

Naalya Food 21st October, 2025
Bulletin

Rotary  | **UNITE FOR GOOD**
Kampala - Naalya

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Robert & Sarah Katende



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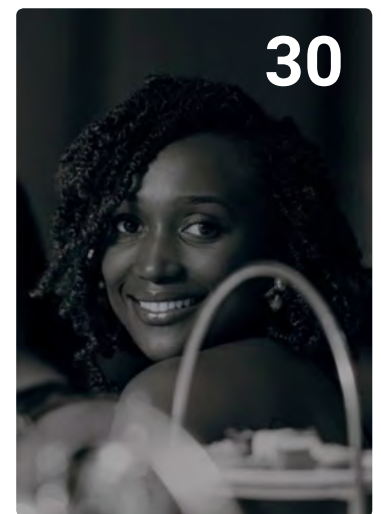
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Chef's Note



Dear Reader,

We continue to shine a spotlight on a core pillar of Rotary's mission: Community Development and Empowerment. This theme isn't just a category on a form; it's the very heartbeat of our work. It's the difference between merely giving a handout and investing in a sustainable future.

At its heart, true community development isn't about imposing solutions from the outside, but about igniting the potential that already exists within. It's about a hand-up, not a handout. When we focus on empowering individual lives, we are doing more than simply providing a resource—we are restoring dignity, fostering self-reliance, and creating a ripple effect of positive change that extends far beyond the recipient.

Think of a group of vulnerable girls who receive tailoring training and then get sewing machines to start them off. This action is a direct investment in human potential. It's seed of change that blossoms into stronger families, more vibrant

local economies, and ultimately, a more peaceful world. Our project in mental health in Acholi Quarters is fundamentally an act of empowerment, designed to help individuals lift themselves and their communities to new heights.

▶ **For decades, this commitment to service has led to some truly inspiring achievements.**

In this issue, we celebrate Rotary District 9213 for recently receiving an Excellence Award for their outstanding work. This honor is a testament to the dedication, innovation, and unwavering spirit of service demonstrated by every club and member in the District. The Magical team's commitment to high-impact, sustainable projects serves as a shining example

for all Rotarians globally. It proves that when we unite under the banner of "Service Above Self," there is no limit to what we can accomplish.

Furthermore, we must pause to recognize Rotary International's monumental partner in our global health efforts:

Bill Gates. His continued, substantial investment in the fight to eradicate Polio has been instrumental in pushing this deadly disease to the very brink of extinction.

As Mr Gates admits in his interview, this partnership is a powerful reminder that the world's greatest challenges can be overcome through collaborative effort, sustained commitment, and a shared belief in a healthier future for every child.

The focus on Community Development and Empowerment this month is a call to action. Let the success of District 9213 inspire our club projects. Let the near-victory over Polio - a joint effort with dedicated partners like the Gates Foundation - motivate our commitment to every one of Rotary's areas of focus.

▶ **Rotary is not just an organization; it is a movement that believes in the potential of people. Let's continue to invest in the individual, celebrate the collective success of our Clubs, and work alongside our partners to build truly vibrant, empowered communities and livelihoods.**

YOURS IN ROTARY,
Rtn. Peter Nyanzi
Bulletin Officer

What community-led development looks like

RI President's Message - Rtn. Francesco Arezzo

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.

Empowering Vulnerable Communities

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 (NDP III), 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 Rotarians, Rotaractors
and Esteemed Guests,

Happy Rotary Week!

I would like to extend my gratitude to everyone who represented our club at various fellowships and District activities throughout the week. Special thanks to those who attended the fellowship last week.

We were privileged to host an inspiring presentation by Robert Katende, who uses the game of Chess to empower children in the Gheto. In light of this, we have agreed to collaborate with his

organization to establish an Interact Club at Katwe.

This week, we are excited to host another distinguished speaker, Mr.

Emmanuel Sanyu Safali from Britam, who will speak about investment opportunities in the insurance sector. I invite all of you to join us for the fellowship this Tuesday at Ndere Cultural Center, starting at 7:00 pm. Your presence will be greatly appreciated.

As a Club, we're preparing for two upcoming outreaches: the Rotary Family Health Days in partnership with the Rotary Club of Kulambiro, and a visit to St.

Mbaaga Primary School in Kiwatule. I kindly request all members to generously donate textbooks and other essential items to support these initiatives. You are all warmly invited to join the outreach on 29th October 2025.

As we approach the end of the month, please prioritize registration for the District Conference 101, and kindly settle any outstanding dues. Let us ensure all balances are cleared promptly.

Once again, thank you for your continued support and passion for our club.

Wishing you a productive and impactful Rotary Week.

YOURS IN SERVICE
ABOVE SELF,

“As we approach the end of the month, please prioritize registration for the District Conference 101, and kindly settle any outstanding dues.”



TEAM TALK

Let Rotary be known for lives uplifted, not just its projects

BY AG FRANCIS LUBUULWA

In recent weeks, we have reflected on Rotary's role in driving Economic and Community Development (ECD). We began by understanding what the theme truly means and followed it by exploring how Rotarians can use their influence to empower young people. This week, we go deeper to question what it means to hold privilege and how we can transform it into purpose that changes lives. Because privilege, when left unused, becomes a wall. But when shared, it becomes a bridge.

Across Uganda, the contrast

between privilege and struggle is unmistakable. In the same city where some enjoy stable jobs and networks that guarantee opportunity, millions of people - both young and old - walk the streets each day looking for work that never comes. They are not lazy; they are simply locked out. They have energy, dreams, and potential, but lack access to those who can open doors. That is



Rotary, with its focus on vocational service and mentorship, can be the missing link between potential and opportunity.”

where Rotarians come in. Privilege is not a badge of success; it is a responsibility to make others successful.

Rotary's motto, 'Service Above Self,' calls us to use our privilege for purpose. Many Rotarians

hold positions of influence in business, education, or government. These positions come with networks, credibility, and the ability to shape change.

▶ **The question we must constantly ask ourselves is: how can I turn what I have into opportunity for someone else? When a Rotarian offers mentorship, internship, or even a small procurement opportunity to a young entrepreneur, they are not giving charity. Rather, they are igniting purpose. The greatest gift of privilege is not comfort; it is capacity to uplift others.**

Uganda has a young population. Our country is teeming with energy, ideas, and ambition. Yet, too many young people remain trapped in unemployment or underemployment. According to the World Bank, one in three Ugandans aged 15–29 is neither in employment, education, nor training. The result is frustration, disillusionment, and loss of potential. Every unemployed youth is a dream delayed. But Rotary, with its focus on vocational service and mentorship, can be the missing link between potential and opportunity. Rotary can help build a generation that not only works but



does so with purpose. Rotary has always stood apart because our service is guided by sustainability, not sentiment. True empowerment is not in what we give, but in what we build. We must shift from charity to enterprise. From providing relief to enabling production. When we buy local products for our club projects, we affirm local enterprise. When we invest in vocational skilling, we multiply independence.

When we collaborate with Rotaractors to start small business clinics, we model a partnership that gives dignity. Vocational service remains one of Rotary's most underutilized avenues for transformation. Through it, we can turn every act of service into an investment in human capacity.

Every Rotarian can make privilege purposeful through simple, actionable steps:

- Mentor one young person each year— someone who reminds

you of your younger self.

- Create internship or job-shadowing opportunities for Rotaractors and students.
- Buy from youth-led enterprises when planning Rotary events or



procurements.

- Support vocational training programs in your community through partnerships or scholarships.
- Encourage your Rotary club to host market days featuring young innovators.
- Share your story - let young people

see that success is built through values, persistence, and service.

Rotary founder Paul Harris believed that ethical business and fellowship could transform society. Today, that belief must translate into how we use our privilege. Privilege is not a trophy to display; it is a trust to steward. When Rotarians use their

“**When Rotarians use their platforms to build skills, confidence, and access for young people, we turn influence into impact.**”

platforms to build skills, confidence, and access for young people, we turn influence into impact. We become part of Uganda's story of transformation, not through donations, but through empowerment.

Let every Rotary club be known not just for its projects, but for the people it builds. Let every Rotarian remember: the measure of our privilege is in how many others we empower to stand tall. Because when privilege meets purpose, communities prosper, hope is restored, and a generation begins to work not out of survival, but with dignity.

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



High impact community transformation through Chess

INSPIRED BY ROBERT KATENDE'S VISION TO TRANSFORM LIVES ONE MOVE AT A TIME.

BY PETER NYANZI

From the time he was a boy, Robert Katende knew that survival in Katwe, one of Kampala's most impoverished slums, was nothing but a daily game of strategy.

▶ **Having beaten the odds and broken out of slum life to graduate from Kyambogo University as an engineer, Katende knew that he had to do something to instill hope in the thousands of slum children who would not be as lucky as he was.**

He thought he would find work as an engineer and then spend some time in the slum, empowering the children through playing chess as a part time activity. But God had other ideas. Katende would find himself tucking away his degree certificate in a suitcase to dedicate all his life to loving, training and empowering the vulnerable children.

So, for the past 15 years, Katende and his wife Sarah, have been orchestrating a remarkable transformation through their organization dubbed Sports Outreach Ministry (SOM) Chess Academy, with a simple but radical idea - teach slum children how to think critically, plan ahead, and believe in their own worth. A simple initiative that started with a handful of children playing on a makeshift board has grown into a movement that has touched hundreds of lives and attracted international attention.



Speaking to Rotarians at the Rotary Club of Kampala Naalya recently, Katende said the children who once scavenged for survival are now university graduates, engineers, accountants, and social workers. Many are employed by reputable organizations both in Uganda and abroad. Some have even returned to the academy as mentors, helping to raise a new generation of chess players and community leaders.

One of the most inspiring stories is that of Phiona Mutesi, who featured in the acclaimed

“**Sometimes, all it takes is a chessboard, a vision, and the strategic understanding that mindset change and training is the most effective tool for building a future.**”

Another boy, Benjamin, is at Duke University, North Carolina, studying to be a neuro-surgeon, while Ivan is qualified as an engineer, now working on some notable contracts. A few years ago, Victoria University reached out to

movie, “**Queen of Katwe,**” whose journey from Katwe to international chess tournaments captured global attention and inspired the Disney movie.

Mutesi, the little girl who featured as ‘Queen of Katwe,’ currently works with Deloitte in Canada as a business consultant.

Katende saying they need to start a university chess team. They asked him if they could sponsor chess players from SOM who have completed Senior Six. At least 11 of the children managed to join the university on free scholarships, thanks to Chess.

To Katende, who is proud to have been an Interactor when he was at Lubiri S.S, that is what economic development and community empowerment are all about.

“Economic development is about creating conditions for growth and jobs as well as integrity, while community development is about empowering people to drive their own transformation,” he says. “That’s what I’ve dedicated my life to do, basically.” So moving was Katende’s presentation that Club President

Charles Owekmeno said the Club would explore ways to plug in, first by collaborating with the organization to establish an Interact Club.

A vision to empower

On the power of community empowerment, which is one of Rotary’s areas of focus, Katende insists that every great transformation begins with a vision rooted in local reality. You have to help people to identify with what you want to do in their own context, he says. “Personally, I used a foreign sport, which doesn’t even have a local name,” he says.

He was sure that chess, as a sport, has the ability to stimulate and enable these young minds to identify challenges, and to ignite their ability to respond to situations and to make the

right decisions in response to the circumstances they face, as well as being creative. It was as simple as that, says Katende.

Their vision was simple yet radical: use chess as a tool to teach critical thinking, discipline, and resilience to children who had been written off by society.

▶ **“In the beginning, we had only one chessboard, and we had all these kids gather up around it. They would come and sit and play,” he recalls.**

His wife, Sarah opened their two-roomed house for some of the children, and became their de facto mother.

Barely a year later, the kids’ confidence had grown. “These slum kids managed to get into



chess tournaments, winning some medals and trophies,” he says. With time, they enrolled some of them back to school. Some managed to get onto bursaries because of their talents in the sport.

But at SOM, chess is more than a game; it’s a curriculum for life. Children learn discipline, patience, and resilience. They are taught to see beyond their immediate circumstances and to envision a future shaped by their own decisions. The academy also provides meals, school fees, counseling, and mentorship - creating a holistic support system that addresses both the mind and the soul.

“The program continues to grow and we continue to impact so many lives,” says Katende. It is currently serving over 2,500 kids in the different centers.

Chess as a mental gym

Indeed, Chess is more than a game; it’s a cognitive gymnasium. Research shows that chess enhances memory, concentration, problem-solving, and emotional regulation. For children in deprived environments, these skills are life-changing, fostering academic achievement and self-confidence.

▶ **Working with different partners, SOM has managed to set up a facility that houses their headquarters and can host 700 chess players in one sitting. It is being used to host the National Chess League organized by the Uganda Chess Federation.**

They have also set up a facility on Mityana Road where they hold an annual tournament for almost 400 learners from upcountry. They also provide private classes in form of a holiday package at

250k per child at their centre in Katwe, as well as classes in homes and schools for both children and adults. Rotary has many options to plug in.

The world over, chess is recognized as a potent development tool. It demands patience, foresight, critical thinking, and disciplined planning - skills sorely lacking and urgently needed for navigating adult life. For kids growing up in an environment where immediate survival often overshadows long-term planning, the 64 squares became a mental laboratory.

Inspirational model

The SOM model is now recognized internationally, inspiring new initiatives across Africa and beyond, as chess and charity combine to deliver a powerful checkmate to despair, and the next generation is already making its opening moves.

Against this backdrop, Katende’s chess initiative stands tall

as a rare and powerful force for change, offering not just hope, but tangible pathways to education and fulfilled potential.

Perhaps the most inspiring legacy of the program is its self-sustaining cycle of empowerment. Many alumni - now professionals - return to the slum to mentor the next generation of chess players. They run workshops, sponsor school fees, and serve as living proof that transformation is possible.

The Katendes’ story is a powerful reminder that developmental aid doesn’t always require massive capital; sometimes, all it takes is a chessboard, a vision, and the strategic understanding that mindset change and training is the most effective tool for building a future.

▶ **Indeed, the work the Katendes are doing connects directly to our monthly theme of Economic Development and Community Empowerment as it focuses on sustainable, long-term impact over temporary handouts.**

The key lesson it teaches us as Rotarians is that empowerment is the true path to economic development. When you invest in a person’s potential - their mind, their skills, and their character - you equip them to drive their own economic future and, in turn, to become agents of change for their entire community.

Mr. Katende’s presentation left us all with a clear mandate: our service projects, like the moves on a chessboard, must be strategic, purposeful, and focused on enabling others to realize their full potential. His commitment to transforming lives, one move and one child at a time, is a powerful inspiration for every Rotarian the world over.





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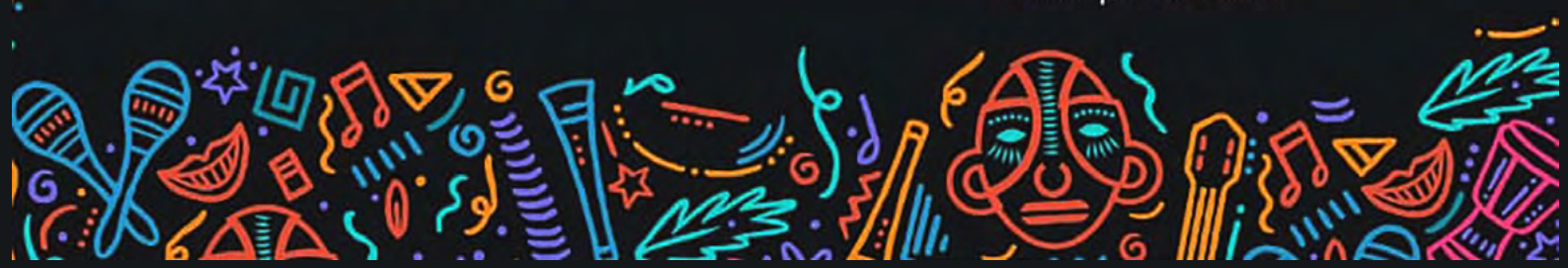


FEAT.

ISAIAH KATUMWA

AND BAND

Lead performer



Islamic Banking: It's for both Muslims and Christians, says CEO



Mr. Michael Mande, the Salaam Bank CEO, was recently invited to speak to the Rotary Club of Kampala Naalya on the topic, 'Unpacking Business and Personal Financing opportunities in Islamic Banking.'

In his presentation, Mr Mande took time to clarify some of the misconceptions and myths about Islamic banking.

First and foremost, he debunked the common misconception that Islamic banking is for Muslims only. According to Mande, Islamic banking is everyone though

it is also required to comply with Sharia law in addition to the usual conventional banking. Indeed, he added that the bank employs both Muslims and non-Muslims, which is why the CEO's name is Michael.

“We don't sell what we don't own. Islamic principles mandate us to do proper due diligence to minimize risk due to speculation.”

According to Mande, Islamic banking does not trade in cash, which is another important difference from conventional financial institutions. “For us, cash doesn't have intrinsic value; we only recognize it as a medium of exchange,” he said. “For that reason, the customer never touches the money. What you're going to do with the cash is what

you get from Salaam Bank.”

Also, Salaam Bank cannot sell what it doesn't own, so all the assets must be owned by the bank and then sold to the customer in case of asset financing.

He said Islamic banking emphasizes that there must be an asset underlying every transaction. “We don't sell what we don't own. Islamic principles mandate us to do proper due diligence to minimize risk due to speculation,” he added.

The word 'loans' is foreign in Islamic banking because it connotes the payment of interest, which is prohibited in Islam.

He said one of the main advantages of Islamic banking is that it has enabled financial inclusion. “Most of our customers don't have a borrowing history. They had never taken loans from any bank,” Mande said. However, he added that Islamic banking appears to appeal more to the Muslim community because they previously had no other option.

According to Mande, Islamic banking represents one of the most ethical, transparent, and socially conscious financial systems available today. The guiding principle is that money should generate value through productive activity, not by merely



earning interest on loans. This encourages financial growth while reinforcing moral responsibility.

Instead of a fixed, guaranteed return on money in the form of interest (*Riba*), Islamic finance operates on a profit-and-loss sharing model. The bank basically becomes a partner in the customer's venture, sharing both the risk and the profit.

▶ **This mutual responsibility discourages excessive risk, which ensures that money is a medium of exchange for goods and services, not a commodity to be traded**

for profit on its own.

According to Mande, Islamic banking insists that 'interest' is a derivative of cash while profit is a derivative of trade. Lending money to a person without regard to whether he will make a profit or not from the business and then, if he defaults you liquidate his security, is forbidden (*Haram*) in Islam.

Mande however said there is a lot of creativity in Islamic banking if the intentions of both parties are right.

Part of the Salaam Group based in Egypt, Salaam Bank started operations in

“We complement each other because there are things that the conventional banks can do that we can't do and vice versa.”

March 2024 when President Yoweri Museveni officially launched it in Uganda.

▶ **Mande says they are still in discussions with the regulators and government to further streamline Sharia-compliant frameworks aimed at deepening Islamic banking in the country.**

He added that contrary to what some people claim, Islamic banking is not fighting against conventional banks. “We complement each other because there are things that the conventional banks can do that we can't do and vice versa,” he said.



District 9213 wins top Rotary International Award

District 9213 has been awarded the District Excellence Award for the Rotary Year 2024-2025. The accolade is awarded to a District where at least half of its Clubs have earned the prestigious Club Excellence Award.

▶ PDG Anne Nkutu was the DG in the 2024-2025 Rotary Year when the Motto was, 'The Magic of Rotary.' The Rotary Club of Naalya, the DG's mother club, was one of the Clubs to receive the Club Excellence Award - given to a Club that achieves at least half of the goals it set for the year on Rotary Central. Our District, which is part of Zone 22 (Africa), was among only 123 Rotary Districts to receive the accolade, out of almost 540 Districts worldwide.

District Governor Geoffrey M. Kitakule saluted the 'Magic Team' for achieving the rare award. "I would like to congratulate Governor Anne Nkutu and the Magic Team for making our District one of 123 districts worldwide to receive this award, which recognizes those



DG Geoffrey Kitakule (L), hands over a certificate to his predecessor IPDG Anne Nkutu (2nd right). Looking on is HCP Lillian Joloba, PDG John Magezi and PDG Francis Xavier Ssentamu

Rotary districts where at least half of their clubs earned the Club Excellence Award. Congratulations!" said DG Kitakule.

Rtn Peter Dhamuzungu, the Vice District Executive Secretary, described it as "an exciting moment for our District."

"It's my honor to extend my heartfelt

congratulations to IPDG Anne Nkutu, IPDRR Simeo Ssebukulu, and the Magical Team for an outstanding achievement," he said.

"This recognition," he added, "is a reflection of your exceptional leadership, teamwork, and unwavering

commitment to excellence in service. Indeed, it was a magical year that continued to shine through your impact and dedication."

Meanwhile, Uganda's Francis "Tusu" Tusubira, a member of the Rotary Club of Kampala-North, has been nominated by RI President Elect Olayinka Hakeem Babalonda to sit on the TRF Board for the period 2026-2030.

▶ Rtn Tusubira previously served as District Governor for Rotary District 9200 during the 2006-2007 Rotary year. The district included Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Eritrea, and Ethiopia at the time.



Magical President's Get Together



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Rotary's leadership will end Polio – Bill Gates

IN MAY, BILL GATES GAVE HIMSELF A BOLD NEW CHALLENGE AND A TOUGH DEADLINE: TO GIVE AWAY VIRTUALLY ALL HIS WEALTH IN THE NEXT 20 YEARS AND CLOSE UP HIS LONG-RUNNING PHILANTHROPIC ENTERPRISE. AT THE 2025 ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION IN CALGARY, CANADA, ROTARY AND THE GATES FOUNDATION ANNOUNCED A JOINT COMMITMENT TO DIRECT UP TO \$450 MILLION OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS TO SUPPORT POLIO ERADICATION, A RENEWAL OF THEIR LONG-STANDING PARTNERSHIP. ROTARY WILL CONTINUE TO RAISE \$50 MILLION PER YEAR, WITH EVERY DOLLAR MATCHED WITH TWO ADDITIONAL DOLLARS FROM THE GATES FOUNDATION. ROTARY MAGAZINE'S DIANA SCHOBBERG SPOKE TO MR. GATES, WHO TURNS 70 THIS OCTOBER. BELOW IS AN ABRIDGED VERSION OF THE INTERVIEW.

As the Gates Foundation celebrates its 25th anniversary, what are you most proud of?

Over the past 25 years, we've witnessed and contributed to more progress than we ever thought possible.

I'm proud of the partnerships that have contributed to saving lives – not only the Global Polio Eradication Initiative but also the [Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria](#), and [Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance](#). Thanks to these programs, the price of lifesaving health care innovations – vaccines, treatments, bed nets, and diagnostics – has dropped dramatically.

The impact is mind-blowing: Thus far, these collaborations have reached 1.1 billion children with lifesaving vaccines, helped cut global child mortality in half, and saved more than 80 million lives. Hundreds of millions of people have risen out of poverty and into better lives.

As you wind down your foundation over the next 20 years, where do you think your money will make the biggest impact? What headwinds do you anticipate?

In spite of all of the progress I've just described, we are seeing the toughest headwinds in the history of our foundation. Countries are slashing tens of billions of dollars in global development funding, and the consequences will be deadly. In fact, this will be the first year in the new millennium when the number of kids dying around

the world goes up instead of down – an unthinkable tragedy.

We need people who are committed to progress – like Rotarians – to stand against these deadly cuts and help us get back on a path to progress.

▶ For our part, we will be accelerating our work over the next 20 years to solve urgent problems and save and improve more lives. We remain steadfastly focused on where we can have the most impact: 1) reducing child mortality, 2) eradicating or eliminating infectious diseases, and 3) lifting millions more people out of poverty and onto a path to prosperity.

We're placing our bet on human ingenuity – on the scientists, health workers, educators, and farmers whose tireless work



Bill Gates vaccinates an Indian child in 2000



has already delivered some of the most dramatic gains in human history. They haven't given up, and neither will we.

Wild poliovirus case counts rose in 2024. What makes you optimistic polio eradication is still possible?

I am as confident as ever that the global polio program will end polio for good.

What keeps me optimistic, despite some challenges, are the innovation, frontline workers, and global commitment driving this effort forward. The next-generation polio vaccine, nOPV2, is helping to stop outbreaks, protecting children in under-immunized communities from paralysis. More than 1.6 billion doses have been administered as of July 2025 – that is an incredible number of children protected from this devastating disease. And we now have enough supply of this new vaccine to protect children wherever it emerges.

▶ **In the countries where wild polio remains endemic - Afghanistan and Pakistan - the program is working closely with local authorities to tackle obstacles, improving cross-border coordination and strengthening community trust to reach all children with vaccines.**

Despite the recent uptick in cases, we shouldn't lose sight of the broader progress, which really is remarkable: the Global Polio Eradication Initiative has eliminated wild poliovirus in almost every country in the world, reducing the number of polio cases by over 99 percent. With continued commitment and collaboration, including from Rotarians around the globe, I am confident we can finish the job.

What's the biggest lesson you've learned in your time working on polio eradication?

Progress depends on relentless collaboration. Success is only possible when polio workers, government officials, partners, and donors – including Rotary – all work together to reach children with life-saving vaccines, even in the world's hardest-to-access areas.

We observed the power of this kind of collaboration recently in Madagascar during an outbreak of variant poliovirus. The government came in with strong political leadership to halt the spread; community partners worked quickly to strengthen vaccination campaigns; and international partners like [UNICEF](#) and the [World Health Organization](#) surged support to bolster those efforts. Everyone worked to protect children with vaccines in some of the most distant and isolated regions of the country, and they succeeded in stopping the outbreak.

▶ **Ending polio for good will require more collaboration like this whenever and wherever the disease continues to emerge. Rotary members' roles as global advocates and civic leaders are critical to ensure polio eradication remains a top global priority.**

Why did you choose to have the Gates Foundation partner with Rotary? What does Rotary bring to the table?

Rotary was the first organization to envision a world without polio, and members' leadership has been essential in driving this global effort for over four decades.

As a founding partner of the GPEI, Rotary has helped vaccinate nearly 3 billion children across hundreds of countries since 1985. Rotary members have contributed numerous volunteer hours and significant funding, and their advocacy has helped secure billions more from governments to support eradication efforts. Their global network allows them to deliver vaccines and engage communities in the toughest settings, from India to the Philippines to Ukraine.

Because of Rotary's leadership, we are closer than ever to our shared goal of ensuring that families will never have to fear this disease again.

Why are you extending the Gates Foundation's 2-to-1 funding match with Rotary?

Together, we hope to mobilize up to \$450 million in new funding over the next three years. These funds will be used to support vaccine delivery, outbreak response, community engagement, and implementation and maintenance of polio eradication programs in affected regions.

▶ **This extension comes at a critical time. Over the past year, we have seen wild polio case numbers rise in the last endemic countries, Afghanistan and Pakistan. And the detection of polio in places that were previously polio-free is a stark reminder that polio anywhere is a threat to people everywhere.**

While transmission overall remains low, our hard-won progress is at risk. Reductions in global aid, vaccine misinformation, and rising conflict and political instability are all contributing to polio's continued spread.

Continuing our partnership with Rotary will allow us to address these challenges and reach children around the world with lifesaving vaccines.

It is critical that we finish the job on polio. Eradication is the only way to make sure that continuing challenges don't mean an ongoing risk for children today and for generations to come.

Rotary has been increasingly emphasizing measurable impact in its projects. As someone who has long been focused on data collection, can you give our members any advice?

Quality, timely data is critical for everything from development of AI-backed tools to vaccine delivery to advocacy. Through advances in how researchers collect and analyze global health data, we now know much more about what kills children, where these deaths occur, and why some kids are more vulnerable than others. By putting those insights to work, we've been able to make incredible progress over the last 25 years, reducing child mortality and saving lives. Over time, better data has revolutionized how we understand health challenges, target resources, and measure impact — and remains one of the most powerful tools we have to drive future progress. Investing in data is a smart, cost-effective way to create impact. Continuing to improve

data-gathering and to invest in the collection of quality data will give us a fuller picture of where our investments and programs will have the greatest impact and help us build solutions to some of the world's toughest health challenges. Measuring impact and starting with quality data to design programs will make Rotary initiatives even more effective.

What message do you have for Rotary members?

Most importantly, thank you for your unwavering support to eradicating polio. Rotary's leadership, advocacy, and sustained commitment have brought the world to the brink of eradication — something once thought to be impossible.

▶ **To Rotarians everywhere: Thank you for decades of dedication and partnership. Because of your efforts, we will one day live in a world where all children are safe from this disease. We look forward to leaving polio behind long before our foundation closes its doors in 2045.**

This interview originally appeared in the October 2025 issue of [Rotary Magazine](#).



How to navigate through mental health struggles



BY RTN JACKLINE MUTIMBA

There are struggles we face that rarely make it to conversation - moments of doubt, anxiety, or personal setbacks that quietly shape our lives. I've faced such battles myself, and for a long time, I kept them hidden behind a smile.

A few years ago, I went through a season where I showed up every day - smiling, working, encouraging others - but on the inside, I was

running on empty. People would say, "You're so strong, Jackline!" and I would nod politely, even though I wasn't sure I had much strength left.

There were days when I felt overwhelmed by expectations, both my own and those of the people around me. I found myself withdrawing from friends and family, not because I didn't care, but because I didn't know how to share the weight I was carrying. Simple interactions felt heavy; even casual conversations became exhausting. I noticed subtle shifts in my relationships, once-close friends seemed distant, and loved ones were often unsure how to support me. My professional life also felt the strain, decisions that would normally come easily became daunting, and my productivity suffered because my mind was occupied with battles I couldn't explain.

Acknowledging these challenges wasn't immediate. There were moments when I questioned my own strength and wondered if I would ever feel "normal" again.

▶ **What finally helped was a combination of small yet powerful realizations and deliberate actions. It began when a close friend noticed my withdrawal and gently asked how I was really feeling.**

At first, I hesitated to open up, but their patience and willingness to listen without judgment created a safe space for me. I realized that support doesn't have to come in grand gestures it can be as simple as someone genuinely asking, "How are you coping?"

I also observed others around me sharing their own struggles openly, which made me reflect, if



they could be vulnerable, why couldn't I? This insight gradually shifted my mindset. I understood that carrying the burden alone wasn't a sign of strength but a barrier to growth and connection.

▶ **From there, I deliberately reached out to trusted friends, mentors, and even colleagues, sharing parts of my struggles. Each conversation reinforced the lesson that vulnerability fosters connection rather than weakness. Coupled with journaling my thoughts and establishing small routines of reflection and self-care, these steps helped me see clearly: I didn't have to face these battles in isolation.**

A reader recently shared their own experience, and it resonated deeply with me:

"I've faced similar quiet battles that we rarely talk about, and at times, they felt overwhelming. Those moments didn't just affect me internally - they strained my relationships, made me withdraw from people I cared about, and even impacted my productivity and confidence. I had to learn to acknowledge these struggles, seek

support from trusted friends or mentors, and develop coping strategies that worked for me. Writing, reflection, and small daily routines of self-care became my anchors."

Reading this reminded me that these struggles are universal. They are not signs of weakness, but of being human. The way we acknowledge, navigate, and ultimately rise above them is what shapes our resilience and empathy.

Sharing our quiet battles doesn't make us vulnerable in a negative way it builds connection, understanding, and strength. Every battle faced and every step taken toward healing is proof of our inner resilience. And while the struggles may be silent, their lessons and impact are profound.

Some practical steps for winning over quiet battles:

- **Acknowledge your struggles:** Admit to yourself that what you're facing is real and valid. Naming the battle is the first step toward managing it.
- **Reach out for support:** Identify friends, family members, or mentors you trust. Sharing even a small part of your experience can lighten the emotional load and create meaningful

“Admit to yourself that what you're facing is real and valid. Naming the battle is the first step toward managing it.”

connection.

- **Create safe spaces:** Whether it's journaling, meditation, or quiet reflection, find routines that allow you to process your thoughts and emotions without judgment.

- **Set boundaries:** Protect your energy by being clear on what you can take on, both personally and professionally. It's okay to say no or step back when needed.
- **Practice self-compassion:** Remind yourself that resilience isn't about facing challenges alone; it's about taking consistent steps toward healing, even if they're small.
- **Observe and learn from others:** Watching how others navigate their struggles can inspire strategies and offer reassurance that you're not alone in your experiences.

▶ **From my own experience, I have learned that it's possible to navigate through our quiet battles effectively, strengthen relationships, and nurture our mental and emotional wellbeing. Remember: speaking, sharing, and caring for ourselves is not weakness; it's the cornerstone of resilience.**

Rtn Mutimba is the Admin at the Rotary Club of Kampala Naalya





ELDER'S EYE

Why Rotary's projects should be climate-smart

BY RTN GODFREY OKELLO-OMODING

Times change, defined by different factors and challenges. Some of these changes are sometimes a threat to the very survival of human beings. And yet the human beings must protect their continuity in existence. To have continuity in existence, therefore, it requires taking measures. Some are radical, others are moderate while others are either ameliorative or preventive. The extent of the measures may affect even the very core of doing things, investing and sustaining livelihoods.

▶ **One of the major time changes today in the world is climate change. Whatever way one would want to avoid it, it is rather difficult because it knows no boundaries. More vulnerable people and communities take a big pain of it. This is simply because of either no or inadequate coping systems and mechanisms. The wise action such people and communities have is to do things while being mindful of climate change.**

Governments have put in place institutions, policies and frameworks for tackling climate change. For

instance, in Uganda, there are institutions and legal frameworks for it, including financing mechanisms. There may be weakness but it is an acknowledgement that climate change is real. As a community of people, there is need to wake up and start doing things 'climate smart way' in whatever small way one can.

Rotary rolled its wheel on climate change given that the environment is one of its areas of focus. Environment as such can better be treated as across cutting issue. Therefore, in economic and community development interventions, the environment ought to be included. Greening of

interventions where possible needs to be included.

Rotarians, let your economic and community development interventions include climate adaptation actions. Be on the forefront of climate smart interventions while uplifting communities economically. You ought to be on the watch out. Support climate and environmentally friendly economic investments.

“
As you aim at economically uplifting people and communities, let climate change be taken into consideration.”

▶ **This kind of alignment is very important for the long-term economic and community development and sustainability.**



Whatever it is, small or big, targeted financing and investment can bring real change and real-life sustenance. This can be achieved in many small ways yet resulting in a significant impact. For instance, while supporting a women market vendors group whose business is food preparation, target aspects of their business that can promote environmental conservation.

For example, you could target financing support to the adoption of energy- saving stoves or linking them to energy credit facilities so that they move from using charcoal stoves to cooking gas. The results from this alone can be enormous. It helps to cut their costs on energy, make their working areas safer as well as their health, and contribute to a better environment. This brings about better health outcomes as well as making environmental



and social impact. Support from Rotarians can significantly play a role of transitioning to better environmentally friendly economic investments. It is possible for Rotarians to turn their support and financing into green financing. All it takes is to start with whatever is available or in reach. What is important is staying on the course, and purposefully focusing the interventions for both livelihood and climate impact.

The hidden challenge in this is unlocking the mindsets of people to look far.

Indeed, small climate smart investments and interventions can effectively contribute to reducing the threat of climate change. There is a need to break obstacles faced by small enterprises in undertaking climate smart investments. Obstacles such as their lack of finance, exposure and the right skills needs to be addressed.

This month, Rotarians can have a deeper reflection on how economic and community development can be consciously made climate-smart, how support can be tailored, how financing and advisory services can be handled.

As you aim at economically uplifting people and communities, let climate change be taken into consideration. The essence of living is lost when people are always surrounded by dangers and threats.

▶ Today, you have the opportunity to contribute to turning around a global threat. There are no small actions when it comes to reversing effects of climate change. A collection of these small actions importantly brings inclusivity in tackling the climate change challenge. Whatever you do, be mindful of making the Earth a better place to live.



#OutToLunch

How UNEB can stop theft of students' registration fees

BY RTN. DENIS JJUUKO



Candidates in the fourth year of their secondary education are currently sitting this year's Uganda Certificate of Education or Ordinary Level (O-Level) exams across the country. These are important national exams that play a big part in determining the student's career.

After sitting these exams, some students continue to do two years of Advanced Level (A-Level) or the Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE) before joining university or other tertiary institutions. Many though don't continue to A-Level. Some go to tertiary institutions or end their academic journey here.

Actually, studies show that the highest level of education the majority of Africans ever attain is secondary education. It must therefore be made meaningful for them, and those who have a chance to get their certificates should.

Technically, if one doesn't sit their UCE exams, they are simply considered to have ended their education at primary level. It is important then that students who enroll into secondary education at least sit their final O-Level or A-level exams.

But that isn't always the case in Uganda. Every October or November for as long as I can recall, newspapers are awash with stories of a headteacher or school director who received money

from students for national exam registration and vanished into thin air.

▶ **See, the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) charges some fees for students to sit their national exams. Schools are responsible for collecting this money and passing it over to UNEB. After receiving this money, UNEB then organizes and administers the exams.**

Many students turn up with mathematical sets, pens and everything they need to write their national exams at the respective school or accredited examination centres only to be informed that they aren't on the list of the expected candidates and thus can't sit for the exams. Reason? UNEB didn't receive their money and therefore didn't register them.

The headteacher or school owner who collected the

“
And if national exam results can easily be accessed through a mobile phone, what about the registration status of students?”



money from the students or their parents/guardians is usually nowhere to be seen. Students plead to UNEB to allow them sit for exams but all in vain.

Desperate, students run to police or resident district commissioners but still nothing happens. Four, two or even seven (for primary school) years of preparation are wasted. For many of these students, the journey to suffering starts here. Education is an enabler, a key that opens many doors for most people. To stand for president or Member of Parliament (MP) in Uganda for example, the highest academic level one needs to have attained is A-Level. If a teacher or school owner eats this money, they are, perhaps, denying the country a future MP or even president.

But isn't there something UNEB could do to avert this annual crisis that has perhaps existed since the body was founded? I believe there is something they can do. When the results of the national exams are out, UNEB enables anyone with a mobile phone to check for their

results. By simply dialing an Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD) code, anyone can instantly find out how they performed.

And if national exam results can easily be accessed through a mobile phone, what about the registration status of students? Using the same method, candidates and/or their guardians could easily check whether they have been duly registered or not, well before the national exams commence.

Those who haven't been registered then can find an alternative like registering again or taking the teacher or school owner to police to recover their money well in time.



Another option for UNEB is to change the registration system and payment method. The school could provide UNEB with its list of candidates, which they can put into a national database available online. A student or their guardian could then access the portal, get their student's payment registration number and pay through the bank or mobile money. The school and guardian could then be notified via SMS or email

of the completion of the registration process. Reminders could be sent when examination dates have been confirmed. Students could also check their status anytime as they may wish.

▶ If UNEB doesn't want to use this route, they could prepare emergency exams at sub counties. If students bring evidence of paying the school the UNEB fees and the teacher or school owner ate the money, then the student can be allowed to sit for emergency exams and then penalize the school.

The Ministry of Education and Sports and/or the districts could suspend the school's license and permits until they have paid UNEB the amount due, plus a hefty fine. That way, teachers and school owners would stop the thuggery of eating students' examination fees while ensuring that all candidates do sit their national exams.

*The writer is a communication and visibility consultant.
Email: djuuko@gmail.com*

Last week's fellowship

#Kimeeza - Pictorial



FAMILY MATTERS



BY PASTOR RONNIE MUTEBI

THE ART OF CONCEALING FAITH

ROMANS 14:21-22 (KJV): "IT IS GOOD NEITHER TO EAT FLESH, NOR TO DRINK WINE, NOR ANY THING WHEREBY THY BROTHER STUMBLETH, OR IS OFFENDED, OR IS MADE WEAK. HAST THOU FAITH? HAVE IT TO THYSELF BEFORE GOD. HAPPY IS HE THAT CONDEMNETH NOT HIMSELF IN THAT THING WHICH HE ALLOWETH."

The walks of life justify so much of what makes us. There are moments in our walk of faith when wisdom calls us to "keep our faith between ourselves and God." Sometimes, in expressing our faith openly, we risk offending or causing those who are weaker in faith

to stumble. While faith indeed pleases God, in such moments it matters even more to Him that we do not become a stumbling block.

Urging a weaker person to do an unwise thing is like making them indulge in forbidden wisdoms.

These wisdoms can be an expression of pride or superiority to a weaker person. And such a situation could become a doorway back to old ways.

In times like these, it is better to keep your faith private, exercise it quietly before your God, without involving those who may be unsettled by it.



There are moments in our walk of faith when wisdom calls us to "keep our faith between ourselves and God."

Take Home: True maturity is knowing how to walk confidently in your own faith while ensuring you do not hinder the growth of those still finding their footing. and speak in love.



When the body turns into a battlefield

BY PAMELA KAWADDWA

It begins in whispers – a tired sigh brushed off, a tiny ache that lingers too long, a doctor's eyes that suddenly soften when words like "we found something" shatter the air like glass.

The world changes in that second. The days stretch longer, and sleep no longer comes with peace. You count the hours not in minutes or seconds, but in pills, tests, and breaths.

Hair falls, strength fades, but something beautiful rises – a quiet fire, a stubborn light that refuses to dim. You learn that courage isn't loud, isn't a battle cry – it's the whisper: "I'll try again tomorrow."

And love... love becomes a soldier, too. It sits beside you



when you are too weak to talk, it holds the bucket, wipes the tears, and still finds reasons to smile.

Some days, hope feels heavy, too heavy to lift. You question the stars, you bargain with faith. You wonder why the world can bloom with such cruelty.

Yet somehow, in the middle of pain, you find grace.

Because even when the body trembles, the soul remembers its power. Even when chemo drips like time, there are moments – tiny, golden – when you feel alive, more alive than ever.

And for those who left too soon, their light does not fade. It lingers in laughter, in photos, in every sunrise they once promised to see. They are the warmth in our grief, the peace in our prayers, the strength in our silence.

Cancer may steal, but it never wins – not when hearts still love, not when stories still speak, not when memories bloom!

the soul that grows.

Till again...

Phwyy

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.



Happy Birthday

15th Oct

Rtn Julie Kiseeka

May this year bring you
prosperity and
happiness!



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Fun Facts

Incommunicado

Rotarians and friends, lend me your ears because today, we're talking about a word that sounds like a secret society's handshake: incommunicado.

▶ **It's one of those 'Square-pants' words that make you sound incredibly worldly, even if you're just explaining why you haven't attended fellowship since time immemorial. But where did this majestic linguistic beast come from, and why do we use it when we could just say "I'm spending time alone"?**

The short answer is, it's Spanish! The word is the past participle of the verb *incomunicar*, which literally means "to keep incommunicated." That 'in-' prefix, as in 'inconceivable' or 'inattentive,' just flips the script on 'comunicado,' which means 'communicated.' So, it's the linguistic equivalent of hitting the 'airplane' button on the phone. 'The telephone

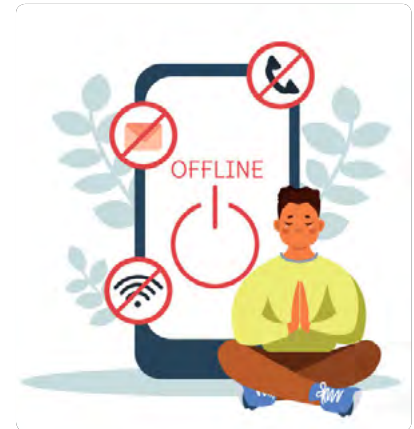


number you've called is not available at the moment. Please try again later.'

The *real* fun started when it waltzed into the English language, primarily used in a legal or official capacity. Think of it: a prisoner being held in the basement *incommunicado*. This isn't just a regular time-out; it's a strictly no-outside contact, no-lawyer situation. It implies a serious, enforced silence. It's like being locked up in the basement where the MTN signal is blocked.

Now, in modern times, we've taken this solemn, serious legal term and turned it into an over-dramatic excuse for being unreachable. And frankly, don't you love us for it?

'Incommunicado' is now the perfect word for when you've accidentally 'forgotten' your phone in the refrigerator. (Don't judge.) You emerge hours later, blinking in the daylight, and declare, "I was forced into a state of incommunicado due to a brief, chilling separation from my communication devices."



It elevates the mundane. Instead of saying, "I went off social media," which is boring, you say, "I declared myself incommunicado for a period of self-reflection and digital detox." It makes you sound less of a loner and more like a mysterious, introspective poet who occasionally forgets to participate in discussions on the WhatsApp group.

▶ **So, the next time you need an airtight excuse for ghosting the group chat, put on your most dramatic outfit, and tell the world you were held incommunicado. It's the only acceptable way to describe a weekend spent entirely in bed.**

Jokes of the week

1. Everyone says your 20s are all about finding yourself. If that's true, your 30s are about wishing you'd found somebody else.
2. If you see a burglary at an Apple shop, you become an iWitness.
3. I've been thinking about taking up meditation. I figure it's better than just sitting around doing nothing.



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