grandmother. We watched the video together in the community centre. When the video ended, I turned around and saw a man standing in the back of the room. I quickly learned that this stranger, Frantisek Zilka, was my second cousin. His grandmother and mine had

been sisters. I felt like I had been struck by lightning.

I visited my newfound cousin's home, which happens to be the home where my grandmother was born. There, he shared old photographs I had never seen of my dad, my uncle, and my grandmother.

Since then, I can't stop thinking about my family of Rotary. When I refer to you as my family, I'm not just being kind. I really think of everyone in Rotary as my family. But I never would have imagined that my Rotary family would introduce me to long-lost personal family.

Sitting in that community centre listening to traditional Slovakian music from my childhood filled me with joy and a profound sense of belonging. I am so grateful to District Governor Cechova and everyone who helped create that magical experience.

As members of Rotary, we have a unique opportunity to share the same magic with each other and with the world. I encourage you to consider how you can help spread that magic and ensure other members of your club — other members of our Rotary family — feel like they truly belong.



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# ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

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## District Governor's Message

# What seeds are we sowing?

Anne Nkutu

During my recent visit to the Rotary Club of Mukono, I had the opportunity to hand over scholastic materials and desks to a school supported by the club. Later, while reviewing photos from the event, I noticed a particularly striking image: a young girl gazing at me with what seemed to be deep admiration. This moment triggered a memory of an experience from nearly twenty years ago.

Back then, a colleague and I were assigned to the mid-western region of Uganda to conduct focus group discussions with local community leaders. We were the only women in a room full of older men, and initially we were worried that they might dismiss us as just city girls, with little experience of real-world challenges. However, as the discussion on governance and social accountability progressed, we found ourselves engaged in a lively exchange.

When it was time to wrap up, we expected the usual polite remarks. Instead, one of the quieter men stood up and said, "Thank you, young ladies, for coming here today and teaching us so much. After watching and listening to you, I

have decided to keep my daughter in school and make sure she finishes her education. I would like her to be like you one day."

At that moment, the notes and data we had collected seemed insignificant compared to the impact we had made. Knowing that we had inspired a community where girls are often married off early was incredibly moving.

Reflecting on this, I realize that our influence in promoting basic education and literacy extends beyond tangible donations. While desks, books, and classrooms are crucial, our ability to inspire and shift mindsets is equally powerful. I am not sure what the little girl in Mukono admired about me, but I hope it was something positive. Perhaps she, too, dreams of becoming a woman of significance, one day.

As we commemorate the month of basic education and literacy, I would like to encourage you to reflect on how else you can use your influence to inspire and make a difference. For example, how are you engaging with school children to motivate and empower them to become better citizens and leaders with the desire to create a better society?



# ROTARY AT THE FRONT LINE OF THE KITEEZI TRAGEDY

By Staff Writer



**Prof Maria Goretti Nassali,  
President RC Kiteezi**

The Rotary Club of Kiteezi was barely a year old when it was thrust into the deep end of emergency action, on the frontline response to one of the worst disasters to hit the country in recent times. On August 10th 2024 the landfill that has been receiving half of the waste generated in Kampala collapsed and buried scores of people alive.

The president of RC Kiteezi, Professor Maria Goretti Nassali had had late engagements and retired late that Friday, waking up late on Saturday at 08.20 am. Checking her phone, she was struck by the numerous missed calls and as is her practice, started returning the calls. All of them had had the same fear, that she had perished in the tragedy that had struck an hour earlier. It is as well that she had had a good night's sleep, for she was just beginning

a month of operating on high adrenaline without enjoying a full rest, entering into September and still counting.

“I can appreciate all the callers’ concern about me, for anyone who hasn’t been here wouldn’t realize how big Kiteezi is, nor imagine the long distance between this place and the centre of the disaster,” she says.

She continues: “And as I was beginning to figure out how to act as the Rotary Club at the disaster front, I got the news that we had also been directly hit as Rotary through the bereavement of our senior Rotarian, Mukasa Kaddu of RC Kasangati who has nurtured our young club of Kiteezi from its conception, through birth up to its current development. His daughter-in-law, Ann Brendan Kawuki, had perished in the tragedy.”

Switching on the TV, she saw the news unfolding. Social media was also awash with the tragedy. Even as she started formulating her club’s response, the president got out to physically assess the situation.

“I found people wailing and in shock along a stretch of one kilometre directly affected by the collapse of the landfill.”

The rest of the day was a flurry of activity, calling her Rotarians and those of the parent club to action while at the same time linking up with the official disaster response agency, the Red Cross. sharing messages and images with the wider Rotary community, and visiting and condoling with the affected and the bereaved.

“Along the way, I got a call from the District Governor, Rtn Anne Nkutu,” she recalls. “It was really energizing sharing the situation on the ground with her and getting her suggestions on how to handle the emergency.”

As overall coordinators of emergency and disaster relief response, Red Cross assigned Rotary the coordination of all non-food relief. The sheltering of the survivors who had been rendered homeless was an immediate concern so the club started mobilizing and receiving blankets and mattresses to be used in the camp.

Senior Rotarian Francis Buwule turned over his Franciscan Angels Kindergarten to operate as the collection centre, and his family members provided labour handling the receiving and recording of donation items on a fulltime basis. Meanwhile, conditions at the survivors camp expectedly became an urgent concern especially in terms of sanitation. KCCA, as owners of the problem and also a key institutional player, alongside Rotary and Red Cross, provided mobile facilities and other logistics.

National security institutions acted professionally from the start, winning the Kiteezi president’s admiration and approval immediately. The army bridged up a trench that had been making the camp area inaccessible.

At the camp, Red Cross registration was streamlined on Day 2 as verification got underway, helped by the mobilization of local leaders -the Councilors from the affected areas. Suddenly, the number of claimants for shelter and food items fell drastically, though they kept rising as more people arrived from the homestead of extreme hazard who were compelled to leave.

At the camp, conditions have been improving steadily. Rotary has mobilized enough items including a large chest freezer to ensure all the comfort possible in the circumstances. The affected persons, accommodated in three large ventilated and well-lit tents (separate ones for males, females and mothers with new babies and very clean) are allowed to leave in the day to salvage their economic pursuits and return in the evening. Children are kept constantly busy with song and dance and there is so much laughter you would imagine all is well.

On the fourth Sunday after the tragedy struck, the president took The Wave team to the ground, enabling us to access the epicentre of the collapse, which is currently under heavy police and military guard. The now ghost settlement is a mix of low and high-cost homesteads. Though eye-opening and informative, our tour was quiet and uneventful. It was after sunset as we left, to start the uneventful drive back to the city.

The only curious thing happened as we left Kiteezi and saw trucks laden with garbage heading towards the valley of death. But we didn’t mind much about them, for trusting the integrity, vigilance and loyalty of our disciplined forces, we believed they would certainly be turned back without being allowed to deposit their stinking cargo when some bodies are yet to be recovered. But the nerve and irony!



# SOLID WASTE DILEMMA: A CASE OF KITEEZI LANDFILL

By Rtn. Ernest Kusiima,  
Past President – RC Kiwatule,  
District Focus Area Champion – Environment

## Opportunities for Rotary

### 1. short term

In the relief phase, possible interventions included evacuations, establishing relief centres, and providing temporary shelter and first aid. Relief can also include counselling and other support services. Relief is significant because engaging with the impacted community at a time when people are most at risk is critical.

Special thanks to the Rotary Club of Kiteezi which has spearheaded and coordinated support efforts of all Rotary Clubs.

### 2. long-term

“Proper management of waste is crucial to the achievement of a clean and healthy environment and, as such, obliges respect for the waste management hierarchy. Viewed in this way, proper waste management is a key component of the circular economy, requiring the use of circulative resources in the production chain as well as minimising waste generation and disposal.” (NEMA Landfills Guidelines, 2020)

Well-engineered landfills include a weighbridge with data capture linked to the head office to enable instant tracking of the quantity of waste coming into the site. Leachate collection and treatment prevent it from leaking into the soil and polluting the surrounding environment. In addition, the country needs to undertake a significant reforestation project in the buffer zone surrounding all

landfill sites.

Waste-to-energy initiatives: Globally, two of the most common strategies for WtE initiatives are burning waste in incinerators to generate energy and landfill gas recovery systems. The Reppie incineration plant in Ethiopia generates 25MW a day from 2000 tonnes of waste.

Another intervention is the establishment of a monitoring and early warning system to detect any signs of instability in landfill sites. This would involve regular inspections, testing of gas emissions, and the implementation of safety measures to protect nearby communities.

3. other unique projects for Rotary clubs to reduce plastic waste

a) Plastic-Free Office Challenge: encourage businesses and offices to eliminate single-use plastics. Provide alternatives such as reusable utensils, cups, and containers. Implement a rewards system for employees who consistently use reusable items. Impact: Reduces plastic waste and promotes a culture of sustainability in the workplace.

b) Community Refill Stations: Reduce plastic bottle usage by providing accessible refill stations/ refillable bottles. Organize events to distribute reusable bottles to community members. Impact: Decreases the reliance on single-use plastic bottles and encourages reusable practices.

c) Plastic Waste to Art:

Raise awareness and repurpose plastic waste creatively. Organize community art projects using collected plastic waste. Display the artwork in public spaces to educate and inspire the community.

Impact: Transforms waste into art, raising awareness about plastic pollution and promoting recycling.

d) Eco-Bricks Initiative:

Utilize plastic waste to create building materials. Collect non-recyclable plastic waste and teach the community how to make eco-bricks for community projects such as building benches, planters, or small structures.

Partner with schools and organizations to incorporate eco-bricks into their construction projects.

Impact: Provides a practical use for non-recyclable plastics and supports community-building projects.

e) Plastic-Free Events:

Organize large events without the use of single-use plastics. Implement zero-waste strategies at community events, festivals, and fairs. Encourage regular community clean-ups (bulungi bwansi).

Provide reusable or compostable alternatives for food and drink containers. Impact: Demonstrates the feasibility of plastic-free events and sets a standard for future gatherings.

f) Collection system: litter bins at Markets, Schools, Bus-Stops, Stations - Railways, Bus and Airports

g) Distribute Awareness Flyers

# ‘The mountain has gone!’

By Rtn Theo Mukasa Kaddu

**O**n Saturday, August 10th I was woken up by our gardener with the announcement, “The mountain is gone!”

I quickly looked out of the window and indeed, the towering garbage heap that has been the growing landmark of the Kiteezi landscape was missing, or most of it. Where its peak had stood was instead a pillar of fumes connecting right up to the clouds in the sky.

To say that it was baffling is an understatement, especially to us older residents who have seen it growing from the valley where it occupies 34 acres. And gone with it, as I was to learn painfully in a few minutes, was my loving daughter-in-law, alongside a big number of other victims who had been buried alive when it toppled over.

My mind flashed back to that day in 1996 when Kampala City Council officials came to address us about their decision to dispose of garbage from the city, after acquiring five acres here. When they mentioned the price at which they had bought the 5 acres, far above the market price, people who owned land in the neighbourhood immediately started offering to sell. By the end of the meeting, they had closed deals for another 25 acres for a total of 30 acres, and a few days later another four acres had been offered to make 34.

For nearly 28 years, we have seen the

valley fill as trucks bring waste daily and earthmovers compact it with marram to allow more to be brought in. The last I had seen the so-called ‘mountain’ hours earlier before retiring to bed, its top measured about two acres wide, many metres above its 34-acre base. Over time it has grown from the valley, reached ground level as garbage got compacted, marram was added and further compacted. It is a mystery how, with all that compaction, the landfill ‘mountain’ toppled over just like that.

My recollection was interrupted by a call that my son’s family had been buried in their house. We knew for certain that there were five people at home, my daughter-in-law, Ann Brendan Kawuki with her house help, and three of her children, as the fourth and eldest girl was still at boarding school. My son, Dr Robert Kawuki, to whom Brendan has been married since 2014, had already left for work when the tragedy happened.

So we got into action and brought in an earth mover. The four children were pulled out of the garbage and rushed to hospital. Miraculously, they had been outside in the compound that early morning, surprising

for children on their first Saturday of school holidays. But their mother and her help were buried in the house, a storied house by the way, and had been calling for help on the phone.

We commandeered a bigger earthmover to speed up the rescue operation. But at 10.00 am, their phone went silent running out of battery as they too ran out of oxygen. They were also baking in the heat.

Brendan had kept talking to her sisters for some four hours, praying that something be done to get them out. I didn’t get to talk to her as I was busy pursuing the logistics. Later in the afternoon, the two were finally found, dead, in a praying position. Their skins had peeled off, apparently from the heat.

Surprisingly, their house was quite a distance from the epicentre of the collapse, showing how far the falling garbage moved. In all, three villages of Kiteetikka, Lusanja and Kiteezi were affected.

I thank all the Rotarians who condoled with me and have been checking on us since the tragedy struck.



# BELEP

## The past, The Present, The Future

**Fredrick Kitakule**  
**CHAIRPERSON – BASIC EDUCATION & LITERACY**  
**ROTARY DISTRICT 9213**

Inspired by the Magic of Rotary and with the intention of consolidating Rotarians efforts in doing good to make the world a better place for all humans in a sustainable and impactful way, Rotary District 9213 continues to join the Rotary Fraternity in implementing impactful projects under the Basic Education and Literacy Focus Area.

During the Rotary Year, 2022 / 2023, Rotary District 9213 focused its activities more on Basic Education and Literacy Enhancement Program (BELEP) under the theme “Make Reading A Way of life”. This aimed at nurturing a reading culture among children, parents, teachers, and the public for literacy skills and improve learning outcomes and standard of living across Uganda.

Rotary District 9213 in partnership with other Development Partners in the Education sector launched a mega Basic Education & Literacy Enhancement Program (BELEP) on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022 at Fair Way Hotel that seeks to address the following concerns in Basic Education:

- Enhance Children’s Literacy skills while at home and at school
- Retooling teachers to competently manage Basic Education and Literacy initiatives.
- Increasing the number of children

- joining and successfully completing school
- Enhance community awareness on Early Childhood Care and Education through awareness generation programmes.
- Provide quality integrated BELEP services for children and their parents while at school and at home.

BELEP program was launched with the **D.E.A.R (Drop Everything and Read)** day on 1st July 2022 at exactly 11:00 a.m. This has become a custom and Rotarians continue to participate and is run this every year. People across Uganda *drop everything and read* wherever they are, be it at workplaces, in classrooms, in libraries, or at home.

Across the country over **80 Rotary Clubs, 250 schools and 35,000 learners** are being reached. They have been provided with readers like books, newspapers, and journals, schools, libraries etc have been constructed to mention but a few. What a magical and wonderful initiative! In the spirit of consolidating, sustaining the impact of BELEP as called upon upon by DG Anne Nkutu, Rotarians through their Rotary clubs have continued to engage, support over 250 schools, Over 1,000 Teachers to make reading a way of life not as a onetime, but rather long term and sustainable intervention.

*“Drop Everything and Read Day, or DEAR Day in short, will always not only be a celebration of reading in schools, communities; but also*

*a celebration of our thirst for knowledge and learning. It will also always be a celebration of the power of the written word to transport us to other worlds without ever leaving our homes; to help us forge connections with people we have never met; and open our eyes to the wonders of the world around us.” This Rotary Years’ D.E.A.R DAY will be on the 15th March 2025.*

As encouraged by DG Anne Nkutu, Rotarians across Uganda have continued to invest in strengthening Uganda’s Education system and improving education outcomes for Uganda. Why do we do this? Because not only is Basic Education & Literacy one of the Seven areas of focus of Rotary International but also because Rotary District 9213 strongly believes that Uganda’s greatest resource is its people and by investing in them at an early stage will help to promote a healthier and more prosperous future. Remember 78% of Ugandans are youth and children.

Update on the implementation Basic & Literacy GG GG2344843 at Butiti Girls Primary Schoos in Kyenjojo District as of August 2024.

At the core of Basic Education & Literacy is reading. Reading is the root of all learning, and evidence shows that when children acquire reading skills early in Early Childhood Development Education and primary school, their chances of succeeding over their lifespan improve. This is because it is scientifically proven that 90% of any human brains develops between the ages of 0 – 5 years.

Students with strong foundational reading skills are less likely to drop out of school. They increase their long-term academic achievement, which in turn contributes to greater economic productivity and positive social participation. Therefore, Rotary District 9213 seeks to support children’s early grade reading programs, improving literacy rates.

Basic Education and Literacy continues to be a fulcrum around which interventions across all the

Seven areas of focus of Maternal & Child Health, Community Economic Empowerment, Water and Sanitation, Environmental Protection, Disease treatment and prevention, Peace and Conflict resolution will be undertaken.

In the spirit of consolidation, Sustainability for greater impact. The 7 X 7 Model continues to be a strategy where at least 7 Rotary Clubs come together and implement projects across the 7 areas of focus to enhance Basic Education and Literacy. Special recognition is given to clubs that have embraced this strategy to consolidate impactful Basic Education and Literacy projects and programs for sustainability and impact.

Education and Literacy being critical to Uganda’s future, we are glad that we are joined other partners like U.S. Peace Corps, Ministry of Education and Sports, the Kampala City Council Authority, Enjuba Spelling Bee, Rotary Uganda, Deaf Link Uganda to ensure there is Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and all the educators and civil society organizations who are supporting this great national effort. With Rotary Uganda’s intervention D.E.A.R Day has never and will never be the same again. Look out for this Rotary Years Day on the 15th March 2025. Plan and prepare to buy your reading kit to make reading a way of life!!

Fellow Rotarians, Rotaractors, Interactors, students, teachers, local leaders in the communities, central and local government officials, parents and guardians, and all Ugandans: Please join us as we embark on the journey of mobilization and sensitization of parents and guardians to not only embrace Basic Education & Literacy but also support our children to access Basic Education, Empower Basic Education Teachers to deliver Quality Basic Education, Enhancing the learning environments for our children among others





# Rotary meets Buganda

On the 24th of July, 2024, the District Governor, Anne Nkutu, led a team of Rotarians to pay a courtesy call on the Katikkiro of Buganda, Owk. Peter Mayiga, at the kingdom headquarters in Bulange. They discussed matters of mutual concern, including the kingdom's flagship campaign, Ekibira kya Kabaka, which encourages citizens to plant trees.



## PDG

# Stephen Mwanje, The Godfather of the Rotary Cancer Programme.

By Rtn Denis Jjuuko  
Past President RC Kampala Naalya

A little over 13 years ago, Stephen Mwanje received the devastating news of the death of one of his closest friends. The death wasn't sudden. The friend fell sick and sought professional medical help but could not get all the help he needed. Some services were and are not available in Uganda. And he died. Devastating, isn't it?

But Mwanje, a Past District Governor (PDG) of Rotary, is built differently. And leaning to his Kiganda culture where people don't sleep by the graveside after losing a loved one, he looked for a solution. But what solution do you find for the dead? They are dead already.

With inspiration from his departed friend, he invited a few friends for breakfast at the Serena Kampala Hotel. He informed them of the death of his friend of cancer, taking them through the devastating challenges he had gone through while searching for the elusive and very expensive medical care.

Many of his friends at the table couldn't fully enjoy their breakfast. They too had lost close ones to the same disease. Being diagnosed with cancer in Uganda is a more final verdict than a death sentence, which can be appealed against or reversed by presidential parole. Cancer in Uganda? A chance for parole is as rare as snow in the desert.

Anyway, by the time the breakfast was adjourned, they had bought into

PDG Mwanje's vision of taking cancer heads on. Taking on cancer seemed similar to moving Rwenzori Mountain, a daunting task. But despair is not part of PDG Mwanje's DNA. An initiative, the Uganda Rotary Cancer Program, was born with himself at the helm. The program would give birth to the now famous annual Rotary Cancer Run as its fundraising vehicle.

“

**Taking on cancer seemed similar to moving Rwenzori Mountain, a daunting task. But despair is not part of PDG Mwanje's DNA.**

For the 13th time this year, because of PDG Mwanje's visionary leadership, thousands of Ugandans woke up to participate in a charity event that raises money to fight cancer across the country and in major cities all over the world. Over the years, the run has mobilized resources that led to the construction of the first phase of the Rotary Cancer Centre at

Nsambya Hospital in Kampala. A 36-bed facility is fully operational albeit without all the necessary equipment.

For any other person, the construction of a 36-bed facility would have been the end. The pinnacle of success. Not for PDG Mwanje. The country at the time didn't have linear accelerators (even today, there are only 3 in the whole country). So he embarked on yet another arduous journey to construct a fully-fledged cancer diagnosis and treatment centre. Currently, bunkers for the linear accelerators are being constructed. The next phase will be to equip the centre.

Of course, as a Rotary trailblazer, Stephen Mwanje hasn't done only the Rotary Cancer Run. He has supported numerous causes and served on countless committees, not just in our district or country, but at the international level. He has mentored many future leaders who have gone to serve Rotary at the highest level in our district, as well as in their professional careers. And he has sacrificed a lot of his resources to his beloved Rotary Club of Mukono and the Rotary Foundation. But the cancer program remains the one that makes everyone bow their head. It is Mwanje's determination and inspiration that sees about 50,000 people run against cancer year in year out. A true Rotary trailblazer per excellence.



# Building Global Connections and Enhancing Community Impact

By Peter Odoki,  
RC Kiwatule

Rotary International has a long-standing tradition of fostering service above self, promoting peace, and encouraging high ethical standards in all vocations. One of the most dynamic aspects of Rotary is its Fellowship program, which provides Rotarians with opportunities to connect with others who share common interests, hobbies, or professions. Rotary Fellowships have played a pivotal role in strengthening the bonds among members and amplifying their impact on both local and global communities.

## The Essence of Rotary Fellowships

Rotary Fellowships are groups of Rotarians, Rotaractors, and their family members who connect based on shared interests, professional backgrounds, or recreational activities. These fellowships operate independently of Rotary clubs and are open to anyone interested, not just Rotarians. They are global by nature, offering members the chance to connect with like-minded individuals across the world, thereby expanding their networks and broadening their horizons.

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**Whether through learning new skills, engaging in community service, or simply enjoying the camaraderie of fellow Rotarians, members find that their fellowship involvement enriches their lives in meaningful ways.**

The diversity of Rotary Fellowships is vast, covering everything from cycling and wine appreciation to IT and health professionals. These groups not only provide a platform for members to pursue their passions, but also encourage them to use their skills and interests in service to others. This dual focus on fellowship and service is what makes Rotary Fellowships unique.

## Rotary Fellowships in Uganda

Some of the Fellowships in Uganda are Empowering women, Campers, Bikers, Rotary Means Business, Healthcare Professionals, Book lovers, Dancers, Vintage & Collectibles, Marine and Comedy & Laughter. A planned one is Fitness & Wellness.

The Rotary Fellowship of Fitness & Wellness seeks to encourage people to embrace regular exercise routines in their lives. Uganda, like many countries, faces significant healthcare challenges, and this Fellowship hopes to bring together exercise, fitness and wellness enthusiasts to address these issues. Members collaborate on initiatives such as medical camps, health education programs, aerobics, wellness workshops, Nutrition talks and healthy potlucks.

## Impact and Benefits of Rotary Fellowships

The impact of Rotary Fellowships in District 9213 extends beyond the immediate benefits to members. These fellowships foster a sense of global citizenship, as members connect with Rotarians from other parts of the world who share their interests. This global perspective is

invaluable, as it exposes members to new ideas and approaches that can be applied to local challenges.

Moreover, Fellowships enhance the overall Rotary experience by providing members with opportunities for personal growth and development. Whether through learning new skills, engaging in community service, or simply enjoying the camaraderie of fellow Rotarians, members find that their fellowship involvement enriches their lives in meaningful ways.

## Conclusion

Rotary Fellowships exemplify the spirit of Rotary: connecting people, fostering service, and building goodwill. Through these Fellowships, Rotarians in the district have formed lasting friendships, expanded their professional networks, and made significant contributions to their communities. As Rotary continues to evolve, the role of Fellowships will remain crucial in ensuring that members find both personal fulfilment and opportunities to make a difference in the world.



The Rotary Ruby Fellowship for Africa is up and running

# My Life-Changing Experience at RYLA

By Musimire Martha Katureebe, Rac Bweyogerere-Namboole  
RYLA Alumni 2023 (Building Resilience)

I honestly didn't know what to expect when I arrived at the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) camp, but what I experienced was truly transformative. The entire journey was a whirlwind of emotions, challenges, and growth.

One of the most memorable moments for me was the Forest Valley challenge. Our group was tasked with navigating a tunnel, which seemed a daunting task at first. But with teamwork, communication, and perseverance, we overcame the obstacle. This experience taught me the value of collaboration and trust in achieving a common goal.

The camp emphasised the importance

of leadership, and I learned that true leaders are exemplary, listen to their subordinates, and prioritise resilience. These lessons resonated deeply with me, and I realised that effective leadership is not about authority but about empowering others.

Rotarian PAG David's message about character being the foundation for everything struck a chord with me. It made me reflect on my values and the importance of integrity, honesty, and compassion.

RYLA has had a profound impact on my life. It made me stronger, more confident and more resilient. I learned to face challenges head-

on, push myself out of my comfort zone, and strive for excellence. The experience taught me that with determination and hard work, I can achieve my goals.

In conclusion, RYLA was a life-changing experience that exceeded my expectations. It equipped me with valuable skills, insights, and friendships that I will cherish forever. I am grateful for the opportunity to have been a part of this incredible journey and look forward to applying the lessons I learned to make a positive impact in my community.



*Pitching tents at the RYLA camp*



*Lessons in team work were taught at the RYLA camp*



# 2.5 billion Shillings Raised from Rotary Cancer Run 2024

By Rtn Sylvia Nankya,  
Rotary Club of Kampala Naalya

Up to sh2.5bn was raised from the 13th edition of the Rotary Cancer Run, held on Sunday August 2024, in Kampala and towns across Uganda. This is the biggest collection in the Rotary Cancer Run's history.

The run was initiated in 2012 as part of what many thought was an ambitious project to build a ward to provide specialist cancer treatment, the second-leading cause of death worldwide. However, many cancer patients in Uganda never receive treatment due to the poor socioeconomic status of the patients, inadequate infrastructure for cancer care, and inefficiencies in the health care system.

The Uganda Cancer Institute (UCI), the country's only comprehensive cancer treatment centre, registers about 4,000 out of the 35,000 new cancer patients recorded annually. This is the basis upon which the run was conceived, and over the years, it has become an increasingly popular event on the calendar. Families run for their relatives who are battling cancer, others remember those who lost the battle, and many join the run for fun or to support the cause.

This year, the run attracted more than 53,000 participants over three races: 5km, 10km, and 21km. Many of them, young and old, walked through the areas of Kololo and Naguru through a route that Gutsy Running Club mapped out.

At the park, another group enjoyed aerobics, Zumba, and spinning, which complemented the run in a powerful display of unity, hope, and resilience in the fight against cancer. More fun came with the arrival of Kickboxer Moses Golola.

Held under the theme 'Spread Magic in Every Step', which was drawn from the Magic of Rotary theme set by Rotary International President Stephanie Urchick, the run attracted the participation of a large group of Kenyan Rotarians, Rotary in Uganda is the real deal to them.

Other highlights included a raffle in which Hilder Robinah Namuddu, a fifth-year Medical Student at Makerere University, won a land title from Bakaima Group.

Rtn. Michael Niyitegeka, the Rotary Cancer Run 2024 Chair, observed that the event was an amazing experience. He says that although the Run aimed at raising sh4bn this year, the collection of sh2.5bn significantly boosted the sh13.8bn required for the entire project.

Key contributions towards the cause included sh1b from the Parliament of Uganda, Centenary Bank (sh300m) and Krystal Natural Mineral Water (sh200m). Additional contributions came from Platinum Credit (sh10m), Uganda Electricity Transmission Company Limited (sh10m), Uganda Insurers Association (sh6m), Uganda Development Corporation (sh5.75m), and Bakaima Properties (Land Title). Next Media Services and New Vision were also on board, with extensive coverage and promotion of the run through their platforms.

At its inception in 2012 the run generated sh68m, followed by sh94m in 2013 and sh118m in 2014. Collections from the three years of 2012, 2013, and 2014 were used to

construct the Rotary Centenary Bank Cancer Centre in St Francis' Hospital, Nsambya.

In 2015 sh288m were collected, sh200m of which was used to construct the Rotary Blood Bank in Mengo Hospital. The money raised in subsequent years up to 2021 was used to construct phase 1A of the Radiotherapy Centre.

The Program has also commenced the construction of two bunkers that will house the two Linear Accelerators for cancer testing and treatment. Past District Governor Stephen Mwanje, the brain behind the run, is optimistic that the Cancer Centre will revolutionise cancer care in Uganda and provide access to life-saving treatments for countless patients.

## Key Cancer Facts

- Cancer is the second-leading cause of death worldwide.
- 10 million people die from cancer every year.
- More than 40% of cancer-related deaths could be preventable as they are linked to modifiable risk factors such as smoking, alcohol use, poor diet and physical inactivity.
- Almost one-third of all deaths related to cancer could be prevented through routine screening and early detection and treatment.
- 70% of cancer deaths occur in low-to-middle-income countries.
- Millions of lives could be saved each year by implementing resource-appropriate strategies for prevention, early detection and treatment.
- The total annual economic cost of cancer is estimated at US\$1.16 trillion.



Sarah Babirye (middle) was the last place finisher over 21km at the Cancer Run

# SARAH BABIRYE

## THE LAST FINISHER

By: Brian Alex Kiira,  
GUTSY Bunch runner

If you've been around Kampala long enough, you've probably spotted a group of runners on various roads every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. And if you participated in the 2024 Rotary Cancer Run, you saw them clad in reflector jackets, directing the enthusiastic mass of runners to the finish point.

The name you are looking for is GUTSY Bunch. We are a club of recreational runners based in Naalya and we had the enviable honour of being the 2024 Rotary Cancer Run's official route partners. The satisfaction of the day's duties was written more in the individual stories of those who hit the tarmac with their souls, carrying testimonies that would've otherwise been drowned in the sea of excitement.

One such story Sarah Babirye's, the last participant to cross the finish line. Sarah's story exemplifies our club's spirit – determination and courage –

and exhibits the power of selfless efforts in spreading magic. She had never thought she could walk a half marathon (21km) through pins and needles of pain due to her longstanding plantar fasciitis condition. You could see the subtle limp in her gait, and on several counts, she contemplated giving up. But something kept her going. One was sheer conviction that she was too close to give up.

“At every turn I met a group of marshals who cheered me on with their vuvuzelas and told me I was almost there,” Babirye said. “So, I kept going. When everyone was long gone and I was informed that I was the last participant, I urged them to move ahead so that I didn't slow them down. They insisted and assured me that they wouldn't leave me behind. We walked, talked and laughed. The route was well-marked. There was plenty of water and the ambulance kept passing by to ensure that all was well. The welcome I received at the finish line left me on cloud nine. GUTSY made me feel special. I will never forget this experience.”

Sarah talks of the redemptive power of exercise. By exercising, she's steadily reduced her weight, conquered diabetes, and is well on her way out of high blood pressure. There is indeed magic in every step.

As the GUTSY Bunch, we are proud and grateful to have contributed to the experience of the 53,000 participants who came out for a worthy cause. A cause meant to raise money to create awareness and access to cheap and better medical care for those battling cancer. Your contribution to the collected 2.5 billion Ugandan shillings is appreciated.

Ours is the business of running. Whether your objective is to grow into a formidable recreational runner, improve your health, or simply discover Kampala on your feet, you'll find yourself at home with us. We Run. Live. Laugh. Follow us on X @gutsybunch to join or participate in our activities.





# VOYAGE DOWN THE RIVER NILE

By Rtn Kalungi Kabuye

**Y**ou know that saying, ‘if I knew then what I know now’? If I did, I would have gladly camped in the Murchison Falls National Park in 2006. To date, I’ve camped on mountains, in forests, and pitched a tent during a heavy downpour in the middle of the night in a place with no electricity.

But in 2006 the idea of camping, let alone in the middle of a national park, terrified me. But I love road trips, so I jumped at the idea when Tony Glencross, then working with the New Vision, suggested I accompany him and his wife on a voyage down the River Nile.

A ‘voyage down the Nile’ sounded like something Ernest Hemmingway would do, so I was all in for it. Till he mentioned in passing that we would be camping. Camping in the national park? With all the lions, elephants, buffaloes and God knows what other animals lurking around? But it was too late to pull out, and I didn’t want to come across

as a cowardly cat.

The plan was to drive to Paraa, leave the car there, and then get on a boat run by Tony’s friend. We would then sail leisurely down the Nile, camping for two nights, and return on the third day.

But we were delayed by traffic and got to Paraa late in the afternoon. It also seemed there were issues with the boat, so we stayed the night at the UWA camp. This meant we could camp for only one night in the park, which was fine by me.

The next morning we got onto the boat named Madi Gras (nothing to do with the jazz carnival of New Orleans, but a phrase in the Madi language). This would be our ‘ship’ for the voyage over the next two days. Cooking would be done on the boat, and there was a ‘bathroom’ at the back, with the bottom open to the water below. It was weird feeling using it, and I think I ‘went to the bathroom’ only once in the two days.

So, with a UWA ranger doubling as a guide, we set off. Usually, visitors take the trip to the falls, which is upstream,

so I’d never been downstream before, which was quite a revelation. From the ferry crossing at Paraa, the river widens and the current is not as strong, so it was a leisurely journey.

First impression I got was the number of hippos, they seemed to be everywhere. Could they upend the boat, I asked the ranger? Nah, he said. The boat was much bigger than them, and unless it was a direct confrontation they would stay away. This came to life in the evening when we camped along what appeared to be a hippo path, but more on that later.

There were elephants, more hippos, and more crocodiles than I’ve ever seen, mostly basking on the shores with their mouths open. The ranger explained that they do that (open their mouths) to cool down because their skins are very thick.

Eventually, as we approached the point where the river enters lake Albert, we came to our camping ground, which was really just a clearing on the banks of the Nile. There seemed to be paths leading up to the river, so I thought we had come to a village within the park. On inquiry where the villagers were, the ranger explained that the tracks were made by hippos leaving the river to graze on land, which they usually do at night.

That didn’t bother me, at first; I was more concerned with pitching tents in the bush, and

how the animals would be kept away. I was assured that a ring of lanterns around the camp would keep the animals at bay at night.

Even when all the lanterns were lit and made a nice circle around the camp, I was not convinced, and decided I would sleep on the boat. Unfortunately, I did not sleep a wink. It turned out a male hippo did not like it that we had camped where he came on shore to graze, and made his displeasure known very loudly.

Hippos are some of the most short-tempered and vicious animals in the world, and the ranger said it seemed to be an alpha male who was extremely unhappy at our camping ground. That hippo made noise the whole night, and any minute I expected the boat to either be bitten into two, or overturned by that very angry alpha male hippo. He only let off towards morning.

Next day the owner of the boat wanted us to go into Lake Albert proper, where we could see lions. But to do that we had to go past about a dozen hippos lounging in the shallow waters of the Albert delta where the Nile splits into several branches. But we all vetoed that idea, and made our way back upstream. It was a very glad team that got to Paraa later that morning, and thence the drive back to Kampala, and civilisation.



Setting up camp at Camp Shareen, 36 kilometers down the River Nile in the Murchison Falls National Park.



## Firing up the Rotary Spirit with Song and Story, RCKN Style

By Rtn Younis Sebagala  
Public Image Chair - Rotary Club of Kampala North

The Rotary Club of Kampala North chose to celebrate their 36th Charter anniversary in style, by holding a special fellowship on the eve that combined the joy of music and the art of storytelling. This event, themed 'Each one Bring Two Karaoke Fellowship', served not only as a kasiki celebration of the club's 36 years of dedicated service to humanity, but also as an opportunity to deepen the bonds among members and guests of the club.

Members took turns at the microphone to sing their favorite songs, as a mixed menu of memorable classics and contemporary hits got everyone on their feet. Stories told by Past Presidents, new Rotarians and guests about their Rotary experiences and moments that defined their journeys of service were more than just anecdotes; they were a testament to the power of Rotary in changing lives and making the world a better place.

Such was the prelude to the club's 36th Charter Celebration in Busunju at the Sam Otori Rotary Vijana Poa Village, a milestone marking over three decades of unwavering commitment to Rotary's ideals of service above self.

The Rotary Club of Kampala North has a rich history of impactful projects, from health initiatives and educational programs to environmental conservation efforts and community development.

The fellowship was also an outreach opportunity. By inviting friends, family, and potential new members to join in the club showcased the vibrant and welcoming culture of Rotary. It was a chance to demonstrate that Rotary is not just about meetings and projects, but also about

building meaningful relationships and having fun together.

Looking ahead, the Storytelling and Karaoke Fellowship served as a reminder of what makes Rotary special: people, stories, and shared commitment to making a difference. It was a celebration of the past, a reflection on the present, and a look forward to the future where the club continues to grow, serve, and inspire.

This fellowship was thus more than an evening of fun; it was a testament to the enduring spirit of Rotary, a promise that the club will continue to serve humanity with the same passion and dedication that has defined its journey for 36 years.







# BENEFITS OF REGULAR WALKING FOR A WORKING POPULATION

By Rtn. Coach Bob Ssebugwawo,  
RC Kampala Central, District 9213 Fitness Team Leader.

In the history of mankind walking has been proven to be one of the great physical exercise that can help all of us to improve and maintain our overall health. Modern medical science consistently urges everyone in a busy work environment to adopt and sustain walking as a regular physical activity.

Engaging in a brisk walk of 30 minutes every day can hugely increase our cardiovascular fitness, strengthen bones, reduce excess body fat and boost muscle power and endurance. Walking can also help us to reduce our risks of developing conditions such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers. Walking is indeed good for our health.

Walking is free and doesn't require any special equipment or training. It is an ideal physical activity that doesn't have to be vigorous or done for long periods to improve our health. Walking can practically improve our fitness levels significantly. It is an enjoyable social activity recommended for all of us human beings.

Walking requires minimal equipment, can be done at any time of day and can be performed at your own pace. We can get out and walk without worrying about the risks associated with more vigorous forms of exercise. Walking is also a great form of physical activity for people who are overweight, elderly or who have not exercised in a long time.

Walking for fun and fitness isn't limited to strolling by ourselves around local neighbourhood settings, there are various venues and strategies we can use to make walking an enjoyable and social part of our

lifestyles.

Walking is a physical activity we can incorporate into our lives starting with regular small periods of 10 minutes three times per day, and gradually building up to longer sessions. However, if our goal is to lose weight, we will need to do physical activity for longer than 30 minutes each day. We can still achieve this by starting with smaller bouts of activity throughout the day and increasing these as our fitness improves.

Walking is a physical activity that can be sustained into our daily lifestyle plan and is also one of the most effective ways to assist with weight loss and keeping weight off once it's lost.

Some suggestions to build walking into our daily routine include:

- Take stairs instead of the lift (for at least part of the way)
- Walk to work or home
- Walk within the city
- Walk within the home courtyard

We must make walking part of our daily routine; for example, we can try to walk at the same time each day. Remember we use the same amount of energy, no matter what time of day we walk so we can do what is most convenient for us. We may find that asking someone to walk with us will help make it a regular activity. We can resolve to keep an activity diary or log also makes it easier.

We must drink plenty of fluids before and after our walking routines.



# RC Kampala Impala’s Game-Changing Project on Financial Empowerment of Women in Markets

By Hajji Isa Bukenya,  
P.E Kampala Impala

On August 1st, RC Kampala Impala didn’t just hold an event—they kicked off a revolution! With a clear focus on financial empowerment for women and vital health services, the club’s signature project at Nakawa Market was nothing short of groundbreaking. And trust us, when Impalas are on a mission, they don’t just walk, they sprint!

### Empowering Women, One Training at a Time

In collaboration with powerhouses like FINCA Uganda, RC Kampala Kibuli, Dr. Agarwal’s Eye Hospital, Marvine Pharmaceuticals, Icon Medical Centre, KCCA, and Ajanta Pharmacy,

RC Kampala Impala set out to transform the lives of 100 incredible women from Nakawa Market. These ladies, many of whom are single mothers and the pillars of their families, embarked on a month-long journey of financial, business, and life skills training. We did not just give them fish, we taught them how to run the whole fish market!

### Health and Hope for Hundreds

But that’s not all. The event wasn’t just about financial empowerment, it was also about making sure the community was healthy enough to enjoy their newfound knowledge. With a medical camp that served 610 people, Nakawa

Market became a hub of health and healing. From eye check-ups to malaria treatment, the local community received top-notch care free of charge! And as if that wasn’t enough, the blood donation drive collected 41 units of blood, potentially saving up to 123 lives. Talk about making an impact!

### Rotary Royalty and the Road Ahead

The occasion was honoured by the presence of District Governor Ann Nkutu, alongside Rotary Past District Governors Mike Ssebalu and Steven Mwanje. Their attendance was a clear signal that RC Kampala Impala is making waves in the Rotary world. This project is a shining example of our ‘Make Impala Great Again’ (MIGA) initiative, and it’s only the beginning.

### And Now, Drumroll for the Next Act

As the dust settles at Nakawa Market, we’re already gearing up for the next big thing. We’re pumped, and you should be too! This project at Nakawa Market is just the first chapter in what promises to be a year full of impactful initiatives.

So stay tuned, because when RC Kampala Impala is on the move, you’ll want to be part of the journey. After all, who doesn’t love an Impala on a mission?

Let’s Make Impala Great Again—One Project at a Time!



# RC CRAWLEY UK GETS NEW PRESIDENT

BY CP Dorothy Waniała,  
RC Kampala Springs from England



Outgoing President Rtn. Bola gives up the chain of office



Rtn. Yinka Odeajo is installed as the President of RC Crawley for Yr. 2024/25



Mayor of Crawley; Councillor Sharmilla Sivarajah pinned as an honorary member of RC Crawley

The Rotary Club of Crawley had seen better days; dwindling membership and limited resources cast a shadow over its once-flourishing community initiatives. However, the club's spirit was far from extinguished. A new dawn was on the horizon with the installation of its new president, Mr. Yinka Odeajo in July.

The 71-year-old club, which had been predominantly white, opened its doors to diverse races in 2022 with the appointment of Rtn. Bola Odunuga as the first Black female president. At its peak, the club had 25 members; but by the end of 2021, membership had dropped to 12.

Mr. Odeajo, a dynamic Nigerian entrepreneur and community leader known for his innovative problem-solving and commitment to social causes was eagerly awaited as president and the hope to revitalize the struggling club.

The installation ceremony for Mr. Odeajo took

place on July 20, 2024, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Crawley. The event began with a lively welcome reception featuring local delicacies, beverages, and traditional African music. Attendees included the mayors of Crawley and Croydon, the District Governor for District 1145 and Assistant Governors. Displays highlighted the club's longstanding commitment to community service projects and initiatives.

As guests took their seats, anticipation filled the hall, which was decorated with Rotary emblems and banners, blending historical charm with modern elegance. The stage featured a Rotary wheel intertwined with traditional Nigerian motifs, symbolizing the fusion of global ideals and local culture.

Mr. Odeajo, dressed in a traditional agbada, was welcomed with thunderous applause as he confidently walked to the podium. The diverse audience of various ages and backgrounds watched with admiration and hope.

In his speech, Mr. Odeajo passionately highlighted the power of community and innovation in overcoming challenges. He shared his journey from humble beginnings to business success, emphasizing perseverance and collaboration. Acknowledging the club's struggles with diversity, he expressed his belief in unity and collective action. His vision was to restore the club's former glory by reconnecting with the community, embracing innovative ideas, and fostering inclusivity.

Following the formal installation, the event transitioned into a town hall-style discussion. Mr. Odeajo encouraged open dialogue, inviting members and guests to share their thoughts and ideas for the club's future. This interactive session generated innovative ideas and reignited a sense of ownership and enthusiasm among the members.

As the afternoon progressed, the atmosphere was celebratory and purposeful. The luncheon featured a blend of traditional Nigerian dishes and contemporary cuisine, reflecting Mr. Odeajo's vision of combining tradition with innovation. Music and dance performances kept the energy high, and by evening's end, club members and guests were united by a shared sense of mission.

Under Mr. Odeajo's leadership, the Rotary Club of Crawley is set for a transformative journey, driven by a renewed commitment to service, community engagement, and innovative thinking. The club's future looks brighter than ever with a leader who values honouring the past while boldly stepping into the future.



Group picture after the installation



Waving off the equipment



Dr. Diana Atwine (r), Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health, PDG John Magezi Ndamira (m) and Marion Muyobo, President RC Kampala Central.



The Oxygen Concentrator critical for babies at birth with a special tube that attaches to the nostrils of the baby

# The Rotary Club of Kampala Central Kicks off \$0.25m MCH Global Grant

By Abass Bwanaheri  
Rotary Club of Kampala Central

A ray of hope has emerged for mothers and children in rural Uganda with the launch of a ground-breaking initiative by the Rotary Club of Kampala Central in partnership with Bulamu Healthcare International.

Funded by a Global Grant of \$245,200 from The Rotary Foundation, the project aims at equipping 76 Ministry of Health

facilities across seven districts with essential medical equipment, thus improving maternal and child health care.

The flag-off ceremony, held on Tuesday, August 13th, 2024, at the Joint Medical Store (JMS) in Nsambya, marked the beginning of the life-saving project. The first batch of medical supplies (oxygen concentrators, weighing scales and baby warmers) was for

distribution to 12 health centres in Mayuge, Amuru, Gulu, Budaka, Kyegegwa, Bunyangabu, and Kakumiro districts.

Dr. Diana Atwine, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health, hailed the initiative as a significant boost to Uganda's healthcare system.

"This generous donation will greatly enhance the quality of

services provided at these health centres, particularly for mothers and children," she said. John Magezi Ndamira, Past District Governor D9213, emphasized Rotary's commitment to maternal and child healthcare as one of its seven areas of focus.

**"This project is a testament to our dedication to improving the lives of rural communities,"**

he stated. RC Kampala Central President Marion Muyobo outlined the project's scope, highlighting the critical role of the donated equipment in saving lives. She also announced plans for subsequent distributions to

include additional life-saving medical supplies. Supported by a consortium of Rotary Clubs from Uganda, the USA and Japan, alongside key partners such as the Ministry of Health and the District Health Officers, the project aims to provide much-needed MCH equipment, support services, and clinical training in rural areas of Uganda.

The second batch will include Penguin suckers, Ambu bags, baby cots, infant incubators, digital thermometers, handheld oximeters, KMC beds, oxygen splinters, infusion pumps, syringe pumps, vein finders, filing cabinets, phototherapy machines, and Vayu CPAPs.

The project's comprehensive approach also includes training and capacity-building programs for health providers, conducted

by Bulamu Healthcare International. These programs ensure the proper usage and maintenance of the new equipment. Past President Emmy Kwesiga from the District Grants Committee reaffirmed Rotary's dedication to improving healthcare services in Uganda. "This latest initiative is part of our ongoing efforts to support the government's mission to provide quality healthcare to all citizens," he said.

The project's objectives are ambitious but crucial. They include increasing the number of women receiving antenatal care, reducing maternal and neonatal mortality rates by 30% in targeted communities, increasing the number of clinicians trained in WHO's Essential Neonatal Care disciplines, and improving community awareness of MCH services.

The equipment was officially handed over on Tuesday, 13th August, at the Joint Medical Store (JMS) in Nsambya.

# OVERSEEING THE TRANSITION IN INTERACT SCHOOLS

By Lydia Ndagire,  
Youth Service Director  
RC Bweyogerere-Namboole

The transition of power within Interact schools is a critical process that ensures continuity, stability and the nurturing of future leaders. As Rotarians and Rotaractors, we have a responsibility to guide and oversee this transition, ensuring that it embodies the values and principles of Rotary International.

As I attended two changeover events for our Interact schools, Kirinya (COU) SS and Naalya Senior Secondary, Namugongo; a quote came to mind from Donald H. McGannon, “Leadership is action, not position”, which resonates deeply with this process, emphasising the essence of active leadership over mere titles.

Overseeing the transition is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it ensures continuity and stability within the Interact clubs. Without a well-managed handover, the momentum of ongoing projects and initiatives can be lost, leading to disruption and disarray. Our oversight helps maintain the flow of activities and ensures that the core values of Rotary – service above self, integrity, and leadership – remain at the forefront of the club’s mission.

Mentoring future leaders is another vital aspect of this process. Young leaders benefit immensely from the guidance and support of experienced Rotarians and Rotaractors. This mentorship goes beyond mere advice; it involves demonstrating through our actions what it means to be a leader. We show them that leadership is about taking initiative, driving positive change, and being accountable for one’s actions.

Effective leadership is characterized by action, not just titles or positions. During the transition, we must encourage outgoing leaders to involve their successors actively in ongoing projects/activities.

This hands-on approach allows incoming leaders to learn through experience and prepares them to take on their new roles with confidence and competence.

“  
**Effective leadership is characterized by action, not just titles or positions.**”

Moreover, our involvement helps build a legacy of service. Continuity in service projects/activities is vital for maintaining the impact of the club’s work on the community. By guiding new leaders to continue and enhance existing projects/activities, we ensure that the club’s efforts remain effective and impactful. Encouraging innovation is also essential; new leaders should bring fresh ideas and perspectives while respecting the groundwork laid by their predecessors.

Organizing training sessions and workshops focused on practical leadership skills, such as project management, communication, and teamwork, equips new leaders with the tools they need to succeed.

Recognizing and celebrating the achievements of both outgoing and incoming leaders reinforces the idea that leadership is about making a difference through actions.

In conclusion, the role of Rotarians and Rotaractors in overseeing the transition in Interact schools is indispensable. Let’s embody the principle that ‘leadership is action, not position’, to ensure smooth, effective transitions that uphold Rotary’s values and drive impact change. Through mentorship, guidance, and a commitment to action, we cultivate a new generation of leaders equipped to lead with integrity, innovation, and a spirit of service.



# RC KAMPALA SOUTH TRAINS KABALE WOMEN IN MUSHROOM GROWING

By Rebecca Nyinomuhangi,  
3rd year African Leadership University,  
Kigali, Rwanda

Just like education, access to opportunities is not a privilege; it's a fundamental right.

"In a society where many young people chase degrees, often with the belief that a piece of paper will secure their future, the reality can be harsh. Many of our friends find themselves stuck..."

Last month my sisters and I were fortunate to receive training to learn how to grow mushrooms from the Rotary Club of Kampala South at the Kabale Mushroom Training and Resource Centre (MTRC). The opportunity to learn how to cultivate mushrooms meant more to us than just acquiring a new skill. It was a chance to equip ourselves with practical knowledge in an uncertain world.

Learning to cultivate mushrooms is more than just a survival skill, it's a form of empowerment. It represents the idea that even when formal education doesn't open doors, there are still paths to success. The knowledge we gain has the potential to transform our lives, providing us with a means to support ourselves and extend it to other girls and women in our communities.

For my sisters and me, this training was a reminder that opportunities like these are essential, especially for young girls and boys. The ability to upskill ourselves, to pivot and adapt, is crucial in today's world. We need to be equipped with more than just theoretical knowledge, we need practical skills that can give us a rebound when we fail to land that dream job.

This experience was transformative for us, and we couldn't be more grateful. We now jokingly refer to ourselves as the 'Five Lady Mycologists' because of our newfound expertise in mushroom cultivation. During the sessions, we opted to conduct our training in Rukiga, ensuring that the local Mamas (the ladies from a certain SACCO in Kabale District) could fully understand and participate. It was a delight to communicate in a language so close to our hearts.

Our teacher, Mr James, was simply amazing—his patience, composure, and knowledge made even the longest sessions feel engaging. And so was Madam Novia, the practicals teacher. Classes started early in the morning and often stretched well into the evening, but the content was so captivating that we barely noticed the time. Plus, we were treated to delicious meals and snacks throughout the day, which kept our energy levels high.

The training space itself was inspirational, with a peaceful atmosphere that fostered our learning. Over the course of three days, we immersed ourselves in the world of 'mycology', the study of Fungi. We even received a transport reimbursement, which was a thoughtful gesture. On the third day, we were awarded certificates of participation, which will be a big deal for some of our future career paths.

On behalf of my Grace Villa sisters, we owe a deep sense of gratitude to the Rotary Club of Kampala South for making this possible. Their commitment to empowering young people like us through practical training is truly commendable. By providing us with this opportunity, they have not only invested in our future but also reinforced the idea that when communities come together to support one another, the impact can be profound.

Dear Rotarians, thank you for reminding us that we have the ability to take control of our destinies, to learn, grow, and thrive, even in the face of uncertainty.



Handover of Financial Support from the Rotary Club of Kampala South to the partners-Mushroom Training & Resource Center towards the White Button Mushroom Project in Kabale



The Author, Rebecca (l) receiving her end of 3-day training certificate at MTRC



Some of the 10-women group participants on Day 3 of the Mushroom cultivation training



Some of the 15 participants who received the 3-day training sponsored by the Rotary Club of Kampala South

## Rotary Club of Njeru



## Rotary Club of Ngora



## Rotary Club of Mubende



## Rotary Club of Bugiri



### Rotary Club of Kampala Day Break



### Rotary Club of Kampala West



### Rotary Club of Arua



### Rotary Club of Yumbe



### Rotary Club of Arua Eco City





### Rotary Club of Kampala Kibuli



### Rotary Club of Upper Kololo



# Camping Fellowship

On 17th August the District Governor, Anne Nkutu, launched the Rotary Fellowship of Camping, highlights





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