

Naalya Food 24th March, 2026 Bulletin

Rotary
Kampala - Naalya



UNITE
FOR
GOOD

Issue 35 | RY 2025-26



PDG Mike Ssebalu (M) joins Partner Club Presidents during the mental health camp in Acholi Quarters in Kampala recently.

RC KAMPALA - NAALYA



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Chef's Note

Dear Rotarians and Guests,

This marks the final week of our monthly theme of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene. To every club that mobilised, every Rotarian who gave time, treasure or talent, and every partner organisation that stood beside us in the field: thank you, and well done.

We do not, however, rest on completed work. We turn the page.

April brings us the theme of Environment, and it arrives at precisely the right moment. Our nation's, our continent's, and indeed our planet's environmental distress is not background noise – it is an urgent, measurable crisis that sits at the intersection of every Rotary cause area: clean water, human health, food security, economic opportunity and community resilience.

Here in Uganda, we feel that crisis viscerally. The degradation of our wetlands has disrupted natural water filtration systems – the very systems that once filtered the water we championed in March.

Deforestation on hillsides feeds soil erosion that silts the rivers our communities depend on. Changing rainfall patterns are rewriting the agricultural calendars of smallholder farmers who have no safety net when the rains fail. Climate change is not a distant policy debate;

it is a lived, daily reality for millions of our neighbours.

Environmental stewardship is not a soft topic for well-meaning idealists. It is infrastructure for human survival – as concrete and as urgent as a borehole or a hospital ward.

When we plant trees, restore wetlands, reduce plastic waste or educate our communities about sustainable land use, we are building the invisible architecture that all development depends upon.

We are calling one to bring to April the same energy that defined March. Tree-planting drives, wetland restoration advocacy, e-waste collection, plastic-free campaigns, school environmental clubs, community clean-ups – the options are as varied as our communities are diverse.

What matters is that we do not treat this theme as a calendar obligation, a box to tick and then shelve. Our actions this month must outlast the month itself. The trees we plant in April must still be standing in the next decades.

On another front, we are pleased to report meaningful progress on one of our Club's most pressing humanitarian initiatives: a mental health programme for adolescents in urban informal settlements. Working in close partnership with both local and international collaborators, we are

putting the final touches on a project that has been years in the making.

This initiative targets thousands of young people in high-density urban areas – young men and women navigating poverty, disrupted schooling, fractured family structures, and the invisible wounds that neither teachers nor parents always have language for.

The young people in these communities face mental health burdens that are largely unacknowledged and entirely unserved.

Depression, anxiety, trauma responses to violence, and the hopelessness of chronic economic exclusion – these are not conditions that simply resolve themselves. Left unaddressed, they become the seeds of a lost generation.

We still need financial support to get this project over the line. If you or your club can contribute in terms of a direct pledge, or a connection to a corporate sponsor – please reach out to the project committee without delay.

This work is not glamorous. It does not produce photographs of smiling crowds or ribbon-cutting ceremonies. But it is necessary, and we intend to scale it.

Rtn. Peter Nyanzi
Bulletin Officer

Water: The Foundation of Peace and Opportunity

RI PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
By Rtn. Francesco Arezzo



MARCH 2026

Cari amici,

In the Rotary calendar, March is designated as Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) Month. While we often talk about strategy and membership, this month reminds us of the most basic human requirements that allow a community to thrive.

Clean water is more than a resource; it is the spark for transformation. When a village gains access to safe water, we aren't just installing a pump or drilling a borehole—we are reclaiming time for women and girls, reducing the burden of disease, and providing the dignity that every human being deserves.

As an orthodontist, I spent decades understanding that you cannot treat a patient without first earning their trust

and understanding their environment.

The same is true for our WASH projects. Rotary does not just “build and walk away.” We integrate hygiene education and local maintenance into every project.

When a child learns to wash their hands and stays in school because they are healthy, that is where our impact becomes permanent.

Unite for Good is our guiding principle this year. This month, I ask you to see how water unites us.

Our work with partners like USAID and the WASH Rotary Action Group (WASH-RAG) shows that no nation can solve the water crisis alone.

It requires a “peace machine”—which is exactly what Rotary is. Every clean water system is a step toward global peace

because it removes a source of conflict and replaces it with opportunity.

I also want to reflect on my recent visit to Nigeria and Uganda. Seeing the dedication of Rotarians on the ground - managing global grants for boreholes and school latrines - reminded me that transformation starts with character.

It starts with how we treat one another and the commitment we keep to the world's most vulnerable. Let us use this month to dream big.

Take those projects you thought were too bold and bring them into the light. Whether it is a small club project or a large-scale Global Grant, let us ensure that the flow of clean water reaches everyone.

Together, we Unite for Good - for our clubs, our communities, and our world.

WITH GRATITUDE AND AFFECTION,

“It starts with how we treat one another and the commitment we keep to the world's most vulnerable.”

Bringing Clean Water to Communities

DG'S MESSAGE

By Geoffrey Martin Kitakule



MARCH 2026

Rotarians are transforming lives by ensuring that people especially children and women have safe water to drink, clean sanitation facilities, and the knowledge to practice good hygiene.

and improved learning outcomes

- Reduced burden on women and girls who previously walked long distances to collect water
- Empowered communities with the skills to manage and maintain WASH services

in underserved towns and villages, providing reliable access to safe, clean water for the first time.

These improvements lead to:

- Better health and fewer waterborne illnesses
- Higher school attendance

“Access to clean water and safe sanitation directly affects children’s health, school attendance, and dignity—especially for girls.”

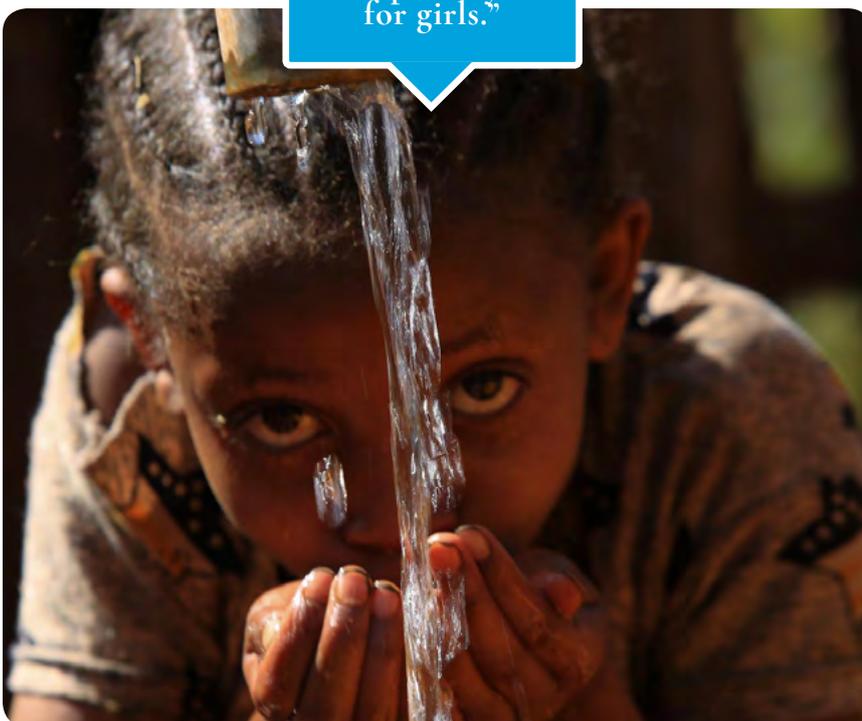
Rotary clubs such as the Rotary Club of Yumbe have drilled boreholes that have transformed communities. Other clubs have installed piped water systems

For example, a project by the Rotary Club of Kampala North delivered a solar-powered piped water system in Busunju. This initiative has transformed daily life by reducing waterborne illnesses and the time people spend collecting water.

Access to clean water and safe sanitation directly affects children’s health, school attendance, and dignity—especially for girls.

Rotary initiatives have also:

- Built water catchment and storage systems in rural areas such as Agago District, enabling communities like Akwang Village to collect and use rainwater.
- Constructed latrines and handwashing facilities in multiple schools, including two schools supported this year by the Rotary Club of Wakiso.
- Provided WASH facilities for girls through the Rotary Club of Nansana Metro.



- Delivered hygiene education and menstrual hygiene support to pupils through the Rotary Club of Kisasi-Kyanja.

In partnership with EACOP, under the Greening Schools Initiative, Rotary is also improving WASH facilities in more than nine schools.

These projects help reduce disease, keep children healthy, and encourage regular school attendance.

Providing infrastructure is only one part of the solution. Rotarians also focus on education and behavior change. Training sessions—such as those conducted at Kabule Health Center III—equip community health teams, educators, and local leaders with essential hygiene practices and sanitation

maintenance skills.

Many WASH initiatives are delivered through Global Grants, which bring together Rotary clubs in Uganda and international partners.

One example is the “Bugiri WASH for Schools – Phase II” project, implemented jointly by the Rotary Clubs of Ntinda and Bugiri, together with international partner clubs.

This project has significantly improved water and sanitation facilities in multiple schools in Bugiri District.

WASH work is also closely connected to disease prevention. By combining safe water access with latrine construction,

handwashing stations, and community health tools, these initiatives drastically reduce incidences of diseases such as diarrhea and malaria.

Beyond direct service, Rotary is expanding its partnership capacity with organizations such as Davis & Shirtliff to support long-term WASH solutions.

“
This is the power of
Uniting
for Good,
and a clear
demonstration
that Rotary
Cares.”

These partnerships provide discounted equipment and technical support, making vital projects more achievable.

This is the power of Uniting for Good, and a clear demonstration that Rotary Cares.

#ROTARYEYAMBA



President's Message

RTN CHARLES OWEKMENO
Unite For Good President
2025-2026



Dear family of Rotary and Guests,

Happy new week. I warmly congratulate and welcome back our Muslim brothers and sisters from the Eid el Fitr celebrations.

It is always a joy to share in the spirit of fellowship and community.

I am pleased to report that five prospective members were successfully trained and will be presented to the club on Tuesday, 24th March 2026, for approval.

Once confirmed, they will be inducted into Rotary on 31st March 2026. This marks an exciting step forward in strengthening our club and expanding our impact.

Last week, we had a captivating presentation on our Mental Health Project. I sincerely thank those

who made commitments to contribute to The Rotary Foundation in support of this initiative.

I continue to encourage members and friends of our club to join us in raising the necessary funds to bring this project to life.

I once again extend my gratitude to PDG Anne Nkutu and PAG Flavia Serugo for their dedication to the Sisterhood Spaces program, which has reached hundreds of women with inspirational mentorship sessions.

Their leadership continues to uplift and empower many.

I also wish to thank Rotarian Mathias Mulumba, our Awards Officer, and Rotarian Brian Mayanja for successfully submitting our applications for several DISCON awards.

We look forward with optimism to walking away with recognition in Entebbe.

Relatedly, our club has made significant progress toward raising \$10,000 in contributions to The Rotary Foundation, which qualifies us for an award at DISCON.

“
Relatedly, our club has made significant progress toward raising \$10,000.”

I call upon all Naalyakos to contribute between now and the first week of April so that we can achieve this milestone together.

I invite you all to our Rotary meeting this Tuesday as we present and welcome our prospects.

Let us continue to serve with joy, commitment, and unity. Wishing you a great Rotary week!

**YOURS IN SERVICE
ABOVE SELF,**



TEAM TALK

Behavioral Change: *The Invisible Leadership in WASH*

BY AG FRANCIS LUBUULWA

When people think about WASH, their minds often go first to what can be seen. A borehole. A toilet block. A handwashing facility. A water tank standing proudly at a school or health centre.

These are visible signs of progress, and rightly so. They matter. They are tangible. They are worth celebrating. But if we are honest, we also know something important: infrastructure alone does not guarantee transformation.

A school may have a handwashing station, yet children may still not wash their hands consistently. A community may have latrines, yet old habits may continue.

A girl may attend a school with improved facilities, but if menstrual hygiene is still treated with silence, embarrassment, or stigma, then dignity is still incomplete. This is why hygiene and behaviour sit at the heart of WASH.

This is why this week's conversation is not only about facilities. It is about leadership, because behaviour change is leadership. It is the kind of leadership that does not always appear in



photographs.

It may not be the most visible part of a project launch. It may not attract applause in the same way a ribbon-cutting ceremony does.

Yet, it is often the difference between a project that exists and a project that truly changes lives. That is an important challenge for us as Rotarians.

Rotary has always been strong at mobilising for action. We raise funds, rally partners, organise clubs, and implement practical interventions.

But in WASH, our work becomes far more powerful when we move beyond

“Every invisible leadership is still leadership. In fact, it may be the kind that lasts the longest.”

construction and begin shaping culture.

What habits are being formed? What norms are being challenged? What behaviours are being reinforced? What dignity is being restored?

Barriers to WASH

In many of our Ugandan communities, the barriers to good hygiene are not always about ignorance alone. Sometimes they are about inconsistency. Sometimes they are about overcrowded schools.

Sometimes they are about poverty. Sometimes they are about the quiet acceptance of unhealthy practices simply because *that is*

how things have always been. And that is exactly where Rotary can make a lasting difference.

A Rotary club does not need to build a large sanitation facility every year to make meaningful WASH impact. Sometimes the most effective intervention is much simpler and much more intentional. One school adopted for hygiene education.

One menstrual health conversation opened with dignity and care. One partnership with local health workers. One teachers' session on consistent handwashing practice. One low-cost but well-maintained handwashing point placed where children actually use it. The financial cost may be modest. The long-term impact can be generational.

Think about the girl who misses school every month because the sanitation environment does not protect her dignity.

Think about the pupil who suffers repeated preventable illness because handwashing is irregular.

Think about the family that continues unhealthy sanitation practices not because change is impossible, but because no one has consistently helped them see and adopt a better way. Now think about what happens when that changes.

A girl stays in school. Her confidence grows. Her performance improves. Her future opens. A child becomes healthier. Attendance improves. Learning improves.



A school community begins to take pride in cleanliness, not as an event, but as a standard. A generation starts to see hygiene not as a favour, but as a responsibility.

That is not small work. That is development. That is empowerment. That is service with lasting consequence. And perhaps this is where we need to challenge ourselves as Rotary leaders.

It is often easier to support what can be commissioned than what must be reinforced over time. A building can be launched in a day. Behaviour must be nurtured over months and years. Infrastructure can be handed over. Culture must be cultivated.

Invisible leadership

But real leadership is not only about what we build. It is also about what we influence. The invisible side of leadership is often the most powerful. When a Rotary club champions hygiene, it is doing more than promoting cleanliness.

It is raising standards.

It is protecting dignity. It is shaping how children think about health, responsibility, and care for others. It is saying to a school, a family, and a community: the small daily habits matter, because they shape the quality of life.

There is also something deeply Rotary about this. We are at our best when we help communities build systems that endure beyond us. Hygiene education does exactly that.

It plants practices that continue long after a project team has left. It turns beneficiaries into participants. It shifts WASH from being an installation to becoming a way of life.

So perhaps this week, each club can ask a simple but important question: ***Beyond building, what behaviours are we shaping?***

Are we helping schools create a culture of handwashing? Are we supporting menstrual hygiene with dignity and openness? Are we partnering with health educators and local leaders? Are we paying attention not only to the physical structure, but to the human habits around it?

Because that is where the deepest impact lies. Infrastructure builds access. Behaviour builds transformation.

And in the end, invisible leadership is still leadership. In fact, it may be the kind that lasts the longest.

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

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Global Grant for Minds That Matter

ROTARY CLUB OF KAMPALA NAALYA, PARTNERS SET TO SPEARHEAD BOLD TWO-YEAR RESPONSE TO THE ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS IN UGANDA'S URBAN SLUMS

BY EDITORIAL DESK

The numbers are stark. Globally, one in eight people lives with a mental health condition. In Uganda, that ratio has worsened to one in four — a silent epidemic that receives less than one per cent of the national health budget.

The adolescents in Kampala's ghetto communities bear the heaviest burden: deprived of schooling, healthcare, and safe spaces, they are at once the most vulnerable

and the most overlooked. The Rotary Club of Kampala Naalya has resolved to act.

With formal approval now secured from The Rotary Foundation, the club is set to implement a two-year Global Grant project targeting mental health support for 3,000 adolescents across Kampala's urban slum communities.

This is not a three-day workshop dressed up as a project. It is a sustained, rigorously structured intervention with clear objectives, measurable

outcomes, and a multi-sectoral framework designed for lasting impact.

A Comprehensive Intervention

During a presentation to the Club on March 17, Project Coordinator Dr John Mugisa said the project rests on three pillars: increasing access to mental health services, building the capacity of community service providers, and strengthening strategic partnerships.

Integrated mental health outreach clinics will be conducted every three to four months directly inside target communities — a model already piloted successfully in Acholi Quarters in Nakawa Division.

“Within schools, the project will deliver mental health screenings and counselling sessions.”**”**



A toll-free helpline and adolescent platforms will ensure that even a young person in crisis can reach support at the end of a phone call.

Within schools, the project will deliver mental health screenings and

counselling sessions, and train teachers to recognise the early signs of mental illness in children too often dismissed as stubborn or academically weak.

Psychosocial support clubs will give adolescents peer-led safe spaces.

Community health workers, village health teams, and trained peer educators drawn from among the adolescents themselves will extend the project's reach deep into communities where formal health systems have limited penetration.

Tackling stigma is central to the strategy. Engaging media partners, community influencers, and local government leaders, the project mirrors the successful HIV/AIDS advocacy models of the past – shifting public attitudes so that people seek help without shame.

A formal referral partnership with Butabika National

Referral Hospital ensures that adolescents screened through community and school outreaches receive prioritised clinical care, creating an unbroken chain from identification to treatment.

Strong Partnerships, Robust Governance

Implementation is led by the Rotary Club of Kampala Naalya in collaboration with partner clubs Bukoto and Kampala Seven Hills.

The Rotary Club of Carlsbad High Noon in the United States serves as the international partner. Technical guidance is

provided by Butabika National Referral Hospital and the Ministry of Health.

A Project Steering Committee comprising experts from Kampala Capital City Authority, the Ministry of Health, educators, and community

development officers will provide oversight through quarterly reviews, a formal mid-term assessment, and a final evaluation.

“The only missing piece is the final push to fully fund this project.”

One Piece Still Missing

The total project budget stands at USD 59,000. The Rotary Foundation has committed USD 9,600, and the Rotary Club of Carlsbad Hi-Noon, California, USA, has fulfilled its USD 6,000 contribution. Several local clubs have pledged support.

Yet approximately USD 27,000 remains to be raised – and the deadline is the end of April. The grant is approved. The partners are in place. The only missing piece is the final push to fully fund this project.

Join the Harambee

The Rotary Club of Kampala Naalya is calling on Rotarians, alumni, business partners, and community allies to join this collective effort.

Contributions can be made directly through the MyRotary portal – select “Donate,” choose “Global Grants,” and enter the project’s Grant number (2570450) to view and contribute toward the pending balance.

Donations count toward Paul Harris Fellow and Major Donor recognition. Direct bank transfers are also being facilitated.

Three thousand adolescents in Kampala’s most underserved communities are waiting.

The time to act is now. Contact the project committee through the Rotary Club of Kampala Naalya, or connect them with networks that can help close the funding gap. Do not let this opportunity pass.



PDG Mike Ssebalu (M) joins Partner Club Presidents during the mental health camp in Acholi Quarters in Kampala recently.

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Club of Kampala Naalya

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Clubs Asked to Nominate Voting Delegates

BY EDITORIAL DESK

With the 101st District Conference (DISCON) in Entebbe around the corner, the D9213 leadership has requested Clubs to forward names of their voting delegates.

DISCON traditionally includes a formal business meeting at which clubs will exercise one of the most fundamental rights in Rotary's organizational life: the right to vote.

But that right does not exercise itself.

District Secretary Kaziro Kyambadde said in an email that all clubs in the district, reminding them of their obligation – and opportunity – to select, certify, and submit the details of their voting delegate or delegates ahead of the conference.

The deadline is 2nd April 2026, and it is one that no club should allow to pass unattended.

The business meeting at DISCON is not ceremonial. Delegates will be voting on substantive matters that will shape the direction of the District in the year ahead. Three items are confirmed for the ballot:

- **The Audited Accounts for 2024/2025** – a matter of financial accountability and transparency that every member has a stake in.
- **The Annual District Goals for 2026/2027** – the strategic compass that will guide clubs and communities across the district.
- **The District Budget for 2026/2027** – the financial framework within which the district's programmes and initiatives

will be executed. These are decisions that determine how the district accounts for its past and plans for its future.

A club that is not represented in that room is a club that has surrendered its voice.

“Delegates will be voting on substantive matters that will shape the direction of the District in the year ahead.”

How Many Delegates Get?

In accordance with the RI Manual of Procedure, delegate entitlement is determined by a





club's membership as recorded in Rotary Club Central as of 31st December 2025. The formula is straightforward:

Every club, regardless of size, is entitled to at least one delegate. That baseline entitlement is itself a statement of Rotary's values – that no club, large or small, is without a voice.

Once your club has identified its delegate or delegates, the club President or Secretary must send the credentials – names and email addresses – to District Executive Secretary Kaziro Kyambadde at kkaziro2@gmail.com, copying Beatrice Ngabirano at ugarotary@gmail.com.

The subject line of the email must match

exactly the subject line of the original communication from the district.

“
Show up
in Entebbe
ready to
do what
Rotarians
have always
done best.”

Two conditions, however, are non-negotiable: both the club and the delegate must be in good standing.

Any club with outstanding arrears – whether RI Dues or District Dues – will not be entitled to nominate a representative or participate in the vote.

This is not a technicality to be taken lightly. It is a reminder that the privileges of membership are inseparable from the responsibilities that come with it.

A Culture Worth Protecting

Rotary's decision-making

culture is one of its most enduring strengths.

It is deliberate, inclusive, and grounded in the belief that the collective wisdom of its members is greater than any single opinion.

But that culture only holds when clubs show up – informed, prepared, and ready to participate.

April 2nd will arrive quickly. Choose your delegate. Submit your credentials.

Show up in Entebbe ready to do what Rotarians have always done best: make decisions together, in service of something larger than any one of us.

Submission deadline: 2nd April 2026. Contact: kkaziro2@gmail.com | ugarotary@gmail.com

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10 Reasons Not To Miss DISCON in Entebbe

BY EDITORIAL DESK

If there is one event that defines our Rotary year in Uganda, it is the Annual District Conference (DISCON). And this year, it comes to Entebbe – on the shimmering shores of Lake Victoria. Here are Ten Reasons why this year’s DISCON is a must-attend:

1. Recharge Your ‘Why’

Club leadership is demanding. The grants, the fundraising, the weekly meetings – sometimes your Rotary flame may flicker.

The conference fans it back into a roaring fire. You will return home not tired, but transformed.

2. Fellowship Like No Other

Rotary is, at its core, a friendship organisation that serves. When you shake hands with a Rotarian from Gulu and find you share the same dreams as one from Mbarara, the isolation of club silos dissolves. The laughter, the singing, the shared meals – this is the glue that holds our District together.

3. Direct Access to Leadership

It is not every day you share a table with the RI President’s Personal Representative or ask a direct question to our District Governor. The conference humanises leadership. You realise they are servants, just like you – and a District built on that trust gets things done.

4. Align With the District Vision

You cannot steer your club’s ship without knowing the destination. The DISCON is where the incoming District Governor and his team unveils their strategic roadmap for the

new Rotary Year. Alignment means eligibility for grants, recognition, and the kind of support that transforms a good club into a great one.

5. A Masterclass in Service

The breakout sessions are goldmines. From writing Global Grants to modern club administration and membership retention, these workshops deliver professional tools for volunteer excellence.

Many clubs have doubled their impact because one member came back with a single brilliant idea.

6. Forge Partnerships For Impact

Some of Uganda’s most impactful Global Grants were born over conference tea breaks. The House of Friendship is a marketplace of ideas – where your club’s medical expertise

meets another’s community access, and something remarkable is built together.

7. Celebrate Excellence Service is often thankless work.

The Awards Gala changes that. Watching fellow Rotarians receive Paul Harris Fellowships and Club Excellence awards builds a culture of appreciation that motivates every one of us to serve harder in the year ahead.

8. Entebbe’s attractions Await

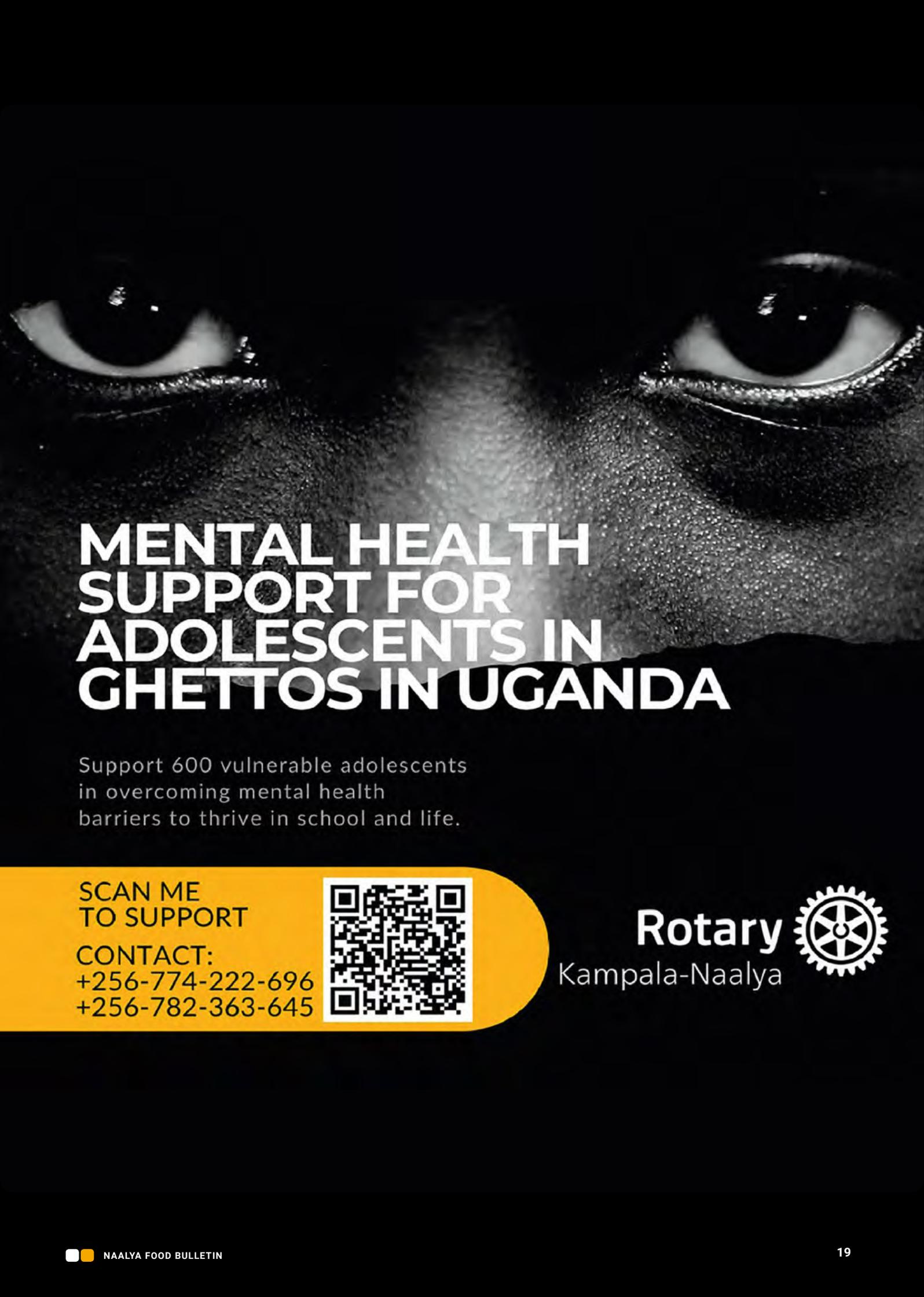
A conference beside Lake Victoria’s calm waters is, quite simply, an experience unto itself.

We know how to celebrate in Uganda – and at the DISCON, we hang out celebrate with purpose.

“The conference humanises leadership. You realise they are servants, just like you.”



PDG Anne Nkutu speaking during last year’s DISCON in Jinja



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#SolRise

Understanding Adolescence Violence, Trauma

BY RTN JACKLINE MUTIIMBA

In many low-income and densely populated communities, violence is not an isolated incident; it is part of everyday life.

It exists in the background of childhood, woven into conversations, relationships, and even silence. For many adolescents, exposure to conflict, aggression, and instability begins early and continues unchecked.

A 13-year-old boy once shared a reality that is both simple and deeply unsettling: "If you cry, people say you are weak. So, you keep quiet."

That statement captures more than just a coping mechanism. It reflects a learned survival strategy.

In environments where vulnerability is discouraged, young people are forced to suppress emotions in order to fit in, stay safe, or avoid ridicule. Over time, this emotional suppression does not disappear; it accumulates.

Repeated exposure to violence fundamentally shapes how adolescents interpret the world around them. Trust becomes difficult. Safety feels temporary.



Relationships may be approached with caution or defensiveness. What might appear externally as toughness is often a protective shield built around unresolved fear and pain.

Trauma, particularly when experienced during formative years, does not simply fade with time. It embeds itself deeply - affecting emotional regulation, decision-making, concentration, and even identity formation.

Adolescents carrying unprocessed trauma may struggle in school, disengage socially, or react impulsively in situations that feel threatening, even

when they are not.

This is where misunderstanding often occurs.

Teachers may interpret withdrawn or aggressive behavior as indiscipline. Parents may see defiance or disobedience.

“
Repeated exposure to violence fundamentally shapes how adolescents interpret the world around them.”

Communities may label these young people as "problematic" or "difficult." However, beneath these labels lies a different reality: these behaviors are often expressions of unmet emotional needs and unprocessed experiences.

In essence, behavior becomes a language.

The fundamental shift

A trauma-informed approach shifts the question from, “What is wrong with this child?” to “What has this child experienced?” This shift is critical. It replaces judgment with curiosity, and punishment with support.

Through structured outreach programs and counselling interventions, initiatives such as the Mental-Health Support for Adolescents in Ghetto Communities (MSAG) create safe spaces where adolescents are not only heard but understood.

It is a 2-year project implemented in Kampala City Ghetto communities. The project targets a total of 3,000 adolescents, aimed at improving their mental well-being and contribute towards better educational outcomes.

Such interventions focus on helping young people recognize, process, and articulate their experiences. Instead of suppressing emotions, they are guided to navigate them constructively.

“When trauma is recognized rather than dismissed, minimized, or ignored, it creates an entry point for recovery.”

This process is not instant. Healing from trauma requires time,

consistency, and trust. But the impact is transformative.

Adolescents begin to rebuild a sense of safety, regain emotional control, and develop healthier ways of relating to themselves and others.

Ultimately, healing begins with acknowledgment.

When trauma is recognized rather than dismissed, minimized, or ignored, it creates an entry point for recovery.

It allows adolescents to move from survival mode toward growth, resilience, and possibility.

And sometimes, the most powerful intervention is simply this: creating an environment where a young person no longer feels the need to “keep quiet.”



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:

FIRST

The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;

SECOND

High ethical standards in business and professions; the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations; and the dignifying of each Rotarian's occupation as an opportunity to serve society;

THIRD

The application of the ideal of service in each Rotarian's personal, business and community life;

FOURTH

The advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service



ELDER'S EYE

WASH at Core of Equity, Dignity For Women

BY RTN GODFREY OKELLO-OMODING

Is it a coincidence, that the International Women's Day and theme of water, sanitation and hygiene are in the same month? March is generally regarded as 'Women's Month' because of the International Women's Day, which is globally observed on 8th March each year.

At the same time, the theme of the month for Rotary is Water, Sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), which is core to the lives and the "assumed" roles of women in society.

One is tempted to partially assert that highlighting and addressing issues of WASH this month forms a good remembrance. Indeed, it is one way of marking a life of a woman through making it better and enabling her advancement.

The 2026 United Nations theme for international women's day was, "Rights. Justice. Action. For All Women

and Girls". From a WASH perceptive, this serves as a reminder and call for actions to address women's and girls' rights to safe water and better sanitation and hygiene.

What actions to take must be the talk. When to execute it must be stated, defining it with a budget.

A lot has been brought out with clear attempts on gender

mainstreaming in various sectors including in WASH.

Fundamentally, this is good but not good enough when left unacted upon. Turn it into reality. Let it be seen with deliverables - taking WASH services to where it is needed most, and ensuring that both genders have access to safe and affordable WASH services.

Today, there is no shortage of international, regional and national declarations, conventions and pronouncements on WASH.

There are government policies and plans on WASH. There are volumes of documents guiding nations and development partners such as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

There are WASH strategic plans, carefully formulated with non-state actors. There are Sector WASH strategic development plans, well-crafted with

“ In WASH, gender is a foundational, not necessarily mainstreaming issue.”



expertise inputs with many local governments.

There are WASH activities embedded in several development plans and community action plans. The question to ask, are these engendered and acted upon? Where are the priorities when it comes to budget allocations and execution?

There is no better way to reconcile this year's international women's day theme without singling out access to and availability of WASH services.

Where are our actions being counted? This is the very core of equality, equity, rights, justice, dignity and esteem of women. Let actions talk rather than ceremony gatherings.

WASH is a twisted fibre for a woman in society. It bears a woman's social, cultural, economic, rights,

governance and justice face. Gender dynamic in WASH must be brought to the forefront and be action parked.

Rotarians, leave no mark that seems to suggest that your interventions are gender blind. Use your gender lens to ensure that your interventions in WASH have captured or they are capturing the gender dynamics in WASH.

The key gender dynamics in WASH rotate around roles, power, access, decision making, inclusion, participation and choices.

Proper application of gender tools should integrate all these. The greatest tragedy is to assume that these dynamics are addressable when treated among cross-cutting issues.

What are you cross-cutting when it is a fact that the living standards and esteem of women are lifted with access to safe water

and better sanitation and hygiene are addressed?

In WASH, gender is a foundational, not necessarily mainstreaming issue. Treat it as mainstreaming; access to safe water to a woman is a form of empowerment. A woman's poverty reduction also includes access to safe water, better sanitation and hygiene.

With these, for instance, her costs in health and that of her family are partially catered for, her economic growth is placed on calibrated rail, her dignity is restored and her time poverty is reduced.

Rotarians, take note that addressing WASH with a gender lens is tackling inequalities, is enhancing inclusion, is economic empowering, and is re-enforcing intersectionality participation.

Let us check on what we do and ensure society as whole is provided for. Let gender consciousness push us to do better in WASH.

“ Use your gender lens to ensure that your interventions in WASH have captured or they are capturing the gender dynamics in WASH.”



Fun Facts

Pastry

Let us begin with a confession: the word pastry is merely a glorified way of saying paste. Yes. Paste. The same substance your kindergarten teacher smeared on construction paper.

The same stuff that holds tiles to bathroom walls. Well, we've been eating architectural adhesive for two thousand years and calling it breakfast.

Here is how we arrived at this splendid situation.

The word traces its lineage through Middle English paste, which marched straight from the Old French pastée, meaning simply a pie.

Before that, it was Latin pasta not the spaghetti kind, before any Italians in the room rise in protest but a word meaning simply dough or paste. Dig even further and you land in Ancient Greece, where pastos meant sprinkled or salted, derived from the verb passein, meaning to sprinkle.

The ancient Greeks, it turns out, were not just inventing democracy and philosophy. They were also the original food hackers shaking salt over barley mush like it



was the ancient equivalent of a seasoning trend.

Somewhere around the mid-15th century in England, some medieval wordsmith probably a fellow named Geoffrey who baked by day and scribbled by candlelight - looked at a lump of dough and decided it deserved a grander title.

He slapped a suffix on it, and pastry was born. The French, those magnificent butter-hoarders, elevated it further still by giving us the pâtissier - a Culinary Artist. Notice the accent? That accent costs extra.

So, what exactly is pastry good for, beyond making us widen our waists and loosen our belts at breakfast? Quite a lot, as it turns out.

Before the invention of the refrigerator, cooks in the Middle Ages encased meats in a thick, hard crust of dough called a coffin. Yes, a coffin. You ate the contents; the servants ate the box. We have since evolved:

today we throw away the box and eat the packaging. That, fellow Rotarians, is what progress looks like.

Clearly, the word pastry is, in the end, the beautiful story of humble ingredients - flour, fat, water, a little salt that were folded under pressure until they became something grand.

Which, come to think of it, is also a reasonable description of a cool Rotarian.

So, the next time you sink your teeth into a pastry during kimeeza, pause for a moment. You're consuming two thousand years of Greek genius, French flair, and English ingenuity - all folded into a flaky, buttery vessel that proves, conclusively, that life is better with more butter.

Now, if you will excuse me, let me enjoy my pastries with all the focus they deserve..

Jokes of the week

1. "You know the 'enconomy' is serious when your chapati starts looking at your ugali and says: 'My guy, we need to have a serious talk about portion control.' Even the beans are like: 'I used to be a side dish, now I'm a luxury item!' Last week I saw a chicken running from

a pot, it wasn't fear; it was a protest: 'No more 'chicken flavor' soup with no chicken!'"

2. "I went to a restaurant in Lagos. The menu said 'Full Chicken.' The waiter brought a photo of a chicken and a single feather. I said, 'Where is the rest?' He said, 'Sir, the rest is imagination. In 2026, we charge for hope.'" 

3. "2026 taught me one thing: Food is not food anymore. Food is a conversation. Food is a prayer. Food is a negotiation with yourself. I looked at my plate yesterday and said, 'Are you my friend or are you here to teach me a lesson?' The plate did not answer. It just sat there. Judging me."

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