Naalya Food Bulletin

24th November, 2026

Rotary Kampala - Naalya

Issue 18 | RY 2026-27



08 Rotary Leaders Call for Giving That Builds Lasting Legacies

RC KAMPALA - NAALYA

SCAN TO LEARN MORE

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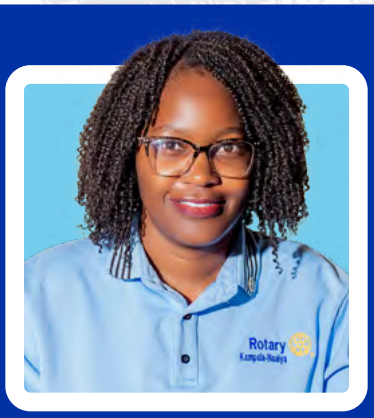
Message from the Editor's Desk

BY **RTN JACKLINE MUTIMBA**
Club's Public Image Chair



Dear Rotarians and Friends,

Welcome to another edition of our weekly bulletin!

"Have you ever asked someone how they are doing, received the familiar "I'm fine," and simply moved on?"

Or attended an outdoor event where the rain suddenly became the main attraction?

Well, this week's bulletin has a little of both, alongside an interesting conversation about The Rotary Foundation.

In here, you will find a variety of perspectives our contributors bring.

Some stories make us smile, others make us reflect, and a few leave us questioning things we have always taken for granted.

As we reflect on International Men's Day, marked on Nov. 19, our article, "When 'I'm Fine' Is the Easiest Thing to Say," invites us to look beyond the familiar smiles, jokes and reassurances of the men around us.

We often celebrate men for their strength, resilience and ability to provide.

It is a conversation worth having, and perhaps one that should continue long after International Men's Day.

Now, from matters of the heart to the unpredictable Kampala weather!

In this week's #OutToLunch, Denis Jjuuko takes us from a rain-soaked entertainment event to a bigger conversation about Kampala's readiness to host major events.

If you have ever attended a function where guests suddenly became more interested in finding shelter than enjoying the programme, you will probably relate to his story!

And as Rotary Foundation Month draws to a close, another article invites us to consider an important question: we often talk about giving to The Rotary Foundation, but what happens after the contributions are made?

Rtn Godfrey Okello-Omoding is inviting us to explore the other side of the Foundation's work, including opportunities and challenges that deserve our attention.

> "My appreciation goes to our contributors for continuing to make these pages worth reading. "

What makes this edition interesting is that the articles take us into very different spaces: our personal lives, the city around us and the wider Rotary family.

Yet each offers something worth thinking about, enriched with information, entertainment, challenges our thinking and something to discuss when we meet again.

My appreciation goes to our contributors for continuing to make these pages worth reading.

So, whether you are settling down with your morning tea, taking a break from work or enjoying a quiet evening, I hope you find something that catches your attention.

Happy reading

President's Message

RTN CHRISTINE AMUCU
Club President
2026-2027



Dear Fellow Rotarians and Rotaractors,

Last Tuesday, we had a memorable TRF Recognition Fellowship, organised by Tuesday Clubs at Hotel Africana. The event was a great success, with an impressive attendance of 143 Rotary Clubs.

We celebrated and recognised our Major Donors, Paul Harris Fellows, Benefactors and clubs whose members have embraced the spirit of giving to The Rotary Foundation.

We were honoured to have Rotary International Director Emmanuel Katongole as our Chief Guest. It was indeed an inspiring occasion that reminded us of the power of giving and the lasting impact our contributions make in communities.

This Tuesday, we begin with our Board Meeting, taking time to reflect on our journey so far. It is an opportunity to take stock of what we have achieved, assess our progress against our goals and identify areas that require improvement.

Each Chairperson will present an account of the activities and achievements of their respective directorates, including the challenges encountered and the way forward.

Let us use this opportunity to strengthen our commitment to delivering on our promises and creating lasting impact.

We have our normal fellowship beginning at 7.00 p.m., featuring an important and timely topic: "The Struggles We Don't Talk About: Understanding the Silent Mental Health Crisis Among Today's Youth".

Our guest speaker will take us through this important subject, helping us better understand the mental health challenges facing today's young people and how we can respond as individuals and as a Rotary family.

As we bring November 2026 to a close, I would like to sincerely appreciate the Katogo Buddy Group for leading us throughout the month of fellowship, with excellent speakers and insightful, relevant topics that enriched our knowledge and encouraged meaningful discussions.

Thank you for the creativity, commitment and effort you put into making our fellowships memorable. You have done a grat job!

> "Congratulations to the organisers for a successful fellowship!"

We now welcome the Kikomando Buddy Group, who will take us through the month of December 2026.

We look forward to an exciting month of fellowship, learning and interaction. We wish you a successful and enjoyable month as you take up the mantle.

"As we move forward, let us remain committed to our Rotary journey and continue to live our theme, Create Lasting Impact."

I look forward to seeing you all on Tuesday.

Yours in Service,

Rotary
Kampala-Naalya

NOVEMBER 2026
TUESDAY FELLOWSHIP CALENDAR

3
Are You Growing Wealth or Just Earning a Living?
Guest Speaker: Rtn Percy Lubega
7:00 PM
Ndere Cultural Centre

10
The Power of Us:
Turning Ordinary Giving into Extraordinary Change.
Guest Speaker: PDG Stephen Mwanje
7:00 PM
Ndere Cultural Centre

17
Rotary Foundation Recognition Fellowship
Hosted by the Tuesday Clubs
7:00 PM
Hotel Africana, Katonga Hall

24
The Struggles We Don't Talk About:
Understanding the Silent Mental Health Crisis Among Today's Youth
Guest Speaker: Dr Raymond Odokonyero
7:00 PM
Ndere Cultural Centre

Hosted by Katogo Buddy Group

ROTARY'S AREAS OF FOCUS















Rotary



#CoverStory

Rotary Leaders Call for Giving That Builds Lasting Legacies

BY **RTN SYLVIA NANKYA**

Rotary leaders have challenged members to strengthen their contributions to The Rotary Foundation, warning that Rotary's global humanitarian work depends on a culture of consistent giving and collective commitment to service.

Speaking at the Joint Fellowship of Tuesday Clubs, held at Hotel Africana on Tuesday, November 17, under the theme The Legacy of Giving, Rotary International Director Emmanuel Katongole called on Rotarians to capitalise on Africa's growing influence in Rotary's global leadership to expand the organisation's impact across the continent and beyond.

Katongole noted that with Nigerian National Olayinka Babalola serving as Rotary International President and two Africans sitting on the Rotary International Board of Directors, the continent had reached a significant moment to demonstrate its leadership capacity, resource mobilisation and transformative service.

> "Our giving today becomes someone else's opportunity tomorrow,"

He urged Rotarians and Rotaractors to support The Rotary Foundation and sustain a culture of generosity, pointing to the far-reaching impact of collective contributions.



"Just imagine, a simple act of Rotarians like you and me has contributed USD 1.8 billion towards polio eradication and helped immunise 3.3 billion children worldwide" Katongole said.

He highlighted the Foundation's contributions to polio eradication, life-saving heart surgeries for children, clean water projects, and opportunities for young entrepreneurs, emphasising how pooled individual contributions can change lives on a global scale. Katongole also challenged Rotary District 9213 to sustain its fundraising performance, recalling that the district raised USD 1.28 million in the previous year and urging members to surpass that achievement in support of Rotary's global mission.

He called on Rotarians to translate Africa's growing representation in Rotary's international leadership into greater commitment to service, insisting that the



continent must seize the opportunity to deepen its contribution to the organisation's humanitarian agenda.

In his address, Governor Gerald Obai challenged Rotarians to rethink how they measure their legacy, arguing that the true value of service lies not in the physical structures established but in the lives transformed.

He observed that while schools, boreholes and other community infrastructure may eventually deteriorate or disappear, the impact of educating children, empowering families and improving access to essential services can endure for generations.

Obai urged Rotarians to keep giving, inspire others to contribute and build a sustainable culture of generosity through The Rotary Foundation.

He emphasised that the ultimate measure of giving is the opportunity it creates for others long after the original contribution has been made. It was the central message of his appeal.



Reinforcing the call for collective responsibility, Katongole challenged Rotarians to recognise that meaningful change requires every individual to play their part." he said.

He challenged members to work towards a world where no child misses school because of poverty, communities have access to safe water, the environment is protected, and polio is eradicated.

> "Let's continue being good in the world. If you do what you must do and I do what I must do, this world will never remain the same."



Earlier, PDG Anne Nkutu, a member of the Rotary Club of Kampala-Naalya, shared a powerful story of how a Rotary-supported community water project transformed not just access to clean water, but also the life and social standing of a woman in a village in Northern Uganda.

Delivering her keynote address at the Joint Fellowship of Tuesday Clubs at Hotel Africana, PDG Anne recounted how the woman, who took responsibility for managing a community well, mobilising residents to maintain it and promoting proper hygiene, eventually earned a new identity: Wonkom, meaning Chairperson.

The title was more than a name. It represented the trust, respect and recognition she had earned within her community.

For PDG Anne, this is the deeper power of The Rotary Foundation. Its impact goes beyond providing essential services. It can transform a woman's confidence, elevate her standing in society and create opportunities for her to emerge as a community leader.

Through the project, the woman did not simply become a beneficiary of clean water; she became an agent of change, entrusted with safeguarding a resource essential to her community.

Pictorial: The Rotary Foundation Recognition Fellowship 2026













Pictorial: The Rotary Foundation Recognition Fellowship 2026













Rotary
Kampala-Naalya



The Struggles We Don't Talk About

Understanding the Silent Mental Health Crisis Among Today's Youth

Guest Speaker: ***Dr Raymond Odokonyero***

Tuesday, 24 November 2026

7:00 PM

Ndere Cultural Centre

Twitter: @RotaryNaalya | www.RotaryKampalaNaalya.org | RelaDental Smile for Miles

Behind the smiles, the laughter, and the confidence, many of today's young people are silently fighting battles we may never see.

Join us for a thought-provoking fellowship as we unpack the silent mental health crisis among today's youth, break the stigma around mental health, and explore how we can better understand, support and empower young people.

Guest Speaker: Dr Raymond Odokonyero

Tuesday, 24th November 2026
7:00 PM
Ndere Cultural Centre

This is a conversation we cannot afford to miss! Come ready to engage, reflect and be part of the change.

Bring a friend, a colleague, or someone who needs this conversation!

#MentalHealthAwareness
#YouthMentalHealth
#EndTheStigma



Uganda Welcomes More Than 700 Rotary Leaders for All Africa Zone Institute

BY **EDITORIAL DESK**

Kampala is set to welcome Rotary leaders from across the continent this week as preparations reach their final stage for the 7th All Africa Zone Institute 2026.

The delegation is led by Rotary International President Olayinka Hakeem Babalola and Rotary International Director Emmanuel Katongole, among others.

The Institute is bringing together Rotary leaders, members and partners for high-level discussions on Rotary's future in Africa, leadership development, fellowship and the organisation's impact across the continent.

It will have special sessions for the training of District Governors-Elect and District Governors-Nominees, as well as sessions on The Rotary Foundation, polio eradication, global projects and emerging leadership priorities.

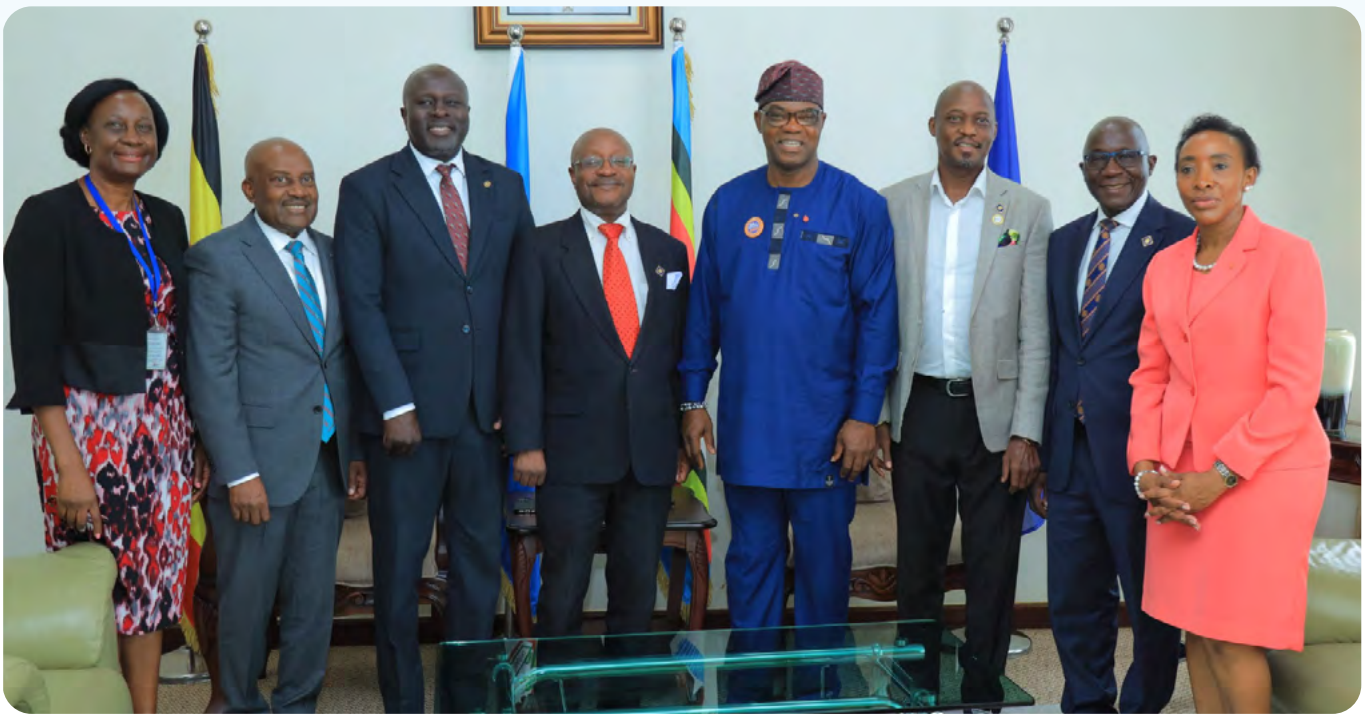
The Institute opens with an Exclusive Business Networking Breakfast on Thursday, bringing together business executives, entrepreneurs and Rotary leaders for a curated morning of connection and collaboration.

The programme will feature engaging breakout discussions, inspiring plenary sessions and valuable opportunities to network with fellow changemakers from across Africa.

> "More than 700 delegates have registered for the annual gathering."

A major highlight will be the Africa Peace Concert 2026, a fundraising event in support of Rotary Peace Centres,

By attending and supporting the concert, delegates will help extend the impact of peace centres in equipping peacebuilders with advanced training, practical skills and global networks







to address conflict, strengthen communities and promote reconciliation.

Also planned is a special breakfast meeting that will feature a keynote address by Sylvia Mulinge, Chief Executive Officer of MTN Uganda, titled "Navigating the Future of Business in a Tech-Driven World."

Ms Mulinge will share insights on executive leadership, digital transformation and building resilient businesses in Africa's rapidly changing technology landscape. The event will take place at the Royal Palm, Speke Resort Munyonyo. Delegates staying at Speke Resort Munyonyo on the night of Wednesday, 25 November 2026, will attend complimentary.

> "The event will take place at the Royal Palm, Speke Resort Munyonyo."

For non-resident delegates, the fee is USD 22 per person.

Delegates are encouraged to bring business cards, fresh ideas and a readiness to build meaningful partnerships.



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WELCOME
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ROTARY INTERNATIONAL
PRESIDENT
OLAYINKA BABALOLA
Safe Roads
Save Lives
#RotaryEyamba
#RotaryKonyo
https://rotaryd9213.org
Rotary District 9213


AFRICA RISING
Grow to Serve
Rotary
Zone 22
7th ALL AFRICA
ZONE INSTITUTE
UGANDA 2026
BUSINESS
BREAKFAST
& NETWORKING
TOPIC: NAVIGATING THE FUTURE OF BUSINESS IN A TECH DRIVEN WORLD
THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26TH, 2026
ROYAL PALM SPEKE RESORT MUNYONYO
6:45AM 8:00AM
SYLVIA MULINGE
CEO MTN UGANDA
SPEAKER
FOLLOW US
@RotaryAfrica_
FOR MORE INFO:
#AllAfricaZoneInstitute26

Pictorial: The Preparation Meetings for the 7th All Africa Zone Institute











Pictorial: The Preparation Meetings for the 7th All Africa Zone Institute











Uganda Set to Showcase Cultural Soul at Sixth Africa Peace Concert

For six years, we have kept the rhythm. We have kept the beat.

Five editions of the Africa Peace Concert are behind us, and on Friday, November 27, 2026, we step onto the stage for the sixth down by the waters at Speke Resort Munyonyo.

This year hits differently. The concert sits right in the middle of the All Africa Zone Institute, Uganda 2026. With over 800 delegates, Rotary International President Olayinka 'Yinka' Hakeem Babalola, 9 Rotary International Directors & 3 Rotary International Trustees in town, we are pulling back the curtain to show the world who we truly are. We are tailor-making this night to showcase the authentic soul of Ugandan culture and tradition.

Beyond the music, the fine dining, and the electric energy in the room, look at what showing up has built: over $2 million raised for the Makerere University Rotary Peace Centre. 12 cohorts trained, 16 fellows currently studying at Makerere, and 223 graduates driving over 186 social change initiatives across 52 countries.

Physical & Virtual Tickets: http://tinyurl.com/rotary-peace-26
Donations: http://rotary.org/donate
Our Journey: http://africapeaceconcert.org

Rotary
Kampala-Naalya

MYTH:

You need a fat wallet to be a Rotarian.



REALITY:

The most valuable thing you bring to Rotary isn't money. It's your heart, your hands, your ideas and your *willingness to serve.*

Curious about Rotary?

Join us every Tuesday at Ndere Cultural Centre or at any service project and experience Rotary in action.



Cynthia Tendo Embarks on a Journey of Cultural Exchange and Discovery

BY **RTN SYLVIA NANKYA**

A new chapter of adventure, learning and international friendship has begun for Cynthia Tendo, a Ugandan Rotary Youth Exchange student, who safely arrived in Argentina last week to begin her exchange experience.

Her participation in the programme was endorsed by the Rotary Club of Kampala-Naalya.

Cynthia arrived in Buenos Aires on Saturday, November 14, 2026, at 8:15 p.m. local time, where she was warmly received by members of the Rotary Club of Caseros Norte and her host family.



In a message to their Rotary partners in Uganda, the Rotary Club of Caseros Norte, located in the Province of Buenos Aires, expressed excitement at welcoming Cynthia to Argentina, describing her arrival as the beginning of a wonderful cultural exchange and an opportunity to build lasting connections.

> “At its heart, Rotary Youth Exchange is also a peacebuilding initiative.

The club also shared photographs of Cynthia’s reception at Ministro Pistarini International Airport, popularly known as Ezeiza Airport, in Buenos Aires.

“We are thrilled to finally welcome her to our country and our club. She has been warmly received by her host family and club members, and we are all very excited for the wonderful cultural exchange and experiences ahead of her during her stay in Argentina,” the club noted.

The Argentine club further thanked its Ugandan Rotary partners for their trust and for making the international exchange possible, promising to keep them updated on Cynthia’s journey and activities.

Cynthia’s journey is part of Rotary International’s Youth Exchange programme, an initiative that gives young people an opportunity to experience life in another country, immerse themselves in different cultures, learn new languages and develop a broader understanding of the world.

The programme, which serves young people aged



15 to 19, is organised through Rotary clubs in more than 100 countries.

Depending on the exchange arrangement, students may participate in short-term exchanges lasting several days to three months or long-term exchanges spanning an entire academic year.

During long-term exchanges, students attend local schools and live with host families, allowing them to experience everyday life in their host communities rather than simply visiting as tourists.

Beyond the opportunity to travel, Youth Exchange is an important investment in the personal development of young people.

Participants develop leadership skills, independence, adaptability and confidence as they navigate unfamiliar environments and learn to appreciate different perspectives.

These experiences nurture empathy, tolerance and cross-cultural understanding, qualities that are increasingly important in an interconnected world.

The programme also creates opportunities for lifelong friendships and international networks.

> "Living with host families also exposes students to new traditions, lifestyles, values and ways of thinking."

Students return home with new perspectives, experiences and knowledge that can enrich their communities and influence their future academic, professional and personal pursuits.

By bringing young people from different backgrounds together, it helps break down cultural barriers, challenge stereotypes and nurture relationships founded on mutual respect and understanding.

For Cynthia, the experience in Argentina presents an opportunity to become an ambassador of Uganda, sharing her country's culture, traditions and identity while discovering what another part of the world has to offer.

Through the collaboration of sponsoring and hosting clubs, host families and dedicated Rotarians, young people are given opportunities to grow, learn and develop into more confident and globally minded citizens.

"The Rotary Club of Kampala Naalya wishes Cynthia a memorable, enriching and successful stay in Argentina."


Malaria Carnival
2026 CLOSING UGANDA'S MALARIA FUNDING GAP
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THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA MINISTRY OF HEALTH
MALARIA FREE UGANDA
TOGETHER WE TURN UP!
All clubs. One cause. One unforgettable day
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GET YOUR TICKETS NOW!
KIDS 30K
ADULTS 50K
06 DEC
LAS VEGAS GARDEN HOTEL, BUNGA



#SolRise

When "I'm Fine" Is the Easiest Thing to Say



BY **JACKLINE MUTIMBA**

The school fees reminder comes in while he's still working out how to pay the rent. Then a friend sends a voice note. "Chief, you've gone quiet. Everything OK?"

He types, "I'm fine, my brother." Then he sends a joke about Manchester United. Within minutes, they're arguing about football, and the conversation goes exactly where he wanted it to go.

I can understand why. Football is familiar territory. Telling a friend you've been lying awake doing the same sums for three nights is harder. He might ask, "So what's your plan?"

International Men's Day, marked on Nov. 19, gave us a theme worth carrying beyond the day itself: "The Future Is Everyone." I want that future to include a man who can tell his friends, "Things are hard at home," and still feel comfortable turning up for football on Saturday.

I want it to include a boy who can say he's scared and trust that the adults around him will take him seriously.

> "Keep the conversation private and check in again. The group chat can survive on football for another week."

The Boys Are Listening

Picture a boy falling off his bicycle. He's scraped his knee, and just as he's deciding whether to cry, an adult says, "Eh, a big boy like you?"

You can hear it at a family gathering, sometimes from the same auntie who's already halfway across the compound looking for a plaster. She cares about him.

We can sit beside him and ask what happened.

Let him finish, even if the story somehow begins with something his cousin did last week. And when he hears an older brother say, "I needed help with that," let that be part of what he learns about being a man, too.

Check On Him The Way You Know Him

Maybe a friend has missed three Saturday games. Try, "We've missed you. I'll be near your place on Sunday. Can we have tea?"

He might spend half an hour talking about a referee from two weeks ago. Sometimes what he really wants to





say comes just as you're paying for the tea.

If he opens up, ask what would help. He may want you to listen or help him find a counsellor.

Keep the conversation private and check in again. The group chat can survive on football for another week.

There's room for this in our clubs, workplaces and fellowships, too. A conversation about grief, job loss or the pressures of fatherhood can give men a chance to talk about experiences they usually keep to themselves. It's also a chance to share where someone can find professional support privately.

Call Him on an Ordinary Day, Too

I'm grateful for the men who show up for us, teach us and make us laugh when we're taking ourselves a little too seriously. I'm thinking, too, of the man who makes everybody laugh and could do with a friend asking how he's getting on.

> "He may still come away thinking that getting older means getting better at hiding what hurts.

Tell him something you appreciate about him. Ask how his week has been and give him time to answer.

Then call again on an ordinary Tuesday, simply because you want to hear his voice.

And yes, you can still talk about football.

102 DISTRICT CONFERENCE
Creating Lasting impact

Rotary District 9213

Rotaract District 9213

EVENT BREAKDOWN

DATE	LUNCH	DINNER	DRESSCODE	HOST
Thursday 29th **Opening Night**	NO	YES	Smart Casual | ALL BLACK | African Beads Accessories	RC Kampala
Friday 30th April **Embers of Legacy**	YES	YES	Beige and/or white	Rotaract clubs of D9213.
Saturday 1st May. **The Governor's Golden Ball**	YES	YES	Black with a golden touch.	Northern Clubs

DISCON 102 APPROVED RATES

EARLY BIRD RATE ENDING 30TH NOVEMBER.

Rotaractors **$130**

Rotarians **$200**

REGULAR REGISTRATION ENDING 31ST JANUARY 2027

Rotaractors **$150**

Rotarians **$250**

SCAN TO REGISTER

29th APRIL TO 1st MAY 2027

29TH APRIL TO 1ST MAY 2027

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Elder's Eye

From Modest to Voluminous: Rethinking Contribution to Utilisation of The Rotary Foundation Grants

BY **RTN GODFREY OKELLO-OMODING**

As we come to the end of The Rotary Foundation month, messages dispensed in various media and presentations have been on contributing to TRF.

There are hardly any deliberately targeted messages on access to, transitional processes and procedures for, and utilisation of TRF grants.

Is this an omission? Could there be an assumption that clubs and members are conversant with them?

There is evidence on record that our district is among the top contributors to TRF in the zone. Equally, there is evidence that very few clubs in the district do access TRF grants. A number is not even a third of clubs, being a bit extravagant with the math.

Somehow, it appears that there are particular clubs whose success rate of accessing grants is nearly tipping one hundred per cent.

Yet, their counterparts continue to struggle to even qualify to apply for grants; a challenging hurdle to jump.

> "There is a gap between mobilising giving for TRF and mobilising for access and usage of global grants.

Nearly half or slightly above jump this bar. Where are the rest? What are the issues?

On one hand, there is also evidence of some clubs, though few, having misappropriation issues with the grants they access. Others have inadequacies in accountability.

In any case, why should people who have come out of society to separate themselves as the ones mindful of the needs of the disadvantaged members of their society do that?

Where is the problem? Why is there apparent silence in addressing these issues in these presentations? Is it because they have unpleasant fragrances?

It would be that the demand for TRF funding will be increasing in the case of Uganda as the world grapples with several challenges. With the cutting and stopping of aid by some donors, the eyes would be on TRF as one alternative.

Clubs would be rallying to access available support from TRF, after all their members live amidst communities where these challenges are prevalent. They see, feel and know them. Let it not become the order of living in painful reality and moving on.

Clubs ought to pump-prime their acts and seek these grants. The widening of the gap starts right from clubs



qualifying to be able to apply for global grants.

Are clubs' leadership and members taking access to TRF grants seriously? Just maybe they have given up due to "laborious" requirements, processes and procedures involved.

They instead resigned themselves to internal club fundraising. They use this to address "project fever" clubs tend to exhibit.

Every club yearns to implement a project. Which is a good thing. Having a project matters in the life of a club and its members.

Among peers, what will they talk about? It may also keep hopes alive that one day they will get a global grant.

> Let us have an enormous turning point where every club is a participant in contributing to utilisation, moving from modest to voluminous.

"For example, it took Rotary Club of Kampala-Naalya thirteen years of very patient waiting and trying to access its first global grant."

Qualifying first to be in a position to apply for it was a hurdle to jump. When the club qualified for the first time to apply for the TRF grant, the Rotary year was coming to an end. This also became a dead effort, though there was learning. The benefit was the lessons it came with. The following attempt benefitted from these lessons.

Matters of qualification ought to be examined further, including speeding up the process for access to global grants. There is a need to direct efforts in strengthening, smoothing, understanding and appreciating processes and procedures for qualifying to apply for TRF grants.



The district leadership needs to increase engagement with clubs. Target strengthening transition mechanisms to increase the number of clubs accessing global grants.

Addressing more than procedural outcomes of applying. Messages and actions need to be packaged on access and utilisation of grants.

This is the worst time to miss opportunities and for any delay in acting.

The rethinking ought to evolve so that contribution and utilisation are tied up. All clubs ought to be active participants, beating "apparently voluminous" processes and procedures, and taking advantage of the voluminous contribution mobilised.

Let the efforts be easier to translate into output and be seen and measured. Let what appears as an uphill climb be flattened, convincing all clubs that they can access TRF grants. Also, let the few big successes be accounted for and keep creating lasting impact.

Let us ensure that we all weigh in on TRF grants, doing the math, and the math is increasingly on the side of implementing TRF grant projects.

Let us be a party driving a long journey to poverty amelioration, and fairness and equitable access to services for our communities. Also exploring healthier partnerships and initiatives with a purpose to reach out to more communities.

VP
VENTURES

Aluminium and Metal Fabrication







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#OutToLunch

Kampala Needs a Large Centre for Events for Uganda to Attain Tenfold Growth

BY **RTN DENIS JJUUKO**

Over the weekend, VIPs were seen carrying umbrellas to shield themselves from pouring rain as one of Uganda's musicians celebrated his 50th anniversary (I guess birthday).

Others were seen scampering for safety. Those without umbrellas covered themselves with chairs. Women's makeup was seen running down their pretty faces.

"Kampala traders arrived en masse with umbrellas. I heard that they were selling a piece at 100,000 Shillings!"

Others sold buveera to those who didn't want their beautiful shoes to get soiled.

See, the organisers had not installed tents. They claim the venue owner didn't allow them to remove a paver or two to anchor the tents for safety.

The venue owner says they should have brought tents with a system that allows installation without tampering with the pavers.

Anyway, I don't know if it was cheeky or not, but there is a video of the organiser telling one of his music industry colleagues that he needed to refund for having failed to stop the rain. The accused said that, without his efforts, it would have been worse.

Anyway, cheeky or not, we know many event organisers pay someone to stop the rain!

> "To determine whether it would rain or not, they went back and looked at events for that particular day for the past 100 years."

But this isn't the first time a show has been disrupted by rain. It happens many times. Rain is a nightmare for event organisers. We don't seem to have the technology to predict the rain.

I asked Meta AI while writing this article if it could give me a weather forecast for an event in January, and it couldn't. It said it can only predict the weather 10-14 days before the date. If AI can't predict it, I guess nobody else can.



I remembered reading a book by Barack Obama's campaign manager for his 2008 election. In the book, The Audacity to Win, the author says that one day they wanted to hold a large outdoor event.

To determine whether it would rain or not, they went back and looked at events for that particular day for the past 100 years. In those 100 years, it had

only rained once, and it was very little. They decided to go ahead with it. It didn't rain. Can our event organisers be that meticulous? Can the guys at the meteorology department provide that data?

Anyway, MICE or meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions, has been identified as one of the pillars of Uganda's ambitious tenfold growth strategy that seeks to develop the country's economy from a GDP of about US$50 billion today to US$500 billion by 2040.

If we are to achieve this ambition, it means working on venues that can enable us to achieve this.

"Kampala seriously lacks venues where large events can be held."

Apart from Kololo Independence Grounds, there isn't much else that is centrally located.

In 1975, when Uganda needed to host the Organisation of the African Union (OAU), the precursor to the African Union, the international conference centre, now Serena, was built. It still holds a few events, but it is a small venue.

A somewhat large conference hall was built at Speke Resort in Munyonyo ahead of the 19th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Munyonyo is some distance from Kampala, and you need to have some x-factor to pull crowds there.

But we are not talking only about concerts. How do we develop a first-class centre that is accessible, affordable and can host large numbers of people?

The government could consider building a world-class conference facility in Kampala.

Alternatively, they could partner with the private sector, and by that I don't mean land brokers. There are a few international hotel chains already operating or setting up in Kampala.

> "Otherwise, we can't develop the MICE subsector when VIPs have to pull umbrellas to catch a musician."

Their rooms need to be occupied. A conference centre that can host large events could help them get occupied all the time.

Events, even as simple as a wedding, employ many gig workers and many others permanently.

There was a plan to develop the sports facility in Lugogo. I am not sure where that is now, but it could be a fantastic location. If the land where the sports facilities are isn't big enough, they can buy the neighbours and set up there.

We can also buy pieces of it as condominiums, some way we buy apartments.

The writer is a communications and visibility consultant. djjuuko@gmail.com



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