



ubuntu

August Edition 2026 . Vol 1.

magazine

Growing Leaders



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Leading
tomorrow.

Belonging

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Growing Communities.
Growing Leaders.



Growing Communities

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Growing Rotary

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A world of
impact.

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Editorial guidelines

Ubuntu Magazine is the official publication of Rotary District 9214, serving Rotarians, Rotaractors, partners, and communities across Uganda, Tanzania and beyond.

Ubuntu Magazines serves to:

- Celebrate the impact of Rotary service.
- Share inspiring stories of members and communities.
- Promote learning, innovation and leadership development.
- Preserve the history and achievements of District 9214.
- Provide a platform for meaningful conversations around service, fun, impact and community transformation.

The Magazine priorities:

- Authentic storytelling over activity reporting.
- Impact over statistics alone.
- Diverse voices across Uganda, Tanzania and beyond.
- Ethical, accurate and respectful writing.

All submissions are subject to editorial review, editing and approval to maintain quality, consistency and alignment with Rotary values.

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For:

- Article submissions
- Advertising enquiries
- Feedback
- Partnership opportunities
- Impact around the district and the Ubuntu magazine

THE TEAM BEHIND THE PAGES



Technical Advisor – PAG Florence Malinga

Club: Rotary Club of Muyenga Bukasa

Role: District Scholarships Chair

Classification: Education Planning Services

She is a seasoned educationist with qualifications in English Language Studies, Literature in English, and Education Planning and Administration. An avid reader and writer, she has made significant contributions to Rotary communications, serving as Deputy Chief Editor of Ubuntu, Chief Editor in Rotary Year 2022/23, and a member of all subsequent District Governor's Newsletter Editorial Teams. Since joining the Rotary Club of Muyenga in 2016, she has served in various leadership roles, including Charter President of RC Muyenga Bukasa, Past Assistant Governor, and New Club Adviser. She also served as Technical Adviser to the District Conference and Assembly (DCA) Magazine in the previous two Rotary years and is pleased to serve as Technical Adviser to the Ubuntu Editorial Team this Rotary Year while serving as Chair of the District Rotary Scholarships Committee.

Tanzania Team



Country Editor Tanzania - Augustine Mwombeki

Club: Rotary Club of Zanzibar Stonetown

Role: Country Editor Tanzania – Ubuntu Magazine

Classification: Education & Community Services

Augustine Mwombeki is a proud member of the Rotary Club of Zanzibar Stonetown, where he currently serves as the Club Rotary Foundation Director after previously serving as Assistant Governor. Professionally engaged in education and community service projects, he is passionate about developing people, strengthening communities, and advancing Rotary's mission through sustainable service and effective communication. As a member of the District Ubuntu Magazine Editorial Team, he is committed to sharing impactful Rotary stories that inspire service and fellowship throughout District 9214. His personal philosophy is: "Perception is not reality."



Ciren Gracias Club: Rotary Club of Njiro Arusha

Role: Ubuntu Magazine Contributor & Editor

Classification: Accounting Services

Ciren Gracias is an accountant by profession and a writer by passion. He has been associated with Ubuntu Magazine since 2021, serving as Tanzania Country Editor and later as Editor-in-Chief during the 2024–2025 Rotary year. His experience and commitment to Rotary communications continue to strengthen the publication, and he is delighted to serve once again as part of the editorial team for the 2026–2027 Rotary year.



Charity Mwakio Club: Rotary Club of Dar es Salaam Mikocheni

Role: Ubuntu Magazine Editor & Contributor & Club Secretary

Classification: Financial Services

Charity Mwakio has been a Rotarian for over 16 years and has served in numerous leadership roles, including Club President and Assistant Governor. She served as Tanzania Country Editor for Ubuntu Magazine during the 2024–2025 Rotary year, a role she greatly enjoyed. With a passion for writing and storytelling, Charity is delighted to continue serving on the District Governor's Newsletter Editorial Team and looks forward to working with colleagues to strengthen and revitalize Ubuntu Magazine.



Angel Joseph Banzi

Club: Rotaract Club of KCMC

Role: Ubuntu Editorial Team Member & Project Secretary

Classification: Medical Services Student

Rotaractor Angel Joseph Banzi is a medical student at KCMC University. She is a passionate advocate for health, youth leadership, community service and Communications & Editorial Enthusiast. As a member of the Ubuntu Magazine Editorial Team, Angel is committed to telling impactful Rotary stories that inspire service, innovation, and positive change across Africa. Beyond Rotaract, Angel actively contributes to public health initiatives, leadership development, and strategic communications, believing that powerful storytelling unites communities and amplifies lasting impact. Angel is excited to use the Ubuntu platform to celebrate the people and projects transforming lives through Rotary's motto, Service Above Self.



Nasibu Mahinya Club: Rotary Club of Dar es Salaam Mikocheni
Role: Assistant Governor and Ubuntu Magazine Editorial & Contributor
Classification: Entrepreneurial Services

Nasibu Mahinya is a multidisciplinary artist, entrepreneur, and international author dedicated to taking African stories to global audiences. Through music, film, and literature, he creates narratives that shape how the world discovers and understands African culture. A proud member of the Rotary Club of Dar es Salaam Mikocheni, he served as President of Presidents for Tanzania during the 2025–2026 Rotary year and currently serves as Country Blood Donation Chair, leading initiatives that promote voluntary blood donation across the country.



Dorcas John Saganya
Club: Rotary Club of Moshi
Role: Ubuntu Magazine Contributor, Club Head of Public Relations Committee and Secretary
Classification: Sales and Marketing Services

Dorcas John Saganya is a sales and marketing professional passionate about service, leadership, and creating opportunities that empower others. As Head of the Public Relations Committee and Secretary of the Rotary Club of Moshi, she is committed to strengthening Rotary's public image through effective communication and meaningful engagement. She believes in leveraging innovation, collaboration, and entrepreneurship to support sustainable community development, particularly for youth and women. Guided by the principle of Service Above Self, Dorcas strives to inspire positive and lasting change through compassionate leadership.



Julia Seifert Club: Rotary Club of Dar es Salaam Mikocheni
Role: Ubuntu Contributor & Editor, Rotary Global Grants Committee – Tanzania, Past President & Past Assistant Governor
Classification: Applied Researcher & Data Analyst

Rotarian Julia Seifert is an applied researcher and data analyst with over a decade of experience leading research, evaluations, and advisory assignments across East and Sub-Saharan Africa. She specializes in financial inclusion, sustainability, socioeconomic development, and evidence-based decision-making, working with governments, development partners, and the private sector. A dedicated member of the Rotary Club of Dar es Salaam Mikocheni, Julia is a former Ubuntu Magazine contributor, Past President, Past Assistant Governor, and currently serves on the Rotary Global Grants Committee for Tanzania.



Caren Mametu Eden
Club: Rotaract Club of Kwanza
Role: Ubuntu Magazine Contributor

Rotaractor Caren Mametu Eden is a member of the Rotaract Club of Kwanza with a passion for meaningful projects, collaboration, and volunteerism. She enjoys using creativity and writing as tools for expression, connection, and inspiration. Guided by Rotary's principle of Service Above Self, Caren believes in fostering personal growth while contributing to initiatives that create lasting change. She is excited to continue serving and making a meaningful difference in her community and beyond.



Rahma M. Nurdin
Club: Rotaract Club of Alpha
Role: Ubuntu Magazine Swahili Contributor/Editor, International Service Director (2026–2027) & District 9214 Swahili Exchange Officer
Classification: Anthropology & Program Services

Rahma M. Nurdin is a proud member of the Rotaract Club of Alpha. She serves as the club's International Service Director and as District 9214 Swahili Exchange Officer for the period of 2026–2027. An anthropologist and program coordinator by profession, Rahma is passionate about maternal and child health, community development, and sustainable social impact. She believes in the power of Service Above Self through initiatives and hands-on projects that create lasting positive change.

Uganda Team



Joyce Kyeyune

Club: Rotary Club of Muyenga Bukasa

Role: Country Editor Uganda – Ubuntu Magazine

Classification: Communication Services

Country Editor, Rotarian Joyce Kyeyune loves all things words; conjuring up fresh, interesting content is her lifetime passion. A certified Strategic Communication Specialist, she serves with the public image Directorate as the Bulletin Officer at the Rotary Club of Muyenga Bukasa. She is the country Editor for the Ubuntu District Magazine -2026/2027.



Beatrice A. Tinka

Club: Rotary Club of Kitende

Role: Ubuntu Editor/Contributor & President Elect

Classification: Communication Services

Rotarian Beatrice A. Tinka is a communications specialist and a dedicated Rotarian serving as President-Elect of the Rotary Club of Kitende. With experience in corporate communications, international trade and business development, she is passionate about sustainable communities, youth empowerment and women's economic advancement. "I believe effective communication is essential in every aspect of life, fostering understanding, collaboration, leadership and meaningful social impact"



Joseph "Joe" Ssuuna

Club: Rotary Club of Bwebajja

Role: Ubuntu Editor/Contributors

Classification: Public Relations & Communication Services

Rotarian Joseph "Joe" Ssuuna is a public relations and mass communication practitioner. Since joining Rotary in 2021, he has established himself as a seasoned storyteller and editor, serving on the District Newsletter team for over four years, including as Country Editor for Uganda during the 2024/2025 Rotary year. He has also made significant contributions to the Public Image and Public Relations portfolio of the Rotary Club of Bwebajja over the years.



Freddie Nyanzi

Club: Rotary Club of Nalumunye

Role: President Elect & Ubuntu Editor/Contributor

Classification: Computer Science Services

Rotarian Freddie Nyanzi is a Computer Scientist, social services professional, and the Principal CEO of SADO Uganda. A dedicated Rotarian and President-Elect (2026/2027) of the Rotary Club of Nalumunye, a graduate of the Rotary Leadership Institute with a deep passion for leadership, community development, and Service Above Self. An avid reader, accomplished writer, and lifelong lover of literature, Freddie is committed to creating lasting impact through servant leadership and community service. He is happily married.



Shubbie Mirembe

Club: Rotaract Club of Mutundwe

Role: Ubuntu Contributor

Classification: Civil Engineering Services

Rotaractor Shubbie Mirembe serves as the Charter President of the Rotaract Club of Mutundwe. Her Rotary journey has seen her serve in several district leadership roles, including District Interact Chair and Family of Rotaract Chair for the 2026/2027 Rotary year. She also serves on the Ubuntu Magazine Committee as an Ubuntu Contributor, where she supports the publication's mission of sharing impactful Rotary stories across District 9214.



Hudu Lubowa Mwanje

Club: Rotaract Club of Seguku

Role: Ubuntu Contributor

Classification: Medical Clinical services

Rotaractor Hudu Lubowa Mwanje is the Charter President of the Rotaract Club of Seguku, Kampala, Uganda. A Medical Clinical Officer by profession and currently working as graphic designer. He is committed to youth empowerment, community health, creative communication, and impactful service. Through his leadership in Rotary, he inspires volunteers and champions sustainable community development, serving with dedication, discipline, and a vision for lasting impact both locally and beyond.



Name: Kakuru Obadia
Club: Rotaract Club of Kabwohe - Uganda
Role: Club PR Chair & Ubuntu Contributor
Classification: Health Services (Human)

Kakuru Obadia is a renown, Health Practitioner, Public Health Educator / Health Enthusiast, with qualifications in Nursing Science, Diabetic Foot Care. He is a regular article writer with Ubuntu Newsletter and The Banana Magazine. He served as a regular article writer of Ubuntu Newsletter for RY 2025/26 and Co - Chief Editor of The Banana Magazine for Rotary Club of Kabwohe. Since joining Rotary family, he served on various different leadership roles including; Vice Club President of Rotaract Club of Rwenzori School of Nursing and Midwifery - Kasese, Club PR Chair, Club Service Projects, Club Vice President, Club President of Rotaract Club of Kabwohe since 2018, Assistant District Rotaract Representative (PADRR) of Western Zone D9211 in RY 2021/22, Past Assistant District Membership Chair Uganda (D9124). And is pleased to serve with the Ubuntu Editorial Team this Rotary year 2026/27.



Godlive Ayebare
Club: Rotary Club of Mbarara
Role: Ethics and Compliance committee D9214, Ubuntu Magazine Editor/Contributor
Classification: Legal Services

Past Assistant Governor Rotarian Godlive Nayeabare is a member of the Rotary Club of Mbarara and a dual member of the Rotary Club of Mbarara Ranchers and the Rotary Club of Bushenyi. A dedicated Rotarian, advocate, and Partner at Rukabura-Ruhome Advocates, she specialises in land matters and serves as a Professional Advisor at the Law Development Centre, Uganda. Beyond her legal profession, she is a golfer, a mother, and a member of the District 9214 Ethics and Compliance Committee. She is also the author of the book *Groomed for Greatness*, reflecting her commitment to leadership, ethics, and personal development.



Francis Tumwebaze
Club: Rotary Club of Kigo
Role Ubuntu Magazine Contributor, Club Youth Director
Classification: Accounting Services

Rotarian Tumwebaze Francis is a Charter Member of the Rotary Club of Kigo and has served the club in several leadership positions, including Youth Director, Treasurer, Secretary, and President during the 2024/2025 Rotary year. He currently serves as the Club's Public Image Chair and Executive Secretary. Professionally, Francis is an accountant with expertise in taxation and works as a Project Accountant at Frontier Energy Africa, a renewable energy company. He has a passion for writing simple, heartfelt messages and joined the Ubuntu Magazine Editorial Team to further develop his writing skills while contributing to the writing and editing of articles that inspire and inform Rotary members across District 9214.



Angella Ainomugizi
Club: Rotary Club of Mbarara Ranchers
Role: Ubuntu Magazine Editor/Contributor, Club Public Image Chair
Classification: Financial Services

Angella Ainomugizi is the Immediate Past President of the Rotary Club of Mbarara Ranchers, passionate about service, leadership, public image and creating lasting community impact. She has led the club's public image efforts through strategic communication, branding, storytelling and digital engagement, significantly enhancing the club's visibility and member participation. She is a strong advocate for Rotary's brand, believing that impactful service should be visible, relatable and inspiring to both members and the wider community. Professionally, Angella is an accomplished finance specialist with extensive experience in financial management, donor-funded programs, compliance and organizational leadership. She is known for her warmth, creativity, attention to detail and sense of humor. Angella remains committed to strengthening Rotary through meaningful partnerships, effective communication and service above self.



Eregu Emmanuel Ambrose
Club: Rotaract Club of Entebbe Airport
Role: Ubuntu Magazine Contributor/Editor
Classification: Electrical Engineering services

Eregu Emmanuel Ambrose is a graphic designer and youth leader from the Rotaract Club of Entebbe Airport, where he served as Club President during the Visionary Rotary Year 2022–2023. Throughout his Rotaract journey, he has served as Projects Director, The Rotary Foundation (TRF) Director, Club Administration Director, Club Secretary, and on several club and district committees, demonstrating a strong commitment to leadership, service, and community engagement. This Rotary year, he is pleased to serve on the Ubuntu Magazine Editorial Team. Professionally, Emmanuel has a background in Electrical Engineering and currently works as a Graphic Designer at Envision Graphic, where he develops impactful visual communication and branding solutions, applying his creativity to strengthen organisations and tell compelling stories.

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Why Belonging Matters More Than Membership

A month ago, we began a conversation.

In the inaugural issue of Ubuntu Magazine, we reflected on why this year matters; why stories matter, why they deserve to be preserved, and why communication is far more than reporting events—it is leadership in action. We committed ourselves to telling Rotary's story differently: with greater purpose, deeper reflection, and an unwavering focus on impact. More importantly, we invited every Rotarian and Rotaractor across District 9214 to become part of that story.

The response has been both encouraging and humbling.

It affirmed something we have always believed: people are not only looking for information; they are looking for connection. They want to understand the ideas shaping our district, celebrate the achievements of fellow members, learn from one another's experiences, and feel part of something larger than themselves.

That brings us to this month's conversation.

Traditionally, August is a time when we speak about growth, recruitment, and expanding our reach. Those conversations are important. Every thriving organisation must continue to grow. Yet before we ask how Rotary can attract more members, perhaps we should ask a more fundamental question:

What makes people choose to belong?

Membership begins with an invitation. Belonging begins with an experience. People may join because someone asked them to attend a meeting. They remain because they found purpose, friendship, opportunities to lead, and a community that recognised their potential. The strongest clubs are not always those with the largest numbers. They are the ones where



every member feels valued, every voice is heard, and every act of service strengthens the bonds that unite them.

That is the spirit that runs through this edition of Ubuntu Magazine.

Within these pages, you will encounter more than discussions about membership. You will discover stories about leadership that inspire people to stay, reflections on the relationships that sustain service, global perspectives on growing Rotary in a changing world, and thoughtful conversations that challenge us to think differently about engagement. You will meet leaders who remind us that building stronger clubs or organisations begins with building stronger human connections, and Rotaractors whose journeys demonstrate the power of a single invitation to change the course of a life.

You will also see Ubuntu Magazine continuing to grow.

This issue introduces new voices, fresh perspectives and richer storytelling from across Uganda, Tanzania and beyond the district. We continue our commitment to showcasing thoughtful opinion pieces, meaningful interviews, visual storytelling and diverse contributors whose experiences strengthen our understanding of Rotary and the communities we serve. Every article has been selected with one

purpose in mind: not simply to inform, but to inspire reflection, conversation and action.

This is the publication we aspire to build together;

- One that celebrates ideas as much as achievements;
- One that values thoughtful dialogue alongside remarkable projects;
- One that preserves not only what Rotary accomplished but what Rotary learned.

Because institutions grow stronger when they remember, and communities flourish when they learn from one another.

As we continue this editorial journey throughout the Rotary year, each issue will explore a different idea that lies at the heart of service and leadership. If July asked why this year matters, especially our stories, August asks why people choose to belong.

Next month, our conversation turns to another foundation of lasting impact: Basic Education and Literacy and our first-ever Kiswahili Ubuntu Magazine. We hope you will continue this journey with us.

For now, I invite you to read these pages with curiosity, to share the stories that resonate with you and, above all, to consider how each of us can help create a Rotary where belonging is experienced long before membership is counted.

Because people may join through an invitation.

They remain because they belong.

Catherine Nayesiga
Editor-in-Chief
Ubuntu Magazine



Rotary
Clubs of Uganda

GGWANGA MUJE

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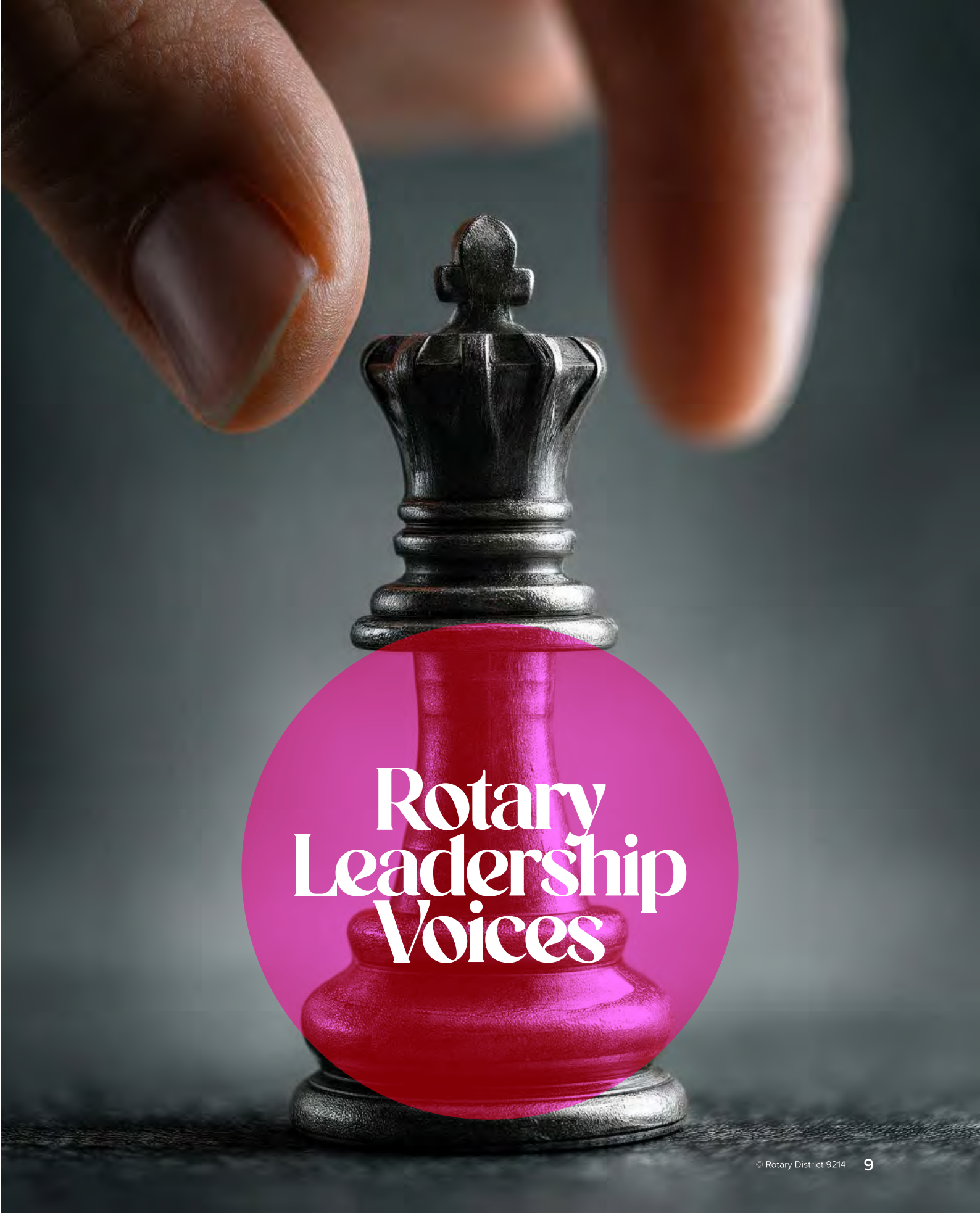
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Rotary Leadership Voices



Rotary International President

Peace does not happen by accident. It must be pursued deliberately, built strategically, and woven intentionally into everything we do. That is the challenge I am placing before the Rotary world this year.

Rotary recognizes peacebuilding as one of our areas of focus. But I believe peace must be more than a category of work we set aside for certain projects. It must become a lens, one we choose to look through every time we plan, every time we serve, every time we ask what kind of impact we truly want to leave behind.

The Institute for Economics and Peace has identified eight Pillars of Positive Peace: well-functioning government, a sound business environment, equitable distribution of resources, acceptance of the rights of others, good relations with neighbors, free flow of information, high levels of human capital, and low levels of corruption. These pillars describe the conditions that make lasting peace possible. And when I look at them carefully, I see enormous potential for Rotary. Not because our work automatically advances peace but because it can when we are deliberate about it.

That is the key word: deliberate.

A water project does not build peace on its own. But a water project designed with the Pillars of Positive Peace in mind — one that asks how equitable access to resources strengthens community trust — can begin to lay that foundation. A vocational training program does not guarantee reconciliation. But one that intentionally brings divided communities together around shared economic opportunity can start to build it. The project does not change. The intention does.

In Colombia, Rotary's Pathways to Peace and Prosperity program shows us what this looks like in practice. Working in communities shaped by decades of armed conflict and displacement, the program combines economic empowerment with conflict resolution training and community-led reconciliation. Peace was not a hoped-for side effect. It was central to the design. That is the standard I am calling all of us to follow.

As you plan your next project, whatever the focus area, I want you to pause and ask one question: How does this create the conditions for peace? Consult the Pillars of Positive Peace. Find where your work connects. Then, make that connection intentional. Share what you discover with your club, your district, and your community. The more we talk about peace as a practice rather than a destination, the more naturally it will shape everything we do.

This is not about doing different work. It is about doing our work differently, with greater awareness, greater purpose, and a clearer vision of the world we are trying to build. Every Rotary project carries potential. Our task is to unlock it, not by chance but by choice.

**Olayinka Yinka
Hakeem Babalola**

President, Rotary International





Every Member Matters

Dear Rotarians, Rotaractors and Friends of Rotary,

By the time this edition of Ubuntu District Magazine reaches you, we will be more than thirty days into the new Rotary year.

The excitement of July may be behind us, but our journey has only just begun. The countdown to our first hundred days is underway, and every day brings another chance to turn vision into visible, lasting impact.

Looking back over the past month fills me with gratitude and optimism. Across Uganda and Tanzania, I have watched clubs embrace this year's call to action with remarkable energy. We have welcomed more than 80 members into our Rotary family, launched projects that are already changing lives, contributed generously to The Rotary Foundation, inspired and motivated our young leaders, and celebrated the fellowship that continues to define District 9214. These are not simply activities on a calendar. They represent people whose lives are being transformed and communities that are becoming stronger through our collective service.

As I write this, I am in Tanzania for the first leg of my district tour, visiting clubs, listening to members, and seeing first-hand the work being carried out in our communities. There is no substitute for being present.

Every visit reminds me that Rotary's greatest strength lies not in our plans or our policies, but in our people. Meeting members where they serve, hearing their stories, and witnessing their passion reinforces my belief that together we are capable of extraordinary things.

August holds special meaning in our Rotary calendar as we mark Membership and New Club Development Month. Membership is the heartbeat of Rotary. Every member who feels welcomed, valued, and engaged strengthens not only their club, but our entire district.

My call to action this month is simple: become an active ambassador for Rotary. Extend an invitation to someone in your circle, mentor a club member, and gently re-engage members you haven't seen for a while. When we build spaces where people find genuine connection and real purpose, our impact naturally grows. In the end, Rotary's greatest legacy will always be the lives we touch and the communities we build together.

As we move into the weeks ahead, let us not lose the momentum we have created. Keep engaging in your club's activities. Keep serving with compassion. Keep giving generously to The Rotary Foundation. Keep telling Rotary's story with pride. And most of all, keep believing that your individual contribution matters.

Our first month has shown us what is possible. As we continue through our first hundred days, let us build on this momentum, because the next eleven months will be defined by what we choose to do together.

Let us keep moving forward with courage, unity and purpose.

Each One, Engage for Impact.

Yours in Rotary Service,

Daniel Mukasa Ddamulira
District Governor 2026–2027
Rotary District 9214

District Rotaract Representative

Dear Rotaractors of District 9214,

August is **Membership and New Club Development Month**, a timely reminder that the strength of Rotaract is not measured solely by the number of clubs we have or the projects we deliver. It is measured by the lives we inspire, the leaders we develop, and the lasting impact we create together.

Over the years, I have had the privilege of engaging with Rotaractors across Tanzania, Uganda and beyond. Those conversations have reaffirmed a simple truth: people do not join Rotaract because they are looking for another meeting to attend. They join because they are searching for purpose, meaningful friendships, opportunities to grow, and a chance to make a difference.

That is why, in a world filled with countless opportunities to connect, learn, and lead, young professionals continue to choose Rotaract. **Rotaract offers purpose beyond profession.** It is where service shapes leaders, ideas become action and impact, and fellowship becomes a lifelong network of changemakers. It prepares us not only for successful careers but also for lives of service, integrity, and leadership.

As we mark this month, I encourage every Rotaractor to become an ambassador for our organization because the most powerful tool for membership growth is not a poster, a social media campaign, or a presentation...it is your story.

Tell your story. Share why you joined Rotaract, the opportunities you have embraced, the communities you have served, the friendships you have built, and the leader you have become. **You never know whose life may be transformed by hearing your journey.** One conversa-

tion can inspire a future Rotaractor, encourage a young professional to serve, or ignite a passion for leadership.

Membership growth is not simply about increasing our numbers. It is about welcoming people who share our values, nurturing their potential, and creating clubs where every member feels valued, engaged, and empowered. When people experience genuine fellowship, purposeful service, and meaningful leadership opportunities, they naturally become our greatest ambassadors.

As we continue **Creating Lasting Impact**, let us remember that every act of service tells a story, every conversation opens a door, and every invitation plants a seed. The next Rotaractor, club president, district leader, or community changemaker may simply be waiting to hear your story. **Be the reason someone discovers a place to belong, a platform to lead, and a lifelong commitment to Service Above Self.**

This August let us intentionally share the gift of Rotaract, strengthen our clubs, establish new ones where opportunities exist, and inspire the next generation of leaders. Together, we will continue Creating Lasting Impact.

Yours in Service,

Beatha Malaori

District Rotaract Representative

2026–2027

Rotary International District 9214





Ubuntu Exclusive

The Future of Rotary Begins with One Invitation

Why people join, why they stay, and what Rotary must become — in the words of the Rotarians living it.

Introduction

Through conversations with Rotarians across Uganda and Tanzania, Ubuntu Magazine explores what attracts members to Rotary today, what keeps them engaged for years, and what clubs must do to remain relevant for the next generation of leaders and community changemakers.

Every Rotarian can trace their membership to a single moment: a conversation, a lapel pin that caught the eye, a friend who thought to ask. For President Elect Munzira Chrispus Namanya of the Rotary Club of Mbarara City, it was curiosity about a Rotaract pin worn by an old schoolmate. That question, asked in 2022, has since carried him through club leadership, a district award, and now the presidency-elect of a Rotary club. “That single meeting inspired me to dig deeper into the world of Rotary,” he recalls.

Rotary’s future, like its past, will be built one invitation at a time — but only if the organisation gives people a reason to say yes, and then to stay.

Every August, Rotary observes Membership and New Club Development Month—a reminder that

Rotary’s future is shaped not only by the projects we complete but by the people we invite, develop and retain. Membership is far more than increasing numbers; it is about increasing Rotary’s capacity to serve. Every new member brings fresh ideas, professional expertise, wider networks and renewed energy that strengthen clubs and expand their ability to create lasting impact in their communities.

Past President Tumwebaze Francis of Rotary Club of Kigo shares that every Rotary journey begins with someone who recognises potential, sees a willingness to serve, or simply believes another person can make a difference. That single invitation may appear small, but it can become the beginning of a lifelong journey of friendship, leadership and service above self.

The person invited today may become tomorrow’s club president, district leader, or champion of humanitarian service.

Why People Join Today

What attracts people to organisations today? Across the world, people increasingly choose organisations that provide more than membership alone. They look for:

- A sense of purpose and contribution.
- Meaningful relationships and belonging.
- Opportunities for personal and professional growth.
- A chance to create visible impact in their communities.

For service organisations like Rotary, the challenge is not only attracting people but demonstrating that membership delivers value throughout their journey.





The interviews gathered for this feature, drawn from Rotarians across Tanzania and Uganda, point to a consistent truth: people no longer join organisations out of duty or tradition. They join for what they cannot easily find elsewhere; purpose, professional company, and a platform for impact.

For Rotarian Isaac Semuyaba of Rotary Club Bukoba Uhuru Kagera, Tanzania, the motivation was explicitly service-driven. “I joined Rotary because I wanted to serve humanity and make a meaningful difference in my community, especially among vulnerable children, youth, and families,” he says. Service alone was not the whole draw. Rotary also offered “a platform to connect with like-minded professionals and community leaders who share the common goal of creating lasting positive change through service.”

That blend of purpose and networking recurs throughout the interviews. Past District Governor Harish Bhatt of Rotary Club of Dar es Salaam Oysterbay, a Rotarian of 28 years, joined for layered reasons: “the first reason was to network and learn; the second was to enjoy fellowship with a group of people having fun; and the third was to be part of Rotary’s community service projects.” He joined, in his words, because Rotary was “a highly respected organization, and its members were business leaders and professionals” — reputation and peer quality mattered as much as mission.

For Past President Nasibu Mahinya of Rotary Club of Dar es Salaam Mikocheni, the appeal was simpler: “I thought it a clear path to hang out with likeminded people. And that has been the case. I’m surrounded by many of such who inspire me on a daily.”

For Namanya, it was mentorship and growth as much as service — a chance to be “continuously uplifted” by people he describes as “smarter, faster, stronger, and more experienced.”

Taken together, these accounts confirm what membership research has long suggested: modern joiners are motivated by a bundle of needs — belonging, professional development, and social impact. Rotary’s advantage is that it can genuinely offer all three under

one roof.

As Francis Tumwebaze reflects, every new member strengthens Rotary beyond numerical growth. New members bring fresh perspectives, renewed energy,

diverse experiences and untapped talents that enrich fellowship, strengthen leadership succession and increase Rotary’s collective capacity to serve, innovate and lead. Membership growth is therefore not simply about increasing numbers it is about expanding Rotary’s ability to transform communities.

Why Members Stay

If joining is about promise, staying is about proof. Every contributor described a moment when the value of membership became tangible — usually through visible impact and human connection, not obligation.

Semuyaba stayed because he witnessed transformation first-hand: “communities transformed through projects in health, education, water, and child protection.

The friendships, mentorship, and opportunities for personal growth have strengthened my commitment.” Mahinya echoed it more simply: “Whenever I see people whose lives have changed due to the many projects we carry out in Rotary, I find fulfilment because this gives me purpose.”

For Bhatt, longevity came from a cumulative return across nearly three decades — leadership roles, international travel, fundraising milestones, and friendships that became “almost like an extended family.” As he puts it, “the achievements of my stay in Rotary have far exceeded my objectives for joining.” Members stay, in short, when the organisation keeps overdelivering on what first drew them in

Namanya frames retention more structurally, describing the Three E’s a complete Rotary experience must deliver:

Experience — “immersive, hands-on service projects and fellowship moments”;

Exposure — vocational tours that introduce members to “diverse perspectives, industries, and leaders”; and Education — “continuous personal growth that challenges members to learn, unlearn, and master new skills for a changing world.”

“When a club harnesses vocational tours and exposes members to rich experiences that drive education and self-reinvention, those members will forever protect their home Rotary club against all external distractions.” — PE Munzira Chrispus Namanya, Rotary Club of Mbarara City

Yet meaningful experiences alone are not enough. Members remain committed when they feel welcomed, respected and trusted with responsibility.

Successful clubs intentionally integrate new members through mentorship, opportunities to serve, leadership development and genuine fellowship. People stay where they know they belong and where they can clearly see the difference their contribution makes.

The same message emerged from members of the Rotary Club of Nalumunye. For Rotarian Angela Namboozee, Rotary became “a home” built on friendship, acceptance and opportunities to serve, lead and mentor others. Past President Philemon Mukisa credits Rotary’s culture of selfless service as the reason he remains committed, while Rotarian Sherifah Namatovu values the opportunity to continue her family’s legacy of service. Their reflections reinforce a simple truth: while projects may attract attention, it is friendship, belonging, purpose and shared values that keep Rotarians engaged for years.

What Rotary Must Become

The picture that emerges is not of an organisation needing reinvention from scratch, but one that must consistently deliver, at club level, what it has always promised at its best. Four priorities stand out.

First, meaningful engagement over passive membership. Semuyaba argues



Rotary “should focus more on meaningful engagement of members by ensuring that every member feels valued, involved, and connected to impactful service projects,” backed by “regular mentorship, recognition of contributions, leadership opportunities, and flexibility in participation.” He proposes a district-level “One Heritage Project,” tying global Rotary identity to local tradition and need.

Second, listening systematically to members. Mahinya’s recommendation is practical: clubs should “consistently make an audit or evaluation to ascertain whether members are receiving the value for which they joined in the first place.” Retention is not guesswork — it is a measurable process, and clubs that treat it as one will outperform those that don’t.

Third, structured pathways for younger members. Namanya’s journey — curious Rotaractor to club president to Rotary president-elect in four years — is a template, not an anomaly. Clubs with deliberate mentorship pipelines from Interact and Rotaract into Rotary will secure their own succession.

Finally, flexibility without diluting substance. None of the contributors asked for a lighter version of Rotary. They asked for a better-delivered one: real impact, recognition, relationships, and opportunities to lead — offered in ways that fit modern, increasingly hybrid and digital, lives.

Growing Rotary through diversity and inclusion; Francis shares that Research and experience across the Rotary world continue to demonstrate that clubs are strongest when they reflect the diversity of the communities they serve. A growing Rotary must intentionally create opportunities for women, younger professionals, emerging leaders and people from diverse backgrounds to participate and lead. Diverse clubs bring broad-

er perspectives, stronger community credibility and a wider range of skills to solve increasingly complex challenges. Diversity is not simply about representation; it is about building stronger and more resilient Rotary clubs.

Membership Growth: Everyone’s Responsibility, he further mentions that Membership growth cannot remain the responsibility of club presidents or membership committees alone. Every Rotarian is an ambassador for Rotary. Every fellowship creates an opportunity to welcome a guest. Every successful service project tells Rotary’s story. The most persuasive invitation is rarely spoken it is demonstrated through visible impact, authentic fellowship and lives transformed through service.

As communities continue to grow and change, Rotary must grow alongside them. Establishing new Rotary clubs, satellite clubs and strengthening Rotaract creates opportunities for more professionals, entrepreneurs and community leaders to experience Service Above Self. Every new club becomes another centre of leadership, fellowship and community transformation, extending Rotary’s reach into communities where new opportunities for service exist.

Beyond Membership: Creating Organisations People Choose to Stay In; A human resources perspective reinforces what Rotarians shared in this feature. Modern professionals remain committed to organisations where they experience belonging, recognition, growth opportunities and a clear connection between their contribution and meaningful outcomes. For Rotary clubs, this means membership growth cannot only focus on attracting new members. It must also focus on creating an environment where every member feels valued, respect-

ed, involved and inspired to continue serving.

Rotary’s next decade will not be won through slogans. It will be won the way Namanya’s journey began — with one good conversation, followed by an organisation that keeps its promises. Every current Rotarian holds that same power today: one invitation, extended well, and honoured by the club that receives it.

Since its beginning in 1905, Rotary has continued to adapt, grow and respond to changing communities and a changing world. The challenge for the next decade is not to change what Rotary stands for, but to discover new ways of delivering its values in a world that looks different from the one in which Rotary began. Evolution, not revolution, will allow Rotary to remain relevant while protecting the principles that have sustained it for more than a century.

The future Rotarian is already in our communities — a professional looking for purpose, a young leader seeking opportunity, or a neighbour waiting to discover a place where they can serve. The question is whether we will recognise them, invite them, and create a Rotary experience where they choose not only to join, but to stay.

Rotary’s challenge is not merely to invite them, but to build clubs where they choose to remain, grow and lead. Every invitation, every welcoming fellowship, every meaningful service project and every new club strengthens Rotary’s future. Membership is not an end in itself; it is how Rotary multiplies its ability to change lives.

Compiled by the Ubuntu Magazine Editorial Team

Contributors: **Rtn Joseph Ssuuna, Rtn Freddie Nyanzi, Rtn Joyce Kyeyune & Francis Tumwebaze**



Rotary Global Perspectives

Beyond Borders:

What East Africa Can Learn from Global Rotary Membership Innovations! -



velop leadership skills, and experience a genuine sense of belonging.

By East Africa, allow me to shape the context of this article to refer the East African Community (EAC) region—Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Somalia—the best current estimate I can establish from publicly available Rotary data is approximately 20,000–25,000 Rotarians, excluding Rotaractors. The exact number depends on the date and the countries included.

For Rotary in East Africa, I would recommend a **10-year target of 50,000 Rotarians by 2036**. This would require approximately **7% average annual net growth**. Achieving this ambition will require more than attracting new members. It will require strengthening the entire membership journey from awareness and invitation, to joining, engagement, leadership development, and long-term retention.

The opportunity is significant because East Africa has:

- a large and growing young professional population;
- strong Rotaract networks that can serve as a membership pipeline;
- expanding business and professional communities;

in East Africa has significant opportunities to accelerate membership growth by borrowing ideas not only from successful Rotary districts around the world but also from other high-performing membership organizations that have reinvented how they attract, engage, and retain members.

In East Africa, Rotary stands at a defining moment. Across Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda, and the wider region, there is a growing population of young professionals, entrepreneurs, community leaders, and changemakers who are seeking meaningful ways to contribute to society. The opportunity before Rotary is not simply to recruit more members, but to create an environment where people discover purpose, build friendships, de-



- a strong culture of community service;
- Significant opportunities for **corporate, young professional and family-oriented membership models**.

The key challenge is that new-member recruitment alone is not enough. Rotary must also improve member engagement, retention, club experience and the conversion of Rotaractors into long-term Rotary members.

What do we need to do?

Transforming membership requires leaders who are willing to embrace change, listen to emerging generations, experiment with new approaches, and make courageous decisions while remaining grounded in Rotary's values and traditions.

Across successful membership organizations, the lesson is consistent: people do not join organizations only because of their history; they join because they see relevance, opportunity, connection, and impact.

The common lesson across successful organizations is clear:

Membership growth is no longer driven primarily by tradition—it is driven by flexibility, value, belonging, personalization, and impact.

1. Flexible Membership Models: Meeting People Where They Are

One of Rotary's most important global innovations has been the introduction of **satellite clubs, e-clubs, corporate clubs, passport clubs,**

and cause-based clubs, allowing members to engage in ways that fit their lifestyles rather than forcing everyone into a traditional model. **Satellite clubs**, for example, can start with fewer members and offer more flexible meeting formats, locations, and dues structures.

What East Africa Can Learn

Across East Africa, this could mean creating Rotary experiences that reflect the realities of different communities; young professionals balancing careers, entrepreneurs building businesses, families seeking meaningful service opportunities, and specialists who want to contribute their expertise to specific causes.

- Create more club options for young professionals.
- Offer hybrid and virtual participation.
- Pilot corporate-sponsored Rotary clubs.
- Develop interest-based clubs focused on health, environment, technology, entrepreneurship, or education.

Many districts in **Rotary USA and Europe** have used satellite clubs, e-clubs, and cause-based clubs to attract members who could not fit into traditional weekly meeting models.

East Africa already has the ingredients for innovation. Strong Rotaract networks, professional associations, universities, corporate communities, and service-minded young leaders provide opportunities to create new

pathways into Rotary. The future may not require every new member to enter Rotary through the traditional club model; it may require Rotary to create multiple doors through which people can enter and experience service.

2. Build a Strong Youth-to-Membership Pipeline

Many organizations for example **Toastmasters International** recognize that long-term growth depends on creating structured pathways for young members. I remember when I was the RI Rotaract Committee Chair 2020/21, we recommended to the Board to open discussions with Toastmasters, and I am glad this was one of the milestones we achieved that year. We need to revitalize this relationship as a means of learning more but also benchmarking on the synergies that can support our growth. Toastmasters have built a strong leadership pipeline by providing clearly defined learning journeys, leadership opportunities, mentoring, and progression pathways that encourage members to remain engaged and grow within the organization. The one thing over time I have realized Rotaractors and young people in general appreciate is a clear pathway and we can strive to create this.

The Rotary Leadership Journey

Interact → Rotaract → Rotary → Club Leadership → District Leadership → Global Service Leadership

What East Africa Can Learn

- Introduce formal Rotaract-to-Rotary transition programs.
- Offer reduced dues for graduates of Rotaract.
- Create mentoring circles led by senior Rotarians.
- Involve younger members in strategic leadership roles early.

3. Focus on Member Experience, Not Just Recruitment

Many organizations have discovered that attracting new members is easier than retaining them. Membership growth is therefore not only a recruitment challenge; it is an experience challenge. A member who feels welcomed, valued, connected, and able to contribute meaningfully is more likely to remain engaged for many years. High-performing membership organizations invest heavily in onboarding and member experience. Toastmasters for example emphasizes onboarding, leadership opportunities, recognition, and continuous member engagement rather than focusing solely on recruitment.

What East Africa Can Learn

- Create a structured 90-day onboarding experience.
- Assign mentors to all new members.
- Conduct quarterly member satisfaction checks.
- Celebrate participation and achievements regularly.

4. Leverage Digital Engagement

Global membership leaders are increasingly becoming digital communities rather than simply organizations that hold meetings. Digital platforms have transformed how

communities connect. Rotary's future engagement model must recognize that members increasingly expect opportunities to learn, collaborate, network, and participate beyond physical meeting spaces. This does not mean replacing Rotary's tradition of fellowship and personal connection but rather using digital platforms to strengthen engagement and create more opportunities for members to participate.

What East Africa Can Learn

- Use social media strategically.
- Create member apps or WhatsApp communities.
- Deliver virtual networking sessions.
- Use digital onboarding and learning resources.

5. Create Personalized Membership Value

The era of one-size-fits-all membership is disappearing. Members now expect value tailored to their interests, career stage, and professional goals. The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) has expanded beyond a traditional membership model by offering personalized benefits, rewards programs, multiple membership options, digital engagement tools, and tailored member experiences.

What East Africa Can Learn

Offer members:

- Leadership development pathways.
- Business networking opportunities.
- Professional mentoring.
- Family-focused activities.

- Service opportunities aligned to personal passions.

In conclusion, the opportunities for Rotary in East Africa are significant, and there are many pathways through which we can grow our membership and create lasting milestones for our communities. What I have witnessed through my Rotary International service of over 10 years on various board committees, as well as through my professional journey, is that the world's most successful membership organizations have evolved by embracing new approaches to engagement. They have moved from tradition to innovation, from fixed meeting structures to flexible participation, from a recruitment focus to a member experience focus, from uniform membership models to personalized engagement, and from activity-driven organizations to purpose-driven communities focused on leadership and impact.

The future of Rotary in East Africa will depend on our ability to adapt, welcome new generations, create meaningful experiences, and ensure that every member finds purpose, connection, and belonging through service.

The Author

Ronald S. Kawaddwa is a Rotarian from the Rotary Club of Kasangati. He has been a Rotarian for the last 21 years and has served his Club, District, region 28 and Rotary International. Ronald is currently a member of the Rotary International Membership Growth & Experience Committee and the Chair of the Rotaract Committee 2026/27.

Uganda Airlines
The Pearl of Africa and Beyond



Journey to the Pearl of Africa and Beyond



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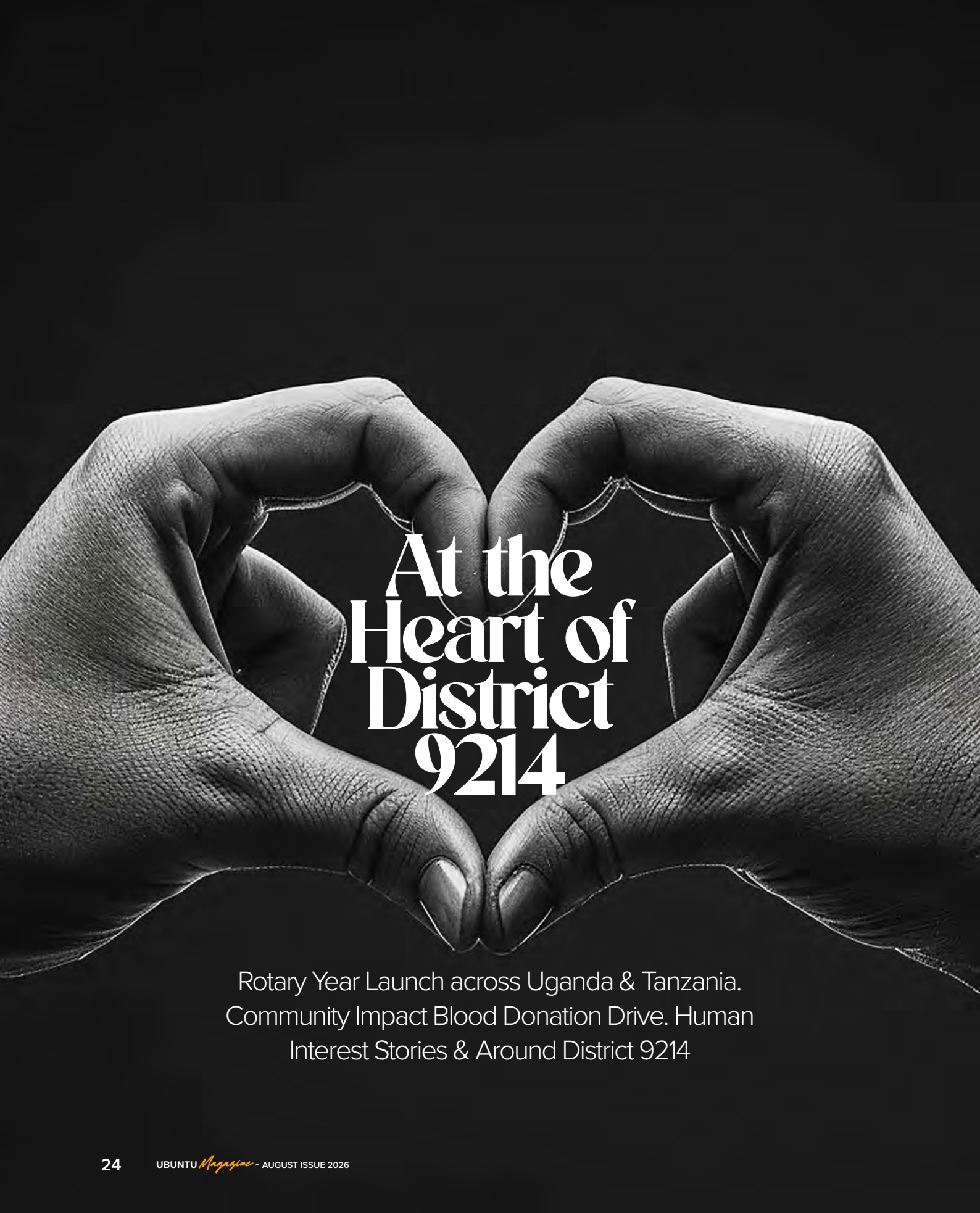
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KILIMANJARO



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A black and white photograph of two hands, likely from a person of African descent, positioned to form a heart shape. The hands are cupped together, with the thumbs and index fingers touching at the top and bottom points of the heart. The skin texture is clearly visible. The background is solid black.

At the Heart of District 9214

Rotary Year Launch across Uganda & Tanzania.
Community Impact Blood Donation Drive. Human
Interest Stories & Around District 9214

District 9214 launches a new Rotary year:

United for Greater Impact



District 9214 officially launched the 2026–2027 Rotary year through a day of service, fellowship and shared purpose. From saving lives through the Impact Mega Blood Donation Drive to unveiling new district priorities, the launch set the tone for a year centred on unity, engagement and meaningful transformation.

A new Rotary year does not begin when the calendar changes. It begins when a district comes together and decides the impact it wants to create. For District 9214, that moment came on 1 July 2026 a day that moved from a midnight celebration to a sunrise blood donation drive, to an evening launch that united Rotarians and Rotaractors across Uganda and Tanzania.

It started the night before, in Munyonyo. Rotarians and Rotaractors from across the district gathered as the old Rotary year drew its last breath. There is something about counting down together, as one family, that reminds you why you joined

this organization in the first place. When midnight came and the new Rotary year officially began, the district did not simply celebrate a date. It celebrated a promise that 2026–2027 would be a year defined by unity and action

That promise was tested almost immediately. Barely hours after the celebrations, before many of us had properly slept, clubs across District 9214 mobilized for a Mega Blood Donation Drive. The action reflected the district's commitment to beginning the Rotary year not only with words, but with measurable community impact. Rotarians rolled up their sleeves, literally, to give the most personal gift a person can offer another: their own blood. It was a fitting way to open a Rotary year. Before a single meeting was held or a single project was launched, Rotarians had already taken action to help save lives. It set the tone for everything that followed: this would be a year of doing, not just declaring.

The evening launch fellowship brought together Rotarians, Rotaractors and partners from across the district, with the programme celebrating the spirit of service and collaboration. Under the banner "Each One Engage for Impact," led by District Governor Daniel Mukasa Ddamulir accompanied by district leaders made their grand entrance, host presidents welcomed a packed house, and Rotaract and Interact members brought the evening to life with a creative showcase of Rotary's Areas of Focus and entertainment from Taibah Schools that had the whole room on its feet.

The programme moved briskly and mean-

ingly. Country Chair Yusufu Kigoye unveiled the District Calendar for the year ahead. PAG Susan Ssamula presented the 102nd District Conference and Assembly (DCA) Awards, recognizing clubs for their work. We paused to reflect on our fight to end polio and to engage every club on disease prevention, and we relived the morning's blood donation drive on stage, a reminder that the day's impact had already begun before the fellowship even started.

Then came the moment we had all been waiting for: District Governor Daniel Mukasa Ddamulira delivered the official proclamation, formally launching the Rotary year. In his address, District Governor Daniel Mukasa Ddamulira challenged members to embrace the theme "Each One Engage for Impact", reminding Rotarians that meaningful change happens when every member takes ownership of service, fellowship and community transformation. Regional Rotary International Director Emmanuel Katongole addressed the gathering as Guest of Honour, offering a charge that reached beyond District 9214 to the wider 7th All Africa Zone Institute. The launch also highlighted the strength of District 9214 as one Rotary family across two nations, with Rotarians and Rotaractors from Uganda and Tanzania united by a shared commitment to service above self. Cakes were cut, photographs were taken, and the room erupted in the kind of joy that only comes when people know they are part of something bigger than themselves.

Alongside the launch, several new district initiatives were introduced for the year: the Mega Blood Donation Drive, Ubuntu Magazine, the Mega Medical Camp, World Polio Day activities, Cancer Run 2026, RYLA 2027, and 10 Days of Double Impact. Together, these initiatives reflect the district's priorities of humanitarian service, membership growth, leadership development, public image and sustainable community impact.

Throughout the year, members can expect increased opportunities for service, leadership development, fellowship, collaboration and engagement across the district. Clubs will be encouraged to strengthen membership, deepen community partnerships and create lasting impact through meaningful projects.

As the day came to a close, one message remained clear: the Rotary year ahead will not be measured only by the projects completed, but by the lives touched, relationships strengthened and members inspired to serve. From midnight celebrations to morning action and evening commitment, District 9214 had already begun to live its promise: Each One Engaged for Impact.

By **Joseph Ssengooba**
District Public Image Chair
Rotary Club of Garuga



Give a Gift to Life: How District 9214's Impact Mega Blood Donation Drive United Communities to Save Lives

"Heroes don't always wear capes. Some donate blood."

Each One, Engage for Impact

On **1 July 2026**, Rotary District 9214 ignited a powerful movement of compassion and community service through the Impact Mega Blood Donation Drive, one of the flagship initiatives of the inaugural District Community Impact Day. Spearheaded by District Governor Daniel Damulira Mukasa and coordinated through district leaders, corridor teams, schools and volunteers, the campaign united communities across Uganda and Tanzania with one shared mission: **Give a Gift to Life. Donate blood today. Save a life tomorrow. Every drop counts.**

More than a humanitarian activity, the campaign became a powerful demonstration of Rotary's commitment to service, leadership and community transformation, perfectly reflecting this Rotary year's call to Each One, Engage for Impact.

The Impact at a Glance

Indicator	Achievement
Blood Units Collected in Uganda	3658
Blood Units Collected in Tanzania (as of 15 July 2026)	404
Total Blood Units Reported Across District 9214	4,062
Countries Engaged	Uganda and Tanzania
Schools Participating	Over 30
Tanzania Annual Campaign Target	3,000 units

These figures reflect a district united by one purpose, proving that when communities come together in service, lives are saved.

Uganda Corridor Participation and performance summary

Rotary clubs, Rotaract clubs, schools and communities across the district responded with remarkable commitment.

Corridor	Final Units Collected	Contributing Schools
Greater Masaka	892	Masaka SS, Kijjabwemi SS, St. Henry's Kitovu, Kako SS
Masaka	786	St. Lawrence, St. Marks College
Entebbe	740	Taibah School, Kisubi Mapeera, Kitende SS, Entebbe SS
Gabba	568	Kansanga Seed, Princess Diana, Kyaddondo Tech, St. Denis Ssebugwawo
Western Zone 1	447	Kashaka Girls, Kibubura Girls, Kasana SS
Western Zone 2	67	Rubaya SS
Kabale	158	Rukore SS, Rukore Technical
Rukungiri	<i>Data yet to be submitted</i>	St. Gerald SSS, Makobore High School
Grand Total	3658	—

Source: Blood collected on 1 July 2026 through Rotary, Rotaract, schools and community mobilisation activities in Uganda. The data is provided by the blood donation team in Uganda.

Schools across the district played a vital role in mobilising students and staff to participate in voluntary blood donation, demonstrating the power of young people in transforming communities.

The Impact Continues Across Tanzania

While Uganda launched the District 9214 Impact Mega Blood Donation Drive, Rotary clubs across Tanzania are continuing the momentum through the **Rotary Blood Heroes 2026/27 Campaign**.

Led by **Assistant Governor Nasibu Mahinya, Country Blood Donation Chair (Tanzania)**, the initiative aims to mobilise **3,000 blood units during the Rotary year** in partnership with the National Blood Transfusion Services (NBTS), supporting efforts to address Tanzania's blood supply needs. By **15 July 2026**, Rotary and Rotaract clubs in Tanzania had already contributed 404 blood units

Tanzania Blood Heroes Progress Report

Rank	Club / Cluster	Blood Units Collected
1	Kilimanjaro Clubs (RC Moshi, RC Marangu, RC Marangu Kibo & RAC KCMC)	110
2	RC Mwl. Nyerere Dodoma & RAC UDOM Youth	75
3	RC Oyster Bay	61
4	RC Bahari & Rotaract Tanzania (RAC Bahari Youth, Kwanza, Alpha, Young Professionals, Muhimbili & Kairuki)	44
5	RC Mzizima & RAC Kairuki	43
6	Satellite Club Madras Midtown – Dar es Salaam	35
7	Arusha Clubs (RC Mount Meru, RC Njiro Arusha, RC Arusha West Side & Arusha)	24
8	RC Sunset	12
Total Tanzania Units Collected		404

Source: Blood collected through Rotary, Rotaract, and community mobilisation activities in Tanzania. The report & statistics are compiled by the Blood donation team in Tanzania



The early progress demonstrates the commitment of Rotary and Rotaract clubs across Tanzania to build a sustainable culture of voluntary blood donation.

Several clubs have also established ambitious targets, including the Rotary Club of Mwl. Nyerere Dodoma together with Rotaract partners, who have committed to mobilising **500 blood units** during the Rotary year.

These efforts reinforce one common message across District 9214: When Rotary, Rotaract, health partners and communities work together, thousands of lives can be saved.

Human Stories Behind the Numbers

Behind every unit of blood collected is a life touched.

A Mother's Second Chance; At Mulago Hospital, a mother facing complications during childbirth received blood donated through the campaign. Her husband later shared:

"Rotary gave us hope when we had none."

A Student's Awakening; One young donor reflected: *"I never knew a single act could save someone's life. I will donate again."*

Health Partner Perspective; A representative from the national blood service observed:

"District 9214's coordination filled a critical gap. This was one of the most impactful blood donation drives we have seen."

These stories remind us that behind every blood unit collected is a family strengthened, hope restored and a life saved.

Why Blood Donation Must Continue

Blood shortages remain a persistent challenge across East Africa. Rotary's continued commitment to voluntary blood donation helps hospitals respond to maternal emergencies, accidents, surgeries and patients living with chronic illnesses. To sustain this impact, clubs are encouraged to:

- Host regular blood donation drives.
- Partner with schools, churches and workplaces.
- Promote awareness about voluntary blood donation.
- Strengthen collaboration with national blood services.

Service is not an event—it is a culture. Every drop saves a life.

One District. One Purpose. Lasting Impact.

The **Impact Mega Blood Donation Drive** stands as a testament to Rotary's ability to unite communities around a shared purpose.

With **3658 units of blood collected**, District 9214 demonstrated that when people come together in service, they create hope for thousands of patients and families across Uganda and Tanzania. The campaign reflects what Rotary is at its best not competition, but collaboration; not recognition, but service; and not individual achievement, but collective impact.

As the campaign reminded us: **"Heroes don't always wear capes. Some donate blood."**

Indeed, every donor, every volunteer, every school, every community person, every Rotarian and every partner became a hero by choosing to **Give a Gift to Life**. Together, we showed that **when each one engages for impact, entire communities are transformed.**

Compiled by

Rtn Cynthia Bayitwa

District Blood Donation Chair (Uganda),
Rotary District 9214

Assistant Governor Nasibu Mahinya

Country Blood Donation Chair (Tanzania),
Rotary District 9214

One Pint, Three Lives:

Why I Choose to Donate Blood

There are moments in life that remind us our greatest gift is not our wealth, status, or profession, it is our willingness to help another human being. For me, blood donation is one of those moments.

Every time I roll up my sleeve to donate blood, I am reminded that somewhere, someone is praying for a second chance at life. It could be a mother experiencing severe bleeding during childbirth, a child battling severe malaria or sickle cell disease, a victim of a road traffic accident, or a patient preparing for life-saving surgery. In those critical moments, blood is not manufactured in a laboratory. It can only come from another human being who chooses to give. That is why I donate blood.

As a Rotarian, I have embraced the principle of Service Above Self. Service is not only about organizing projects or raising funds; it is also about making personal sacrifices that improve the lives of others. Blood donation is one of the simplest yet most powerful acts of service I can offer. It costs nothing, takes only a few minutes, and has the potential to save up to three lives with a single donation.

Whenever I leave a blood donation centre, I experience a deep sense of fulfillment. I may never know whose life was saved by my blood, and they may never know my name. Yet we are connected by humanity. That quiet connection is enough to remind me that kindness does not always need recognition—it

only needs willingness, followed by action.

On July 17th, the Rotary Club of Nalumunye organized a blood donation drive at Lubiri Secondary School and Mackay Memorial College bringing together students, teachers, health professionals, and community members for one common purpose, to save lives.

Through this initiative, we were reminded that saving lives is not only the responsibility of hospitals and health professionals; it is a responsibility we all share as members of one community.

Rtn. Freddie Nyanzi

Ubuntu Editor & Contributor
Rotary Club of Nalumunye





Around District 9214





ROTARY YEAR LAUNCH





The Impact Mega Blood Donation Drive (Uganda & Tanzania)



TANZANIA BLOOD DONATION





GGABA ROAD CORRIDOR

BLOOD_ KANSANGA

GGABA ROAD-
CLUSTER3



KYADONDO
TECHNICAL
INSTITUTE,
BUSABALA
CLUSTER





**BLOOD-RC ENTEBBE,
GARUGA, ENTEBBE
BASE & NKUMBA**



**NAMASUBA,
MUTUNDWE, LUBOWA,
SEGUKU, MILD MAY,**



MASAKA ROAD CORRIDOR CLUBS



Rotary
District 9214



TANZANIA
GRANTS SUPPORT TEAM



SAVE THE DATE!

REGIONAL GRANTS SEMINARS
ARE COMING SOON!



Join us for practical learning, sharing and collaboration as we strengthen our capacity to deliver high-quality, high-impact grants projects.



DAR ES SALAAM
& BUKOBA



ARUSHA



DODOMA



VENUES WILL BE COMMUNICATED SOON!



COME WITH
QUESTIONS.



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KILA MTU AWAJIBIKE

Coming up Across District 9214

Join us – Make a Difference!

Fellow Rotarians,

If your club is already qualified to receive Global Grants, is currently implementing a Global Grant, or aspires to become qualified, then this **Global Grant Seminar** is for you.

The seminar will equip you with the knowledge and practical tools needed to successfully prepare, implement, and manage Global Grant projects. We will cover qualification requirements, effective project management, financial stewardship, documentation, reporting, and oversight—helping your club deliver sustainable, high-impact projects.

We strongly encourage **two members from each club** to attend, particularly clubs that are implementing a Global Grant, planning to apply for one, or seeking qualification.

Beyond the learning, the seminar is highly interactive and enjoyable. Through case studies, practical experiences, and discussions with fellow Rotarians, you'll gain valuable insights while building connections with Rotarians from other clubs and districts.

We look forward to welcoming you. More details will be shared shortly, so please keep an eye on your Rotary WhatsApp groups and other communication channels for registration information.

See you at the Global Grant Seminar!

For Information Contact

**Past Assistant
Governor Julia Seifert**

Global Grant committee member
Rotary Club of Dar es salaam
Mikocheni

GUIDELINES For The Official District Governors' Club Visits 2026/2027 (Dg Daniel Mukasa Ddamulira)

1. A copy of the Club goals (at least 15) entered and updated in Rotary Club Central.
1. All RI, District and Country dues must be paid and receipts attached.
2. DG's Visit report submitted to the respective Assistant Governor at least 2 weeks before the visit.
3. Audited books of accounts for RY 2024/2025.
4. Three-Year Club Strategic Plan.
5. A well-filled Club Engagement Plan.
6. Governance documents available (Bylaws, Budget, etc.)
7. Leadership succession plan (President, PE & PN).
8. Service Project within 10-km of meeting venue.
9. Programme for the visit submitted to the Country Chair a week prior to the visit.

NOTE:

- District Governor visits shall follow the prescribed schedule comprising a project visit, board meeting/ Club Assembly. Early visits shall run between 10:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., while evening visits shall commence at 3:30 p.m., with all official proceedings concluding by 8:30 p.m. (or 9:00 p.m.) where dinner is arranged.

- Clubs with 30 or fewer members shall hold a joint Board Meeting and Club Assembly, while clubs with more than 30 members shall hold separate Board Meetings and Club Assemblies.
- No fundraising activities shall be conducted during the DG's Official Visit.
- Clubs should adhere to Rotary branding guidelines; all PR materials and official portraits must be approved by the Country Chair before use.
- Clubs should arrange for a professional photographer/ media team to capture the visit and share photos promptly with the DG's PA or Country Chair.
- The District Governor prefers contributions to The Rotary Foundation to personal gifts. Any dummy cheque should only be prepared after the contribution has been remitted to RI and confirmation received.
- New members to be inducted must be entered into Rotary Club Central (RCC), and their Rotary ID displayed on the membership certificates.

For inquiries:

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The Impact Conversation

Beyond the Blood Donation Drive

An exclusive conversation with **Dr. Dorothy Kyeyune Byabazaire**, Director of the Uganda Blood Transfusion Service, exploring the science, statistics and human stakes of every unit of blood donated in Uganda
Interview conducted by Catherine Nyesiga
Editor-in-Chief, Ubuntu Magazine
With contributions and technical support from the Uganda Blood Transfusion Service team



Dr. Dorothy Kyeyune Byabazaire,
Director of the Uganda Blood
Transfusion Service



Uganda Blood Transfusion



UBTS closed FY 2025/26 having surpassed both its collection and issuance targets — a second consecutive year of exceeding target performance.

Introduction

Every two seconds, somewhere in the world, someone needs blood. In Uganda, that need is answered by a national system built from nothing more than sixty years ago: nine Regional Blood Banks, a growing corps of voluntary donors and an institution that has spent more than five decades turning a fragmented, replacement-donor model into a modern and centrally coordinated blood service.

Uganda has just crossed a threshold it has never reached before. In the financial year ending June 2026, the Uganda Blood Transfusion Service (UBTS) collected enough blood to meet, for the first time, the World Health Organization's benchmark of at least 1% of the national population - a minimum standard designed for low and middle-income countries to meet essential transfusion needs. It is a milestone worth marking but it is not a finish line.

The 1% figure was never meant to represent adequacy; it is the floor below which a health system cannot function, not the ceiling of what a growing one will eventually need. Therefore, Uganda's need keeps growing. Sickle cell disease, road traffic trauma, maternal hemorrhage and severe malaria in children remain some of the most frequent and urgent triggers for transfusion in the country, while cancer care is being managed more actively than ever before and the Uganda Heart Institute's rapid expansion is driving a rising volume of complex cardiac and surgical procedures. Each of these is, in its own way, a sign of progress because more patients are being diagnosed, referred and treated than a decade ago. That same progress means the demand for blood is not plateauing at 1% but it is climbing past it, the way it has in every health system that has expanded its clinical capabilities before Uganda.

Meeting that need is not a seasonal campaign; it is a daily operational challenge involving thousands of blood donors, laboratory scientists, cold-chain logistics and clinicians, coordinated by UBTS. Following Rotary District 9214's district-wide Blood Donation Drive during Community Impact Day, Ubuntu Magazine sat down with Dr. Kyeyune Byabazaire to go beyond the headlines of the drive and into the numbers, the science and the stakes behind every single unit of blood collected

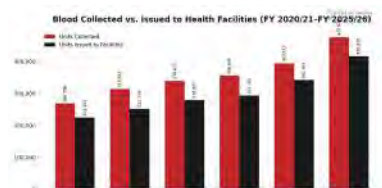
"Donate blood - not just to save a life, but because it enriches your own."

Dr. Dorothy Kyeyune Byabazaire, Director, UBTS

A Target-Beating Year: FY 2025/26 in

Numbers

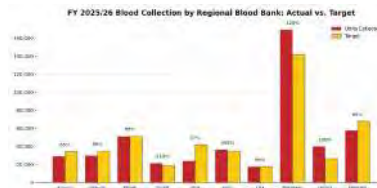
UBTS closed the July 2025–June 2026 performance year having collected 475,972 units of blood against a national target of 469,600 units; a collection performance of approximately 101%. Blood issued to health facilities reached 416,819 units against a target of 410,482, a performance of roughly 102%. It is the second consecutive year UBTS has met or exceeded its annual collection target, and it builds on five years of sustained growth: national blood collection has climbed from 268,796 units in FY 2020/21 to 393,972 units in FY 2024/25 - growth of over 46%, while blood issued to hospitals grew from 224,305 to 342,397 units over the same period, a rise of more than 52%.



Blood collected vs. issued to health facilities, FY 2020/21–FY 2025/26. Source: UBTS Annual Performance Reports; UBTS FY 2025/26 Regional Performance Data.

DID YOU KNOW?

A single unit of donated whole blood, once separated into red cells, plasma and platelets can be used to treat up to four different patients.



FY 2025/26 collection performance by Regional Blood Bank vs. target. Hoima (150%), Nakasero (120%) and Gulu (105%) led the over-performers; Arua (57%) lagged, reflecting access and infrastructure constraints in the West Nile sub-region.

The regional picture behind the national 101% is uneven and instructive. Newer regional blood banks such as Hoima and Soroti are already exceeding target, evidence that recent government investment in infrastructure is translating directly into collection capacity. Nakasero, as the national reference laboratory and Kampala's primary collection point, is absorbing demand well above its own target, a signal that urban mobilisation, corporate drives and campaigns like Rotary's Community Impact Day are concentrating impact where population density is highest. Arua's shortfall against target is a reminder that the gains are not yet uniform and that rural, harder-to-reach regions still need targeted investment in mobile collection and road access.



Hoima Regional Blood Bank, one of Uganda's newer facilities and the top over-performer against target in FY 2025/26 and Soroti Regional Blood Bank

1. From a national perspective, what is the current state of blood donation in Uganda, and why does voluntary blood donation remain such a critical public

health priority?

Uganda needs an estimated 450,000 to 500,000 units of blood every year; that's the WHO benchmark of roughly 1% of our population. Today, UBTS collects between 350,000 and just under 480,000 units annually, and in the year just closed, FY 2025/26, we collected 475,972 units against a target of 469,600 - a performance of about 101%. That is real progress: five years ago we were collecting fewer than 270,000 units a year. But even with that growth, a gap still persists most years and it falls hardest on mothers in obstetric emergencies, children with severe malaria-related anaemia, trauma victims and people living with sickle cell disease and cancer. Voluntary, non-remunerated donation is not a preference for us but it is a policy and safety. Uganda has committed to 100% voluntary non-remunerated blood donation in line with WHO recommendations, because voluntary donors are consistently the safest source of blood. So the state of blood donation in Uganda today is one of encouraging momentum, but still-real scarcity - which is exactly why every donor, every drive, every partnership like the one Rotary just ran, matters.

DID YOU KNOW?

Uganda has just reached the WHO's minimum recommended donation rate of 10 per 1,000 people for the first time. However, high-performing health systems (countries) donate at 20 per 1,000 or more. Closing that gap is what stands between "meeting the floor" and truly securing the national blood supply.

2. Rotary District 9214 recently conducted a district-wide Blood Donation Drive as part of Community Impact Day. From your perspective, what impact do partnerships like these have on Uganda's healthcare system and the lives of patients?

Partnerships like this one are not symbolic- they show up directly in our stock levels. Community and institutional mobilisation, from cultural and religious leaders to corporate drives, consistently yields more units than routine walk-in sessions. We already work closely with organisations such as the Uganda Red Cross Society, the National Social Security Fund, the Kabaka Foundation, the Indian Association of Uganda, Rotary International and the Council of International Cooperation Agencies, and every one of those relationships has delivered the same

three things: increased voluntary donation, stronger community mobilisation and better sustainability of our systems. A single well-organised district drive can supply enough blood to cover a regional blood bank's emergency buffer for weeks. When Rotary brings its network; Ro-

tarians, Rotaractors, schools, businesses into a coordinated blood drive, you are not just collecting pints of blood, you are building the habit of giving that keeps our supply resilient year-round, not just during a single campaign.



A donor gives blood at Rotary District 9214's Blood Donation Drive during Community Impact Day.

3. Many people know that donating blood saves lives, but few understand what happens after they donate. Could you walk us through the journey of a unit of blood - from donor to patient — and explain how one donation can make such a significant difference?

It starts with screening at the point of donation; blood pressure, weight, haemoglobin, pulse and temperature - which doubles as a free basic health check for the donor. Once a unit is collected, it goes through rigorous laboratory testing: blood grouping and screening for HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and syphilis. We have also added another layer of safety by implementing the use of Nucleic Acid Testing (NAT) in blood screening. This detects infections at a molecular level much earlier than serology methods (reduces window period from weeks to days). To maximize the benefits, we separate whole blood into its components; red cells, platelets and plasma because most patient conditions need only one component or different conditions need different components. That single separation step means one donation of whole blood can support up to four

different patients. From collection to transfusion, the whole system runs against the clock; whole blood expires after about 35 days, packed red cells after 42 days and platelets (prepared from fresh whole blood) expires after only 5-7 days. This explains why we must collect blood every single day of the year, not in occasional bursts. The full picture is set out in the infographic on the following page.



Automated laboratory equipment used to screen and process donated blood units for transfusion-transmissible infections.



4. Despite the ongoing need for blood, many eligible people still hesitate to donate. What are the most common myths or misconceptions about blood donation, and what facts should every Ugandan know?

Myths remain one of our biggest obstacles, alongside cultural and religious barriers we still work to address sensitively in our communities. Let me set the record straight on the most common ones we hear- they are laid out in full on the myths-and-facts page in this feature.

Myth vs. Fact: What Every Ugandan Should

Know

Misconceptions remain one of UBTS's most persistent obstacles to closing the national blood gap. Here is the record, set straight.

Myth	Fact
Donating blood weakens or permanently harms the body.	A healthy adult's body replenishes donated volume and stimulates new blood-cell production within weeks; regular donation has even been linked in studies to reduced cardiovascular and cancer risk from lower excess-iron levels.
Donating blood is painful and takes hours.	A standard donation itself takes under 10 - 15 minutes; the pinch is brief and mild rest afterward is all that's needed.
You can contract HIV or other infections by donating blood.	Uganda uses sterile, single-use equipment for every donor. It is physically impossible to contract an infection from donating.
Only certain blood groups are needed, so my type doesn't matter.	Every group is needed. Only about 4% of the population is Rhesus-negative, making rare groups especially precious, but common groups are used in the highest volume daily.
One donation doesn't make a real difference.	Because whole blood is separated into components, a single donation can help save up to four different patients.
I don't have blood and I am small	Eligibility is assessed per donor via a simple haemoglobin check at the point of donation; the guidance is individualised, not a blanket exclusion.
Donating blood means giving up a whole litre of blood.	A standard donation draws only about 450ml, roughly a tenth of an adult's total blood volume, not a full litre; the body replaces this volume within days.
Only people who eat meat (a "good diet") have enough blood to donate; a diet of mostly beans and greens leaves you without enough blood.	Beans and leafy greens are iron-rich foods that build healthy haemoglobin just as well as meat; eligibility is not about diet type but is confirmed for every donor by a simple haemoglobin check, not by what you ate that morning.

5. Looking ahead, what more can organisations like Rotary, schools, universities, businesses and individual citizens do to build a sustainable culture of voluntary blood donation in Uganda?

Right now, students and youth contribute the largest share of our donations, which is a wonderful foundation but it also means we lean heavily on school calendars and collections dwindle during holidays. What we need next is deliberate diversification: more repeat adult donors from workplaces and community groups, so we are not over-reliant on any one segment. Concretely - organise recurring, not one-off, blood drives; adopt a donor club or a regional blood bank; use your networks and digital platforms to bust myths and normalise giving; and support us with logistics and equipment where you can, particularly for mobile collection in harder-to-reach rural areas, has the reach to turn Community Impact Day from an annual event into a standing, quarterly commitment across the district. That is the kind of structural partnership that closes our supply gap for good.

6. Finally, what message would you like to leave with every Rotarian, Rotaractor and reader of Ubuntu Magazine about the power of giving blood and the difference one person, one unit of blood can make?

Donate blood not just to save a life, but because it enriches your own. Every unit you give can reach up to four patients: a mother surviving childbirth, a child recovering from severe malaria, an accident victim in theatre, sickle cell war-

riors waiting for their next transfusion. You will likely never meet the person your blood saves and that is precisely the point - it is one citizen quietly making sure another lives. That is patriotism in its most literal form: citizens helping citizens. To every Rotarian and Rotaractor who rolled up a sleeve at Community Impact Day, and to every reader considering it for the first time - Uganda's blood supply is only as strong as the number of people willing to give. Be one of them and bring three friends.

DID YOU KNOW?

Blood donation includes a free basic health check; blood pressure, weight, haemoglobin, pulse, temperature, blood group, and screening for HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and syphilis.

Rotary's Contribution to Uganda's Blood Supply

Rotarians and Rotaractors donate blood during Rotary District 9214's Blood Donation Drive as part of Community Impact Day.

UBTS's five-year run of growth has been underpinned by partnership, and Rotary sits firmly among the institutions that have moved the national needle. Alongside the Uganda Red Cross Society, the National Social Security Fund, the Kabaka Foundation and the Indian Association of Uganda locally, and Rotary International and the Council of International Cooperation Agen-

cies internationally, Rotary's community networks give UBTS something it cannot manufacture on its own: trusted, organised access to thousands of potential donors at once.

- **Reach:** Rotary District 9214's network of Rotarians, Rotaractors, schools and affiliated businesses represents exactly the kind of institutional donor base UBTS is working to expand beyond its traditional student-heavy pool.
- **Trust:** Community and cultural mobilisation consistently outperforms routine walk-in sessions — a coordinated Rotary drive carries the same credibility advantage as UBTS's partnerships with cultural and religious leaders.
- **Consistency:** A single well-organised district drive can supply enough blood to cover a regional blood bank's emergency buffer for weeks; a recurring quarterly commitment could do so year-round.
- **Advocacy:** Rotary's platform - publications like Ubuntu Magazine included — is itself a tool for myth-busting and donor education, two of UBTS's most persistent challenges.

The explicit ask from UBTS, in Dr. Kyeyune's own words during this interview, is structural rather than one-off: turn Community Impact Day from an annual event into a standing quarterly fixture, and help extend mobile collection into harder-to-reach regions such as Arua, where FY 2025/26 collection still trails target.



YOUR NEXT DONATION COULD BE SOME-ONE'S NEXT CHANCE

Uganda still needs more units of blood every year than it currently collects. Every Rotarian, Rotaractor and reader can help close that gap.

- ✓ **Donate** and bring three friends.
- ✓ **Organise a recurring drive, not a one-off; talk to your Club or workplace.**
- ✓ **Help bust the myths and share this feature.**
- ✓ **Support mobile collection in underserved regions.**

"Safe Blood Saves Lives-Together We Can Build a Healthier Uganda."

Appendix A: National Blood Indicators at a Glance

Indicator	Figure
Estimated annual national blood requirement	450,000 – 500,000 units (WHO benchmark: ~1% of population)
UBTS collection, FY 2024/25	393,972 units
UBTS collection, FY 2025/26 (vs. target 469,600)	475,972 units (~101% of target)
UBTS issuance, FY 2025/26 (vs. target 410,482)	416,819 units (~102% of target)
5-year growth in collection (FY 2020/21→2024/25)	+46%
5-year growth in issuance to facilities (FY 2020/21→2024/25)	+50%
Share of clinical demand still unmet	20 – 30%
Donations per 1,000 population (Uganda / WHO recommended)	10 / 10–20
Policy on voluntary non-remunerated donation	100% VNRBD
Regional Blood Banks nationwide	9, plus the Nakasero national reference laboratory (HQ)
Shelf life whole blood / packed red cells / platelets	35 days / 42 days / 5-7 days
Lives that one whole-blood donation can save (via component separation)	Up to 4 patients
Largest donor demographic	Youth and secondary/tertiary students
Largest clinical drivers of demand	Malaria-related anaemia, maternal haemorrhage, trauma, paediatric anaemia, sickle cell disease, cancer

Sources: UBTS Strategic Plan and performance decks; UBTS FY 2025/26 Regional Performance Data; "Blood Supply, Safety and System Challenges in Uganda" briefing; WHO Global Status Report on Blood Safety and Availability.



Appendix B: Educational Resources & Authoritative References

For readers who want to go deeper on the science and global standards behind safe blood transfusion, UBTS points to the following authoritative sources:

- [World Health Organization — Blood Safety and Availability \(fact sheet\) — https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/blood-safety-and-availability](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/blood-safety-and-availability)
- [World Health Organization — Global Status Report on Blood Safety and Availability — https://www.who.int/publications-detail-redirect/9789240051683](https://www.who.int/publications-detail-redirect/9789240051683)
- [World Health Organization — Towards 100% Voluntary Blood Donation: A Global Framework for Action — https://www.who.int/publications/item/9789241599693](https://www.who.int/publications/item/9789241599693)
- [International Society of Blood Transfusion \(ISBT\) — https://www.isbtweb.org](https://www.isbtweb.org)
- [Africa Society for Blood Transfusion \(AfsBT\) — Step-Wise Accreditation Programme — https://afsb.org](https://afsb.org)
- [NHS Blood and Transplant \(United Kingdom\) — https://www.nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk)
- [NHS — Give Blood \(donor-facing site\) — https://www.blood.co.uk](https://www.blood.co.uk)
- [Sanquin Blood Supply Foundation \(Netherlands\) — https://www.sanquin.nl/en](https://www.sanquin.nl/en)
- [British Society for Haematology — Transfusion Guidelines — https://b-s-h.org.uk/guidelines/](https://b-s-h.org.uk/guidelines/)
- [Uganda Blood Transfusion Service — https://www.ubts.go.ug](https://www.ubts.go.ug)
- [Uganda Ministry of Health — https://www.health.go.ug](https://www.health.go.ug)
- [Kanyike AM, Kakuba F, Mayambala P, et al. Prevalence trends of transfusion-transmitted infections at a tertiary private hospital blood bank in Uganda: a retrospective 6-year review \(2017–2022\). BMC Infect Dis. 2025;25:672.](#)
- [Cwinyai N, Opio D, Kajumbula H, et al. Prevalence and factors associated with transfusion-transmissible infections among blood donors in Arua Regional Blood Bank, Uganda. BMC Infect Dis. 2024;24:926.](#)
- [Glynn SA, et al. Motivations to Donate Blood: Demographic Comparisons. Transfusion. 2002;42\(2\):216–225.](#)

Peer-reviewed literature cited in UBTS technical briefings:

Note: Ubuntu Magazine extends its appreciation to Dr. Dorothy Kyeyune Byabazaire and the Uganda Blood Transfusion Service team for their contribution to this special Impact Conversation.



Belonging;

Growing Rotary. Growing Communities.
Growing Leaders.

District 9214; Can we be the answer to the global membership crisis?



Global Rotary membership has remained fairly stable but has declined slightly over the past four years, falling from 1.17 million in 2022–23 to 1.12 million in 2025–26 (down about 50,000 members, or 4.3%). The encouraging news is that Rotary is becoming more diverse: female membership continues to grow, and more younger people are joining. However, these gains have not yet been enough to reverse the overall decline.

The picture looks more encouraging in Zone 23. Membership has remained largely stable, hovering around 39,000 members, while female membership has grown steadily and younger age groups are slowly expanding. The current 2025–26 total is only a partial-year figure, so it cannot be directly compared with previous years, but the overall trend is one of stability with gradual improvement.

Our District, 9214, appears to offer an encouraging response to these global and zonal challenges, having demonstrated strong and consistent membership growth, increasing from 2.55k members in 2022–23 to 3.73k in 2025–26, representing an increase of approximately 46% over four years.

Growth has been shared across both genders, with female membership rising from 1.15k to 2.04k and male membership from 1.47k to 2.53k, reflecting a steady improvement in gender balance.

The district has also strengthened its younger membership base, with members aged 29 and under increasing from 41 to 200, while the 30–39 age group more than doubled from 464 to 1,000 members.

At the same time, the largest membership gains occurred in the 40–49 and 50–59 age groups, which grew from 745 to 1.36k and 543 to 997 members, respectively. Overall, District 9214 is experiencing healthy growth, successfully expanding its membership while improving both gender diversity and the representation of younger Rotarians.

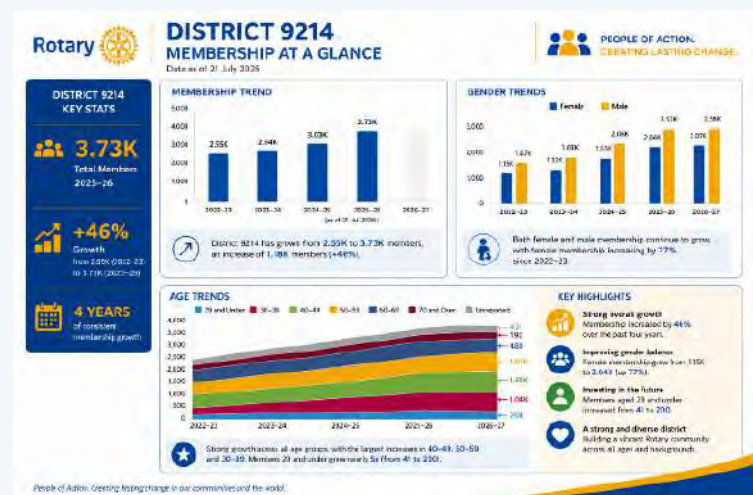
Membership remains a clear priority across Rotary. In 2025–26, 58.9% of clubs globally, 74.1% in Zone 23, and 82.4% in District 9214 had set membership goals. Goal setting for 2026–27 is still underway, but District 9214 is once again leading, with 71.3% of clubs already having committed to membership targets, well ahead of both the Zone (60.6%) and Rotary International (33.5%).

Finally, it's worth remembering that these figures only reflect Rotary clubs. Rotaract is already outperforming us on many membership indicators, showing strong growth, energy, and engagement. There is a lot we can learn from our Rotaractors, and they may well hold some of the best ideas for the future of membership growth.

Our membership country chair underlines the importance of continuing to fly our Flag high by attracting new members and sets a clear goal: "Each Tanzanian Club to have at least 20 Actively Engaged Members" - now that's our call to action!

Written by

Past Assistant Governor Julia Seifert
Ubuntu Magazine Contributor
Rotary Club of Dar es salaam Mikocheni



Membership Is Our Lifeline, Engagement Is the Key



Membership is the lifeblood of Rotary. Every new member strengthens our ability to serve, while every member we retain preserves the leadership, friendships and experience that make our clubs vibrant. Investing in membership is therefore not simply about increasing numbers—it is about securing Rotary's future and expanding our impact across District 9214.

The 2025–2026 Rotary year demonstrated what is possible when membership becomes a strategic priority. Guided by the theme **“Unite for Good,”** District 9214 grew to **150 Rotary clubs and 4,751 members**, chartered **25 new clubs** and achieved a **net gain of more than 1,000 members**. Our challenge this year is to build on that success by ensuring every member enjoys a Rotary experience worth staying for.

Attraction, Engagement and Retention

This year's membership strategy is built around three connected pillars, **Attraction, Engagement and Retention**—captured in our slogan, **“Each One Engage for Impact.”** Attraction brings people into Rotary. Engagement gives them purpose. Retention follows when members feel valued and involved. Every club is encouraged to appoint Attraction, Engagement and Retention

Officers to deliberately support members through every stage of their Rotary journey.

Growing with Purpose

Growth remains essential because healthy organisations continually attract new people, fresh ideas and renewed energy. Every Rotarian should become an ambassador by inviting friends, colleagues and family to experience Rotary. Every club should also hold an **“Each One Bring One”** or better still, **“Each One Bring Many”** fellowship during the year. These meetings provide a relaxed environment where prospective members can meet Rotarians, ask questions and begin building relationships before joining.

Growth must also be intentional. Clubs have been provided with a **Membership Prospect Tracking System** to record and follow every prospective member from first contact through induction and integration. Used consistently, this tool will help us mentor prospects, manage expectations and ensure that no one falls through the cracks.

Building Better Rotarians

Joining Rotary is the beginning of a journey, not the end of a recruitment exercise. District 9214 has therefore introduced a unified **Rotary e-Academy** to provide

every new member with the same strong foundation in Rotary's history, values, the Avenues of Service and the Rotary Foundation. The first online cohort will be held on **22 and 29 August**, with two further cohorts later in the Rotary year to accommodate members who join later. District-wide membership Forum will also begin on **1 August** as we launch Membership Month.

The E-Academy is designed to cover the common subjects every Rotarian should know, allowing clubs to focus on the equally important local experience. Club-led onboarding should include practical elements such as project visits, introducing club traditions and culture, fellowship opportunities, mentoring relationships and helping new members quickly become active participants in club life.

Extension: Multiplying Our Impact

Every new club expands Rotary's reach and multiplies our ability to serve. District 9214 has already demonstrated what is possible through community, institutional and corporate clubs. RC Mengo Elites, RC Medical Stars show what can be done in this area. RC Nsambya Premium when an AG starts a club from within their zone. Existing clubs should continue identifying opportunities to sponsor new clubs and encourage organisations to experience Rotary. Every new club means new leaders, new partnerships and greater service to our communities.

Engagement: The Heart of Retention

Members stay where they feel connected. Every new Rotarian should have a meaningful **Point of Engagement (POE)** within the first **45 days** of joining. Whether serving on a project, helping with fellowship, supporting club administration, communications or the Rotary Foundation, every member should quickly choose the a role to play. The POE is one of the most important tools in this year's strategy because people remain committed when they know they are making a difference.

Buddy Groups should actively connect with members, and when someone has been absent for an extended period, someone should reach out. Clubs should also keep Rotary fresh by balancing educational meetings with interactive fellowships, project visits and social events that strengthen friendships alongside service.

Removing Barriers to Retention

Retention begins long before a member considers leaving. While members who are able should continue paying their subscriptions in full, every club

should establish a **part-payment system** and actively encourage members to begin paying during the first few months of the Rotary year. Flexible payments reduce financial pressure later in the year and allow Club Presidents to focus on leading rather than collecting subscriptions. Members who become **Fully Paid Up (FPU)** should also be recognised and celebrated for their commitment. Be creative. Celebrate them.

Taking the Message Across the District

Membership is everyone's responsibility. During Membership Month of August, the District Membership and Learning teams will launch district-wide training, while senior district leaders will visit clubs across our different corridors through a **District Membership Caravan**. By sharing best practices, promoting these membership tools and reinforcing the importance of attraction, engagement, retention and extension, we will ensure that every club begins the year equipped to succeed.

Our Call to Action

District 9214 has proved that extraordinary growth is possible. Our next challenge is even greater, to become the district that not only attracts members faster than any other, but develops them better, engages them more intentionally and retains them for life.

The tools are in place. We have a clear strategy, a district-wide E-Academy, a Prospect Tracking System, structured onboarding, the Point of Engagement framework, flexible payment options and a Membership Caravan to support every club. What remains is for each of us to use them. Invite someone. Hold an **Each One Bring One** fellowship. Track every prospect. Give every new member a Point of Engagement. Develop them, celebrate them and watch them grow into lifelong Rotarians.

Membership is our lifeline. Attraction is our opportunity. Engagement is our responsibility. Retention is our promise. Together, through "Each One Engage for Impact," we will build an even stronger Rotary District 9214.

By **Past Assistant Governor Godfrey Kivumbi**
District Membership Chair
Rotary District 9214

Governance and Compliance:

Strengthening Rotary's Service Across Uganda and Tanzania



“For District 9214, strong governance is more than administration; it is the shared foundation that enables Rotary clubs in Uganda and Tanzania to serve with credibility, protect their integrity, and build impact that lasts.”

District 9214 is blessed with a rich diversity of clubs, cultures, communities, and opportunities for service across Uganda and Tanzania. Yet whether a club meets in a busy capital city, a growing municipality, or a rural community, one truth remains the same: meaningful service can only endure when it is built on a strong foundation. That foundation is governance. Governance is not merely about constitutions, minutes, reports, or procedures. It is the quiet strength that enables Rotary to lead with integrity, make sound decisions, and inspire confidence in all those we serve.

Across both Uganda and Tanzania, Rotary is called to serve in environments where trust matters deeply. Partners and donors are more willing to support clubs whose decisions are documented and defensible. Members are more committed when they know their club is guided by fairness, accountability, and a clear sense of purpose. Good governance therefore does more than organize a club; it protects Rotary's credibility and strengthens the public trust on which our service depends.

Good governance also safeguards the resources entrusted to us. Every contribution, every grant and every project fund carry with it a duty of stewardship. In both Uganda and Tanzania, our clubs must remain above reproach in the way they handle finances, records, approvals,

and reporting. Clear controls, responsible oversight, reconciliations, and accountability do not weaken service; they make service stronger. They reduce the risk of misuse, misunderstanding, and internal conflict, while allowing clubs to focus on what matters most: transforming lives.

There is also an inseparable link between governance and compliance. Compliance is governance made visible. It is how we demonstrate respect for the laws and regulatory requirements of our respective countries, the policies of Rotary International, and the stewardship expectations that accompany Rotary service. For clubs across District 9214, compliance is not a burden to be tolerated, but a discipline to be embraced. It protects clubs from preventable penalties and reputational harm, strengthens grant readiness, and shows that Rotary's values are not only declared in words but practiced in action.

Strong governance is equally essential in protecting people. Rotary's work involves members, young people, families, and vulnerable communities. Safeguarding is therefore not optional. A well-governed club creates an environment where people are respected, protected, and able to participate with confidence. This is especially important as Rotary continues to engage Interactors, Rotaractors, and community beneficiaries across our district. Safe clubs are strong clubs, and strong clubs are better able to serve.

Perhaps most importantly, governance gives continuity to our impact. Leadership changes every year, but Rotary's mission does not. In a district as vibrant

and wide-reaching as D9214, good governance ensures that one board builds on the work of another, that records are preserved, that succession is planned, and that projects grow beyond personalities and terms of office. This is how short-term effort becomes long-term transformation. This is how Rotary's influence in Uganda and Tanzania can endure for generations.

For this reason, governance and compliance must not be left to presidents, secretaries, treasurers, or board members alone. They are the responsibility of every Rotarian. Every member who supports transparency, respects process, values stewardship, and protects the integrity of the club contributes to Rotary's strength. When governance becomes part of our culture, service becomes more credible, more sustainable, and more impactful.

As District 9214 continues to grow across Uganda and Tanzania, let us recommit ourselves not only to visible service, but also to the invisible discipline that sustains it. Let every club be intentional. Let every leader be accountable. Let every Rotarian be a guardian of trust. If we desire Rotary to remain a respected force for good across our two nations, then we must champion governance and compliance with unity, conviction, and purpose.

Yours in Rotary service,

Ismael Mukasa (PAG)

District Chair, Governance and Compliance



Fireside Chats





Sustainable Membership Growth: Design the Experience, and Growth Will Follow

Sustainable membership growth is not achieved by recruitment campaigns alone. People may join because they are invited, but they stay because the experience is meaningful. Rotary's growth challenge is therefore not only a numbers issue but also an experience issue.

Prospective members quietly ask, "What am I joining? What will I do? Who will I meet? Will it fit my life? Will it matter?" When these questions are answered clearly, recruitment becomes more inviting. A strong experience after joining encourages members to stay and grow.

Sustainable growth begins with a clear value proposition. Rotary must speak not only to service but also to belonging, leadership growth, friendships, professional networks, credible impact, and personal purpose-elements that inspire members to engage deeply and remain committed.

Clubs should focus especially on the first 90 days. Every new member should have a mentor, a role, meaningful project experience, and a check-in conversation. Belonging should be intentionally designed, not left to chance.

Growth also requires flexibility. Busy professionals need meeting formats, service opportunities, and participation pathways that align with modern life. Affordability, family inclusion, hybrid engagement, and project-based involvement all matter.

The most sustainable membership strategy is simple: make Rotary easier to join, easier to love, and easier to stay in. When members feel proud, useful, connected, and respected, they naturally become Rotary's best ambassadors.

By: **PDG Harish Bhatt**
RC Dar es Salaam Oyster Bay

Building a Vibrant Club and Meaningful Member Engagement

Q and A with IPP Abel Kahara RC Mbarara

Interviewed by Past Assistant Governor, Godlive Ayebare

Q; What do you understand by building a vibrant Club in relation to your year of service as an award-winning President?

A: There are three characteristics: Every member is fully engaged in their Club Rotary activities; every member is involved in goal setting with a Board that handles tasks together as a conveyor belt. Finally, it is a club where every member feels valued.

Q: In the Rotary Year 2025/26 while you were the Action President of the Rotary Club of Mbarara you earned a Golden member recruitment award and many other awards as a Club. What was your strategy?

A: I set out goals that were achievable with clear indicators. As relates to membership, we set out to start two new Rotary Clubs and one Rotaract Club which was 100% achieved. These are RC of Ntare that was chartered with 48 Members, RC of Kanungu with 32 members and RAC Nakivale in Isingiro District. Together with my Board we identified appropriate and quality membership for all the clubs and they were successfully chartered before the 30th June 2026. This success story is a clear indicator of vibrant club with meaningful member experience.



Q: RC Mbarara is known for being among the Big 5 Clubs in the District. You have grown steadily during your year of service, how was this possible?

A: I received 76 members at the beginning of the RY 2025/26 and handed over a club of 108 membership indicating an increase of 32 members out of which 25 members were sponsored by me.

"As a club we adopted a mantra of each one bring one because we believed that everyone had that one good friend that has a heart for humanity. I took up the initiative personally and before I knew it I had identified people from all walks of life ranging from professionals, administrators, doctors, media, business community. We still have over 50 intending members in our recruitment pool and this I attribute to intentionality coupled with a good and committed board."

Q: How did you ensure that the newly recruited members were engaged in club activities?

A: During the orientation exercise we identified their potential and upon induction assigned many of them to directly work with my board and buddy group leaders. As of today many of them are Board members on the **Impact** team as we continue to identify talent, interest and professionalism to engage them in different club activities. This ensures that they feel Involved in building the club.

Small Actions. Lasting Impact: Agnes Mungati Batengas on Leadership, Service and Growing Rotary



Interviewed by Country Editor Ugnada, Joyce Naiga Kyeyune

“Behind every great success are countless small efforts”- Agnes Mungati Batengas

For Agnes Mungati Batengas, leadership has never been about titles or recognition. It is about adding value wherever she is called to serve. Whether transforming communities through Rotary, mentoring women leaders, or shaping development projects across Tanzania, she believes that lasting impact is built through many small, purposeful actions. That same philosophy has guided her Rotary journey for more than fifteen years.

Agnes Mungati Batengas is a Real Estate Consultant based in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, specialising in Development Consultancy, Project Finance, Value Engineering and Project Management. She is the local representative for eeeAustria in Tanzania, a company specialising in Government-to-Government projects. She has served on the board of the African Real Estate Society (Afres), a constituent member of the International Real Estate Society (IRES). She currently serves as the Board Chairperson for Assemble Insurance Tanzania, formerly known as AAR, and as an advisory board member for Culture and Development East Africa (CDEA) as well as a board member of IHC a special service vehicle of The Benjamin Mkapa Foundation.

Agnes joined Rotary in 2009 and has since held roles that include Club President, Assistant Governor, Country Chair for Tanzania, Chair for the Rotary Dar marathon and co-chair of the Rotary Taskforce for Covid-19 in Tanzania. Agnes was part of the re-districting team for Districts 9213 and 9214 and describes this as a defining moment in her life and a journey of purpose and fulfillment. She is a past District Governor -District 9214 for the year 2024/2025

How has your experience shaped your perspective on women in leadership?

Our parents raised us in a gender-equality setting. Every child, male or female did everything. If it was washing the car all of you washed the car; if it was cutting grass all of us cut the grass. And that has formed my approach in life. When I am placed in an environment the first thing I think about is not “How come I’m the only woman?” but “What is my mandate”? What needs to be done? What are my responsibilities?

In my profession, I work as a value engineer in a field largely dominated by men and the only thing I ever really consider is how do I bring value to my clients? If you dwell upon the fact that you’re the only woman at the table, or in the field, you’re going to adopt certain self-defeating mindsets. Performance is not about gender but competence. I recall during one engineering consultancy opportunity where we were several women on the team, and we decided to show up with pink clipboards and pens. It was a statement that our femininity is not something to shun but embrace because it does not detract from our skills or ability to deliver. It’s important for us to change our mindsets from gender

to ability because gender has often been used to promote disadvantage (females) or privilege (males).

I belong to a women’s mentorship group that meets every month. We remind one another that we are already empowered, and we hold each other accountable for achieving the goals we have set. That encouragement builds confidence. One of the greatest outcomes of that mentorship has been introducing more women to Rotary. I was able to encourage fifteen women from the group to join Rotary because they realized they were already equipped to contribute to meaningful community transformation.

From your experience as a District Governor, how have you seen women’s leadership evolve in Rotary??

Women have only recently been allowed in Rotary, starting in the late eighties, but their membership has grown significantly. I have always enjoyed supporting from behind the scenes, however when the position for District Governor came up, my friends suggested that I stand. Initially I was hesitant, but I realized that these were the ‘hesitations’ we had been discussing in our mentorship group. I needed to practice what I had been preaching and so I persuaded myself to say: “Let me do it, not because I am the best but because there is a need for service.”

Some women hold back saying “I just want to enjoy and have fun.”. The practical reality though, is that Rotary calls for sacrificial service; it is not about being completely perfect but about willingness to take up responsibility.

This role has been impactful because I have a wonderful support structure that is always present to fill in where I lack. And that’s what service is –stepping up to lead with others.

From my experience and observations, women complement the role of men in unique ways –being more able to multitask, catching the small details, staying fully committed and being inclusive in terms of holistic development for a group rather than an individual.

How can we amplify the impact of Rotary in our communities?

The most important thing is to step up and take responsibility for the change you want to see. Leadership gives you influence so you can make your unique contribution. Rather than sitting back and complaining, use your skills and your talents to shift

things in the right direction.

But Rotary also has many untold stories. It is important to tell them.

I have been humbled by the different projects that I have seen Rotarians doing and one of those I recall was a water and sanitation project in Kyengera, in Uganda. Children used to collect water from a muddy spring well until Rotarians intervened, cleaned it up and paved it. They planted a lovely small garden around it and completely transformed the well. It was so heartwarming to see children and adults happily visiting it to collect water. It was a small project with big community impact.

Another memorable experience was visiting a school for blind children that had been started by a Rotarian with a blind child and the club had adopted the school, teaching children's life skills. The children had gained amazing abilities. They played the national anthem, they danced, and they had all these Braille drawings including a map of Uganda. The club had prepared them so well to thrive in life. They had also constructed a dormitory for them because some of the children were sleeping in classrooms. Eventually, the blind child became a volunteer with the very school she had grown up in and is also pursuing her university degree. This is the transformative impact of Rotary, and we need to tell more and more of these stories.

In Arusha, Tanzania, one Rotary club decided to focus on WASH projects entirely and they were able to implement a project in every single one of the 53 primary schools in Arusha. That's phenomenal change.

In conclusion, I studied value engineering where the premise is that everything you do adds up in building the whole structure, so small things matter. I believe in helping people realize their dreams through small acts that add up to big things. For example, I am passionate about financial growth in multiple ways and so I encourage people and communities to focus time on activities and financial investments that will create the most value. In applying this concept of value engineering, in Dar es Salaam most of the clubs are small and have never taken on a global grant. I encouraged the clubs to take on a collective project, and they are now experiencing the power of group transformation even if the individual clubs are small. We want to emulate the Arusha example and do one impactful thing. This is an example of maximum output with minimum input—putting resources where they will have the greatest impact.



The Impact of Shared Leadership

“Relationships are the building blocks for Rotary Service” - District Governor 9213, Anne Nkutu

For Anne Nkutu, Rotary has always been about people. From initially declining an invitation to join Rotary to now serving as District Governor, her journey has been shaped by relationships, continuous learning and the courage to step forward whenever service called. Along the way, she has discovered that leadership is not about having all the answers—it is about bringing people together to create lasting impact.

Rotarian Anne is a Gender and Monitoring and Evaluation Consultant who has spent the last 20 years providing advisory services to development agencies and civil society organizations on gender equality, women's empowerment, social inclusion and programme management across Africa. Anne is currently the Chair of the Mentoring and Empowerment Programme for Young Women (MEMPROW) and a board member of the International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW). She is also one of the Eminent Women of the Women Situation Room (WSR) Uganda – a peace building mechanism that seeks to prevent violence before, during and after elections.

Anne is a charter member of the Rotary Club of Kampala-Naalya and has served Rotary in numerous leadership roles at club, country, and district levels, including as Club President, Chief Editor of the District Governor's Newsletter, Assistant Governor, District Public Im-

age Chair, and Country Chair for Uganda. She has also served on several Rotary boards and committees, including Rotary Uganda Limited, the Uganda Rotary Cancer Programme, Mengo Hospital Rotary Blood Bank, the RI-USAID WASH Programme, the Advisory Committee of the Makerere University Rotary Peace Centre, and as Assistant Ambassador of the Empowering Girls Initiative. She is as Past District Governor of District 9213

What were your initial experiences with Rotary?

I was first invited to join Rotary in 2001 but at that time I was just starting out in my professional career, and I did not feel like it was a good fit. The club was 99% male, wearing dark suits and it felt too formal and intimidating for my taste. However, in 2012, I was invited by another friend to join the Rotary Club of Kampala Naalya, which, advantageously, was near my home. At this point in my career consulting in women's rights and gender, I wanted to expand my professional network, and I felt Rotary was now a good place to start. I was well established in my work, and I felt I could make room and time for Rotary activities.

I think that when we are trying to interest people in Rotary, we should be persistent in inviting our friends to join because from my experience and those of others, there is always a right time for everyone.

In my first year with Rotary, the learning curve was quite steep, and it was challenging. Everything seemed so strange; you never knew what you were supposed to do first, you were always fumbling. In the club I knew only one person, so it was awkward trying to make friends. I used to remind myself that this was fine because the reason I had joined Rotary was to meet and serve with new people. I understood that as part of the growth process.

It quickly became clear that Rotary would provide room for expanding women's rights discussions, occupying new spaces and attracting men as allies. Where I came from professionally had always felt like preaching to the converted, but Rotary had a whole other interesting mix of people with different perspectives so it was refreshing.

What leadership skills did you learn from Rotary in those early years?

Initially, service was frustrating because it felt like only a few people were actually serving, until I discovered that those were typical growing pains of young clubs. I realized Rotary attracts people with different motivations, and effective leadership begins with understanding

those motivations and helping members gradually discover the deeper purpose of Rotary.

Building relationships is vital. Recognize that people are different and build genuine friendships with them (one of the key components of Rotary); that connection is what helps you persuade and inspire people towards the main mission.

One of the key roles I held was Bulletin Officer and it was interesting putting it together because I had to engage many people from different clubs for content. Every Sunday evening was Bulletin Day. Churning out a weekly bulletin gave me and the club significant visibility. An effective leader must excel at networking and progressively expanding their connections, as achieving success requires collaboration and support from others. Looking back, that responsibility taught me that communication is leadership.

Equally important, being knowledgeable is key because you cannot lead others where you have not gone. Developing a quality bulletin required me to read widely about Rotary International global news and include what other clubs around the world were doing. I had to sign up for learning courses on the Rotary website to keep educating myself about Rotary.

What interesting experiences have you had as a female leader in Rotary?

I became an 'accidental' president of my club when the President Elect left the country for a new professional position and the seat fell vacant. I was Presidential Nominee and I was informed that I was required to take up the position. It was unnerving because I did not feel ready for this fast-tracked position – it felt like being a bride at a wedding that was not yours.

Eventually I realized that the only thing that was holding me back was fear because I already had a board team that was rallying behind me and reassured me of their support. At that point, my internal reflection shifted from “Was I ready for Club President?” to “What service projects did I want the club to achieve during my presidency? What change did we want to be known for?”

The idea for a feasible project came to me after watching a television programme covering a school in Northern Uganda where children were sleeping on the floor, the classrooms were dilapidated and there was no lighting.



We left Kampala at 6am and it was a long, bumpy drive to Gulu where we visited the school for a needs assessment and fact-finding mission. During the drive I kept second-guessing myself wondering whether I had made the right decision because the journey was long and the civil war, though over, was still fresh in the minds of many.

I recall asking the Charter President whether it was viable to return with the rest of the club members on the long journey of project implementation. He said something that reminded me of why Rotary existed: “I do not think it should be about the distance to Gulu but about the level of need.”

The journey was worth the effort because even after arriving at dusk, the parents and school leadership were still waiting for us and their commitment inspired us to press forward with the planning.

I discovered the importance of listening to communities and prioritizing their needs. We gained several insights because parents explained that their greatest need was not beds for the children but keeping girls in school; many of them were being married off due to economic impoverishment stemming from the civil conflict. Our focus then shifted to supporting the girls to stay in school.

Balancing work and Rotary service is often a challenge; how did you navigate it?

A few months into my presidency I took up a job offer in Juba. I learned to focus on my strengths and leveraging my team's abilities. I would do all the critical tasks of networking, engaging speakers, scheduling and reporting and delegate other responsibilities to the board members. I also returned for one day visits to Kampala every month to bridge that physical gap.

It is important to harness the gifts, times and resources of others, especially as women, because we love playing the superwoman role. Men on the other hand focus on their skills and abilities and can let everything else slide. Therefore, having a strong support network for home, work and service is key learning to accept help will make your leadership more effective and give you room to breathe.

When others are supporting you, it is easy to prioritize your needs as well. As we are giving, we also need to be receiving and filling up ourselves.

In accepting the District Governorship, I was challenged by a study that showed that women were getting left behind for management roles because whereas a man would pitch himself when he had only 40% of the requirements, women would only come forward if they had 90% of the requirements. My club had been organizing the Women in Rotary event annually where we brought women leaders together to share experiences and inspire more women to overcome self-limiting beliefs to assume more management roles. I realized my time had come to live what I was preaching. I believed I had at least 80% of the requirements and I shot for gold.

Last words

I view my role as a District Governor as the opportunity and privilege to inspire and motivate clubs and their members towards change that matters. No two clubs are the same so identifying the strength in a club and supporting them to build on that is the most important thing. Relationships remain at the heart of Rotary. When we take time to understand one another, build genuine friendships and recognize the unique strengths each member brings, service becomes more meaningful and our impact grows. That is the kind of Rotary I hope to continue inspiring across District 9213.

A glowing lightbulb with a human brain inside, set against a dark background with colorful bokeh lights. The brain is depicted with vibrant, multi-colored patterns (red, orange, yellow, green, blue) that suggest neural activity or thought processes. The lightbulb is illuminated from within, casting a warm glow. The background is dark with numerous out-of-focus light spots in red, blue, and orange, creating a bokeh effect. The overall composition is centered and symmetrical, emphasizing the theme of innovation and future thinking.

Future Thinking

Can Artificial Intelligence Help Rotary Grow?



Rotary has always grown through connection — one handshake, one meeting, one act of service at a time. Artificial intelligence will not change that truth. But it is quietly changing where connection begins, how quickly it scales, and who gets to be part of it. For a movement thinking seriously about membership and new club development, that is not a threat. It is one of the most significant opportunities in a generation

- Moses Kemibaro

The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn. — Alvin Toffler

There is a question I am asked in almost every Rotary room I speak in Kenya, across East Africa and globally, in person and virtually? Is this AI thing actually for us? Rotary is a fellowship built on presence — on being in the room, breaking bread, doing the work with our own hands. Where does a machine fit into something so deeply human?

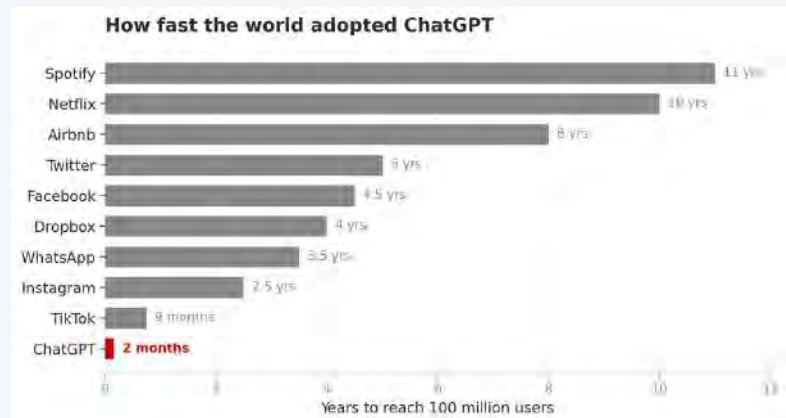
The truth is that AI does not fit into the heart of Rotary at all. It does not replace the fellowship, the service, or the Four-Way Test. What it does is remove a great deal of the friction that stands between a Rotarian's good intentions and their visible impact. In a membership month, friction is precisely what we should be talking about — because friction is why good clubs stay invisible, why willing volunteers burn out,

and why the next generation scrolls past us without ever knowing we exist.

The world we recruit in has already changed

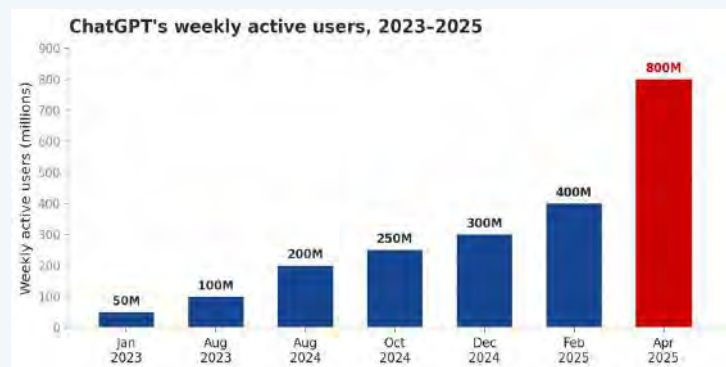
The people we hope to welcome into Rotary have already changed how they discover, evaluate and join anything. Community conversations now happen digitally first. Trust is built through a digital presence long before anyone walks into a meeting. The younger prospective members every district is trying to reach — the Rotaractors and young professionals — discover causes through their phones, not through printed flyers on a notice board.

Consider how quickly this shift has taken hold. When ChatGPT launched in November 2022, it reached 100 million users in two months. Netflix took ten years to reach the same milestone. That is not a technology story; it is a story about human behaviour changing faster than at any point in living memory.



Time taken by selected online services to reach 100 million users. Source: adapted from industry adoption data.

It has also kept accelerating. By April 2025, some 800 million people were using ChatGPT every single week — up from almost none just two years earlier.



ChatGPT's weekly active users, 2023-2025. Source: DemandSage.

Closer to home, the shift is even more striking. Recent studies suggest that 97.5% of Kenyans online use AI every month — reportedly the highest rate anywhere on earth — with India close behind at around 80%. The communities Rotary serves in East Africa are not waiting for permission to adopt AI. They are already among the world’s most enthusiastic users.

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800M

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2 months

for ChatGPT to reach 100 million users — Netflix took 10 years

If our members and prospective members are already living in an AI world, the real risk is not that Rotary adopts AI too quickly. It is that we adopt it too slowly to stay relevant to the very people we hope will carry the movement forward.

What AI actually is, in plain words

Before we talk about growth, it helps to strip away the jargon. In plain language, AI is a very well-read assistant that never sleeps. Tools such as ChatGPT, Google’s Gemini and Anthropic’s Claude have read an enormous amount of the world’s writing. You ask them a question in ordinary language — typed or spoken — and they respond in seconds with text, translations, images, even audio and video.

You do not need to code. You do not need to be technical. If you can send a WhatsApp message, you can use AI. That single fact is why this moment matters so much for membership: the barrier to entry has collapsed. For years, technology rewarded those who already had a head start. This wave lowers the barrier for everyone — including the women, families and communities too often left behind by the last one.

It’s a brilliant intern. You’re still the boss.

The most useful way to think about AI is as a brilliant intern. It is fast, endlessly willing and remarkably capable — but it needs your direction, your judgement and your final sign-off. You remain the boss. Hold on to that idea; everything else follows from it.

Five ways AI can help Rotary grow

If the theme of this edition is membership and new club development, here is where AI earns its place.

1. 1. It helps us be found by the next generation. Younger members discover organizations digitally or not at all. AI lets even a small club with no marketing budget produce a steady stream of professional, engaging content — event posts, short videos, before-and-after service stories — in a fraction of the time. Visibility determines relevance, and relevance is what draws enquiries. A club that shows up consistently online is a club that grows.
2. 2. It transforms the member experience — which is what keeps people. Recruitment gets the headlines, but retention is where clubs are quietly won or lost. AI can personalize onboarding for new members, translate communications so that no one in a multilingual district feels excluded, draft warm and timely updates, and power a simple chatbot that answers a prospective member’s questions at midnight when no committee member is awake. A better experience is a stickier membership.
3. 3. It amplifies our service storytelling and public image. Great projects too often stay invisible. AI turns rough notes and photographs into compelling human-interest narratives, produces impact reports in minutes rather than weeks, and helps clubs tell their

4. 4. It lightens the administrative load — and reduces volunteer burnout. This may be the least glamorous benefit and the most important. Every hour a Rotarian spends wrestling with minutes, agendas, proposals and reports is an hour not spent on fellowship or service. AI can turn a voice note into tidy minutes with action points, draft a project plan and timeline, and outline a grant proposal in minutes. The traditional workflow — idea, write, design, approve, publish — takes days or weeks. The AI-enabled version — idea, prompt, publish — takes minutes. The result is more consistency, less burnout and higher output from the same committed people. Burnout is a leading cause of member attrition; anything that reduces it is a membership strategy.
5. 5. It accelerates new club development. For those building new clubs, AI is a research and outreach partner. It can help identify prospective communities and partners, analyze publicly available data on where the need and interest lie, translate outreach materials across borders — a particular gift for a district spanning Uganda and Tanzania — and draft the founding communications that turn an idea into an inaugural meeting.

Rotary’s timeless mission, technology’s timely amplifier

Rotary constant	AI multiplier
Fellowship	WhatsApp, video calls, AI-translated group chats
Service projects	AI storytelling, live coverage, instant impact reports
Leadership	Thought leadership, speeches and training decks
Fundraising	Digital payments, AI-drafted donor appeals, crowdfunding
Public image	Social media, AI-designed graphics, short-form video
Global reach	Real-time translation across borders and languages

The scale we already have

It is worth pausing on the sheer size of the platform AI would amplify. Rotary International connects more than 1.2 million members across 46,000 clubs in over 200 countries and geographical areas. Together they volunteer close to 47 million hours a year, contributing to a humanitarian footprint worth roughly USD 850 million annually. More than USD 2.9 billion has been invested in polio eradication, helping to protect over three billion children.

1.2M+

Rotarians in 46,000+ clubs worldwide

47M hours

volunteered each year across the movement

USD 850M

humanitarian footprint every year

Now imagine that network with each club a little more visible, each volunteer a little less burdened, and each story told a little more powerfully. AI does not add members directly. It multiplies the reach and effectiveness of the members we already have — and a more visible, more effective Rotary is a more attractive one to join.

Opportunities, challenges and the ethics of getting it right

None of this comes without responsibility, and Rotary leaders are right to ask hard questions. In February 2026, Rotary International issued formal AI Guidelines for Members and a Mem-

ber FAQ on AI Use. They are essential reading, and they can be summarized in a few principles.

First, protect what is confidential. Never input members’ personal details, donor information, financial records, grant applications or club databases into public AI tools. Treat anything you type into a free chatbot as if it could become public.

Second, protect the brand. Do not use AI to generate or alter Rotary logos or marks — always use official Brand Centre elements. You may add your own club or district logo to AI-created flyers; you may not have AI invent

a Rotary mark.

Third, protect people’s likenesses. Do not upload identifiable photos of members, volunteers or beneficiaries without explicit consent, and never create deepfakes.

Fourth, verify everything. AI can be confidently, fluently wrong — a phenomenon known as a “hallucination”. Fact-check names, dates and figures against a real source before anything is published.

Fifth, be transparent. If AI played a significant role in creating something, it is fine — and wise — to say so. Disclosure builds the very trust Rotary depends on.

Four habits for using AI well

DO	DON'T
• Protect privacy — keep ID numbers, passwords and others’ details out of it. • Verify facts against a real source. • Stay human — write the sentences that carry your warmth yourself. • Be open when AI has helped meaningfully.	• Overshare confidential or financial details in a public chatbot. • Publish blind — always read it yourself first. • Assume it is right — it can be confidently wrong. • Outsource the decisions that truly matter.

These are not obstacles to adoption. They are the guardrails that let us adopt with confidence — and they align neatly with the Four-Way Test we already live by. Is it the truth? Is it fair to all concerned? Will it build goodwill? Ethical AI use asks exactly the same questions.

The future of volunteer organizations in an AI-driven world

So, what does this mean for the future of a movement like ours? I am an optimist, and here is why. The organizations that struggle in the years ahead will not be those that lack technology. They will be those that cannot adapt. As Darwin observed, it is not the strongest or the most intelligent that survive, but the ones most adaptable to change.

AI does not threaten what makes Rotary irreplaceable. No machine can build genuine fel-

lowship, sit with a grieving family, or make a difficult ethical judgement. What AI can do is hand those hours back to us — the hours currently lost to admin and friction — so that we can spend more of them being human, together, in service. Rotary was built on connecting people. AI simply lets us connect more people, faster, and at greater scale, without losing the human warmth at the centre.

How to start — this month

None of this requires a technology budget or a computer-science degree. It requires curiosity and a first step. For any club reading this, here is a simple plan for Membership Month.

1. Appoint a Club AI Champion. One enthusiastic member — they need not be technical — whose job is to try these tools and share what they learn at the next meeting.

2. Start a simple content calendar. Open a free tool such as ChatGPT or Gemini and type: “Create a four-week social media plan for a Rotary club focused on our next service project.” Assign one member to post each week. Consistency beats perfection.

3. Complete one free course. Google AI Essentials and the OpenAI Academy both offer free beginner courses, some with certificates. Encourage members to take them and bring their learning back to the club.

Start with one task, one free tool, on the phone already in your pocket, this week.

The next chapter

Can artificial intelligence help Rotary grow? On its own, no — technology has never grown anything. But in the hands of curious, ser-

vice-minded Rotarians who use it wisely and ethically, it can make our clubs more visible, our members less burdened, our stories more powerful and our welcome more open to the next generation. That is not a machine doing our work. That is us, doing more of what we have always done — connecting people to do good — amplified for a digital age.

The illiterate of the 21st century, Toffler warned, will be those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn. Rotary has been learning and adapting for more than a century. This is simply the next chapter. Let us write it together.

The Author

Moses Kemibaro is a member of the Rotary Club of Karen (District 9215) and serves as Assistant Rotary Public Image Coordinator (ARPIC) for Rotary Zone 22 Region 28. He is the Founder & CEO of Dotsavvy, one of East Africa's pioneering digital agencies, and a technology analyst, blogger and podcaster with more than two decades of experience in the region's digital economy. He is a frequent speaker on digital transformation and the responsible and ethical use of artificial intelligence.

People of Ubuntu

Human story of one Rotarian whose single invitation transformed many lives

Rtn Josephine Wambugu.

One Invitation. Many Lives Changed.

Ubuntu is often described as *humanity towards others* the belief that our lives are enriched through the wellbeing of those around us. In Rotary, this spirit is reflected not only in the projects we undertake, but also in the people we welcome into our family of service. Strong, committed members keep Rotary vibrant, relevant and impactful, and every invitation has the potential to change many lives.

One Rotarian who embodies this spirit is Josephine Wambugu.

Over the past 16 years, Josephine has introduced many people to Rotary. Several of those she invited have grown into dedicated leaders, served their communities with distinction and continued the cycle of changing lives through service. One notable example is **Past District Governor Agnes Batengas**, whom Josephine introduced to Rotary in 2008. Agnes would later become one of Rotary's respected district leaders, demonstrating how one invitation can create a ripple effect that extends far beyond a single individual.

Throughout her Rotary journey, Josephine has served in various leadership roles, with a particular passion for membership—an area that reflects her belief that Rotary grows through people. Her commitment to introducing new members and helping them feel welcome has earned her recognition from her



former club, Rotary Club of Dar es Salaam Mikocheni, as well as from the former Rotary District 9200, in appreciation of her contribution to membership growth.

When asked about her secret to recruiting members, Josephine speaks of **persistence, sharing the joy of being a Rotarian and leading by example through service**. To her, Rotary is not simply about membership—it is a way of life built on friendship, service and the desire to make a positive difference in the lives of others. Her story reminds us that membership growth begins with conviction, consistency and personal example. Every invitation offers someone the opportunity to discover purpose through service, and every new member has the potential to inspire many others.

As People of Ubuntu, we are reminded that each of us has the ability to make a meaningful difference. By sharing the Rotary story, welcoming others and nurturing them along the journey, we strengthen our clubs, develop future leaders and expand Rotary's impact across our communities and beyond.

Sometimes, all it takes is **one invitation** to begin a lifetime of service—and to transform many lives.

Written by: **Rtn Charity Mwakio**
Rotary Club of Dar es Salaam
Mikocheni

Rotaract Lens





Why I Joined Rotaract

There are moments in life that change the direction of our journey. For me, joining Rotaract was one of those moments.

As a refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo living in Nakivale Refugee Settlement, I have witnessed hardship, uncertainty, and loss. Like many refugees, I left behind a place I once called home and had to learn how to rebuild my life in a new environment. There were times when the challenges seemed overwhelming and the future uncertain. Yet, through those experiences, I learned the value of resilience, hope, and community.

My journey into Rotaract began with a simple invitation from a friend. At first, I was curious, but after attending my first fellowship, I was deeply inspired. I met young people who were genuinely committed to serving others, not for recognition, but because they believed that even the smallest act of kindness could transform lives. That experience changed my perspective and convinced me that I wanted to be part of this global movement.

What touched me most was realizing that even in difficult circumstances, people still have the power to help one another. I saw individuals sharing what little they had, supporting their neighbors, and refusing to give up despite the struggles they faced. Those moments inspired me and planted a desire in my heart to serve others.

When I discovered Rotaract, I found more than an organization, I found a family. I found a group of young people who believed that no matter where we come from or what challenges we face, we can make a difference. Rotaract gave me a sense of belonging and a purpose greater than myself. It showed me that leadership is not about titles or recognition; it is about lifting others when they need support and creating opportunities where there seems to be none.

Through Rotaract, I have had the privilege of serving vulnerable communities, supporting young people, promoting health and education, and bringing hope to those who need it most. Every smile from a child, every grateful parent, and every life touched through our projects reminds me why I chose this path. Those moments mean more to me than words can express.

One of the most rewarding experiences has been serving my own community through the Rotaract Club of Nakivale Rubondo. We were able to provide shoes for vulnerable refugee children, giving them comfort, dignity, and confidence to attend school and participate in everyday life. We also implemented a Sexual and Reproductive Health project, where we educated refugee girls and young women on menstrual health and distributed reusable sanitary pads, underwear, and hygiene supplies. Seeing their smiles and hearing their words of gratitude reminded me that service is not only about meeting physical needs, it is about restoring hope, dignity, and opportunity.

As the Charter President of the Rotaract Club of Nakivale Rubondo, I remain committed to the vision that

inspired us from the very beginning.

I continue to carry the responsibility of serving as an ambassador for Rotary International and our club and representing the hopes of many young refugees who refuse to let their circumstances define their future. We may have lost our homes, but we have not lost our ability to dream, to lead, and to serve.

I joined Rotaract because I wanted my story to be more than one of survival. I wanted it to be a story of purpose, impact, and hope. Rotaract helped me transform my pain into service and my challenges into opportunities to help others.

Today, when I look at what we have achieved together, I am reminded that even the smallest act of kindness can change a life. And if there is one thing Rotaract has taught me, it is that no matter how difficult the journey may be, we all have the power to bring light into someone else's darkness.

I joined Rotaract because I wanted to make a difference. I stayed because it gave me hope, purpose, and a family dedicated to changing lives.

To every young person searching for purpose, I encourage you to join Rotaract. You will discover a family that believes in your potential, a platform to serve your community, and an opportunity to become the leader the world needs. Together, we can create hope, inspire change, and build a better future. one act of service at a time.

By **Elie Nuru**
Charter President,
Rotaract Club of Nakivale Rubondo



Why Young Professionals Still Choose Rotaract



Young professionals continue to choose Rotaract because it offers something many organizations cannot: an opportunity to grow personally and professionally while creating meaningful change in society. Rotaract empowers members to develop leadership skills, build lasting friendships, expand professional networks, and contribute to sustainable solutions that address real community needs.

In a generation that increasingly values purpose alongside career success, Rotaract provides a unique platform where service, innovation, and personal development work together. Members are encouraged to lead projects, collaborate with diverse teams, and turn ideas into actions that positively impact their communities.

To strengthen membership growth, clubs must remain relevant to the evolving interests of young people. This can be achieved through im-



pactful community projects, mentorship opportunities, flexible participation options, and effective digital storytelling that highlights genuine success stories and measurable impact.

When young people see an organization that listens to their ideas, invests in their growth, and gives them the tools to make a difference both locally and globally, they do more than join they stay, lead, and

inspire others. Through this cycle of engagement and empowerment, Rotaract continues to attract the next generation of changemakers and strengthen the Rotary family for years to come.

By: **Rtr. John Gilleard Maro**,
Rotaract Club of KCMC
District Rotary foundation and Grant
Chair



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Centenary Bank Building Stronger Communities through Financial Inclusion and Social Responsibility

Every thriving community begins with people who have access to opportunity. For more than four decades, Centenary Bank has worked to make financial services accessible to those traditionally excluded from the formal banking system. Centenary Bank was established to transform lives through inclusive and innovative financial solutions, especially in rural areas, sustainably. The Bank currently serves more than 3.4 million customers through 81 branches, 210 ATMs and over 9,000 agent banking points across Uganda. This network enables customers to access banking services closer to where they live and work, reducing the cost and time required to transact.

Today, financial inclusion remains at the heart of the Bank's strategy. By embedding it into its core business model, Centenary Bank has demonstrated that sustainable growth is achieved by investing in communities often overlooked by mainstream financial institutions.

One of the bank's priorities is deepening financial inclusion for smallholder farmers, women, youth and refugees.





By the close of 2025, 77.6% of the bank's customer base belonged to under-served groups. Through this broad outreach, customers entrusted the bank with UGX 5.2 trillion in deposits, reflecting growing confidence in formal financial systems among populations that were previously excluded or under-banked.

Women, youth and refugees remain priority groups for Centenary Bank's lending and capacity-building initiatives, delivered through programmes such as Grow, SupaWoman, Cente Youth and the National Youth Venture Capital Fund. In 2025 alone, women entrepreneurs accounted for 38.79% of all borrowers, reflecting the Bank's commitment to expanding economic opportunities for women.

Beyond traditional lending, Centenary Bank has deepened financial inclusion through microfinance services which have further expanded access for low-income households. Linkage Banking has also strengthened community-based finance systems by reaching over 80,000 clients through Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) and SACCOs, structures that remain critical for rural savings mobilization and financial resilience.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) remain a major driver of Uganda's economy. They create employment, support household incomes and strengthen local supply chains. Many, however, struggle to access financing and financial management skills. At Centenary Bank, SMEs are not a side segment; they are at the heart of our mission of transforming lives through sustainable financial services.

We are proud to be Uganda's leading commercial microfinance institution as several of our customers are small business owners who start small and grow. We have structured SME programmes that support businesses at different stages. These include SME loans for working capital and expansion, asset financing, trade finance and group-based lending for associations and cooperatives such as the Cente SME/Corporate Loans, Cente Micro Business Loans, Cente Lease, Bank Overdraft, Cente Agricultural SME and Corporate Loans.

On top of financing, we provide financial literacy training, business clinics and mentorship because we know money alone is not enough. The trainings cover practical topics such as budgeting, saving, managing debt, using digital financial tools and understanding

our range of banking products. Through business forums and partnerships like the Pakasa Forum with Vision Group, we share practical business knowledge that help SMEs make better decisions.

However, we recognize that sustainable development requires investment beyond financial products to transform lives, strengthening communities and creating opportunities. Every year, the bank has been and continues allocating up to 1.5% of its previous year's profits towards Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives targeting key sectors such as education, health, environmental stewardship, Social Mission of the Church and community development.

In 2025, the bank invested UGX 4.9 billion across over 1,000 community activities, spanning health outreach, financial literacy, stakeholder support and branch community engagement. Our partnership with Rotary International through the Cancer Run programme, medical camps, malaria free days and other Rotary club activities contributed over UGX 1.1 billion as part of more than UGX 6.2 billion contributed to Rotary over 13 years. This long-standing partnership with Rotary reflects a shared belief that lasting community transformation is achieved when institutions work together to improve health, strengthen livelihoods and expand opportunity.

Strong communities are built when individuals have the opportunity to participate in economic activity, build businesses and improve their livelihoods. Financial institutions therefore have an important role in creating these opportunities by expanding access, investing responsibly and working with partners who share a commitment to inclusive growth.

As Uganda continues to grow, Centenary Bank remains committed to ensuring that growth is inclusive, sustainable and shared. By investing in people, businesses and communities, the Bank believes stronger communities create a stronger nation.

The Author: Beatrice Lugalambi is the General Manager Corporate Communication and Marketing at Centenary Bank.



kiswahili Connect

Kujenga Rotary Kupitia Lugha ya Umoja na Ujumuishi

(Building Rotary through the
language of Unity and Belonging)



Kiswahili ni zaidi ya lugha ya mawasiliano kwasababu ni lugha inayotumika kama daraja la kuunganisha watu na tamaduni zao. Katika Rotary na Rotaract Wilaya ya 9214 (District 9214), Kiswahili sasa kinakuwa daraja muhimu la kuwafanya wanachama wapa-ya wajisikie kukaribishwa, kuthaminiwa na kuwa sehemu ya familia ya Rotary kwa lengo la kuhudumia jamii.

Umoja na ujumuishi hujenga kupitia urafiki wa kweli, ushirika na mazingira yanayowajumuisha watu wote bila kujali asili au uzoefu wao. Mwanachama mpya anapaswa kupokelewa kwa ukarimu, kusikilizwa na kupewa nafasi ya kushiriki, hii humjengea imani na hamasa ya kuendelea kushiriki katika shughuli za Rotary.

Kati ya Tanzania na Uganda, Kiswahili kinaweza kuimarisha uhusiano wa wanachama wa Rotary na Rotaract kwa kubadilishana uzoefu na kushirikiana katika miradi ya huduma. Lugha hii inatwezesha kujifunza kutoka kwa kila mmoja huku tukien-
deleza maadili ya Rotary ya huduma, uongozi na amani.

Kila mwanachama wa Rotary na Rotaract ana jukumu la kuwa balozi wa kuwakaribisha na kuwaongoza wanachama wapya, na kuwahusisha katika miradi ya Rotary, kuwapa nafasi za kujifunza na kuhakikisha kila mmoja anatoa mchango wake na kuthaminiwa. Vitendo hivi vya ukarimu si vidogo bali ni vikubwa na vinaweza kuwa sababu ya mwanachama kubaki na kuendelea kuwa katika familia ya Rotary.

Katika Mwezi huu wa Agosti wenye dhima ya Uanachama, ni vyema kila mwanachama wa Rotary na Rotaract kujitolea kwa dhati kualika watu wapya, kuwakaribisha kwa moyo na kuwajumuisha kikamilifu katika shughuli za vilabu vyetu. Vilevile tutumie lugha ya Kiswahili kwa nia ya kuimarisha umoja na ushirikiano ili tuendelee kujenga jumuiya ya Rotary yenye wanachama wanaojivunia kuwa sehemu ya familia inayobadilisha maisha kupitia huduma.

Rahma Nurdin

Swahili Exchange Officer
International Service
Chair 2026 - 2027
Rotaract Club of Alpha,
Tanzania

Ask the Expert

Organizations People Never Want to Leave



In 2004, while facilitating a leadership program across Africa, I heard the line “I am because you are, because we are.” That was my introduction to Ubuntu. Having employed staff since 2004, and consulted in 25 countries, I’ve come to believe Ubuntu isn’t just philosophy. It’s a retention strategy.

In 2006, a staff member turned down an offer worth three times her pay. “I believe I still have a lot to learn here,” she told me. No policy produced that decision. She stayed because she was building something, not earning a wage.

That’s the difference between organizations people leave and organizations people never want to leave. Some are run like leasehold land: you occupy it

for a season, extract what you can, then hand it back. Others are run like mailo land: passed down, built on, worth defending: what you build there outlasts you.

People don’t stay on mailo land because it’s the best plot available. They stay because it’s theirs to build on. Even mailo land loses people. In 2012, a young man joined my team at a modest pay. He served more than ten years, and left when COVID disrupted our finances. He left on good terms and remains a wonderful human being. Had it not been COVID, he would still be with us.

Rotary understands this instinct: Service Above Self was never meant to stop at the office door. These organizations practice it inward, toward their people, as much as outward.

Start here: ask each person on your team this month, not “are you happy here,” but “what are you still building here.” The answer will tell you whether you are holding leasehold or mailo land.

By **Ethan Victory Mussolini**

Ethan Victory is a motivational speaker, author and public speaking coach www.EthanVictory.com

Young Writer’s Corner – Interact

Interact my Club

I will be honest, when I joined interact, I thought it was just community work plus snacks.

I showed up for the snacks, I stayed because interact ‘tricked’ me into growing up.

One minute, we are cleaning the compound and painting banners before a project, the next minute we are entertaining guests and standing on big stages. Interact has a way of doing that—throwing you into leadership before you even realise you are leading.

We have packed food, cleaned communities, run fundraisers and somehow turned planned meetings into comedy shows. But between chaos and group chats something happened and I changed. Interact isn’t just about serving, it’s about dance after cleaning. It’s planning a project at 10pm and still showing up early the next day. It’s about painting a classroom with paint on your face and joy in your heart; it’s travelling with my Interact family to visit a community, singing in the bus, and then sitting quietly because some stories break us and build us again. We work hard and laugh harder.

I was pleased during one outreach when while giving out pens and books, a little girl looked at me and smiled and asked whether I would be back. I realized that it wasn’t just about giving books and pens, but it was giving time, hope and attention.

It’s not about being the richest to make a difference, you just have to show up. Today, I am braver, kinder, because I said ‘Yes’ to one club fellowship. Interact didn’t change my calendar, it just filled my life with joy. Service above self, joy above all.

Muhoza Daphine Raphaella

Interact Club of St Augustine
International School-Bunga





The Little Light Shining In The Dark

In a dark, cold and scary place,
Where shadows stretch and silence weighs,
I stood alone, my heart afraid,
Of all the things the darkness made.

Yet in that gloom, so small, so slight,
A brave and little being caught the light.
Not big, not loud, not fierce, not strong,
But steady, steady all along.

It flickered once, then twice, then more,
And pushed against the heavy door
That darkness held so tight and near,
Whispering, "You don't have to fear.

"It shined, and managed to break through,
To show the night it could be new.
For even one small light can say:
"I'm here. And I can light the way.

"So let this be the truth we keep,
When life feels low and thoughts run deep:
Even in darkness, cold and bare,
Courage can glow, and hope is there.
Be that light. Shine anyway.

By: **Babinkundira Ezra**
Public Representative Director (P.R.D)
Makindye S.S Interact Club

More than a club: how interact changed my life

The best way to find yourself is to love yourself in the service of others.

For me, joining Interact was not just joining a school club but it was the start of a journey filled with friendship, leadership and service. I still remember my first meeting. I was nervous, unsure of what to expect and quietly hoping I wouldn't say the wrong thing. But before I knew it, I was surrounded by friendly faces, warm smiles and people who made me feel like I already belonged.

That first meeting turned my nerves into excitement.

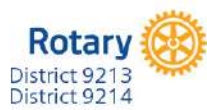
Through Interact, I have helped plant trees, visit children's homes and hospitals and support charity drives. These activities taught me that even small acts of kindness can make a difference and every activity gave me a new story, a new lesson and a deeper understanding of how kindness can ripple outward in ways we never expected.

Along the way, I didn't just serve others, I grew too, I made friends who became like family, found my voice in front of the crowd, and learnt how to organize, lead and work with others move confidently. Interact showed me that leadership isn't about being the loudest person in the room, instead it's about showing up, listening and helping others shine. Even during the busiest events, there was always room for a shared laugh and a quick "HAHA" that made the work feel lighter.

The motto: "Service Above self" has shown me that meaningful change begins with simple actions. Joining Interact was one of the best decisions I have ever made. Interact is more than a club, it is a place where the young learn to serve, lead and make a difference.

By: **Owase Sharon**
Greenlight High School





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