

Naalya Food Bulletin

18th November, 2025

Rotary
Kampala - Naalya



UNITE
FOR
GOOD

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Rtn. Fathila (R) with Lydia and Rachel

RC KAMPALA - NAALYA



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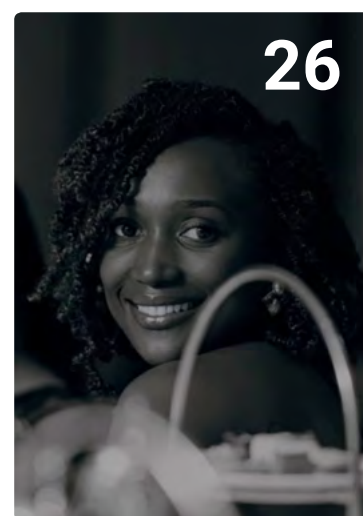
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Chef's Note



Fellow Rotarians and friends,

As we continue to focus on The Rotary Foundation Month this November, let us reflect on the profound legacy and ongoing impact of PolioPlus and The Rotary Foundation (TRF) – not as a remote institution, but as the heartbeat of our Ugandan efforts and a catalyst for global change. Rooted in our own history, TRF embodies the vision and tenacity of Ugandan Rotarians, reminding us that our contributions fuel both worldwide triumphs and local transformations.

The story begins in the early 1980s, when Prof. Kakitahi and fellow Ugandan leaders championed Rotary International's bold push to give polio a fatal blow. Their advocacy birthed PolioPlus, a program that has immunized billions and edged humanity toward a polio-free world. Today, as we donate to PolioPlus, we honor this Ugandan heritage. Every dollar safeguards a child, fulfilling a promise made decades ago on our soil. It's a personal stake: we're not just supporting a global cause; we're completing our forebears' work.

Yet, TRF's power extends far beyond polio. Through the Annual Fund and Global Grants, it amplifies our hyper-local

initiatives, turning compassion into sustainable action. Consider our flagship projects, which exemplify this multiplier effect.

In Kamuli, we're rehabilitating teenage mothers, addressing the devastating cycle of early pregnancy that strips young girls of education and opportunity. A Global Grant elevates this from modest vocational training to a comprehensive program: building a dedicated center, equipping it with industrial sewing machines, offering psychosocial counseling, and forging market linkages for their products. This isn't temporary aid; it's empowerment, fostering economic independence and dignity for dozens of lives.

Equally vital are our mental health initiatives for youth, particularly in areas like Acholi Quarters. In a post-pandemic era, anxiety, depression, and trauma silently erode the next generation's potential. TRF funding transforms small workshops into systemic solutions: partnering with national experts, training teachers and leaders in mental health first aid, establishing hotlines, and creating school-based therapy units. By breaking stigma and building resilience, we're ensuring young people thrive emotionally, academically, and socially.

These projects aren't isolated; they're interconnected through TRF's framework, which demands sustainability, measurable outcomes, and international collaboration. Global Grants ensure our solutions endure, owned by communities long after funds are spent. Remarkably, 91% of contributions go directly to programs, making every donation a strategic investment that often returns multiplied to our clubs.

We celebrate milestones like Rtn Joachim Buwembo's Paul Harris Fellow recognition, a testament to individual commitment amplifying collective impact. As People of Action, Ugandan Rotarians wield TRF to tackle poverty, disease, and despair at their roots.

In these final weeks of Foundation Month, we're reminded that our gift isn't mere charity; it's fuel for a stronger Uganda – a second chance for a teenage mother, hope for a troubled youth, and a polio-free future for all children. Together, let's sharpen this powerful tool and build sustainable change, right here in our backyard.

▶ **The stories in this Bulletin should remind us that Rotary is more than service; it's a partnership elevating local passion into global force.**

Enjoy!
Rtn. Peter Nyanzi
Bulletin Officer

#Leadership

LET US GIVE WITH GRATITUDE

RI President's Message - Rtn. Francesco Arezzo

NOVEMBER 2025

This November, as we celebrate The Rotary Foundation, I invite you to consider not only what we give but also why we give. The Foundation is more than a fund for projects. It is the beating heart of our promise that service, rooted in trust and friendship, can create lasting change.

Our Action Plan calls us to increase our impact, and the Foundation is how we make this vision real. Since 1988, Rotary and our partners have immunized nearly three billion children against polio.

▶ **We have committed more than \$2.6 billion to this cause, and last year alone we directed \$146 million toward the final push for eradication.**

These numbers are significant, but the true impact is not in statistics — it is in the lives of children who will never again fear polio. It is in the hope restored to families and the peace built in communities once defined by disease.

But polio is only one story among many. Each year, Rotary Peace Centers train new generations of leaders who will transform conflict



into dialogue and division into understanding. In 2023-24, nearly 100 new fellows began their studies, continuing a legacy of more than 1,800 peacebuilders from over 140 countries. When we invest in them, we are planting seeds of peace that will bear fruit for decades to come.

The Foundation also touches lives through district and global grants - supporting projects large and small. A clean water well for a rural community, scholarships for young professionals, medical care in the wake of disaster — these are not temporary gestures, but steps toward

dignity, resilience, and opportunity. This is how Rotary service becomes lasting impact. And when natural disasters strike, our Foundation allows Rotary to act quickly with disaster response grants.

▶ **Our Foundation is not about what we can do alone but what we can do together. Each contribution, no matter its size, joins with others to create a collective act of faith in humanity and in the future.**

The last mile of any great journey is always the hardest. We see

this in our final steps toward ending polio, in our work for peace, and in every project that seeks to lift people out of despair. Yet, every time we give, we declare that our work will continue regardless of the challenge.

▶ **This November, let us give with gratitude, with joy, and with hope. Through our Foundation, we Unite for Good, and in doing so, we leave behind not only projects but also a legacy of peace, trust, and 'Service Above Self.'**

The Power of Our Giving as Rotarians

BY DG GEOFFREY KITAKULE

NOVEMBER 2025

Fellow Rotarians, when we joined Rotary, we pledged to serve above self, and also to be people of action. One of the most powerful ways we live out that promise is by giving to The Rotary Foundation.

► **The Rotary Foundation (TRF) is the engine that drives Rotary's good work across the world. It turns our compassion into clean water, our generosity into education, and our service into lasting change in communities. For us here in Uganda, giving to the Foundation is more than charity, it is an investment in our people and our communities, so that they can have a bright future.**

Think about the many lives touched by Rotary projects in Uganda - children who can now drink safe water in Nakayonza; mothers receiving better healthcare in Namutumba; young ladies ravaged by the war in Northern Uganda gaining vocational skills in Gulu; and families building sustainable livelihoods because the mothers have been given baking skills. Many of these stories are made possible because Rotarians, like you and me, chose to give to



the Rotary Foundation.

Every contribution, no matter how small, multiplies in impact. That's why we are encouraging every Rotarian to give to the Foundation through our easy to use Give & Impact App (trf.rotaryd9213.org) Through global and district grants, our giving comes back to us many times over, empowering our clubs to undertake bigger, better and more sustainable projects. When we give, we position our clubs as leaders and partners in Rotary's global network of service.

Our giving also keeps the End Polio Now campaign alive, ensuring that Uganda and the world remain free from this devastating disease. Uganda has been polio-free for years, but a continued giving

ensures that surveillance, vaccination and emergency response remain strong.

Our giving funds the peace fellowship at Makerere University, disaster relief and humanitarian programs that make Rotary's name synonymous with hope and help.

But beyond the numbers and programs, giving to the Rotary Foundation is personal. It is a reflection of our gratitude, our commitment and our belief that service can change the world. It is how we turn our values into action and our dreams into impact.

► **So, fellow Rotarians; let us give, and give so generously, joyfully and consistently. Because, every time we give to The Rotary Foundation, we are lighting a candle of hope in someone's darkness. We are building a better Uganda. And, on 22nd November, let us get together for the TRF Dinner and celebrate our giving and the impact that we have to our communities. We shall be proving, once again, that when Rotarians come together, there is no limit to the good we can do in the world.**

AND, THAT INDEED, #ROTARYEYAMBA!

President's Message

RTN CHARLES OWEKMENO
Unite For Good President
2025-2026



Dear Family of Rotary and Guests,

Happy new week to you all! I hope this message finds you well and your loved ones - energized for the week ahead.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who joined us last Tuesday for our informative fellowship session on giving towards the Polio Fund.

The session was well led by PAG Ronald Mulindwa, our District 9213 Polio Chair for 2025-2026, who gave valuable insights into why we need to increase our giving to the Polio Fund. I am especially grateful to those who contributed and pledged to support the Polio Fund. Your generosity plays a vital role in our collective efforts to eradicate polio worldwide.

As we continue to reflect on the significance of The Rotary Foundation this month, I want to encourage all members to consider making a generous contribution to the Foundation. Your donations directly support impactful projects that transform lives

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...I would like to remind everyone to confirm your participation and make payments for the upcoming Rotary Foundation Dinner, scheduled for the 22nd of Nov 2025.”

across the globe, helping to provide clean water, promote health, support education, and alleviate poverty. Let us also inspire our loved ones and friends to also contribute towards the foundation. Every contribution, no matter the size, makes a difference and furthers Rotary's noble mission.

This week, we have the honour of hosting Lieutenant Governor Catherine Asekenye Barasa, who will share valuable insights on the importance of giving to The Rotary Foundation (TRF). I invite all members of RC Kampala Naalya to attend this week's fellowship in large numbers, and I kindly ask everyone to mobilize friends and family to join us.

Additionally, I would like to remind everyone to confirm your participation and make payments for the upcoming Rotary Foundation Dinner, scheduled for the 22nd of November 2025, at Kabira Country Club in Bukoto. This event promises to be a wonderful occasion to celebrate our giving to TRF, network with fellow Rotarians, and further support the Foundation's impactful work.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to celebrate and acknowledge all those who had birthdays, anniversaries, or other special celebrations last week. We share in your joy and wish you continued blessings, good health, and success in all your endeavours.

Wishing you all a productive and action-packed Rotary week. Let us continue to serve above self and make a difference in our community and beyond.

YOURS IN SERVICE
ABOVE SELF,



TEAM TALK

Listening: The Silent strength of effective leadership

BY AG FRANCIS LUBUULWA

In leadership, the loudest voice isn't always the strongest. Sometimes, it's the one that knows when to pause, listen, and understand. In a world where everyone wants to speak, post, or persuade, true leaders are those who listen.

Last week, we explored how great leaders communicate vision and purpose: how they use words to inspire action. This week, we look at the quieter side of communication: listening, and the emotional intelligence that makes it meaningful. Because in Rotary, as in life, listening is not just good manners; rather, listening is good leadership.

▶ **Listening is more than hearing. According to Wolvin and Coakley (1996), listening is the process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to messages. In simpler terms, it's not about waiting for your turn to speak. It is about being fully present to understand what the other person is saying.**

In some of our Rotary clubs, a complaint that surfaces commonly isn't about workload or fundraising. Instead, it's

that people feel unheard. A member might suggest an idea that is ignored in a meeting, only to see it appreciated when repeated by someone else. Another may quietly stop attending because their views never seem to matter. These moments slowly drain energy and goodwill. When leaders practice intentional listening: nodding, clarifying, asking follow-up questions, they make members feel valued. And when members feel valued, they show up, speak up, and stay engaged.

Emotional intelligence

Psychologist Daniel Goleman (1995) defines **emotional intelligence (EI)** as the ability to recognize and manage our emotions while understanding those of others. For Rotary leaders, EI is what helps us read the mood in a room,

sense when tension is rising, and respond with calm empathy rather than frustration. A president who can sense when a member is discouraged and takes time to ask, "How are you really doing?" is practicing emotional intelligence. A membership director who acknowledges a mistake openly instead of becoming defensive, models self-awareness and humility. EI is not about being "soft."



▶ **It's about being wise enough to lead people as human beings first, and Rotarians second. It's what transforms meetings from routine gatherings into spaces of trust and motivation.**

Rotary's motto, **Service Above Self**, begins with one quiet act: listening before serving. Every impactful project starts when a club listens carefully to what the community actually needs: not what we assume they need. Similarly, within our clubs, service begins when leaders listen to their members:

- When a club treasurer says the books are tight, a good listener hears concern and offers support.



- When a member misses meetings, a good listener checks in privately rather than sending a reprimand.
- When partners or sponsors give feedback, a good listener sees opportunity for growth, not criticism.

Listening transforms leadership from a command to a conversation. It turns Rotary from an organization into a community. Active listening is a skill that can be learned and practiced daily. Here are some simple habits that make a world of difference in Rotary life:

1. **Be present:** Put your phone or gadgets away during meetings. Give people your full attention; eye contact says, "You matter."
2. **Seek understanding, not agreement.** You don't have to agree to value someone's perspective.
3. **Reflect and clarify:** Before responding, paraphrase what you've heard: "So you're suggesting we start smaller before scaling up?"
4. **Watch the unspoken:** Emotions are communicated through tone, posture, and silence.
5. **Create listening spaces:** Dedicate time in club assemblies or board meetings for open feedback even anonymously if necessary.
6. **Pause before reacting:** Emotional intelligence means choosing your response rather than being driven by emotion.

Carl Rogers (1957) famously wrote that real understanding begins

when we listen with the intent to understand, not to evaluate. For Rotary leaders, that's a principle worth practicing every week. Rotary, at its core, is built on relationships. And relationships grow through listening.

When we listen to our members, our partners, and our communities, we discover needs, nurture potential, and build goodwill.

Stephen Covey once said, "**Most people do not listen with the intent**



We'll look at how leaders become Rotary's public voice using words and presence to share our story, attract partners, and build the Rotary brand with integrity.

to understand; they listen with the intent to reply."(Covey, 1989). Rotary leadership challenges us to do the opposite: to listen with empathy, humility, and curiosity.

Listening doesn't make you less of a leader; it makes you **more human**. When we slow

down to truly understand others, members, families, or communities, we lead from the heart, not the podium. In the end, people don't follow titles; they follow

those who make them feel heard. That is the silent strength of leadership.

Looking Ahead

Next week, in our fourth and final part of The Language of Leadership series, we'll explore "Speaking to the World: Representing Rotary with Authenticity." We'll look at how leaders become Rotary's public voice using words and presence to share our story, attract partners, and build the Rotary brand with integrity.

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Rotary District 9213     



#CoverStory

Joy as Kamuli mothers sit 'O' Levels

In Kamuli District and indeed across Busoga Region, the sight of a teenage girl leaving school because of pregnancy has become painfully common. To many of these girls, it is the end of their dreams - forever condemned to the label, 'school dropout.'

However, there are a few who muster the courage to dust themselves off, ignore the scorn and choose to wear their uniform and return to school after giving birth.

But it takes more than the girl's personal decision; it also involves lots of support from parents, teachers and the community.

Take for instance, Mirembe Rachael, a determined young girl who has overcome incredible challenges to continue her education, reaching a key milestone of sitting her 'O'

level exams, which looked like a far-off dream when she dropped out of school after getting pregnant. Rotarian Fathila Nannozi, the coordinator of the Bandera School Program, says Rachael became a teenage mother during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown while searching for work.

The Rotary Club of Naalya met her through a youth group we trained during our partnership with Rotary Vijana Poa.

"She expressed a strong desire to return to school, and the club graciously offered to support her," says Nannozi. "In 2022, she resumed her studies, and this year she successfully sat for her Form Four (O level) examinations.

This achievement marks a significant milestone, and we are extremely proud of her progress and determination."

Giving a helping hand

What the Rotary Club of Naalya found out is that supporting a teenage mother to return to education is not charity. It is the smartest, most strategic investment we can make in breaking the cycle of poverty that has gripped Busoga for generations.

An uneducated young mother struggles to feed her child, access healthcare, or find decent work.

That struggle becomes her child's inheritance. But when the classroom is reopened for her, fees paid, childcare provided, and mentorship offered—she gains the tools to build a different future: a nursing certificate, a nursery school teaching certificate, a thriving small business. One educated mother lifts two generations at once.

She also becomes her child's fiercest advocate for learning. She understands the value of every school

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The role requires working directly alongside the incoming President, absorbing institutional knowledge, and supporting the execution of the MDIO's core objectives.”

day, every exercise book, every exam. Educated mothers raise healthier, more ambitious children who, in turn, stay in school longer. This is how we build a stronger, more resilient Busoga from the ground up.

And for many girls, school is more than classrooms; it is a safe space. A girl pushed out by pregnancy faces heightened risks—exploitation by another man, early marriage (to another poor man), despair. Bringing her back restores purpose, surrounds her with peers and caring teachers, and empowers her to make independent choices.

We have living proof that transformation is possible. The Rotary Club of Kampala Naalya has shown the way in Kamuli District through the Vijana Poa vocational programme and the Bandera School Programme. Vijana Poa has equipped dozens of young mothers with marketable skills—soaps, tailoring, craft shoes—while Bandera has returned many girls like Rachel to formal education.

Nanozi complements Charter President Dr. Francis Lakor for personally covering Rachel's school fees for the last two

years, while CMP Sylvia provided constant guidance and emotional support. Their quiet and steadfast commitment of these selfless Rotarians turned despair into triumph.

▶ **“On behalf of the Bandera School Program and Rachael’s family, I extend our deepest appreciation for your dedication and unwavering belief in the power of education,” said Nanozi.**

Rachael is not an exception; she is evidence. Where one club has acted with purpose, dozens of girls have been given second chances—Nambogwe Maureen and Nabirye Joan among them—returning to Senior 3 and Senior 2 with fees, uniforms, and renewed hope.

Supporting these young mothers does not encourage teenage pregnancy; it attacks the conditions that cause it—poverty, ignorance, and hopelessness. When girls see education as a real, protected path, they fight harder to stay on it.

Drop in the ocean

Of course, the need remains great. Busoga still records

some of the highest teen pregnancy rates in Uganda. But the model is proven, and the return on investment is staggering.

The call then is for Rotarians to amplify what has worked.

There is need to advocate with families and communities for forgiveness of the girls. We need to set up safe, affordable school-based daycare centres. We need to expand targeted scholarships for fees, books, uniforms, and examination fees.

Like Sylvia, there is need for more mentors who remind these girls, again and again, that their past does not define their future.

Rachael's success this November is a clarion call. Let every Rotarian ask: Who are the Rachael's in our own communities, and how will we open the school gates for them once again?

▶ **This is Rotary at its very best—seeing possibility where others see only problems, and acting decisively because ‘service above self’ demands nothing less.**



Building stronger communities through Rotary action



BY PAG RONALD
MULINDWA

Look around at our world today. We stand on the brink of one of humanity's most monumental achievements: the eradication of polio.

This journey, which began with a mass immunization of six million children in the Philippines in 1978, has defined Rotary's capacity for global impact. It was the moment the world took notice of Rotary International not as a mere organization, but as a force for tangible, life-saving change.

Rotary didn't whisper its intentions; we acted. With the bold immunization of six million children in the Philippines, we announced to the world that Rotary International was more than a network of clubs; we were a global force for health and hope. That single campaign ignited a movement

that would become one of humanity's greatest public health achievements: the near-eradication of polio.

Seven years later, Rotary deepened its resolve with the launch of PolioPlus, a visionary program that was never just about vaccines. The "Plus" stood for clean water, sanitation, community education, and local empowerment. It recognized that lasting health requires resilient systems. And so, while we delivered life-saving drops, we also built surveillance networks, trained health workers, and fostered trust in communities from Kampala to Kabul. Today, polio cases have plummeted by 99.9%, sparing over 2.5 billion children from limb paralysis.

Yet, our work is not finished. The final 0.1% - stubbornly entrenched in parts of Pakistan and Afghanistan - demands our full attention and renewed commitment. This isn't just a medical challenge; it's a test of our values: cooperation, compassion, and unwavering service.

The true power of PolioPlus lies not only in what it prevented, but also in what it enabled. The infrastructure we built to

stop polio became a lifeline during other crises, from Ebola in West Africa to COVID-19 in Uganda, where Rotarians partnered with governments to deliver PPE, testing kits, and public health messaging. In conflict zones, our vaccination teams have done something even more remarkable: they've brokered temporary ceasefires, convincing warring factions to lay down arms so children could be protected. In Nigeria, that fragile truce sometimes blossomed into lasting peace - proof that healing one child can help heal a nation.

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Today, polio cases have plummeted by 99.9%, sparing over 2.5 billion children from limb paralysis.”

But none of this happens without you. Every dollar you contribute to The Rotary Foundation's PolioPlus Fund is tripled through the 2:1 match from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. That \$100 gift becomes \$300 in impact. And for just \$100 a year,

you can join the PolioPlus Society, standing shoulder-to-shoulder with fellow Rotarians who refuse to let this historic mission falter.

People-driven legacy
Our legacy also thrives through people. Through RYLA, we equip young leaders with the ethics and vision to serve.

Through Rotaract—now a full membership type—



young professionals lead Global Grants and mentor their peers. I've seen a Rotaractor from Uganda earn a Rotary-funded scholarship in water and sanitation in the Netherlands, return home, and now serves as a Rotarian transforming his community. That's the ripple effect of your giving.

True Rotary service, however, begins with listening – understanding what the beneficiaries actually need. We've learned that solutions imposed from afar often fail. Remember the village where women walked miles for water—not because water was scarce, but

because that journey offered a rare escape from domestic hardship and a chance to connect with other women. Only when Rotarians asked, "What do you really need?" did understanding—and real impact—begin.

So, as we near the finish line of polio eradication, let us not only celebrate our past but build on it. Let us use the trust, systems, and partnerships forged through PolioPlus to strengthen health, advance peace, and empower

communities in all seven of Rotary's areas of focus.

The goal is within reach. Become a PolioPlus

“
Let's champion transparency and local ownership in every project. And know this: when we heal one life, we take a step toward healing our world.”

Society member. Increase your Foundation giving. Imagine each of the 55 members of the Rotary Club of Kampala Naalya contributing \$100 in a year. I want to all of us to be part of it. Let's champion transparency and local ownership in every project. And know this: when we heal one life, we take a step toward healing our world.

▶ **Let's be the generation that ends polio—and ignites a new era of Rotary impact.**

Rtn Ronald Mulindwa, the District 9213 Polio Chair (2025-2026), gave the above abridged presentation at the Rotary Club of Kampala fellowship at Ndere Centre on Nov.11



#Impact

How a Ugandan 'plus' sparked a global health revolution

In the annals of Rotary's global humanitarian legacy, few stories are as profoundly Ugandan, and as globally transformative, as the birth of PolioPlus. While many associate the campaign solely with eradication of polio, the truth is richer, deeper, and rooted in Uganda's own struggle against child malnutrition in the politically turbulent years of the 1980s.

▶ **The story of PolioPlus, a name synonymous with the relentless pursuit of a polio-free world, is, at its core, a Ugandan story. It is a narrative that began, not in the Rotary International boardroom in Illinois, but within the determined walls of Mulago Hospital, born from our unique understanding of holistic care and community resilience.**

In the 1980s, Uganda, navigating a complex political landscape, faced a severe crisis of child malnutrition. In response, the Rotary Club of

Kampala secured a landmark Health, Hunger, and Humanity (3-H) Grant (equivalent of Global Grant today) from Rotary International to support the Mwana Mugimu Nutrition Unit.

Professor John Tuhe Kakitahi, a pediatrician and Rotarian at the Rotary Club of Kampala, was the brain behind the unit.

The unit's name itself, drawn from the deep wisdom of the Luganda proverb "Omwana omugimu ava ku ngozi" (A strong and healthy child is a result of proper care at home"), defined its mission. This was not a place that merely gave nutritious food to fight kwashiorkor and marasmus; it was a centre of transformation. The Mwana Mugimu model treated the whole child while empowering mothers with vital nutrition education and counselling, ensuring they could sustain their children's health long after leaving the unit. It was a powerful, local solution addressing a root cause, not just the symptoms.

This Ugandan model of integrated care did not go

unnoticed. In May 1985, Prof. Kakitahi was invited to speak at the Rotary International Convention in Kansas City, USA. He not only reported about a successful project, but also proposed a revolutionary idea.

▶ **Drawing directly from the Mwana Mugimu experience, Prof. Kakitahi presented the compelling case that simply delivering a medical intervention—be it a food supplement or a polio vaccine—was an incomplete strategy.**

For lasting, transformative impact, the intervention required a "plus." It needed a comprehensive package of supporting actions: community education, vitamin supplementation, robust disease surveillance, and the logistical infrastructure to ensure consistent delivery. He demonstrated that true healing and prevention happened when you equipped the entire family and community, not just the baby.

Rotary International listened,

and it acted. From this powerful presentation, 'PolioPlus' was born. That simple, powerful word "Plus" was not an afterthought; it was genius. It transformed Rotary's vision from a well-meaning vaccination charity into the architectural blueprint for the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI).

▶ **This "Plus" became the cornerstone upon which historic partnerships with the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and later the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation were built.**

So, what exactly does this Ugandan-born "Plus" entail? Its brilliance lies in its multi-faceted application:

1. The Operational Plus: The "Plus" ensured that every vial of the oral polio vaccine was more than just medicine; it was the catalyst for an entire delivery system. It funded the solar-powered refrigerators for the cold chain, the motorcycles and

boats to reach remote villages, and the legions of trained health workers and volunteer Rotarians who went door-to-door. It built sophisticated surveillance networks that track not only polio but have become a frontline defence against other disease outbreaks.

2. The Financial Plus: Ugandan Rotarians, alongside our global family, have been unwavering in our financial commitment, helping to raise over \$1.2 billion for this cause. Our commitment continues to be a powerful engine for funding, with the

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation matching every \$1 Rotary raises with \$2. This means our collective annual goal of \$50 million transforms into a formidable \$150 million for the final push towards eradication.

3. The Humanitarian Plus: This is the most profound legacy. The infrastructure created for PolioPlus is now leveraged to deliver other critical,

life-saving services. During National Immunization Days, children also receive Vitamin A supplements to boost immunity, deworming tablets, and mosquito nets to protect against malaria. The "Plus"

ensures that every contact with a community is maximized, creating a ripple effect of better health far beyond polio.

Today, as we stand on the brink of eradicating a disease that once paralysed hundreds of thousands of children each year, we must look back with immense pride. The case count has plummeted from 350,000 annual cases in 1988 to a handful today, confined to only two endemic countries. Indeed, this staggering achievement has a Ugandan fingerprint at its very heart.

▶ **The spirit of "Plus" is Rotary's promise in action: that we will not settle for half-measures. We do not just treat symptoms; we address root causes. We do not merely donate; we build sustainable systems. When our clubs today support teenage mothers with education and vocational training, we are walking in the very same spirit that powered Mwana Mugimu and inspired PolioPlus. We are honouring the legacy of Professor Kakitahi and the Rotary Club of Kampala, who taught the world that to heal a child, you must empower mothers and fortify communities.**

“

When our clubs today support teenage mothers with education and vocational training, we are walking in the very same spirit that powered Mwana Mugimu and inspired PolioPlus..”



COMPASSION, KINDNESS SHOULD BE UNLIMITED



RTN MAUREEN KAWOMBE TUMWEBAZE, THE CHARTER PRESIDENT OF NAALYA STATES, CURRENTLY SERVES AS ASSISTANT GOVERNOR AND IS ALSO PART OF THE PR TEAM OF DISCON 101. SHE TALKED TO PETER NYANZI ABOUT HER ROTARY JOURNEY.

How and when did your Rotary journey officially begin?

My Rotary journey started in August 2021 at the then virtual Rotary Cancer Run. Together with other residents of Naalya Estates, we helped to mobilize for this run, and it is from this experience that the idea of a Rotary club was born. Rotary Club of Naalya States was later chartered on 30th May 2022, and I was the Charter President.

What roles have you taken on in Rotary since chartering the Rotary Club of Naalya States?

I have since taken on roles as a Grant Support Officer, a role I still serve in to date. I supported as a content builder for the virtual vocational exchange between Districts 9213 and 3450, a connection of different districts that still runs up to now.

▶ **I have served on Rotary Cancer Run teams in fundraising and protocol, and I am now a Routes Chair for Cancer Run 15. I also served as a RYLA Chair, a role that I enjoyed so much, and I am serving on the PR team of DISCON 101. I am now an Assistant Governor.**

Please take us through the process of chartering the Rotary Club of Naalya States.

Chartering RC Naalya States followed the normal procedures of forming new clubs. We met often as members of a club in formation for about nine months, developed our bylaws and constitution, and mentored members. When we felt we were ready, we applied for charter.

What key lessons did you learn from the experience of being a

Charter President?

Many things! Key among them was the lesson of leading volunteers, but I also learnt a lot about Rotary. One of the things I've learnt is that you will never know it all as far as leadership is concerned, so listening and learning is a continuous process that I have adopted in Rotary. My eyes and ears are always looking out for new knowledge, new opportunities and new energies. The moment you think you know it all marks the end of any successful leadership journey.

In what ways did being a Charter President change your leadership philosophy in general?

“ I have always been passionate about the youth. As a teacher, I like to guide young people through their careers and life experiences.”

Having come from an academic background, I was used to giving instructions and following rules to the dot—something that cannot fully apply here. I am now more open to change, to different opinions

and to new ideas.

Briefly, what would you point to as the key highlights of the Club since the charter?

The growth of the members that have stayed the course. I am elated by people like our current President

Stella and how she has grown in leadership. That transformation, much like mine, is one to celebrate.

The Club has partnered with a number of clubs to implement key projects in different communities. What lessons have you learned about the importance of partnering with other clubs in implementing impactful projects?

Alone we can go fast, but together we can go far. At the start, we didn't collaborate much, partly because we didn't have many connections. Now, I see us benefiting from such partnerships in terms of resources, reach and impact.

If you were asked to speak to a group of new Club Presidents, what would you tell them?

Always listen to your members and be open to learning. Old methods cannot solve new problems, and no man is an island.

If you were asked to speak to a group of new Rotarians, what would you tell them so that they can have an impactful journey in Rotary?

To have an impactful journey in Rotary, first commit to being part of it. This means pay, attend and participate. Take advantage of all trainings provided, whether physical like RLI or online like the Learning Center. Visit as many clubs as you can to build meaningful connections. Participate in service projects to create impact.

You are quite passionate about youth development

and empowerment, and you were recently recognised with an award for championing the youth at the Women in Rotary event. Why is supporting young people important to you as a Rotarian?

I have always been passionate about the youth. As a teacher, I like to guide young people through their careers and life experiences. It gives me joy to later see them succeed. Supporting young people means supporting the next generation and guarantees sustainability of what we are doing. Being around them also brings an energy that is not always present among older people. That energy helps me connect with my younger self, and it is contagious!

You've visited different clubs and interfaced with different communities where Rotary operates. What are your most important takeaways regarding the impact of Rotary in society?

I have seen clubs change communities through adoption of villages and also through small but powerful interventions like medical camps. You never fully know the importance of these efforts until you meet a mother who is unwell, with children who are equally sick and

have not afforded medical care for a long time—until Rotary reached them. At a medical camp in Busunju recently, organized by the Rotary Club of Ntinda Metro, one woman safely delivered twins. What a joy it was to the club! The children we have met in our mentorship series later meet us in the community filled with gratitude.

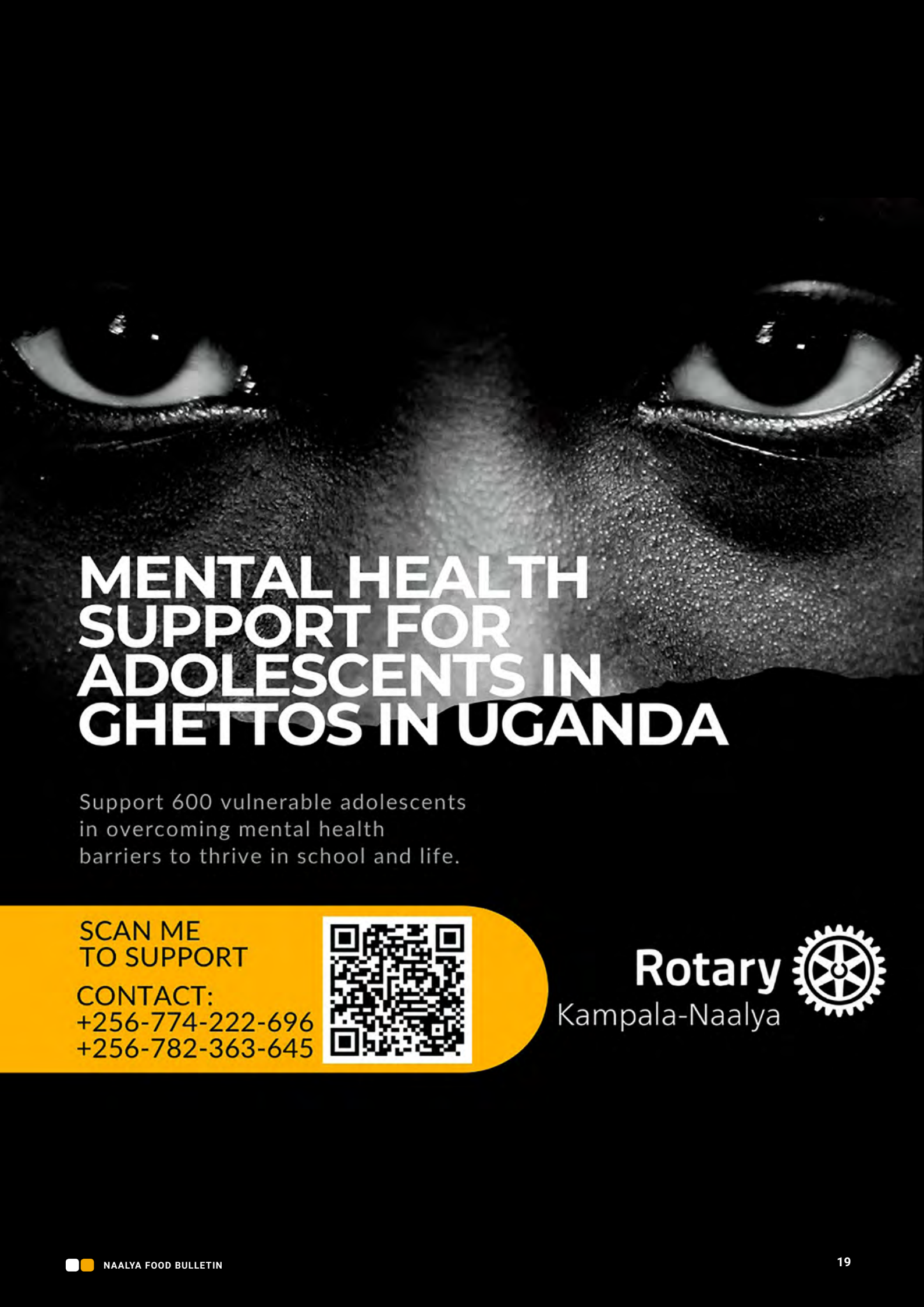
The clean water that clubs have taken to hard-to-reach areas is transforming lives. My takeaway is that compassion and kindness should be unlimited and, as we warmly give them to the communities, we should extend the same to one another as Rotarians.

Where do you see yourself in Rotary in the next few years?

In the next few years, I want to enjoy Rotary even more.



Rtn Maureen (L) with other Rotarians at a recent Women in Rotary event.

A high-contrast, black and white close-up photograph of a person's eyes, looking directly at the camera. The eyes are dark and expressive, with visible eyelashes and skin texture. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the contours of the face and the intensity of the gaze.

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Rotary 
Kampala-Naalya

The Hustle Trap: When ambition turns into burnout



BY RTN JACKLINE MUTIMBA

Across Uganda's cities and towns, a new rhythm drives daily life - the relentless pulse of the hustle. Young people wake before dawn to sell thrifted clothes online, deliver food, run errands, design posters, or teach short digital courses. The mantra is simple: keep pushing. But behind that energy, a quiet exhaustion grows.

The rise of the 'hustle culture,' glorifying constant work and financial independence, mirrors the dreams of a generation eager to thrive despite high unemployment. According to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS, 2023), youth unemployment stands at about 12 percent, but underemployment is far higher, with over 40 percent of young people working irregular, low-income jobs.

Social media amplifies the pressure. Platforms like TikTok and Instagram showcase peers who seem endlessly productive, starting

businesses, buying cars, traveling. This "highlight reel" culture subtly tells youth that rest equals failure.

▶ **But beneath the drive to "secure the bag" lies anxiety, fatigue, and self-doubt. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2022) lists burnout as one of the leading emerging mental health concerns among people under 30 globally and Uganda is no exception.**

The Human Cost

Hustle culture often pushes young people to measure their worth by output. Long hours blur with sleepless nights. Some skip meals, delay healthcare, or ignore stress symptoms. A 2023 Makerere University School of Public Health study found that over 60 percent of university students reported persistent stress, linked to academic and financial pressures.

The informal sector, where most youth work, compounds this. Without contracts, predictable pay, or rest days, exhaustion becomes normalized. Over time, ambition morphs into anxiety, a cycle of survival rather than sustainable growth.

Reframing the hustle

The problem isn't hard work;

it's imbalance. The hustle culture rarely acknowledges the mental, emotional, and social costs of constant striving. Uganda's youth need empowerment models that value both productivity and well-being.

What can be done:

- Normalize balance. Entrepreneurship programs should integrate mental wellness sessions.
- Workplace culture shift. Even in startups, leaders must model rest, empathy, and planning.
- Public campaigns. Media influencers can reshape the narrative — from "work till you drop" to "work smart, live well."

Ambition should uplift, not consume. Uganda's greatest potential lies not just in the energy of its youth but also in their ability to thrive without breaking.

Rtn Jackline Mutimba is a Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist / Mental Health Advocate



Youth perform a skit on mental health at the Rotary Mental Health camp in Acholi Quarters



ELDER'S EYE

TRF: Let's balance giving with grants access messages

BY RTN GODFREY OKELLO-OMODING

Messages in this month of November are all centred on giving to The Rotary Foundation (TRF). The reason is obvious: it is the TRF month. Yes, giving pools funds together. It builds reserves for doing good for humanity.

▶ **However, why is it that there are very few or no talks on how, in turn, to access these funds from the TRF? It seems, either by design or omission, how to access the funds is not part of the package of the month. One would expect or imagine that this would be a good time too to talk about accessing TRF funds.**

Another very glaring feature when talks or speeches are given is what the TRF's funds are used for. Of course, it's sweet to hear all these good things and impact being brought about by these funds. Still, I think it would be equally good to relate it simultaneously with how to access the funds. Could this be the factor contributing to the fact that very few clubs are able to access Global Grants? May be or maybe not.

How to access Global Grants is majorly left for seminars or training sessions, yet just giving a brief during talks would suffice. These talks of the month tickle and raise interest on working to access grants. And later on, it can be concretized during scheduled seminars or training sessions. Understandably, both district and club leaderships have earmarked giving as one of their key performance indicators. Hence, a drive to meet the targets.

To emphasize TRF as an engine of Rotary ought to



have two balanced wheels - the giving and accessing. Many times, even with water pools, they tend to overflow when the outlets are either narrow or blocked. They need to be constantly checked or drained. So, time ought to be given also on how to access TRF funds. Let it not come later as a finding that clubs are more inward looking because they have failed to participate or meet the conditions of accessing TRF funds.

▶ **Apparently, it is notable every year to find that many clubs struggle to qualify to begin the process of applying for grants. After this, they "relapse". Why? Do they get consoled at this stage? Time must also be devoted to issues of access of global grants and other available grants that are drawn from TRF.**

Members of clubs should generally learn together on how to move with TRF in all aspects. Structurally, in every Rotary Club there is

“Structurally, in every Rotary Club there is a TRF director, but it does no harm to have crusades on access of TRF funds through these talks.”



**Recognition event for TRF
Major Donors in September**

a TRF director, but it does no harm to have crusades on access of TRF funds through these talks.

▶ **Through such presentations, it is possible to have individual Rotarians respond, appreciate and understand. It re-enforces the messages of giving when messages of access too are shared.**

Clubs, especially those not receiving grants, are always challenged; “why are you not receiving grants?” This challenge when directed to members of a club, seems to suggest that they have some things wrong. And it

presumes that the grants are there waiting for them to access. This leaves a burden on the leadership of the club, wondering why not their club?

Message of access need to be brought at the forefront more than before. Let it be preached while handholding or mentoring clubs to access grants. This can also have a bearing on the clubs’ giving. There is evidence that clubs which receive grants also give more. Either way, was it giving much that made them access grants? Probably we need to pose

here and ask a question, “what is the future of giving from those clubs which have not received any grant

“
Probably we need to pose here and ask a question, “what is the future of giving from those clubs which have not received any grant or not receiving grants?”

or not receiving grants?”

Rotarians, the spirit of giving needs constant refreshment. This comes in different forms: knowing what you are giving can do or is doing; knowing one day my club will access grants; and knowing that what other Rotary clubs are doing I’m also part of it. These forms keep refreshing the giving and the hope of access.

▶ **There is a need to ensure more clubs or all club access grants. This goes with continuously learning to define our giving and ourselves, rekindling our fire and giving hope where there is hopelessness through being action bearers in bettering humanity.**

#OutToLunch

School visitations, meetings should be revisited

BY RTN. DENIS JJUUKO



You're invited for the school day on Thursday starting at 10.00am. "Dear parent, thank you for the great work. You are reminded that tomorrow is class visitation day at 3.00pm.

On Saturday, the school will be holding the parents talk. We have lined up a great panel. Next week is sports day. On Friday, we shall hold our parents-teachers interaction event. Please come with your child. The Parents Teachers Association Meeting will be held on Monday from 11.00am. This Sunday, we shall be holding the school Founder's Day. Rev Jjuuko and his wife, Lady Canon, will be leading the prayers."

“

If Not these days of parents casually walking into a classroom to interact with the teachers over absolutely nothing. I mean, I am not a teacher, what am I going to do about my child's bad handwriting?"

"On Saturday, we shall be dedicating the candidates. Prayers will commence at 10.00am in the main hall. On Tuesday, we shall be holding a party for all the candidates who finished their exams. Give your child Shs10,000 for a special samosa and Shs50,000 for a group photo. Visitation day is on Sunday for Senior Four and the week after will be our school drama day. The weekend after will be visitation day for Senior Two students. Then Prom!"

If you have a child in school in greater Kampala, you have probably received all those messages or more in a single academic term. If it is not the school sending you messages or

letters about such events, it is the child asking you to attend their school assembly or parade.

▶ Times have really changed. My parents and guardians were never even once asked to come see me at a school assembly or parade. I don't remember them being invited to school so teachers can take them through my exercise books.

In fact, during my time, if they ever asked you to bring your parent or guardian, you know you are in trouble. Not these days of parents casually walking into a classroom to interact with the teachers over absolutely nothing. I mean, I am not a teacher, what am I going to do about my child's bad handwriting? Like knock the knuckles out? Shouldn't that be the teacher's responsibility to guide him



on how to write better?

But Kampala schools don't want to know. They will invite you at every single opportunity for all sorts of things. How many times should parents and guardians visit schools? How do you get involved in your child's academics and still be able to work when every random day there is something that needs your presence? Something as mundane as a school assembly or some drama practice.



Then come the endless visitations. If I come to visit my child in Senior Five, why can't I see another child in Senior One as well? But no, each class must have its visitation day. Then some schools have more than one visitation a term. Something needs to give. Parents can't be trekking to schools all the time checking on this

or that or attending one meeting after another.

If you live or work near some of these big schools, it is a nightmare the day the school has such events. The Uganda middle and elite class parents drive like they don't care, creating multiple lanes everywhere. Traffic jams become the order of the day. The hapless traffic cops try and then they are asked by those breaking the rules if they know who they are dealing with.

Can't schools think of other ways? Like allowing a parent or guardian to visit their child once a term over the weekend or any day outside class hours. This would mean no dedicated visitation days. But you only visit once a term. Once you arrive at the gate, they check the student you have come to visit and tick off the name. You won't be allowed to visit again unless there is a medical emergency or something really serious.

There should also be a limit to how many hours

a parent or guardian can spend in the school. School visitations shouldn't be picnics where kids sit, eat some fried kitchen while a parent is playing music on a boom box. Visit the child and leave within an hour so the kids can go back to their lives.

Dedication events for candidates shouldn't be fashion shows. I mean, why should a kid in Primary Seven have hair extensions, stilettos and flowing gowns for a prayer event? Are candidate dedications replacing the extravagant proms? It seems to be the case.

Schools should concentrate on educating the kids entrusted with them and rather than making their campuses a gathering of parents every week for stuff that don't add much value to the learners.

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

Last week's fellowship

#Kimeeza - Pictorial



Friendship Isn't Effortless

BY PAMELA
KAWADDWA

They say, people get busy, as if busyness should silence affection, as if friendship can live off memory alone.

But I don't agree. Love — in any form — is an act of choosing, again and again, even in the in-between spaces.

I believe in effort. In messages that whisper, "You crossed my mind today." In the warmth of a call that says, "I still care." Because presence isn't measured in hours;



it's measured in heartbeats that remember.

Friendship is not built on silence.

It breathes through the reaching, the checking in, the small, sacred gestures that say, "You still matter."

So no, I won't romanticize absence. I'll always believe that real friendship takes presence, intention, and the gentle courage to show up — even when life gets loud. Just show up. Just try... **It's an effort!**

Till again,

Phwry

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.

Fun Facts

Aroma

A first-time visitor to the RC of Naalya has most likely caught a whiff of something mysterious wafting from the Ndere Centre kitchen—and thought, “Ah, is this aroma part of ‘service above self’?”

Well, well, that little word is a two-thousand-year-old linguistic secret weapon.

The word ‘aroma’ didn’t start life as the delicate whisper of beef samosas on a saucer. No, it began as ancient Greek *arōma*—a bold, pungent spice that told bland olive stews, “You’re welcome.” Think of it as the Schwarzenegger of seasonings: essential, assertive, and not to be trifled with. It traveled through Latin like a word on a Rotary Youth Exchange, detoured through French salons, and finally crash-landed in English in the 14th century—just in time to rescue us from saying, “That smells amazing.”

And thank goodness it did. Because in Rotary, diplomacy smells like roses—even when it’s actually Fred’s notorious

tuna casserole. “Smell” implies gym socks and forgotten leftovers. But ‘aroma’? Suddenly, you’re a connoisseur of community impact. “What an aroma,” you murmur, as the polio vaccine cooler is unpacked in 40°C heat. It’s not sweat and plastic—it’s the bouquet of eradication.

▶ **‘Aroma’ is Rotary’s favorite linguistic euphemism. Need to praise a fellow member’s “experimental” scent without triggering HR? “Its aroma is... memorable.” Describing the aftermath of a community clinic cleanup? Don’t say “smelly kids”; say “the earthy aroma of resilience.” It’s not spin—it’s service with seasoning.**

More than that, ‘aroma’ captures the intangible magic of what we do. The ‘aroma of



success’ isn’t a luxury spray—it’s the scent of a classroom newly built, a borehole freshly dug, or a cacophony of scents from a classroom of PLE candidates. It’s hope with top notes of determination and a lingering finish of fellowship.

So next time you’re accepting a service award, remember: you’re not just reporting smells. You’re bottling the essence of Rotary—one elegant, slightly spicy, etymologically globe-trotting word at a time.

▶ **Now, if you’ll excuse me, I must run as I can detect the unmistakable aroma of my best snack - microwaved tilapia**

Jokes of the day

1. Our Rotary committee meeting on Zoom had six people, three dogs, one parrot yelling ‘Service above self!’, and someone who accidentally unmuted for 20 minutes... and somehow, we still got more done than our Parliament.
2. My nephew asked if Rotary was like LinkedIn, but with more samosas. I said, ‘Close – except we actually show up for each other.’ He’s applying for an internship next week.
3. AI can now draft grant proposals, design logos, and simulate empathy. But can it serve breakfast at 6 a.m. in the rain while smiling? Nope. That’s still Rotary.



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TOPIC

TIPS ON RAISING MORE FOR TRF AT CLUB LEVEL



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LOCATION
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