

# The Wave

Rotary  
District 9213



February 2025

Ride The Tide

## Stephanie Urchick's Magic Tour

- State of the District Address
- A RYLA Experience
- The History of Rotary in Uganda

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# District Calendar

## February 2025

### All Rotary activity helps prevent conflict

It has been an action-packed season in the District, what with the RIP's visit, January worries, the return of children to school, the weather which seems to be having its own mood swings, the taxman trying to do his work - the list is endless. Amidst all this, Rotarians are trying to fulfil their daily, weekly and monthly duties in addition to ensuring even their annual obligations are not overlooked. Thankfully, the Governor has made her State of the District Address which helps put everything in perspective.

As we reflect on our conflict prevention role, it helps to remember that all that we do as Rotarians contributes to conflict prevention, starting with what is apparently the lightest - enjoyment of Rotary.

Yes, when Rotarians have fun it is a very vital tonic for preventing conflict, even within Rotary itself. For, how effectively can an institution that is not at peace be able to build peace and prevent conflict in

society? It would be as difficult as deploying sickly health workers to promote health. So fellowships, and even 'swallowships', are very important in preventing conflict.

By serving the less privileged in society, Rotarians directly help prevent conflict all the time. For conflict, in most cases, stems from the sharing of resources, or failure of.

Even when the 'obvious' cause is ego and bigotry, the root of which may be centuries old, resources like land can be traced. So when Rotarians serve society by improving the lot of the least privileged, they ultimately prevent conflicts that would tear societies apart.

So Rotarians should remember to encourage one another because, beyond the easily measurable outcome of their service projects, there is the ultimate prize they deliver to humanity - PEACE!

**Joachim Buwembo**  
RC Kampala-Naalya

#### EDITORIAL TEAM



Joachim Buwembo  
RC Kampala- Naalya

EDITOR



Maureen Kawombe  
RC Naalya States

ASSISTANT EDITOR



Kalungi Kabuye  
RC Lugogo Mango Tree

PHOTO EDITOR



Sylvia Nankya  
RC Kampala-Naalya

PR AND MEDIA

- 01 RLI Training Module 1: 29th Undergrad/ 21 Grad  
  
State Of The District Address
- 03 DG's Visit to RC Mbalwa
- 04 DG visit to RC Wobulenzi
- 05 DRR's visit to RC Kasana Luwero
- 06 DG Visit RC Bujuuko Kireka  
  
DRR's Visit to RAC Kyadondo
- 07 RAC Kasangati Inductions & Fundraiser  
  
DG visit to RC Kasubi
- 08 Assistant Governors Semi Annual Retreat
- 09 International Assembly
- 10 DG Visit to RC Kasangati
- 15 Magic Presidents Semi Annual Retreat  
  
DGE Meeting PEs and AGes  
DRR's visit to RAC Iganga and Bugiri
- 16 DRR's Visit to RAC Kentim University
- 18 DRR's visit to RAC Nakawa Vocational Training Institution
- 23 DTLS (Rotary)  
  
Rotary's Anniversary  
  
Rotaract Uganda Trip Closing Dinner
- 26 DRR's visit to RAC Arua and Arua School of Nursing
- 27 DRR's Visit to RAC Gulu
- 28 DRR's Visit to RAC Kitgum and NMF start



## Ripples of hope and change

**T**his month, as we come together for the International Assembly and the Presidential Peace Conference, we celebrate The Magic of Rotary — a unique blend of global connection, vision, and action that empowers us to create lasting change.

One of the most inspiring examples is our Rotary Peace Fellowship program, a cornerstone of Rotary's mission to build a more peaceful and just world.

For more than 23 years, Rotary Peace Fellowships have been transforming communities. Our Rotary Peace Centres, hosted at leading universities around the globe, have educated over 1,800 fellows who now work in more than 140 countries.

These centres cultivate expertise in fields like conflict resolution, sustainable development and peacebuilding, preparing fellows to tackle some of the world's most pressing challenges. This program exemplifies how Rotary turns vision into action, creating a ripple effect of hope and change.

This month during the Presidential Peace Conference, we celebrate a significant milestone with the opening of our newest peace centre in Istanbul. This centre will focus on training leaders to address peace-building challenges in the Middle East and North Africa, further extending Rotary's impact.

Peace fellows are dedicated champions of transformation, addressing critical issues such as refugee resettlement, youth and women's empowerment, and reconciliation in conflict zones. Many founded vital organisations or hold leadership

roles in governments, nongovernmental organisations, and international institutions like the United Nations and the World Bank.

One inspiring story is that of Ntang Julius Meleng, a 2024 Rotary Peace Fellow at Makerere University in Uganda. Through his Social Change Initiative, Julius has worked to empower young people in Cameroon to take active roles in peacebuilding and leadership.

His project provided training in conflict prevention, civic engagement, and leadership to youths and community officials in areas affected by conflict, equipping people to drive sustainable peace efforts.

Julius harnessed Rotary's global network to overcome obstacles, including limited funding and security risks, and make a meaningful impact.

The Rotary Peace Fellowship gave Julius the tools and support to turn his vision into reality. His work embodies The Magic of Rotary — the transformative power of connecting people, sharing resources, and uniting for a common purpose.

As we reflect on the achievements of our Peace Fellows and celebrate Rotary's enduring commitment to peace, let us also recognise the role that everyone in our network of 1.2 million members plays in creating magic through service.

Together, we can amplify our impact, inspire new generations of leaders, and build a brighter, more peaceful future.

**Stephanie A. Urchick**  
President, Rotary International



**TOGETHER, WE**

**PROMOTE PEACE**

Building a peaceful world begins in our own backyards. That's why Rotary brings communities together to learn from our differences, gain new perspectives, and form stronger connections. Promoting peace through understanding — that's what people of action do. **Learn more at [Rotary.org](https://www.rotary.org).**

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## Peace starts with us...

Rotary's Founder, Paul Harris is quoted to have stated that "The way to war is a well-paved highway, and that the way to peace is still a wilderness...." Nearly a century later, this statement holds true.

Peace across the world remains ever so fragile, with a new conflict emerging every other day. It appears as though disagreements can no longer be resolved peacefully. Unfortunately, as disheartening as this is, the constant barrage of news on conflicts is increasingly numbing us to their impact. And perhaps that is why we, in Rotary, have dedicated the month of February to Peace and Conflict Prevention. To remind ourselves of our individual and collective responsibility to promote peace.

During RI President Stephanie Urchick's visit last month, Rotarians in Uganda reaffirmed their commitment to peace. And I would like to heartily congratulate the different teams that successfully organized the Peace Symposium, the Peace Walk and the Africa Peace Concert, whose proceeds will support the Makerere University Rotary Peace Centre. But beyond these events, we need to challenge ourselves, what are we doing individually and at the club level in terms of building peace actively?

A survey conducted on the range of service projects in D9213 showed that the Peace and Conflict Prevention area of focus had the least number of projects benefitting from global grants. As a matter of fact, I have seen only four projects that directly address peace and conflict prevention during my visits to over 110 clubs. Three out of these four are promoting legal, social, and rehabilitative services aimed at the re-integration of juvenile offenders, ex-

prisoners and refugees into society. More recently, I commissioned a solar street lighting project being implemented by RC Mbalwa, that is aimed at averting growing crime in the club's neighbourhood. But there is so much more that we can do.

The preamble of the UNESCO Constitution reads: "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defence of peace must be constructed." This suggests that nurturing a culture of peace is key. Peace must be in the minds of men and women. The Rotary Foundation also prioritises peace leadership and education, particularly among the youth. And as clubs operating in a country with a young population, we should consider peace building initiatives for youth on constructive ways to prevent, manage, and transform conflict. And there are several ways of doing this, including through sport.

But like our vision statement implies, creating lasting change applies to us as well. Before we can offer peace to others, we must first cultivate it within ourselves. During my visits, I have encountered a few clubs grappling with internal conflict. I have, and continue to encourage all clubs to institute internal dispute resolution mechanisms to address conflicts whenever they arise; to apply the 4 Way Test; and to make use of the Rotarian mediators that have recently been trained. Before we can extend peace to others, we must first experience it within ourselves.

I wish you all a peaceful February.

**Anne Nkutu,**  
District Governor

### CLUBS WITH HIGHEST GIVING TO TRF TODATE

Source: Rotary Club Central

01	RC KAMPALA CENTRAL \$ 41,515	06	RC KIWATULE \$ 20,784
02	RC UPPER KOLOLO \$ 38,689	07	RC LUGOGO MANGO TREE \$ 18,305
03	RC BWEYOGERERE NAMBOOLE \$ 25,720	08	RC KAMPALA DAYBREAK \$ 18,189
04	RC KAMPALA \$ 23,636	09	RC NTINDA \$ 12,906
05	RC KIRA \$ 22,204	10	RC KAMPALA NAALYA \$ 11,552

### CLUBS WITH HIGHEST GIVING TO POLIO FUND TODATE

Source: Rotary Club Central

01	RC KIRA \$ 8,131	06	RC KIWATULE \$ 3,218
02	RC UPPER KOLOLO \$ 6,991	07	RC KASANGATI \$ 2,627
03	RC E NAGURU \$ 4,267	08	RC BULINDO \$ 2,557
04	RC GAYAZA \$ 3,616	09	RC KAMPALA \$ 2,549
05	RC KITANTE 3,222	10	RC MANYANGWA NAKWERO \$ 2,206

# State Of The District Address 2025

*The District Governor presented her State of The District Address on Feb 1st, 2025. Excerpts:*

**G**ood morning fellow Rotarians and Rotaractors. I want to welcome you to our State of the District Address this morning. This address should have come a month ago, but because of the activities that we had and for which I want to congratulate you.

The visit of our Rotary International President changed our schedule and we had to accommodate that because it was the most important thing at the beginning of this year. And I want to congratulate you and to thank each and every one of you for your involvement in that visit, which demonstrated the vibrancy of the districts, both 9213 and 9214. And I think our President left without a doubt as to why our district is rated as highly as it is.

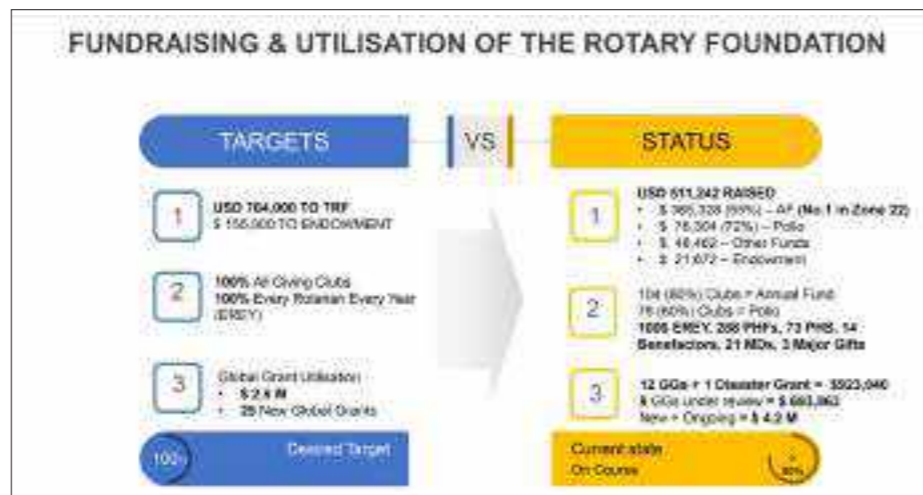
This morning I'm going to make a presentation of what we have been able to achieve over the last seven months. Initially, it was six months, but because January is over now, we have included January.

Our targets were linked to our strategic plan and the Rotary Action Plan, and everything that we have done over the last seven months was aimed at increasing our impact, expanding our reach, enhancing engagement and increasing our ability to adapt. I want to thank my predecessors because we are building on a very, very strong foundation that you set for us. Whatever we have been able to achieve, it is because we were starting on strong ground.

This presentation is just a synopsis of what is happening on the ground, there is so much more happening that might not appear here.

## 1.0 STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: INCREASE OUR IMPACT

I'll start with priority number one, which is increasing our impact. Our target includes fundraising,



utilisation of the Rotary Foundation and measurement of impact.

## 1.1 Fundraising & Utilisation Of The Rotary Foundation

Our target for the year was US\$700,000. When we went into the system, we found that clubs had committed to contributing more than that, US\$764,000. So that is the target in the system. We also committed to contributing US\$155,000 to the Endowment Fund.

To date we have so far contributed to the Rotary Foundation US\$499,524,000. And some funds are not yet reflected in the system, but we know that it's slightly above \$500,000. Of that, US\$353,000 has gone towards the annual fund, representing 53% of the annual fund.

We have contributed US\$76,000 to polio, which amounts to 72% of the polio targets. \$48,462 has gone

towards other funds, and 21,672 has gone to the Endowment Fund.

Because of the Rotary Peace Centre, the Endowment Fund is going to go much higher than this. We were able to raise US\$105,000 from the Africa Peace Concert held during the President's visit.

Our second target this Rotary year was very ambitious, we challenged ourselves to ensure that 100% of our clubs contribute to the Rotary Foundation. To date, 104 clubs (80%) have contributed to the annual fund.

78 clubs (60%) have contributed to polio. To date, we have slightly over 1,000 Rotarians who have contributed towards Every Rotarian Every Year (EREY), about US\$25. We have 288 Paul Harris Fellows, 73 Paul Harris Society members, 14 Benefactors, 21 Major Donors and 3 Major Gifts.

This group of people, about 20%



of the Rotarians in our district, have contributed the \$499,000 that has been raised. This means that our target of 100% every Rotarian every year is still far off from being met. The good news is if 20% of the Rotarians in our district have contributed to \$500,000, imagine if we did 100%, we would be able to go over \$2 million if everybody gave. However, we are committed to ensuring that everybody, between now and the end of this Rotary year, gives at least a minimum of US\$25.

At the beginning of this year, we launched the 25 x 25 TRF Relay which uses the Jjengo app to collect funds from members. The purpose of this was to increase convenience for our members to contribute to TRF, and we've had at least somebody from every club attempt it. And to date, through the Jjengo app, we have been able to collect close to UGX90m. We believe that once there's more information about this app, the numbers will even go much higher.

One of the challenges has been that many Rotarians do not know their RI numbers, just like the Rotaractors. And yet the app requires them to put their ID numbers, so that is something that we are going to work on.

One of our other targets was that we should utilise up to US\$2.5 million in this Rotary year, and that we should seek to obtain 25 new global grants. And I'm pleased to inform you that so far we have 12 global grants that have been approved and one disaster grant, which collectively amount to US\$923,000.

We also have nine global grants that are in the process of review and submission, which amount to another \$693,863. We have the new and ongoing, or what they call the active global grants, amounting to US\$4.2 million. And so we are in a good place as far as fundraising and utilisation are concerned.

## 1.2 Collaboration & Measurement of Impact

Our next targets were on Collaboration and Measurement of Impact, and we set a target of having at least 10 multi-club or multi-district projects. I'm pleased to inform you that as I speak now we have over 100 Rotary clubs from our district that have submitted expressions of interest to participate in the Maternal and Child Health program of scale. We have another 10 clubs collectively working on a mental health initiative, and another 10 that are collectively working on a menstrual hygiene management initiative.

At the district level, we have partnered with District 9214 to support the establishment of the Rotary Wash Institute Nkumba University which was recently launched by our R.I. President. Our district has also partnered with 9212 and 9214 to support the renovation of Pumwani Maternity Centre in Kenya. The three districts D9212, D9213 and D9214 at the beginning of this Rotary year also collectively agreed to implement a joint initiative on Planting Your Balance.

So we have met that target. We set out to establish five corporate partnerships and to date we have

three partnerships that we have signed up. Centenary Bank continues to be our regular partner but also our most valued partner.

We have signed a partnership with ABSA Bank to plant trees in 186 primary schools. We have also signed up another partnership with National Water and Sewerage Corporation to protect the River Nile from pollution. We have an ongoing discussion with DFCU Bank which is still at the inception stage but we anticipate that the partnership will be signed before the end of this quarter.

In terms of international partners we have set out to link our clubs with international partners to enable them to have either global grants or even non-global grants, but certainly have more resources for their projects. To date, we have had 16 clubs that are linked with international partners.

One of the challenges we continue to experience as a district is being able to measure in granular detail the impact of what it is that we do, and so at the beginning of this year we set out to ensure that we can get some understanding of what it is that we have achieved over the last three years.

An impact survey, which is still going on, produced very interesting data showing that only 30% of the projects in our district are funded by global grants. The remaining 70% is funded by clubs through other resources.

Unfortunately, the challenge has been establishing exactly how much clubs have spent on these projects and that comes from a culture of poor record-keeping. The Community Service team is still working on finding ways of establishing the spend on this project, and is looking at using the audit reports of the last three years to try and get some idea of how much money has been spent.

We have also asked all clubs, if we're going to increase our impact and have partners, all clubs must present their projects on Rotary Showcase, now the Rotary Service Centre. To date, we have 356 service projects that have been reported in the service centre.

Turn to page 12

Continued from page 11

However that only represents about 80 percent of the clubs. There are many that have not reported a single project. In this Rotary year we have asked all clubs to integrate environment and climate action in their interventions and other projects. But, although at each club that I have visited I have planted trees, when it comes to reporting the actual numbers only 46 clubs have reported on the number of trees they have planted. So record keeping remains a challenge for many of our clubs, and it is an area that we want to continuously work on.

**2.0 STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: EXPAND OUR REACH**

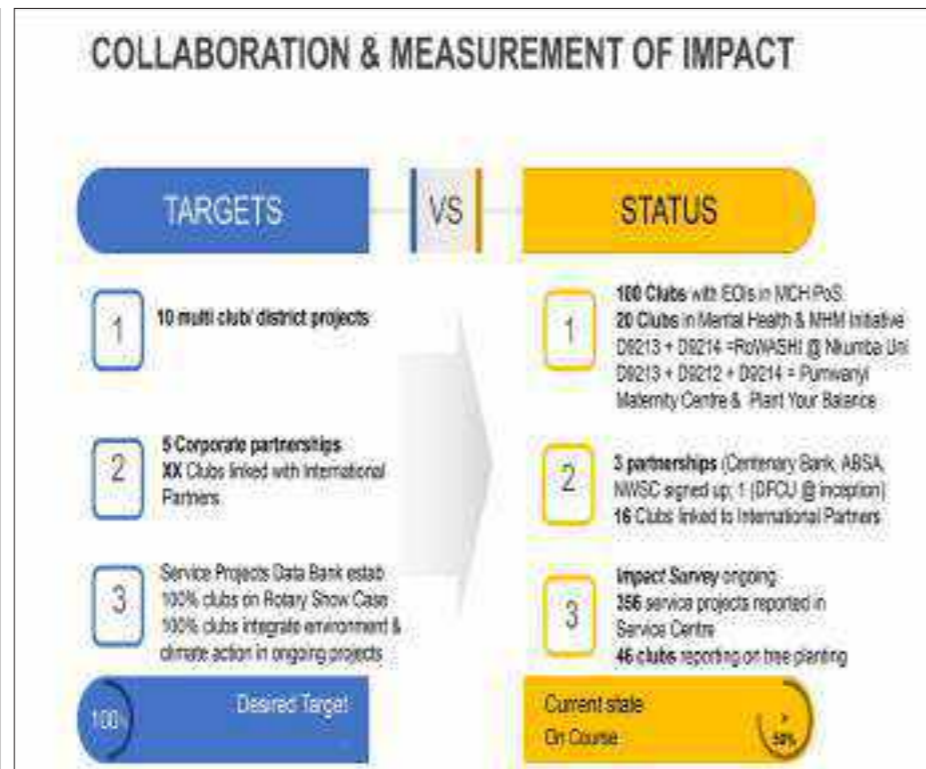
Under strategic priority to expand our reach we are looking at issues of membership, and our district continues to grow, thanks to the strong foundation on which we are building.

**2.1 Membership Growth & Extension**

At the beginning of this Rotary year, we proposed a net growth of 720 new Rotarians, with a minimum of at least six Rotarians in every club. To date, we have been able to get 456 new members, and as I speak now our district is number one in zone 22 as far as membership is concerned, and number five globally as far as membership growth is concerned. The percentage of women in our district has risen slightly from 44.2% to 44.45%, and I can attest that most of the interactions I have attended are mostly dominated by women. Clearly that is where our growth is going to come from.

The percentage growth of members under 40 remains more or less the same, and part of the problem again arises from poor reporting. Although we induct many people, we are not capturing the age sufficiently for the system to be able to calculate the percentages and so it seems more or less stagnant at 25%; but we hope that these numbers will continue to go up.

In this Rotary year, we plan to charter 15 new Rotary clubs including three new club models. And I'm



pleased to inform you this is the Lottery Club ye'Singo, a purely Luganda-speaking club. We have also chartered one satellite club of Lumino in Busia.

We have 15 different clubs at different stages of formation, and I can guarantee you that all these 15 clubs will be chartered before the end of this Rotary year. Of these two are cause-based and two are interest-based. This year we also determined that we should have more Rotary Community Corps, and our target was to have 35 Rotary Community Corps.

I know that many clubs have engaged communities and are working around it (10:34) but to date, we only have one that is chartered so this remains a work in progress.

One of our targets under membership growth was to have 120 Rotaractors transitioning and to have each club bring on board at least one Rotaractor moving to Rotary. So far we have 35 Rotaractors who have joined Rotary, representing 29%, but this is not the end of the story. We have two Rotary clubs at provisional state that are 100% composed of Rotaract alumni, and we believe that by the time those clubs are chartered we will be nearer to 80 or

so Rotaractors who've transitioned to Rotary.

Our challenge was to establish 10 Rotaract clubs, so far we have four have been chartered. Out of 15 Interact clubs, we have six that have been chartered. We also planned that we would have the Rotary Youth Leadership Academy targeting 200 participants, I'm pleased to inform you that we exceeded that and had 240 participants attending the RYLA. And I think it has been the most widely publicized RYLA in the history of our district, so I want to congratulate the team behind this.

**3.0 STRATEGIC PRIORITY**

Our next priority is to enhance participant engagement, and under this, our main goal was to increase retention and have clubs retaining members at a rate of 95%.

**3.1 Member Development and Retention**

Currently the retention level is at 89.45%. We purposed that all clubs should adopt structured member development plans in order for them to be able to meet their retention goals, and I'm pleased to inform you that the district membership team has developed a draft member development guideline that will be

shared with all clubs to support them on how to attract, orient, induct and retain their members.

As part of engagement, we set a target of establishing two new Fellowships, and I'm happy to inform you that at present we have one Fellowship at an advanced stage, that is the Rotary Fitness Fellowship spearheaded by Coach Bob.

We set out to have two new Rotary Action Groups and now we have three action groups that are at advanced stage. One on mental health, another on drug addiction and the third on a local chapter of peace.

For the district conference, our target was to have at least 1,000 participants registered. To date, we have 1,570 registered of which 746 are paid up. We also had a target of 200 Rotarians registered for the R.I. Convention in Calgary, to date we have 1,129 registered with 167 paid up. We know that this will keep rising as more people get their visas.

As part of enhancing engagement we've also worked very hard on training, leadership training and different trainings have been provided, including at the Rotary Leadership Institute that is going on right now. We've also had trainings organised by the district, and 14 virtual trainings with an average attendance of 194 people. We have had very many media stories, we have a count of 24 at the District but we know that the number is over and above 24. I think during the R.I. President's visit we lost count.

We have The Wave, our monthly magazine, and we've had seven editions of that. We have had trainings as well for clubs on media reporting and telling the Rotary story, but we agree that we can still continue to do more so that our members can optimize the different media platforms.

**4.0 STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4: INCREASE OUR ABILITY TO ADAPT**

Under Strategic Priority Four, we are looking at issues of compliance and issues of sustainability.

**4.1 Compliance & Sustainability**

One of the issues on compliance was to ensure that 100% of the clubs pay district dues, and I'm pleased to inform you that as I speak now 94% of the clubs have been compliant. That was a condition for the governor's visit and it seems to have worked very well.

It was our intention and our desire to have 100% of clubs with goals on Rotary Club Central, and as I speak 100% of the clubs have goals on the annual fund, 98.4% on polio and 100% have goals on all the other things. It was also our desire to see more members using My Rotary and Club Runner. We continue to have challenges there with only 67% of Rotarians having My Rotary accounts, and usage of Club Runner still remains below what we would wish it to be. That's another area we'll continue to work on.

We have asked that at least 80% of our clubs adopt good governance and are compliant with the laws of the land, I'm happy to inform you that many clubs have been able to meet the basic minimums which include financial audits and registration with URSB. As I speak now 86 clubs, including five Rotaract clubs, have qualified and that comes to about 85% of the target which was 100 clubs.

In this area we have also had the governor's committee develop a good governance checklist which has been shared with the clubs.

They have also developed manuals and policy guidelines for clubs which should be able to support clubs to qualify and to be compliant as well as to practice good corporate governance in their clubs.

Under this area and as part of sustainability, our goal was also to see that Rotaractors are represented on all district committees, and again I'm pleased to inform you that there is 100% representation of Rotaractors on all the committees.

Inconsistency in record keeping has made it very difficult for us, for example, to track how much money is spent on non-global grants. Maintenance of records of previous

years is also a challenge with each team only keeping their records.

We have also observed that there are many knowledge gaps in many of our clubs because at least 30% of the Rotary clubs in our district are under five years of age, so there's a lot more that needs to be done in terms of educating clubs on Rotary, what it means, its practices, its values and the way we do things; while at the same time allowing for innovation.

The timely remittance of funds also remains a challenge, and that's why we have up to 50 clubs that have not yet remitted to the polio fund. There's also slow adoption of new technologies that, although we have the technologies as I mentioned already, many people do not know their RI numbers, and many people are not using the Learning Centre as much as they should.

Many people do not have My Rotary accounts, many people do not use the Club Runner even though these tools exist to increase efficiency.

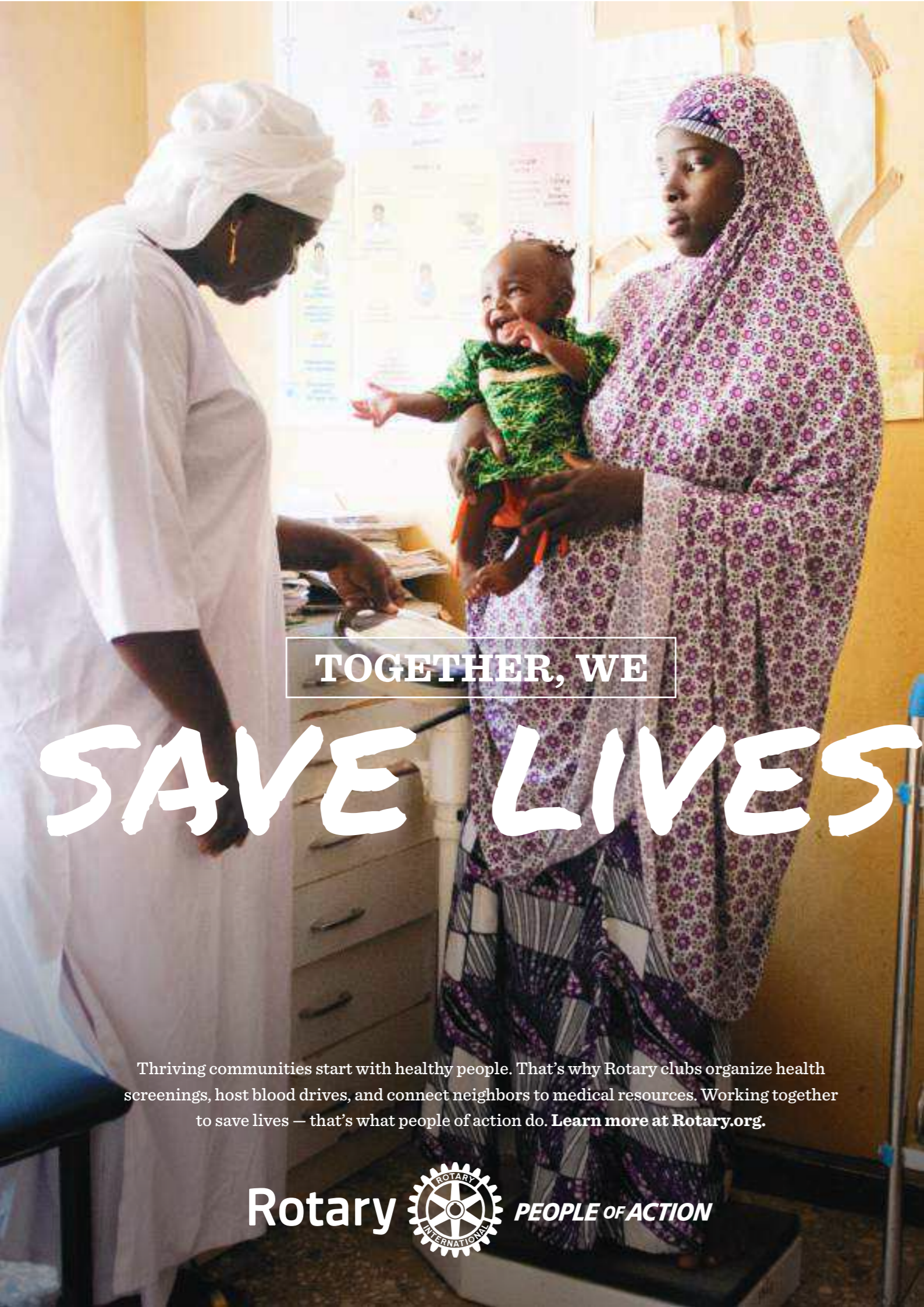
Finally, one of the other challenges that we have come across, and for which we hope that the governance committee will help us, is the internal conflicts that sometimes derail clubs from working collectively, from working cohesively and from achieving their goals.

**THE NEXT 5 MONTHS**

And so there are many things that we would like to do for the remaining five months, we will continue with the trainings, we will continue with mobilization for TRF and EREY, we'll continue to support clubs with the global grants, we'll support clubs to strengthen their M&E function.

There are many tools that have been developed and we intend to have all of them finalised, piloted and disseminated so that they can be used.

And so I would like to once again thank the team, the Magic Team that I'm working with; all the district officials, the Presidents as well as the club officers working at the club level. Thank you very much for listening to me.



TOGETHER, WE

SAVE LIVES

Thriving communities start with healthy people. That's why Rotary clubs organize health screenings, host blood drives, and connect neighbors to medical resources. Working together to save lives — that's what people of action do. [Learn more at Rotary.org](https://www.rotary.org).



## When The World Of Rotary Came To Uganda

By Kalungi Kabuye

**D**r Stephanie A. Urchick, the 70th Rotary International President and only the second female, visited Uganda from the 5th to the 12th of February as part of her Magic Africa Tour 2025. The tour took her to 5 African countries, starting with Uganda. She then went on to visit Kenya, Senegal, Tunisia and Egypt.

Dr Urchick is the 4th Rotary International President to visit Uganda, following in the footsteps of Jennifer Jones (2022) and Shekar Metha (2021). Rajendra Saboo was RIP in 1991 but visited Uganda in 2017 after his tenure, to attend the funeral of the late Sam Owori, RIP-Elect.

During her whirlwind tour that left even the most resilient on the verge of exhaustion,

she toured various Rotary projects including the Rotary Blood Bank at Mengo Hospital and the Rotary Cancer Centre at Nsambya Hospital; participated in the Peace Symposium and Capstone at Makerere University, led a Peace Walk around Makerere University and interacted with the media and other stakeholders.

In her final address to Uganda, Dr Urchick thanked the Rotarians and Rotaractors of Districts 9213 and 9214 (which comprise Uganda and Tanzania) for making her feel at home and was proud to call them all “My Family of Rotary”.

In this special edition of *The Wave*, we recap the tour that dominated social and digital media space, hogged radio and television, and made headlines in the print media.



## RIP VISIT

# Sunday 5th - Arrival

**D**r Stephanie Urchick landed at Entebbe International Airport aboard a KLM flight shortly after 11pm, and was received by her hosts, the Governors of District 2913 Anne Nkutu, and District 9214 (Agnes Mungati Batengas). The President was accompanied by Tom Gump, Director Nominee for the Rotary Foundation and Pearl Ijeoma Okoro, a Trustee to the Rotary Foundation. After receiving a bouquet of flowers, from four-year-old Ssubi Isabel Ingabire she was introduced to the various District officials who received her. She then addressed a press conference, in which she reaffirmed Rotary's commitment to fostering service, fellowship and sustainable development across Africa. "My family, I'm happy to be here. You're the evidence that Rotary works," she said. "I hope to visit as many projects as possible, including those that work on environmental sustainability. Protecting our environment is our seventh area of focus, and we shall help to heal the world."



President Stephanie after receiving a bouquet of flowers at her arrival at Entebbe International Airport



Being received by District officials



President Stephanie is flanked by Pearl Ijeoma Okoro, a Trustee to the Rotary Foundation (left) and Agnes Mungati Batengas, Governor District 9214 (right)



Anne Nkutu, Governor of District 9213, addressing the press conference. left is Tom Gump, Director Nominee for the Rotary Foundation



Group picture after the press conference



Emmanuel Katongole (second-right) Director Rotary International Nominee, addresses the press conference. Extreme right is PDG Ken MUGISHA



President Stephanie addresses a press conference after her arrival

RIP VISIT

# Monday 6th

**D**ay Two began with a meeting with the Board of Next Media at their offices on Naguru Hill, led by the Group CEO Kin Kariisa.

After a meeting with the Board of Next Media, President Stephanie had a discourse with the Uganda media corps on leveraging the media to strengthen Rotary's reach in Uganda. She explained to the media that while Rotary does not enforce peace, it makes conditions for peace possible.

"We are peace-builders, not peace brokers," she said. "We will not rescue hostages or stop actual fighting, but we create the conditions whereby peace can prevail."

Later in the afternoon, while interacting with Uganda Rotary leaders, she addressed the challenges of increasing Rotary membership.

"We need to bring more young people into Rotary," she said. "We need to grow the numbers, especially the youth."



Meeting the Uganda Media Corps at Next Media



District 9213 Governor Elect, Geoffrey Kitakule, speaking at the meeting with Rotary Club Presidents



President Stephanie signs Next Media's 'Hall of Fame'



President Stephanie speaks to Rotary Presidents from Districts 9213 and 9214



DG Anne Nkutu, President Stephanie and DG Agnes Mungati Bagengas while meeting the Uganda Media Corps



President Stephanie was welcomed by traditional dancers when she paid a courtesy call on President Kiiza Besigye, and was hosted by Peter Mayiga at Bright Studios

# Tuesday 7th - Courtesy Visits

It was a busy and hectic day for the President which included two very high-profile courtesy visits, and the TRF Recognition dinner. But first up was a visit to the Rotary Blood Bank at Mengo Hospital.

Built-in 2017 as a response to persistent blood shortages in the country, the project was spearheaded by Past Rotary District Governor Emmanuel Katongole.

Katongole, who was recently appointed Rotary International Director Nominee for Africa, was inspired by the loss of his teenage sister who bled to death while giving birth in 1969.

“This facility is very personal to me,” Katongole said, adding that he had also been inspired by a woman who died in Soroti due to lack of blood. He also revealed plans to establish another blood bank in

Soroti in eastern Uganda.

“If you are a regular blood donor, you lower the risk of heart attack and stroke,” President Stephanie said.

“So, giving blood not only helps others but is a good thing for us as well. It is my honour to see the great work that you are doing.”

The Mengo facility serves over 30 hospitals in the city and beyond the Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area, with performance consistently exceeding targets.

President Stephanie also inducted the Bishop of Namirembe, the Rt Rev Moses Banja, into the Rotary Club of Mengo, one of the oldest Rotary clubs in the country.

From Mengo it was time for a courtesy visit to the Prime Minister, Robinah Nabbanja, who commended Rotary for its significant

contributions to health, education, and environmental conservation in Uganda.

“The list of Rotary contributions in Uganda is enormous,” the Prime Minister said. She was then inducted into Rotary by the Rotary International president.

The afternoon was a visit to the headquarters of the Kingdom of Buganda, the oldest kingdom in East and Central Africa, where she met the Katikiro (Prime Minister) of Buganda, Charles Peter Mayiga.

“One of the most fascinating things about Rotary is participating in an activity where you expect no monetary reward,” Mayiga said. “Rotary members go to villages and do amazing work with people they will never meet again. This is a family that everyone would love to work with.”



Exchanging gifts with the Prime Minister



Pearl Ijeoma Okoro, Trustee to the Rotary Foundation, presents Katikiro Mayiga with a symbol of the fight against polio



Touring Namirembe Cathedral



Meeting the Prime Minister, Robinah Nabbanja



President Urchick presents Bishop Banja of Namirembe with a Membership Certificate



Outside the Mengo Rotary Blood Bank



Katikiro Mayiga presents President Stephanie with an 'organic' coffee mug from Buganda



President Stephanie was welcomed by traditional dancers when she paid a courtesy all on the Katikiro of Buganda, Charles Peter Mayiga, (right)

# RIP VISIT TRF Dinner

On Tuesday evening,  
President Stephane attended  
the TRF Recognition Dinner at  
the Kampala Sheraton Hotel.  
Highlights:



RIP VISIT

# Wednesday 8th: Cancer Run and ROWASH Launch

**W**ednesday started off with the launch of the 2025 Cancer Run, which will be held on August 31st. Dr Urchick then toured the Nsambya Rotary Cancer Centre, which has been built with proceeds from previous Cancer Runs. She said the Cancer Run proves that Rotarians are people of action.

“I understand that there is so much more that needs to be done, but working together will do the magic,” she said.

The 2025 Cancer Run’s target is to raise USD1m. Vision bearer PDG Stephen Mwanje said the centre would be completed in 2027. The focus will then turn to further equipping it and supporting the

Uganda Cancer Foundation, as well as raising funds for those unable to afford cancer treatment.

President Stephanie also launched a fundraising app which allows donors worldwide to contribute by scanning a QR code, she started it off by donating US\$100. USAID was announced as the Platinum sponsor, committing \$756,000 over the next three years while Centenary Bank pledged Shs500 million.

In the afternoon Dr Urchick commissioned the Rotary Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (RoWASH) Institute at Uganda’s Nkumba University in Entebbe.

The Institute will focus on research and capacity building in water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), and

empower graduates with practical skills that can create a ripple effect in their communities.

“Millions of women and children still walk long distances in search of clean water, compromising their health and well-being,” Urchick said.

“Rotary’s involvement in initiatives such as the RoWASH Institute transforms local communities and contributes to global progress.”

The RoWASH Institute will focus on research and capacity building in water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) and empowering graduates with practical skills that can create a ripple effect in their communities.

Afterwards met with Rotaractors from the two Districts.



The 2025 Cancer Run kit



New Vision are sponsors



President Stephanie at the ROWASH launch



Christine Kyeyune Kawooya, DGE, D9214, at the ROWASH launch



MAAD McCann are sponsors of the 2025 Cancer Run



USAID are sponsors of the 2025 Cancer Run



Centenary Bank, major sponsors of the cancer Run



KRYSTAL Water are sponsors of the 2025 Cancer Run



2025 Cancer Run Chairperson Rita Balaka

# Thursday 9th Rotary Women Fellowship

**W**hile meeting the Rotary Fellowship for Empowering Women at Four Points by Sheraton Hotel, President Stephanie appreciated the tremendous work women have put in to make Rotary grow worldwide, and emphasised the organisation needs the involvement of both women and men to grow.

“I know that many of you have heard the stories about the way men and women think differently, and that is very true, and that’s why we need both,” she said. “We need both men and women since they react to the world differently, and the world reacts to men and women differently.”

She added that she is frequently asked how it feels to be the second female Rotary International President, emphasizing that she is not the president of Rotary because she is female but rather, she was selected because she has the Rotary depth of experience, skill, talent, education, the drive and passion to do the job.

“But having said that, I also recognize that I am female, and I know that there are females around the world in all of our rotary family who will look, and say, well, if Stephanie can do that, I think I can step up to leadership.”

In addition, Urchick underscored the so many important ways that Rotarians around the world take a look at the empowerment of young people, girls and boys alike.

Flavia Serugo, the founder of the Rotary Fellowship for Empowering Women, explained that the fellowship follows the Rotary Roses program that aimed to elevate women in Rotary leadership. And that the Fellowship is open to men as well as youth.

“Rotary Fellowships are about the passion to serve communities,” Serugo said. “The activities we carry out include those that target women, address health, and education; advocate for justice, and financial literacy, as well as mentor girls and our members into leadership development.”

Serugo also doubles as the founder of the Women in Rotary Initiative.



# Friday 10th - Peace Symposium & Capstone



The stand-out event in the Magic Tour was held at the Peace Symposium and Capstone at Makerere University on Friday morning, where President Stephanie encouraged individuals to become peace-builders. Under the theme ‘Collaborative Peace-building for Societal Transformation’, the event also featured Makerere University Vice Chancellor Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe, and Past Rotary Foundation Trustee Geeta Manek, who gave the keynote address.

Speaking to an audience of Peace Fellows from the Makerere University Peace Centre, academics, and Rotarians, the Rotary International president said she was thrilled about peace-building.

“We are peace-builders, not peace breakers,” she said. “Our projects create the necessary conditions and each of you, Peace Fellows, are going back to your areas to make a difference with the societal change initiatives you presented to me. Incredible, You make me proud to be a Rotarian, you make me proud to call you my

family of Rotary.”

The Makerere University Rotary Peace Centre was established five years ago. The first such Rotary centre in Africa, it has graduated 10 cohorts of 169 fellows from 46 countries, equipping them with skills and knowledge to advance peace and conflict resolution.

“You are among the 1,800 or more graduates now who are going around the world and creating these remarkable programmes that are changing the world because you are creating essential ways for peace to permeate the society,” Urchick said. “Peace is possible, it is a journey of 1,000 miles, and must be taken one step at a time.”

Vice-Chancellor Nawangwe thanked Rotary for giving Makerere University “the opportunity and privilege to host the only Rotary Peace Centre on the African continent” and lauded the centre for doing a “wonderful job” The day also saw the graduation of the 7th cohort of students. Then the President inducted the Vice-Chancellor, Prof Nawangwe, and seven other professors into Rotary.



President Stephanie inspects the work of Peace Fellows



Past Rotary Foundation Trustee Geeta Manek gave the keynote speech



President Stephanie pins Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe



# Peace Concert

**O**n Friday evening the 4th edition of the Africa Peace Concert took place at Nsambya Gardens, Kampala. The concert is held annually to raise funds for the Makerere Rotary Peace Centre, one of seven worldwide and the only one in Africa. Others are in England, Sweden, Thailand, the USA, Japan and Australia. Rotary awards up to 151 fully funded fellowships to leaders worldwide each year, enabling them to study at one of the Peace Centres. This year \$239,000 was raised from the concert.

The concert kicked off with the Rotaract Club of Kampala North Musical, young men and women dedicated to serving others through music. Then a surprise

act in the Jazzing Rotarians, a group of veteran musicians who are leading professionals. These included former Minister of ICT Ham Mulira (keyboards), Justice Oscar Kihika (drums), senior counsels Allan Shonubi (vocals) and Andrew Kasirye (bass), Hope Mukasa (vocals) and Solomon Rubondo (trumpet).

Brazilian cellist Diego Carneiro, who had just graduated from the Makerere Peace Centre, and his ensemble that included Albert Ssempeke Jr were next, and then Ghetto Kids brought their irresistible energy onto the stage.

After a short break for club recognition and awards, the main act, Blu3, came on. After that Kenya's DJ Leo took to the ones and twos.



Solomon Rubondo plays the trumpet



Cindy, Lillian and Jackie of Blu3 perform



Rotarians get down to the beat



The Ghetto Kids



Brazilian cellist Diego Carneiro and his ensemble



Members of the Rotaract Club of Kampala North Musical perform



Justice Oscar Kihika plays drums with the Jazzing Rotarians





# Saturday 11th - Peace Walk

**H**undreds of Rotarians participated in the Peace Walk, which took place around Makerere University. The President also received Rotarian Shaka Mbanda at the end of his 300km Peace Walk from Nakivale Refugee Settlement in Isingiro district to Kampala “Thank you for being here,” she said. “Walking for peace is a commitment to make peace possible, and I thank you for that. Enjoy the walk and remember that you’re helping to make peace possible. You are peacebuilders today.”

Later in the afternoon, Dr Urchick participated in the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) camp at the Kaazi camping grounds on the shores of Lake Victoria. She told participants that skills in public speaking, writing, and proficiency in ICT and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence are



Warming up before the Peace Walk

essential for all careers.

A farewell dinner was hosted for her by Rotary International Director Nominee Emmanuel Katongole.

“I will never forget the memory that I have of this special week in Uganda,” President Stephanie A. Urchick said.



President Stephanie (middle), DG Anne (right) and PDG Mike (left) at the start of the Peace Walk



Making a peace point



Selfie time to record the memories



Dr Stephanie A. Urchick, middle, meets Rtn Shyaka Mbanda at the end of his 300km Peace Walk from Nakivale Refugee Settlement in Isingiro district to Kampala



PDG Mike Ssebalu joined musician Spice Diana on stage



The Prisons Band led the walk



Finally, at the finish line

# RYLA Camp

President Stephanie Urchick visited in the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) camp at the Kaazi camping grounds on the shores of Lake Victoria. She told participants that skills in public speaking, writing, and proficiency in ICT and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence are essential for all careers.



# Farewell Dinner

On the last day of her official visit, President Uchick was hosted to a dinner by Rotary International Director Nominee Emmanuel Katongole





PDG Stephen Mwanje talking about the history of Rotary

## The History Of Rotary In Uganda

By PDG Stephen Mwanje

*During the Rotary International President's interaction with Uganda Rotary leaders at the Next Media studios in Naguru, PDG Stephen Mwanje gave a brief history of Rotary in Uganda. These are edited excerpts from his speech:*

Rotary came to the African continent in 1921 through South Africa with the chartering of the Rotary Club of Johannesburg. It then began moving upwards, and by 1930, it had reached our neighbourhood in Nairobi.

At that time, all clubs on the continent were grouped under District 55. In 1949 that District was split into two, D24 and D25. D24 was the southern part and D25 was the

upper north, which started with 24 clubs and 1036 members.

Attempts to start a club in Uganda began in 1946, but it did not happen until some 'magician' in RC Nairobi cracked it. In May 1957, the RC Kampala was born. We then began growing slowly starting with the Rotary Club of Mbale, sponsored by the RC Nakuru in 1963. Shortly after, RC Kampala sponsored the RC Jinja in 1964 and then the RC Kampala West followed in 1970, also sponsored by the RC Kampala.

In 1962, Uganda gained independence. At that time, the majority of Rotarians were expatriates. After independence, many of them went back to Europe, leaving a very big gap. Luckily at the time, there were many Asians who were running businesses and many of these joined Rotary and closed the gap in membership. Rotary was therefore able to continue growing.

By 1970, we had 4 clubs, but in 1971, there was a coup in this country and Idi Amin became the president. Amin did not understand what Rotary was all about and referred to it as an organization for Zionists and Imperialists. He even banned the use of the title 'President' by anyone other than himself. The club Presidents were therefore called Chairmen during that time.

In 1972/73, this country had its first black District Governor, Elizaphan Ntende (popularly known as Phan), although we had earlier had Governor Vanu Radia, an Indian as the first Governor from Uganda in 1970/71. Ntende was reportedly the first black Rotary Governor worldwide.

Governor Ntende requested for an appointment to meet President Amin. When the two met, the Governor tried to explain to the President that Rotary was apolitical, an organization

of volunteers who focused on serving needy communities.

Unfortunately, Amin was not convinced and as soon as Gov Ntende left, President Amin developed other ideas. Soon thereafter, Amin expelled all Asians from Uganda, which was a very big blow to the Rotary movement in Uganda. Many Rotarians were murdered, quite a number were imprisoned and the majority that survived went into exile. Membership for all 4 clubs dropped from 223 to 19 by June 30 1973.

Therefore, from 1973 to 1979, there was nothing to talk about Rotary in Uganda. In 1980, we had our first general elections and in 1981 some Rotary activities started, but still very slowly. In 1983, 2 clubs were formed, bringing the total number of clubs to 6.

Serious Rotary business started in 1984/85, at a time when Sam F. Owori (RIP) became club President of the RC Kampala. Under his leadership that year, the RC Kampala started 3 Rotary clubs of Masaka, Mbarara and Gulu. That same year, Sam helped to start the first RCC of Mutajjazi and 3 Rotaract clubs Mulago, Kyambogo and Makerere. Remember, there was a civil war at the time, and how they managed to start a Rotary club in a place like Gulu, one wonders. But that was Sam Owori for you.

Because of this outstanding job, his Rotary club requested him to put in an application for District Governor. He was voted in to become the DG for the year 1987/88. As of June 30 1987, as Sam was starting his year of service as DG, our District was the largest globally. It was 5.5km<sup>2</sup> and covered 12 countries. It was therefore redistricted on July 1 1987, and Sam became the first DG of the new District 920, made of 8 countries and 34 clubs.

Sam then went on to make wonders. At the end of his year of service as Governor, District 920 recorded the highest growth rate globally, mainly because of Uganda. That year, Uganda recorded over 110% growth in both the number of clubs and

membership. Clubs grew from 9 to 19 that year and to 30 the year after. This growth continued, though at a lower rate into the 1990s.

Unfortunately, growth in numbers came with challenges of quality with clubs/Rotarians struggling with the payment of dues. I remember vividly at a district conference in Reunion when, while discussing the issue of redistricting, a PDG from Mombasa went to the podium and said that no matter what the committee decided, they did not want to stay with Uganda in the same district, because Ugandan Rotarians were substandard. This statement shocked many of us who were new to Rotary.

Unfortunately for this PDG, redistricting indeed happened but Uganda was still left with Kenya, plus Ethiopia, Tanzania and Eritrea. This was the new D9200 born on 1st July 1997. The issue of quality persisted until the early 2000s, and it was not uncommon to find 30% of clubs from Uganda on the list of unpaid dues. It consequently became very difficult even for a Ugandan to be voted into the office of Governor.

By 2002, the situation was so bad that Ugandan Rotarians had become the laughingstock of the district. Consequently, a group of 4 young men (code-named the GANG OF FOUR) felt that enough was enough and something had to be done. They candidly analyzed the situation and decided to take action. First, they agreed to visit all the clubs in the country and offer training, all at their cost (since there was no budget). This training was focused on Rotary basics and Governance.

Thereafter they organised the very first Training of Trainers, where all Past Presidents were encouraged to attend. After building sufficient capacity, these young men went ahead and addressed the issue of sustainability. This necessitated influencing a change in structure and policy. They convinced the DG then, Varinder Singh Sue, to set up the office of Country Chair in Uganda, which would be responsible for coordinating all Rotary activities in the country. With the support of

senior colleagues Sam Owori (RIP) and Abel Katahoire, they got an office and someone to run the office, again at their cost. They then convinced the DG not to visit any club that had outstanding dues, whether RI or District.

These actions did wonders immediately. All clubs were now compliant. These friends then decided that it was high time for them to take on the challenge of leadership of the District and at the DCA in 2003, convinced one of them to give it a shot, and F.F Tsubira (Tusu) was successfully nominated as Governor for the year 2006/07.

This gave the group the opportunity to consolidate on their achievements. For example, they then drafted a document appropriately called the 'High Minimum Standard' which spelt out what sort of credentials one needed to occupy the different offices at country or district.

There was also effort at getting ladies and youths into leadership positions. A year later, another member of the Gang, Christ Mutalya, was requested to offer himself as well and he too went through as DG for 2007/08. At Chris's DCA in Dar, yours truly also gave it a shot, and as expected, went through to become DG for 2010/11. Unfortunately, our fourth colleague, Martin Kiyaga, passed on in 2010, before he got the opportunity to serve in the position of DG.

The results can be seen even today. For example, whereas Uganda produced only 6 Governors in the first 50 years of existence (1957-2007), we have been able to produce 18 Governors in the years that followed (2007-2027). The average age of Uganda then was 62, and today, it is about 45. The percentage of women then was 18%, and today, it is over 44%.

Today, we've got 201 clubs, in both districts. Membership is just over 7,500. Rotaract has 220 clubs and members are almost 5,000.

So, the combined family has 12,000 people. But we are saying that's not enough. There's so much more that we can do. Thank you for listening.



Group activities at RYLA 2025

## Leadership is not about wielding power... it is about serving others

By **Steven Matovu**  
Public Relations Director, RAC Kiteezi

Leadership is a concept that evolves with experience, exposure and reflection. For me, RYLA was a defining moment in my leadership journey. This transformative programme redefined my understanding of leadership, introduced me to the power of collaboration, and instilled in me a deep sense of community and social responsibility.

RYLA taught me that leadership is not about wielding power or holding prestigious titles, it is about serving others. This principle, encapsulated in Rotary's motto, 'Service Above

Self', resonated deeply with me; and I embraced the concept of servant leadership, a style that prioritises the needs of others, empowers teams, and fosters an environment where everyone can thrive. This shift in perspective has profoundly influenced the way I approach leadership roles, focusing on serving and uplifting those around me.

Another critical lesson from RYLA was the importance of a team-oriented approach to leadership. I learned that true leadership success is not measured by individual achievements but by the collective commitment and accomplishments of the team. Collaboration, communication, and mutual respect are the cornerstones of effective

leadership, and RYLA provided practical experiences that reinforced this. RYLA did not just shape my outlook on leadership, it also inspired me to lead with purpose. The program's emphasis on personal growth, ethical practices, and service to humanity has left an indelible mark on my leadership style. It is a constant reminder that leadership is a privilege and a responsibility to create a better world for others.

In conclusion, RYLA was more than a leadership training program; it was a life-changing experience. As I continue my leadership journey, I carry these lessons with pride and gratitude, striving to embody the ideals of servant leadership and purposeful action.

## We can achieve more together

By **Cuthbert Ssempe**  
RAC Makerere University

One of the most significant lessons I learned was the true essence of teamwork. Working with others, sharing ideas, and striving toward common goals showed me how much more we can achieve together than alone. It was not just about collaboration, but also about being present and fully engaged in every activity, knowing that each team member's effort contributes to the bigger picture.

RYLA encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone and speak up. The dynamic sessions and group interactions emphasised

the importance of voicing ideas and actively participating. Grabbing opportunities as they arose was another vital takeaway. I realised that leadership often requires not waiting for the perfect moment but making the most of the moments presented.

Amid the seriousness of leadership lessons, there were light-hearted moments that brought us closer together. Dancing became a universal language of joy and connection, proving that even in leadership, there is room for laughter, energy, and fun.

The forest hike was a challenging yet rewarding experience. It taught me resilience, pushing me to persevere even when the journey seemed difficult. This lesson

extended beyond the hike, reinforcing the importance of determination in both personal and professional spheres.

Through Coach Bob and the Toli Wekka team, I discovered the critical importance of maintaining physical and mental health. Their sessions highlighted the connection between a healthy body and a healthy mind, equipping us with tools to lead balanced and fulfilling lives.

RYLA was a platform for learning, connecting, and discovering my potential. The lessons I learned and the memories I made will stay with me as I continue my Rotaract journey and beyond. To anyone considering RYLA, I can confidently say it's an experience you don't want to miss.

## A journey of connection, impact

By **Santalucy Fungaroh**  
RAC Kitante

One of the most remarkable aspects of RYLA was the spirit of flexibility and collaboration that defined our group activities. As a proud member of the vibrant Luminaries, I witnessed the magic of storytelling come alive. Together, we championed a cause that often goes unnoticed: raising awareness about rare diseases. Our story was not just a narrative but a powerful call to action, a commitment to

shine a light on issues that need attention and compassion.

Sharing our vulnerabilities within the group was both humbling and empowering. We held hands figuratively and literally promising to let the Four-Way Test guide us in all our actions. This moment of collective commitment reminded us of the core values of Rotary: truth, fairness, goodwill, and the benefit of all concerned. These principles serve as a compass, steering us to put the needs of others above ourselves. RYLA was not just an event, it was a journey

of self-discovery, personal growth, and meaningful connections. The experiences I gained and the lessons I learned will continue to shape my Rotaract journey and beyond.

Through RYLA, I saw first-hand the unity and impact of the Rotary world, with the visit of the Rotary International President, Stephanie Urchick. It reinforced the belief that, as Rotaractors and Rotarians, we are part of something much bigger — a global family committed to service and positive change.

Turn to page 38



Rtn Hellen Kirunda spelling out the dos and don'ts of the RYLA camp

## I was part of something extraordinary

By **Akia Mastula**  
**RAC Nangabo**  
 (Sponsor - RC Kansangati)

**R**YLA was more than just an event for me, it was a transformative journey that left an indelible mark on my life. I still vividly recall the day I arrived, brimming with excitement yet tinged with nervousness.

From the very first activity, a team-building exercise designed to help us connect, I felt a sense of belonging.

The motivational speakers who took us through the power of self-

discovery and the importance of setting clear, achievable goals touched my heart deeply. As I listened to their words, I thought this was exactly what I needed to hear. I left those sessions feeling motivated and inspired to take on the world.

One of the most memorable parts was the Valley Challenge. At first glance, the course seemed daunting. But with the unwavering support and encouragement of my teammates, I mustered the courage to face it head-on.

The challenge involved navigating rope courses, crawling

through tunnels, and overcoming obstacles that tested both physical and mental limits. It was a few intense hours filled with mud, sweat, and even a few tears. Yet, with every hurdle I crossed, my confidence grew. By the end of the challenge, I was exhausted but exhilarated. I knew I had been part of something extraordinary.

To me, RYLA was a journey of self-discovery. It pushed me to new heights, showing me what I was truly capable of. The experience has changed me in ways I never imagined, instilling a sense of purpose and determination to create a positive impact in my community.

## An unforgettable experience

By **Linnet Nabwire**  
**PE RAC E-Club of Uganda Global, (Sponsor - RC E-Club Uganda Global)**

**A**s I reflect on my maiden RYLA experience, I am filled with gratitude and a renewed sense of purpose. It was a transformative journey that has left an indelible mark on my life.

As part of the Phoenix Squad, our group's name symbolized resilience and determination. We were tasked with creating reusable sanitary towels, a skill that not only empowered us but also ignited a passion to make a difference in our communities.

The highlight of the camp was the visit from the Rotary International President, who witnessed our skills in making reusable sanitary towels. But the icing on the cake was emerging victorious in the proposal writing and pitching competition for our mighty Phoenix group's Green Livelihood Initiative. RYLA 2025 was more than just a leadership conference, it was a catalyst for growth, connection, and impact. I return home empowered to soar, equipped with skills, experiences, and memories that will shape my role as the incoming President of the Rotaract E-Club of Uganda Global and the journey beyond.

## It was a turning point

By **Morris Nabimanya**  
**RAC Kyambogo University**

**A**ttempting RYLA was a turning point for me as a student.

Among the many impactful sessions, the one led by Rtn. Mussolini on goal setting stood out. His insights on setting sustainable goals in line with one's career were not only inspiring but also practical.

Through his guidance, I learned how to craft goals that align with my aspirations and how to trace my progress toward success. The emphasis on setting clear, achievable milestones has given me a new perspective on planning for the future.

As a student, these lessons are invaluable. They have equipped me with tools to create a structured approach to my academic and career pursuits, ensuring that I remain focused and purposeful. RYLA has truly been a platform for personal and professional growth, and I am grateful for the opportunity to learn and be inspired.



## Peace-Building in Nakivale Refugee Settlement

By AG Marion Natukunda

Peace-building and conflict resolution are central tenets of Rotary’s mission to create lasting change in our communities and around the world. This month, as Rotarians focus on promoting peace and resolving conflicts, we reflect on how our efforts in Nakivale Refugee Settlement embody these ideals.

One of Uganda’s largest and oldest refugee settlements, Nakivale is home to over 130,000 refugees from several countries, including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, and South Sudan.

These individuals, displaced by conflict and persecution, seek not only safety but also the opportunity to rebuild their lives in harmony.

Our Rotary Club RC Kiwatule has been at the forefront of initiatives to support these refugees, fostering an environment of peace and empowerment.



Recognising that peace is not merely the absence of conflict but the presence of opportunity, our club has focused on programs that address both immediate needs and long-term resilience in partnership with RC Mbarara from D9214.

**VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR PEACE AND INDEPENDENCE**  
One of our flagship projects has been vocational training for youth and women in Nakivale, and by equipping them with skills in tailoring, computer training and laptops, among other tools, we provide them

with self-reliance and economic stability. This initiative reduces the competition for scarce resources, a common trigger for conflict in displaced communities. More importantly, it instills hope and a sense of purpose, which are vital for fostering peaceful coexistence.

### PROMOTING EDUCATION FOR A PEACEFUL FUTURE

Education is a cornerstone of peace-building, and RC Kiwatule has been committed to supporting vocational schools in Nakivale. We have provided scholastic materials and established mentorship programs to encourage students to dream beyond the boundaries of

the camp. Through education, we empower young refugees to become ambassadors of peace, equipped to break the cycle of violence and instability in their communities.

### DIALOGUE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Understanding that peacebuilding requires collaboration, our club facilitated dialogue sessions between host communities and refugees. These sessions focus on cultural exchange and conflict resolution, promoting mutual understanding and respect. By bridging divides, we create an inclusive environment where diversity becomes a strength rather

than a source of division.

### HEALTH AND HYGIENE AS A FOUNDATION FOR HARMONY

Good health is essential for peace, and our club has championed WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) initiatives in Nakivale. By improving access to clean water and promoting hygiene practices, we reduce tensions over resources and contribute to a healthier, more harmonious community.

### A CALL TO ACTION

As Rotarians, our role in promoting peace extends beyond Nakivale. The lessons we learn and the impact we create are testaments to Rotary’s ability to address global challenges at the local level. Let us continue to champion peacebuilding and conflict resolution, ensuring that no one is left behind in our pursuit of a better world.

This month, let us rededicate ourselves to creating pathways for peace in our clubs, communities, and beyond. Through collaboration, compassion, and commitment, we can transform lives and build a legacy of peace that endures.

Rotary’s theme this month reminds us that peace begins with us and it begins now. Together, we are making peace possible, one initiative at a time.





## Mentorship for the Future: Empowering Children Through Training Camps



BY ALICE GUMA KEMBABAZI

In a continued effort to uplift and inspire young minds within the Naalya Estate community, the Rotary Club of Naalya States hosted its most recent Children’s Mentorship Training Camp on January 17, 2025. This impactful initiative, organized during school holidays, reflects the club’s unwavering commitment to nurturing the leaders of tomorrow. Partnering with BURN Radio, a Christian faith-based organisation, the camp featured a range of engaging sessions designed to holistically develop the participants. Key topics covered included:

### Team Building: Teaching collaboration and teamwork through interactive activities.

- **Boosting Public Speaking:** Helping children articulate their thoughts and speak confidently.
- **Boosting Confidence:** Building self-esteem and enabling children to face challenges with assurance.
- **Introduction to Coding:** Introducing basic computer skills to stimulate creative and logical thinking.
- **Team Building:** Teaching collaboration and teamwork through interactive activities.
- **Sports Games:** Encouraging physical fitness and promoting a

sense of discipline and fair play.

- **Financial Literacy through Shopping:** Instilling the value of money and budgeting in a fun and practical way.

### TRANSFORMATIVE OUTCOMES

The benefits of this program were profound, resulting in significant positive changes for the young participants:

- **Enhanced Self-Esteem and Confidence:** Many children were able to confidently introduce themselves and express their ideas.
- **Improved Behaviour:** Positive influences were observed both at home and in school settings.
- **Development of Interpersonal Skills:** The sessions fostered better communication and collaboration among children.
- **Tech-Savvy Knowledge:** Introduction to computer skills sparked curiosity and creative thinking.
- **Financial Awareness:** Activities emphasised the importance of money management and budgeting.







## DG VISIT: RC BUSIA & BUSIA BORDERLINE



## DG VISIT: RC JINJA METRO



DG VISIT: RC KAMPALA-SSESE



DG VISIT: KASANA-LUWEERO





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