

Naalya Food Bulletin

7th October, 2025

Rotary
Kampala - Naalya



UNITE
FOR
GOOD

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RC KAMPALA - NAALYA



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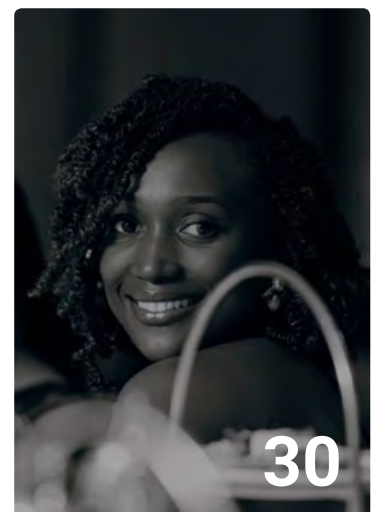
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Editor's Note



Fellow Rotarians and friends,

As we embrace October, our focus turns to Community Economic Development. This is not merely a theme for the month; it is the very bedrock of sustainable progress. Here in Uganda, we understand this intimately. True development is not just about infrastructure or capital—it is about empowering people to become the architects of their own prosperity.

We often discuss initiatives like vocational training, micro-finance, and supporting local entrepreneurs.

These are vital, and I commend the work our Club has done in these areas. But this month, I want us to consider a fundamental, yet often overlooked, pillar of economic resilience: mental well-being.

An economy cannot thrive if its people are struggling in silence. How can a mother grow her small business if she is burdened by depression? How can a young person learn a new trade if they are paralyzed by anxiety? The mind is our most valuable economic

asset, and it must be nurtured. It is with this conviction that I draw your attention to a groundbreaking project we are launching this month: a Mental Health and Wellness Camp in the slum community of Acholi Quarters in Banda, here in Kampala. In partnership with local health workers, we will be setting up a safe space to offer basic

mental health screenings, counselling sessions, stress management workshops, among others.

This camp is not a diversion from economic development; it is its foundation.

By addressing the trauma, anxiety, and depression that fester in conditions of poverty, we are clearing the ground for seeds of enterprise to take root. A youth who receives support for their mental health is better equipped to seek employment, to innovate, to save, and to invest in their family's future. They become an active participant in the local economy, not a casualty of it.

This is where we issue our call to action. These events cannot happen without

you. Like columnist Okello-Omoding argues in his article, it takes passion to align one's mind to the feelings of a deprived community or person.

▶ **So, we need your passion and your hands. Your presence shows our community that we care, deeply.**

Your support is needed. Contribute to the camp fund. A donation of just UGX50,000 can go a long way; it's a direct investment in human capital.

Fellow Rotarians, let us be the Club that recognizes the inextricable link between a healthy mind and a thriving community. Let us build economies not just from the ground up, but from the inside out.

▶ **Join in. Donate. Let's make this Mental Health Camp a resounding success and demonstrate what Service Above Self truly means.**

YOURS IN ROTARY,

Rtn. Peter Nyanzi
Bulletin Officer

“

Let us build economies not just from the ground up, but from the inside out.”

Message from Rotary International President

BY FRANCESCO AREZZO
PRESIDENT, ROTARY
INTERNATIONAL

OCTOBER 2025

October is Rotary's Community Economic Development Month, a time to spotlight our efforts to help communities build thriving, sustainable futures. This month's observance aligns perfectly with the Rotary core value of leadership.

Leadership means empowering people to guide their own progress. That is precisely what Rotary's economic development projects aim to achieve.

Take, for example, a recent initiative in southern India in which Rotary members unlocked the power of women of the Adivasi tribal groups through sewing training to earn a living and regain social inclusion. Historically, widows and abandoned women in this region lose social standing and are shunned by society or blamed for their misfortunes. Opportunities to support themselves or obtain training are minimal.

This year, the Rotary Club of Windsor Roseland, Ontario, partnered with clubs in Districts 3203 and 3234 in India — and with the Indian organization Sevalaya Trust — to provide sewing machines and training to 80 Adivasi women. They learned to stitch saree blouses, kurta tunics, and salwar suits, enabling them to support



themselves and their families. Each woman received a certificate for completing the program, and the sewing-machine provider offered free long-term maintenance for the machines. The project offered vital income and dignity to women ostracized by society after widowhood.

This story is one example of Rotary leadership in action: local people guiding solutions that address their community needs. Our role is not to deliver charity or to impose outside models, but to foster self-reliance by investing in leadership, skills, and sustainable enterprise.

This October, I invite Rotary members worldwide to reflect on economic leadership in their communities. Who is

stepping forward to lead local economic initiatives? Where is there untapped talent that could be supported with training or mentorship? How can your club catalyze opportunity through partnerships with local businesses, vocational schools, or savings groups?

Leadership is not always about being visible. Sometimes it means listening, working collaboratively, and amplifying the voices of others. That approach lies at the heart of Rotary's philosophy and our lasting impact on economic development.

By building capacity — whether through microcredit groups, vocational training workshops, or entrepreneurship programs — we enable communities to lead their own transformation. When people take ownership of their progress, change becomes sustainable.

Let us lead with good intention and provide support with heart. By nurturing local leadership, we can create opportunities that ripple through communities, empowering individuals, families, and societies.

Together, we can support economies that work for everyone and enact community development projects that last.

Message from D9213 Governor, Geoffrey Martin Kitakule

BY DG GEOFFREY KITAKULE

OCTOBER 2025

At the heart of Rotary's global mission lies a fundamental commitment to building a better world. As Rotarians, we are bound by the belief that lasting peace and prosperity cannot be built without dignity, opportunity, and hope.

Economic empowerment is not just about financial stability; it is about unlocking human potential, restoring dignity, and creating pathways for self-reliance. Rotary's motto, 'Service Above Self,' is lived out every time we equip a young person with skills, every time we support a small entrepreneur, and every time we open doors for women and vulnerable groups to participate fully in economic life.

▶ **In many of our communities, poverty is not just the absence of money; it is the absence of opportunity. Unemployment among youth, limited access to credit, and a lack of vocational skills often trap families in cycles of poverty.**

But where others see obstacles, Rotarians see possibilities. Economic empowerment is one of Rotary's seven Areas of Focus because it addresses the root causes of poverty and lays a foundation for sustainable development.

Rotary plays a significant role in economic development in



Uganda. This has been through skills training, infrastructure, empowerment of marginalized groups, health interventions that reduce economic burdens, and partnership-driven community projects. These interventions support Uganda's third National Development Plan (NDPIII), particularly in boosting economic inclusion, infrastructure, human development, and agriculture and rural development. Our interventions also align with the global Sustainable Development Goals such as SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 6 (Clean Water & Sanitation), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), among others.

Through our economic empowerment projects, we have seen an increase in incomes and job creation. Small enterprises and vocational training enable

people to earn livelihoods rather than depending solely on subsistence or informal labor. Improved sanitation, clean water, and hygiene reduce incidences of disease. This reduces medical expenses and time lost to illness. The empowerment of women and youth helps reduce inequality and promotes inclusive growth.

Behind every project is a human story:

1. A young mother who once struggled to feed her children but now runs a tailoring business.
2. A school leaver who, through vocational training, now earns a living in carpentry.
3. A community that once lacked clean water but now thrives because time once spent fetching water is now spent in productive work.

▶ **These are the lives Rotary touches, and they remind us why we serve. When we empower one person economically, we empower a family. When we empower a family, we strengthen a community. And when we strengthen communities, we create the foundation for peace and prosperity in our nation and our world.**

THAT IS THE TRUE POWER OF ROTARY. INDEED, ROTARY CARES FOR OUR COMMUNITIES.

#ROTARYEYAMBA

President's Message

RTN CHARLES OWEKMENO
Unite For Good President
2025-2026



Dear Rotary and
Esteemed Guests,

A very happy and prosperous Rotary Month of October to you all! It is with great enthusiasm that I welcome you to this special period dedicated to Community Economic Development, a core focus that aligns with our Rotary ideals of service, empowerment, and sustainable growth.

We are delighted to have the Rolex Buddy Group leading us throughout this month. Their dedication and innovative ideas will undoubtedly inspire us all to make a meaningful impact within our communities. Let us rally behind their initiatives and support their efforts wholeheartedly.

I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to each of you for your active participation in our club activities over the past month. Your unwavering support and

generosity, especially towards our mental health outreach programs, have been truly inspiring. Because of your contributions, we are making tangible differences in the lives of many, and I encourage us all to continue this spirit of giving and service.

This October, we have two significant outreach programs scheduled: one at Acholi Quarters and

another at St. Mbaaga Primary School. These initiatives are not just projects; they are opportunities to touch lives, uplift spirits, and foster community resilience. I call upon each member to plan and commit to participating in these historic outreaches.

Your presence and support will undoubtedly make a lasting impression and demonstrate our collective dedication to service.

Additionally, I would like to remind everyone that October marks the final

month for early bird registration for Discon 101. I urge all members to take advantage of this early bird opportunity by registering promptly to avoid the late registration fees. Let's ensure our club's representation at this important event and continue to build our capacity for service.

I also wish to express my appreciation for the valuable feedback you provided during our recent club assembly. Your insights are instrumental in guiding our club's growth and operational improvements.

Rest assured that I will work closely with the Board to implement necessary changes and enhance our club's efficiency and member engagement.

▶ **As we embark on this new Rotary month, I encourage all of us to embody the Rotary motto of "Service Above Self." Wishing you all a joyful, productive, and impactful Rotary Month!**

YOURS IN SERVICE
ABOVE SELF,

“
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TEAM TALK

Rotary's philosophy remains empowerment, not handouts

BY AG FRANCIS LUBUULWA

Rotarians often represent the privileged in our society - people with education, influence, and access to networks and resources. This privilege is not something to be ashamed of; it is something to be used for good. October's Rotary theme of 'Economic and Community Development' (ECD) reminds us that the real business of Rotarians is not only about meetings and fellowships; it is about using our position of influence to create pathways for others, especially the young people who make up the backbone of our nation, Uganda.

As Rotarians, we sit in rooms where decisions are made. We run businesses, manage institutions, and hold positions that shape our communities. With this privilege comes responsibility, to open doors for others. Economic and Community Development is a task and mission for those with the means to make a difference. The young Rotaractor

looking for a job opportunity needs not our sympathy, but our network, our mentorship, and our willingness to believe in their potential.

Uganda's young people make up more than 75% of the population. Yet, many are unemployed, still studying, or lack any form of training. The Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) tells us that 80% of the workforce operates in the informal sector - often without contracts, social protection, or growth prospects. These young people are not lazy; they are simply disconnected from opportunity. This is where Rotarians can

bridge the gap - through mentorship, internships, and reaffirmation of their potential.

Rotary's philosophy has never been about giving handouts. It has always been about empowerment. Paul Harris envisioned a world where business leaders used their resources and ethics to uplift others. For Rotarians, this means focusing our projects to capacity building.

Instead of donating sewing machines, we could partner with local vocational

schools to provide training, marketing, and access to finance. Instead of importing items for club projects, we could source from local youth-led enterprises. In doing so, we build dignity rather than dependency.



Economic and Community Development is a task and mission for those with the means to make a difference."



Every club meeting, fellowship, or service project is an opportunity to empower young people. When we involve Rotaractors in the planning and execution of projects, we not only mentor them but also prepare the next generation of leaders. When we invite young entrepreneurs to showcase their products at our fellowships, we give them visibility, credibility, and hope. Our clubs should become incubators of opportunity where youth talent meets Rotarian guidance.

Here are a few ways every Rotarian can make a tangible difference:

- Offer job shadowing or internship opportunities for students and Rotaractors in your company.
- Create 'micro-mentorships'—one coffee, one conversation, one connection at a time.
- Buy from youth-led small businesses when planning club events or projects.
- Feature young entrepreneurs in your club bulletins and social media platforms.

“

If we, as Rotarians, use our influence to mentor, connect, and invest in the youth, then we are truly living out the spirit of Economic and Community Development.”

Rotary's founders believed that fellowship and ethical business could transform societies. Today, that transformation begins with us. If we, as Rotarians, use our influence to mentor, connect, and invest in the youth, then we are truly living out the spirit of Economic and Community Development.

▶ **We are not just building projects; we are building people. And when we build people, we build nations.**

The author is Assistant Governor, and Past President of Rotary Club of Kampala - Naalya



Optimism as President Owekmeno presents Q1 results

BY PETER NYANZI

It looks as if it was only yesterday when President Charles Owekmeno was installed as the President of the Rotary Club of Naalya for this Rotary Year, but three months have already passed.

On September 30, Owekmeno presided over the Club Assembly at which he presented the report for the first quarter.

▶ **The report shows positive performance for the club against its objectives for the year. According to the report, 22 members are in good standing, having fully paid up, while at least 12 members have paid up out 50%. He was optimistic that the 19 members who have paid less than 50% would fulfil their obligations by December.**

However, he reported that the Club's finances are generally in "good standing." "We have been able to pay our first invoice for RI and we have also paid our first invoice for the District," he said, adding that the Club has been able to meet all the operational costs and still has balances on the account

"We want to thank you for this support," he said, amid cheers from members. However, he urged members to give more especially during the fellowship through the 'plates of gratitude' initiative.

Going forward, he said the



Club needs to set up a buffer to support the day-to-day activities. He said plans are underway to use the Women in Rotary concert to raise funds that the club can use to implement its strategic actions throughout the year.

"This is an area that the Board is thinking about, not just for the current Rotary Year, but also in the next two-three years, to ensure that the club has finances in a sustainable manner such that the Presidents are not stressed about the Club's operational costs," he said.

He added that Women in Rotary is just one aspect the Board is looking in

addition to other avenues that can generate resources into the club to meet its needs. For example, the Club intends to purchase a portable public address system that can be used to support online meetings, Kimeeza and fun fellowships following a request from members that the venue should be varied.

On youth engagement, he said two Rotaractors transitioned into Rotary in the last quarter, which he said was an achievement that very few clubs have been able to register. "It's a very unique achievement; there are very few clubs that are matching this milestone, and we are happy that there is another Rotaractor transitioning soon."

"It's because our club has very good mentors, so I want to encourage the young people that this is your Club."

The Club is engaging three schools to form Interact Clubs - two in Kampala, including Kisaasi College, and another in Kamuli District. The Club intends to sponsor at least four youth for RYLA in the second quarter. Owekmeno commended Service Projects Director Brian Mayanja for his excellent leadership. Already, two global grants proposals have been submitted

“On youth engagement, he said two Rotaractors transitioned into Rotary in the last quarter, which he said was an achievement that very few clubs have been able to register.”

– to implement a mental health project in Kampala and teenage pregnancy in Kamuli.



"This is a strategy that we want to build for the club - that we should always have two or three projects in the pipeline. So that every Rotary Year we have a grant to implement," he said. He commended PP John Mugisa, for leading the mental health global grant proposal, which has now reached the approval stage.

He urged members to participate actively in the mental health outreach at Acholi Quarters on October 11, St Mbaaga Primary School on October 31, Agago in November, and to the Missionaries of the Poor in December.

TRF giving

To date, Club's giving to TRF stands at about USD1,365 overall, against a target of USD13,500. He expressed optimism that this would rise in the new quarter. The club has achieved two PHFs - a PHF and a PHF+2. He hoped that more PHFs would be achieved ahead of the DG's next visit in November.

On Public relations front, the club now has a Tiktok account while the website is also being updated. Going forward, the major focus of the PR effort would be on marketing activities for the Women in Rotary concert due in March next year, which includes a press conference for the official launch later this October.

On attendance, Owekmeno said members need to pull up their socks as it is the "lifeblood of the club." If the members don't show up for fellowship, they don't show up for the activities, the club becomes weak. You cannot call yourself a strong club if you don't have members who show up," he said.

"So, this is really a call to all of us. This is our responsibility. It's one of the reasons we're Rotarians. I request that we should have a different trajectory in this second quarter in terms of showing up for our club."

Responding to the President's report, IPDG Anne Nkutu challenged members to

open up and create more 'vibe' in the fellowships. PP Okello-Omoding said he has prepared a questionnaire for the various officers to pick out some information, which shall be a basis for making some recommendations. Other members expressed the need to build deeper friendships, to create a family environment and to strengthen our fun fellowship around hobbies and informal networking rather than mere music.

▶ **Rotarian Fathila, who is the Buddy Chef for this month with Rolex, urged members to get involved when they come for fellowship. "Why do you pay your dues and contribute to service projects then you're here unhappy in Rotary?" She asked amidst loud cheers. "Don't wait for others to make you happy; be the one to make other people happy."**

Rotary to commemorate Mental Health Day at Banda

In the congested, vibrant, and relentlessly challenging urban slums of Acholi Quarters in Kampala, a hidden epidemic is threatening the future of Uganda: a pervasive mental health crisis among its youth. This isn't just about sadness; it's a profound, systemic breakdown fueled by the twin forces of abject poverty and the trauma of the LRA insurgency in northern Uganda, which displaced hundreds of thousands of people from their homes to places such as Acholi Quarters.

The data presents a dismal image. According to studies, many young people

in Kampala's informal settlements report having serious psychological problems, such as worryingly high rates of anxiety, depression, loneliness, and even suicidal thoughts. For these young people, their surroundings are a furnace of ongoing stress rather than a place of refuge. For young people in slums,

mental well-being is not a luxury, but a casualty of their daily reality. The links between the environment and mental health are undeniable. Unemployment, unstable livelihoods, and ongoing financial strain foster a depressing and anxious atmosphere. The

mind cannot be at peace when the necessities of life—food and shelter—are continuously in danger. Significantly higher rates of psychological distress are directly correlated with monetary poverty.

Secondly, being in a crowded slum frequently exposes one to crime, violence, and sexual exploitation on a daily basis.

► **The risk of trauma is particularly high for young women. Two important risk factors that increase the prevalence of PTSD and psychological distress are orphanhood and exposure to domestic or communal violence.**

These recurrent negative experiences cause severe,

“Significantly higher rates of psychological distress are directly correlated with monetary poverty.”



long-lasting psychological harm in addition to physical scarring.

Thirdly, many young people resort to harmful coping mechanisms because formal mental healthcare systems are largely inaccessible. For example, Uganda spends a very small portion of its health budget on mental health. The cycle of mental and physical illness is only exacerbated when substance abuse, especially alcohol abuse, becomes a common form of self-medication. This is a public health emergency that needs to be addressed right away.

RC Kampala Naalya leadership

It's for that reason that the Rotary Club of Kampala Naalya has earmarked mental health as a critical area for support. The Club is set to implement a major community project in the Acholi Quarters of Banda where it will celebrate the Mental Health Day on October 11 with a mental health camp for the community.

It will also mark the launch of a global grant project, according to Dr. John Mugisa,

who is the project lead at the Rotary Club of Kampala Naalya. He told club members at their club assembly last Tuesday that the grant, amounting to about \$65,000, has been approved and set to roll out soon.

"We have progressed on our global grant as we sent all the clarifications that were requested. So, the latest feedback is that all is okay. All that is remaining is to submit our bank account," he said. He added that preparations for the Mental Health Day on October 11 are in high gear, led by RC of Kampala Naalya, which he said is set to lead mental health activities in District 9213. He said other Rotary Clubs including the RC of Bukoto and RC Morning Tide Bugolobi have expressed readiness to be part of the effort.

"We want as many clubs as possible to join us," he said. Club President Charles Owekmeno commended Rotarian Mugisa and Projects Director Brian Mayanja for the leadership on the mental health global grant, together with the Kamuli teenage pregnancy grant, which is also in the pipeline.

These grants have received glowing acceptance as they are set to be a lifeline for the youth both in Kampala and Kamuli. Rotary believes that every young person has the capacity to become a teacher, business owner, or leader in the future. However, their potential is stifled by invisible chains of trauma and distress if they do not receive timely, culturally sensitive psychosocial support.

Restoring hope

Mental illness is a predictable result of severe social and economic hardship, and we need to get over the stigma associated with it. It's an investment in Uganda's future when mental health services are supported. It is an investment in hope, stability, and resiliency. Charter President Francis Lakor urged all Club members to turn up on big numbers for the mental health camp at Acholi Quarters.

► **First launched in 1992 by the World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH), a global mental health organization with contacts in over 150 countries, the International Mental Health Day.**

The day is commemorated to promote general mental health advocacy and to educate the public, bring global attention to mental illness and its wide-ranging effects on people's lives and to serve as a powerful reminder that there is "no health without mental health." This year's theme is 'Access to Services – Mental Health in Catastrophes and Emergencies,' which highlights the critical need to address the severe mental health consequences experienced by people affected by disasters, conflicts, and other crises.



Rotary 
Kampala-Naalya

Rotary 
Bukoto

Mental Health Day!!!

**Mental Health
Comprehensive - Health
Camp**

11.10.25

9 AM – 6 PM

**Acholi Quarters
Banda B1**





#News

Taipei set to host 30,000 for Rotary convention in June

Rotary International President Francesco Arezzo has met the leadership of Taipei in preparation for the Rotary International Convention due on June 13-17, 2026.

▶ **Rotary members from 120 countries will be welcomed to Taipei Hong Kong, for the second time since the city hosted the event in 1994. The 2021 convention in Taipei was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.**

The Rotary convention is expected to inject US\$50-55 million into the local economy, and drive significant business for Taipei's hotels, restaurants, retailers, and tourism attractions. Held in a different city each year, Rotary's international conventions serve as a



hub for members and participants to connect and learn from each other and a range of experts on how to take action to address issues in their communities and promote health, peace, and prosperity in communities across the globe.

"Rotary conventions are powerful moments of unity, where people from every corner of the world come together to connect, celebrate service, and spark new ideas for creating a healthier and more peaceful future," said Arezzo. "We're honored to welcome the global Rotary family to Taipei in June 2026, and I look forward to reconnecting with old friends and making new ones as we share in the joy of our collective work to uplift communities around the world."

In June, convention attendees will transform the

Taipei Nangang Exhibition Center and the Taipei Dome into an energized hub and cultural mosaic as the global network of volunteers gain inspiration from more than 100 humanitarian projects on exhibit and from world class speakers.

▶ **"Taipei City is very happy to welcome over 30,000 Rotary members from all over the world to the Rotary convention next year," said City Mayor Wan-An Chiang. "Taipei is ready, and will extend our warmest hospitality to all the Rotary members to ensure that they have an unforgettable and fruitful visit in our city."**

Organized by Rotary International in conjunction with local Rotary members, the convention presents an opportunity to showcase Taipei's culture, food, and attractions. "Rotary in Taipei



RI President Francesco Arrezzo listens to Taipei City Mayor Wan-An Chiang during his recent visit to the city, which is preparing to host the RI Convention in June next year

and across Taiwan is thrilled to welcome Rotary members and participants from around the world back to Taiwan since we last hosted the Rotary international convention in 1994,” said Rotary Host Organizing Committee Chair, Jackson Hsieh. “I’m excited to share Taipei’s vibrant culture, innovative cuisine, creative and friendly spirit and highlight the positive and lasting change Rotary brings globally and locally.”



Rotary’s members throughout the world develop and implement sustainable, community-driven projects that fight disease, promote peace, provide clean water, support education, help mothers and children, grow local economies and protect the environment. Over the last 100 years, US\$5.5 billion has been awarded through The Rotary Foundation – Rotary’s charitable arm that helps clubs work together to perform meaningful, impactful service.

► **In Taiwan, Rotary members are engaged in a wide range of community service projects that bring science education programs to rural schools, support Indigenous communities through environment and vocational training, tackle e-waste through computer refurbishing and donation programs, provide meals and companionship to senior citizens, and much more.**

The future of Rotary is African – Rotarian Serugo

ROTARIAN JAMES SERUGO IS A PAST PRESIDENT AND LONGTERM MEMBER OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF KAMPALA. HE HAD A CHAT WITH PETER NYANZI ABOUT HIS ROTARY JOURNEY AND THE FUTURE OF ROTARY.

Q: You joined Rotary over decades ago. What single moment, event, or person finally convinced you to say “yes” and become a Rotarian?



club raise money, and what was the most creative—or craziest—fundraiser you ever participated in? How do you think this compares to today’s grants and global giving models?

Although things to do with funding have changed, they still look and feel the same. We had the 3H (Hunger, Health, Humanity) grant from TRF. Now, we have Global Grants. Rotarians have always contributed or raised money for projects just as they do today.

Rotary was introduced to me by my then boss, Wafula Oguttu, who was a Rotarian in Ntinda Rotary Club. He came to me with a request to make a standing offer of advertising space to Rotary whenever they wanted. It was part of The Monitor’s CSR.

However, a friend of mine, Andrew Ntegeka invited me to his Club, the Rotary Club of Kampala, and I stayed.

Q: As a young, first-time club president, what was the most unpredictable, hilarious, or challenging situation you had to manage

during your tenure? What piece of “insider advice” would you give a club president today?

As soon as I became president, the Club secretary went away on family emergencies and did not return. I was my own secretary most of the time.

My advice for current presidents is this; “don’t hesitate to reshuffle you team if you notice incoherence.”

Q: Rotary’s funding model has changed drastically over time. When you started, how did your

“
My advice for current presidents is this; “don’t hesitate to reshuffle you team if you notice incoherence.”

Q: Over the decades, you’ve witnessed projects shift from local, smaller-scale efforts to global, high-impact initiatives like your current heart surgery program. Can you describe the most heartwarming, simple, and ‘boots-on-the-ground’ project from your early years, and how that sense of service translates to the complexity of the current life-saving project?

The current heart surgery program is not new. It has its foundation in the 1970s when the RC of Kampala wrote a letter inviting international Rotarians to save a Karimojong girl who had been mauled by a Hyena

and was dropped in Mulago with all her face eaten off.

She was picked by Rotarians from Australia. However, Rotarians from New York also wanted to help. So, they requested RC Kampala to send any sick child that needed surgery. RC Kampala sent three children. The surgery that one of them needed very was so complicated that she spent a year in hospital. That was the genesis of Gift of Life Programme.

This programme has assisted over 40,000 children globally to access heart Surgeries. And Little Hearts is the same as Gift of Life just a different name.

Q: You're leading a project that funds heart operations for underprivileged children. Can you share a single, specific story about a child or family whose life was completely transformed by this project?

The Program we are implementing is a Global Grant funded by the Rotary Foundation at USD 62,000. It's designed to pay for heart surgeries at Amrita Hospital in Kochin, India. We are planning to assist 25 children suffering from congenital heart disease to get access surgery.

These are desperate cases that either could not pay to access it at the Uganda Heart Institute or their cases were rather complicated and could not be done at UHI due to different reasons.

Nearly all of them come from very humble back grounds. Without this assistance, the children would most certainly die.



Mr Serugo and wife Flavia are both acclaimed Ugandan Rotarians

So, all the surgeries are transformative and do impact the patients' families remarkably.

“

This programme has assisted over 40,000 children globally to access heart Surgeries.”

The previous program I handled assisted 60 children but the waiting list had 300 - all of them desperate to access surgery. Many of them delay or fail to even to get passports. Every help is needed.

Q: What is the biggest obstacle that your team faces in getting a child from a Ugandan village to an operating theatre in India?

The biggest obstacle people face is lack of money, lack of information and absence of basic services in their localities.

The process requires the patient to undergo several specialised tests, which requires them to travel to Mulago Heart Institute several times. Passports too take a lot of money and time to process, which delays their travel.

Q: Rotary has gone from printed directories and mailed correspondence to Zoom meetings and social media. How do you, as a veteran Rotarian, feel about this massive technological shift, and what essential part of the 'old way' do you believe the young members should try to preserve?

I feel it's convenient and I love to attend meetings remotely by Zoom.

I however think that one of the objectives of Rotary of making acquaintances and friendships is least when you always meet remotely.

The human contact is lost, yet it's the main reason for being in Rotary.

Q: In your view, what unique strengths does Africa as a Zone bring to the global Rotary fellowship?

The future of Rotary is African. Not many young people in the West are joining Rotary. So, it is facing an existential threat. Yet in Africa, Rotary is growing because young people are the majority and have embraced Rotary.

Q: Beyond the service, Rotary is about fellowship. What is your favorite memory of pure, unadulterated Rotary fun—perhaps a fellowship trip, a humorous club tradition, or a moment shared with a Rotarian from a different country?

My best fun happens when I attend Discons and or

International Conventions. To make friends and have fun while learning.

Q: Rotary now has many young professionals looking at a very different world than you did in the 1990s. If you could distill your 30 years of experience into a single sentence of advice for the newest member of your club, what would it be?

Expand your networks.

Q: What's that one principle you believe every young Rotarian should hold close if they want to serve effectively and enjoy the journey in Rotary?

My advice to new members to Rotary is that you have to participate in something that you are passionate about. That's the best way to enjoy Rotary.

Q: Looking back, how has Rotary shaped you—not just

as a leader, but as a man, a husband and father, and as a citizen of Uganda?

Rotary has enabled me to serve those in need beyond my immediate environment. It has expanded my leadership horizons and my family's involvement in Rotary experiences has made it even more fulfilling.

Q: Of course, your work of service isn't over. What is the one big, ambitious thing you still hope to see Rotary achieve in the next five years, and what role do you see the younger generation playing in making that dream a reality?

For Africa to host the international Convention for the first time in Rotary's history. I think it is the young people who will enable that to happen.





#Leadership

Rotaract Naalya: September fellowships in review



BY BRIDGET AMUTWONGIRE

From harnessing knowledge to transform communities, to grounding ourselves and managing pressures, September's fellowships reminded members that personal growth and community impact go hand in hand. These sessions left the club members motivated, empowered and ready to create meaningful change.

▶ The Club hosted an inspiring and thought-provoking session titled, "How to Capitalize on Our Knowledge" with Mr. Kaddu, who shared insights on turning knowledge into action.

His core message was transformational: education is not just for employment, it is a tool to solve real-life challenges and create meaningful impact in our communities. One of his memorable quotes resonated deeply with members: "Don't study just to be employed; study to solve a problem. That's where

true opportunity lies."

Key Takeaways:

1. **Employment and Entrepreneurship:** Don't just chase jobs; create them by addressing challenges around you.

2. **Practical Thinking:** Move beyond idealism; map out your future and actively position yourself for growth.

3. **Networking and Professional Profile:** Expand and leverage your network, while cultivating a professional presence that attracts opportunities.

4. **Intentional Living:** Take

“The talk provided members with practical tools to navigate stress, anxiety and life pressures while fostering resilience and well-being.”

deliberate actions aligned with your goals and values.

5. Creativity and Impact: Use your unique skills to transform your community and leave a lasting mark.

▶ **The session left members energized to think bigger, act boldly, and live with purpose, reinforcing that true growth combines knowledge with practical action for both personal and societal advancement.**

The Club also hosted another guest to facilitate on the topic, "Finding Your Ground: Mental Health and Coping with Life's Pressures."

The fellowship focused on mental health, hosting a session led by Mr.

Douglas Akena, an expert in occupational therapy and psychology. The talk provided members with practical tools to navigate stress, anxiety and life pressures while fostering resilience and well-being.

Discussions highlighted key strategies for maintaining mental wellness:

Self-Care: Mindfulness, exercise, journaling, and nurturing supportive friendships.

Breaking Stigma: Encouraging open conversations and creating safe, non-judgmental spaces.

Seeking Help: Recognizing professional support as a strength, not a weakness.

Resilience: Building mental and emotional strength through intentional self-care.



▶ **Members left inspired to prioritize their mental health while championing awareness and support within their communities.**

Rtr Amutwongire is the PR Director at the Rotaract Club of Kampala Naalya





ELDER'S EYE

Passion: The missing link in development projects

BY RTN GODFREY
OKELLO-OMODING

October, whose theme is 'Economic and Community Development,' comes with a reminder that amidst us are people that need economic uplifting. This theme is close to every one's heart; it's about survival. For me, the theme is within my main area of training, and what I have practiced for many years and continue to practice and earn a living from.

▶ **One of my touching experiences is designing and managing programmes in the post-war communities that brought transformation.**

I did mingle with those communities and personally came out a transformed person in outlook of community development.

To effectively participate in the economic uplifting of communities, one must have passion. It only takes passion to save misappropriation of funds meant for deprived communities. It takes passion to align one's mind to the feelings of a deprived community or person. Passion leads to translation of proposed development programmes/projects from documents and minds to actual livelihoods. Passion makes you see deeper and have a sense of doing

something positive for others. Otherwise, it may remain written in reports that interventions were carried out. Then tracing of results leaves a distasteful feeling. Such scenarios are not strange in our midst.

A number of programmes have been designed for economic uplifting of communities, and in some, the results are invisible. You may be reminded that you probably don't have eyes to see them. The programmes either get mismanaged or remain vents for the outflow of funds.

Cases of such mismanagement are not limited to government

programmes only, even those executed by non-state actors are culprits. The missing link between actual delivery of programmes and the communities is lack of passion on the part of those supposed to deliver

them. Rotarians, as we reflect on the theme of this month, let us take time to reflect on the choices of those who deliver our programmes/projects.

Even if there may be issues in the delivery mechanisms, a destructive challenge emanates from the personnel given to implement them.

Delivery mechanisms can be reviewed and adjusted,

“Rotarians, as we reflect on the theme of this month, let us take time to reflect on the choices of those who deliver our programmes/projects.”



but in the hands of officials without passion, there will be no results.

▶ **The unfortunate thing about passion is that, it's not taught. It can only be nurtured in hearts. The nurturing is a long-time process coupled with values. A value system is important in development. Putting in place laws, regulations and rules won't nurture passion. They are there to control negative passion. As Rotarians, let's pay attention to values when we engage in community projects.**

Rotarians, this month is a translation of our value systems and what we say in the 'Grace' – "may we be ever mindful of the needs of others." For economic and community development to be realized, it has to be

intentional and well-planned. Sometimes, we rush to the community when we're not well prepared. We see things from the surface and design supposedly good interventions. Little attention is paid to understanding the deeper root of the problem. People with passion to uplift

“

Like the Solomonic saying, "there is nothing new under the sun," so is the economic and community development. It has been there and so is the community."

a community must dig the roots of the problem. Doing so enables right targeting, clear design of interventions, and eventual impactful results would be realized. Remember, development is dynamic as the people are. Never stick to one solution for similar conditions.

Like the Solomonic saying, "there is nothing new under the sun," so is the economic and community development. It has been there and so is the community.

What is new, at all times, are actors. Where actors are passionate, results are marvelous. The challenge

today with our "Unite for Good" is to translate it. This should not be an imaginary saying. But a saying with efforts in it and demonstrated by actions. Interesting fact about development is that it's felt and seen among the intended beneficiaries.

'Cooked' figures won't add up. This reminds me of the programmes I was managing years ago. We never had posters, nor took interviews from the press. We referred them to the communities we were "partnering" with. We called it partnering because we believed in empowering. Let the communities talk for themselves.

▶ **As we reflect on the theme of this month, let us remember that economic and community development evolve. It takes only passion to move with the evolving problems. May we grow and obtain satisfaction from what we do with the communities.**





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#OutToLunch

The transition nobody is talking about

BY RTN. DENIS JJUUKO



Ugandans love politics. Newspapers splash politics on the front pages every single day year on year. Radio and television lead stories are about politics, after spending many hours of airtime talking politics on various programs. In WhatsApp groups, informal meetings, over frothy drinks and roast, politics dominates, with each move analyzed. Many people earn a living as analysts.

Being an election season, politics is in overdrive mode everywhere. Every street has hundreds of posters. TikTok loops in politics reel after reel. With

more than 1.6 million elected leaders, politics is up there with agriculture as one of the biggest sectors to employ people even when its contribution to GDP is not usually reflected in national data.

“Politics is up there with agriculture as one of the biggest sectors to employ people even when its contribution to GDP is not usually reflected in national data.”

Given that President Yoweri Museveni will be marking 40 years in power in January 2026 (if he wins the forthcoming presidential elections), a political transition to the next generation has been on the lips of many including some ministers. And in a country where many people eat and breathe politics, this is understandable.

However, there is a transition that nobody is talking about, yet it is critical to Uganda's economy. After

experiencing wars for years, most parts of Uganda became relatively stable, enabling many people to do business or even be employed uninterrupted. The businesspeople imported whatever Uganda needed and made lots of money. Some became manufacturers, hoteliers, real estate owners and provided whatever service the country needed.

▶ **The economy boomed, making some people wealthy. Even those who had assets like land in urban areas saw a significant increase in their portfolios. Areas that were hitherto ancestral burial grounds for people who lived in Kampala became urban all of sudden.**

At the same time, the country's population started its upward trajectory - ballooning to the current levels of nearly 50 million



people. Population growth can exert pressures on existing infrastructure and services and those who saw opportunities pocketed the proceeds.

Those who were ushered into Uganda's economy of the early years of Museveni's rule and a few others who had been doing business from the 1970s and 1980s during those troublesome years are now on their way out. They are aging, aged or already dead.

Those who became wealthy are leaving significant portfolios largely to people who can't manage them. See, doing business in Uganda is relatively new - dating back to the 19th Century when the Arabs introduced trading as we know it today. Even then, doing business was largely for foreigners. Many people doing business today are either the first or second generation in their families to do so.

Both these generations largely don't know what to do with their wealth once they are dead. Many have not been able to build businesses that can outlast them as they were no particular systems

to follow. No governance structures like boards of directors or management systems. The businesses simply grew from small shops into empires by Ugandan standards and the owners carried on – business as usual.

That is why inheritance cases are dominating the courts with children suing their surviving parents or even asking courts to give them their inheritance when the parents are still alive. Such businesses will most likely not exist in the next decade or so.



Many people who worked their backs off (or benefited from corruption) have raised lazy children who have not been prepared to take over the businesses.

The children prefer to 'live the life' – drive fancy cars, buy expensive liquors in Kololo and Bugolobi bars, date slay queens or kings and holiday in Dubai or the Maldives. Many such children inheriting significant wealth are going to be broke in a few years of their parents' death.

Those who don't live that life don't know how to handle financial institutions. That explains why many

banks advertise the properties within months of the proprietor's death. Companies with structures should not be too difficult to build if the owners realized that business acumen and tenacity are not always genetic. Not every son can run a business.

Businesspeople need to build strong systems and let professionals run the business. The children, if found wanting, can always earn dividends and live the life. We can learn from the big businesses operating here. If they can come here, set up a country office and employ people and appoint a board and remain successful, what stops Ugandan companies to do the same right here?

In the meantime, as Ugandan businessowners continue to run their business empires like kiosks, prepare to benefit from this transition. The kids will be selling at giveaway prices.

*The writer is a communication and visibility consultant.
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Last week's fellowship



FAMILY MATTERS



BY PASTOR RONNIE MUTEBI

INVEST WISELY

LUKE 19:23 (NLT): "WHY DIDN'T YOU DEPOSIT MY MONEY IN THE BANK? AT LEAST I COULD HAVE GOTTEN SOME INTEREST ON IT."

There are different schools of thought on investment. Nonetheless, God expects us to be wise in how we invest money. It's important not to be wasteful.

This is a story about a master

who gave his servants money to manage. One of the servants did absolutely nothing with it. The master rebuked him and said, "You could have at least put it in the bank so it could earn interest!" This teaches us something important: God expects an increase, even if it's just through a simple and safe option like a fixed deposit in a bank.

The interesting phase here is "at least."

This means the basic minimum. This is the most undermined principle of life in management of finances.

Some people never invest their money (like the servant in our theme study) or they start businesses or investment projects that bring in no return—sometimes even less than what they'd get from simply saving their money in a bank or some other similar platform. That's not wisdom.

“
Ask yourself: “If I put this money in the bank or in a similar investment option instead, would it give me more?”



If a bank or some other platform is offering a better return, why risk your money and time on something that might give you less?

It's wise to compare your options and go with what brings growth. Any investment without returns is simply a waste of time and resources.

Don't invest just to say, "I have a business." Don't spend money just to look like you're doing something. Ask yourself: "If I put this money in the bank or in a similar investment option instead, would it give me more?" If the answer is 'yes,' put it there—until God gives you a better idea or opens a door that makes real financial sense.

Take Home: God expects us to be wise in how we invest money. This wisdom helps us not to be wasteful or mishandle the resources He has entrusted us with.

Checklist

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2. Tell a friend to register
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For My Friend Pesh, who fought

BY PAMELA KAWADDWA

**You carried your pain
with quiet grace,
A warrior's heart,
a gentle face.**

Through sleepless nights
and endless days,
You still found strength
in softer ways.

You smiled through
storms, refused to fall,
Taught us courage
through it all.
Even as the battle grew,
Your light burned fierce,
and your love stayed true.

Though cancer tried to
steal your flame,
It could never take your name
For every life your
warmth has touched,
You'll live in hearts
that love so much.

Now stars above hold
you in peace,
Your struggle ended,



your soul released.
But in our hearts,
you still remain
a song of hope
beyond the pain.
Pesh, you will forever
be remembered.

Your kind of love
was a rare gem!

Till again...

Phwgy

Object of Rotary

The Object of Rotary is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to encourage and foster:





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Rtn Edgar Gonza Ategeka

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Largesse

It's the fancy-pants word your English professor drops like it's a microphone after a particularly good sonnet. You know the phrase: "The mogul displayed remarkable largesse by donating his *slightly* used Range Rover."

To understand it, we must time-travel to the Middle Ages, where hygiene was optional, but theatrical generosity was mandatory. Grab your mead!

Largesse (pronounced 'lar-JESS,' not 'large cheese,' which is a whole other, more delicious discussion) arrived via 12th-century France. This was an era when nobles competed in the Olympic sport of 'Conspicuous Giving'-seeing who could unload the most useless junk while looking dramatically noble before rolling cameras. Picture Count Pierre

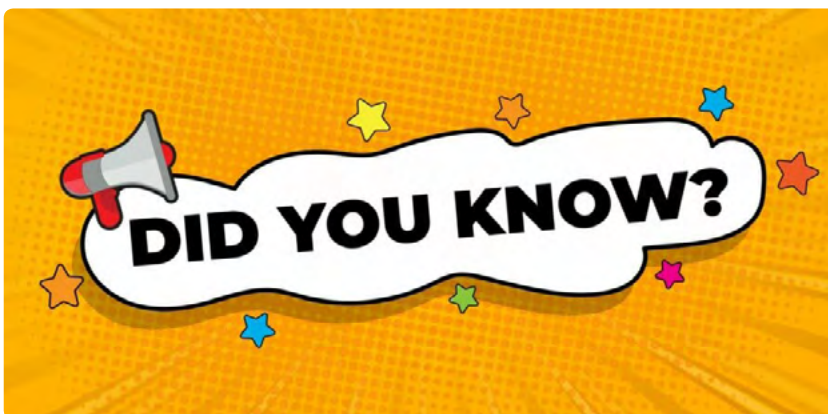
sighing, "Ah, such is my largesse!" as he tosses a peasant a gold coin and his tailor silently patches the holes in his silk overcoat.

The root word, large, meant 'generous.' Back then, being 'large' wasn't about your belt size; it was about your soul's Wi-Fi signal strength. Strong signal? You gave your second-best warhorse. Weak signal? You got the nickname "Miserly Malcolm, He Who Counts Candle Drippings."

Today's largesse is less about "feasting 200 serfs" and more about "donating

IT equipment to charity and writing it off." Yet, the spirit remains: it's the art of giving just enough to feel saintly while protecting your solid-gold espresso machine.

So, when someone praises your largesse for sharing a cookie, mutter something in faux-French and remember: you're not just being nice—you're upholding a 900-year-old tradition of professional showboating. Vive la largesse! (Long live to generosity).



Jokes

1. The preacher said we should never discuss politics or money at the dinner table.

So now, when my family gets together, we just sit in silence, staring at our ugali and **Sukuma wiki**, and wondering if we'll ever be able to afford a house of our own, with our current government still in power.

2. I told my therapist, "I feel like nobody understands me." She said, "What do you mean by that? Be more specific. Use data. I need you to present your feelings in a PowerPoint deck by Friday."

3. What's an astronaut's favorite part of the computer keyboard?
The space bar.



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