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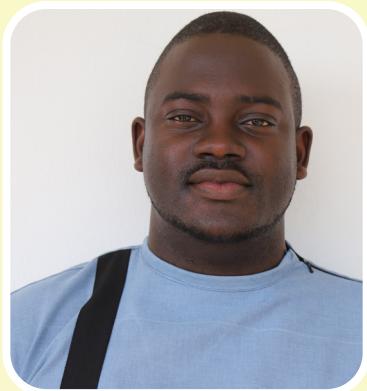
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TUSIIME CHRISTOPHER

Chief Editor

Dear Reader.

Welcome to the 12th edition of the Rwenzori Times! As always we bring you real stories shaping the districts unified by the breath taking Rwenzori ranges in Western Uganda.

In this issue, we bring you the latest updates, insightful analysis, and in-depth stories shaping Uganda and the East African region. From developments in politics, economy, and social programs to inspiring community initiatives, our goal is to keep you informed and engaged with the issues that matter most.

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We remain committed to bringing you insightful coverage that celebrates progress, highlights challenges, and informs

The Editor, Rwenzori Times

**KABUGHO
SHARON**

Editor



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STEPHEN**

Editor



KITAGWENDA HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI LAUNCH UGX 500M DRIVE TO REVIVE SCHOOL

By *Ainomuhangi Justus, IT Officer-Kitagwenda District*



Old students pose for a photo during the reunion.



KOSA President Andrew Kaletwa

The Kitagwenda High School Old Students Association (KHOSA) has launched a UGX 500 million fundraising drive aimed at reviving the school's former glory and improving learning conditions for current students. The initiative was unveiled during a colorful reunion held on Saturday, October 11, 2025, at the school grounds. The event brought together former students from across the country who returned to their alma mater to reconnect, celebrate achievements, and mobilize support for key development projects. Speaking during the function, the President of the Old Students Association, Mr. Andrew Mwebaze Kaletwa, said the reunion was not only a moment of nostalgia but also a call to action.

"Kitagwenda High School gave us a foundation for who we are today. It's our responsibility to restore its dignity

and ensure that current students enjoy a better learning environment," he said. "We owe our success to this institution. It's our duty to give back and make sure that Kitagwenda High School regains its reputation for academic excellence and discipline," he added.

The association unveiled a fundraising drive targeting over UGX 500 million to renovate the dilapidated girls' dormitory, equip the computer lab with modern technology, and improve the bursary scheme for the vulnerable students that has been active for three years now.

The Head Teacher, Mr Ahimbisibwe Simon, expressed gratitude to the old students for their renewed commitment,

noting that the school has faced challenges ranging from inadequate infrastructure to limited learning materials.“We are deeply encouraged by this gesture. The support from our old students will go a long way in improving academic performance and restoring discipline and pride among our learners,” he said.

The Head Teacher also applauded the old students’ initiative, noting that their contribution comes at a critical time when the school is struggling with infrastructure challenges.“This reunion gives us hope. The renovations and bursary program will motivate learners and improve performance,” he said.

Representative of the Bishop for Fort Portal Diocese Rev Father Bikongotole, who graced the event, applauded the old students’ initiative, describing it as an example of responsible citizenship.

He also commended the association for complementing government efforts to improve education standards.“Partnerships like this strengthen our education system. Government alone cannot do everything, and we appreciate the old students for

giving back to their community,” Rev. Father Bikongotole noted.

The reunion also featured inspirational talks to students, cultural performances, football match and tree planting as a symbol of renewal and growth. Students who attended the event expressed gratitude and excitement about the plans to improve their learning environment.

Sarah Katusabe, a Senior Five student, said the planned dormitory renovation would make life easier for girls.“Sometimes our dormitory leaks when it rains, and space is very limited. We are so happy that the old students are thinking about us,” she said.

Michael Atwebembeire, a Senior Five student, praised the idea of reviving the computer lab. “In this digital era, computer skills are very important. Having a well-equipped lab will help us learn better and compete with students from other schools,” he said.

Other students appreciated the bursary



Some of the students who benefit from the bursary scheme pose for photo



Rev. Father Bikongotole

scheme, saying it has helped those who struggle to stay in school due to financial constraints. "Many of my friends have benefited from this bursary scheme that was introduced by the old students and most of them are going to sit for their UCE exams this year," Jane Mbabazi, a Senior Three student said. "This bursary brings hope to families that have almost given up."

As the event concluded, the old students pledged to make the reunion a continued annual tradition, fostering unity and continued support for the school's development agenda. Kitagwenda High School, once one of the top-performing institutions in the region, is now on a path to reclaiming its former glory, thanks to the renewed spirit of solidarity and commitment from its proud alumni.

LEADERS DEMAND ACTION AS ELEPHANT KILLS WOMAN IN KITAGWENDA

*By Ainomuhangi Justus, IT Officer-
Kitagwenda District*

Leaders and residents of Kitagwenda District are mourning the death of a young mother killed by an elephant in Mahyoro Town Council, renewing urgent calls for the completion of the long-delayed electric fence designed to protect communities from stray wildlife.

The deceased, identified as Masika Juliet aged 25, a resident of Zambia cell, kanyabikyere ward, mahyoro town council, met her untimely death while heading to her garden at around 7:00 a.m on Friday 10th October, 2025.

Eyewitnesses say the elephant, believed to have strayed from Queen Elizabeth National Park, suddenly emerged from nearby bushes and charged at her, killing her instantly.



The launching of electric fencing of Queen Elizabeth National Park in 2023.

Residents described the scene as horrific and expressed fear over their safety, citing increased cases of wild animals invading communities near the park boundaries. "It is a very painful loss. Masika had gone to protect her garden from destruction, only for her life to be taken by the same animals she was trying to keep away," said Ashabahebwa Silvester, LC1 Vice Chairperson Zambia Cell. "We have lost several people in similar attacks, and it is high time the authorities complete the electric fence project."

He further said local leaders have called on the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) to urgently intervene and

prevent further loss of life and property. Mr. John Vincent Bimbona, the LCIII Chairperson of Mahyoro Town Council, said they have repeatedly reported the issue of stray elephants but no lasting solution has been provided.

John Vincent Bimbona condemned the recurring attacks and criticized the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) for slow implementation of safety measures. "Our people are living in fear. Wild animals continue to destroy crops and threaten lives almost every week," he added. "This is the fifth person we've lost to wild animals in just two and a half years," Bimbona said.

Bimbona revealed that although construction of the electric fence began in the late 2023, operations have since stalled leaving communities exposed and fearful. "We urge the Uganda Wildlife Authority to accelerate the fencing works before more lives are lost. Our people live in constant terror. Wild animals continue to destroy crops and threaten lives almost every week."

"This is not the first time elephants have crossed into our villages. We have lost crops and now even a life. We live in fear every day," Mr Agaba David, a resident of Mahyoro said.

Residents are now urging government agencies to establish stronger community-wildlife protection measures, including trenches, electric fencing, and rapid response teams to handle such emergencies. "This tragedy is a wake-up call," said Kakondo a resident of kanyabikyere. "We need action before more lives are lost."

In September 2023, the government initiated a 14-kilometer electric fence project worth Shs 1.5 billion in Mahyoro Town Council to protect residents from elephants, hippopotamuses, and other wildlife.

Residents, however, report that work on the project has stalled, leaving communities exposed. The community is now appealing to both UWA and the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities to prioritise completing the fencing project, which they say is the only sustainable solution to human-wildlife conflicts in the area.

In a statement, UWA officials from Queen Elizabeth National Park confirmed the incident and expressed condolences to the family. They promised to investigate the matter and intensify patrols in the affected areas to drive the elephants back to the park.

KASESE WOMAN TURNS UGX 1 MILLION PDM GRANT INTO THRIVING TURKEY BUSINESS

By *Kabugho Sharon, Communication Officer-Kasese District*

In the village of Kabafu Parish, Isango Sub-county, Kasese District, the story of Aisha Kabugho becomes one of the many inspiring tales emerging from Uganda's Parish Development Model (PDM). A determined woman who has turned a modest government grant into a flourishing agribusiness.

Aisha's story began with UGX 1 million, the amount she received as a PDM beneficiary. While many might have spent it on short-term needs, she chose to invest it in ten turkeys — a decision that has changed her life.

"Each turkey produces about three times a year," Aisha explained. "When I sell the young ones, each goes for UGX 30,000, and the mature ones can fetch up to UGX 150,000 each."

At first, it was a small, experimental venture. But her careful management, guided by local agricultural officers, quickly bore fruit. The turkeys multiplied,

her sales grew, and so did her confidence.

From her earnings, she has been able to buy two plots of land in her village a milestone she once thought impossible. Aisha's story is one of ingenuity and seizing opportunity. Living close to the Uganda-Democratic

Republic of Congo (DRC) border, she found an unexpected market for her birds.

Demand from buyers across the border has given her a consistent source of income and a chance to grow beyond local boundaries. "People from Congo come to buy in bulk," she shared. "That has been my biggest blessing. The market there is good, and it keeps me going."

Encouraged by her progress, Aisha has diversified into chicken rearing, further strengthening her income base. She's also keen on maintaining financial

PDM Funding and Impact in Kasese District

Financial Year	Funds Received (UGX)	Funds Disbursed (UGX)	% Disbursement	Beneficiaries
2021/2022	1,800,010,867	1,800,010,867	100%	3,600
2022/2023	19,700,000,000	19,700,000,000	100%	19,700
2023/2024	19,700,000,000	19,600,000,000	99.4%	19,600
2024/2025	19,700,000,000	13,790,000,000	70%	13,790
Total	60,900,010,867	44,940,010,867	0	56,690

discipline, having already saved UGX 300,000 as part of her plan to repay her PDM loan. Aisha's success is not an isolated case.

Across Kasese District, similar stories are unfolding. According to Mr. Julius Baluku, the District Production Officer and PDM Focal Person, the program has been steadily transforming rural livelihoods since its rollout in the 2021/2022 financial year. "The implementation of the Parish Development Model in Kasese has been continuous and successful," Baluku said. "We have seen tangible change in income levels and production."

The beneficiaries, like Aisha, are proof that the model works. "PDM Funding and Impact in Kasese District; Baluku emphasized that training and mentorship have been central to PDM's success in Kasese. SACCO and enterprise group leaders have been trained in key areas such as loan access, cost-benefit analysis (Ekibaro), group dynamics, and good agronomic and animal husbandry practices.

To ensure continuous learning, the district introduced the concept of Practical Training Centers (PTCs) and strengthened the Community-Based Facilitator (CBF) network. These centers are spread across the district and serve as hands-on learning hubs for farmers.

By the end of FY 2024/2025, a total of 120

PTCs had been established, doubling from 60 the previous year. Common PDM-supported enterprises in Kasese include coffee production and trade, piggery, poultry, goat rearing, maize cultivation, and vegetable farming (onions and tomatoes).

Enterprise reviews conducted annually have shown steady improvements in productivity and value addition, especially in coffee, maize, and cassava.

Back in Kabafu Parish, Aisha's journey is still unfolding. She dreams of expanding her turkey business into a larger farm, complete with modern housing structures for her birds. She also plans to put a fence on her land to protect her birds from thieves since it has been her biggest challenge.

The Parish Development Model, launched by the Government of Uganda, is designed to transform subsistence households into commercial producers by channeling resources and decision-making power to the parish level. It emphasizes financial inclusion through SACCOs, enterprise development, and skills enhancement.



Aisha Kabugho PDM beneficiary in Kabafu Isango Subcounty during an interview with the communications Officer

In Kasese District, the model has not only empowered individuals but has also strengthened community cohesion and built a foundation for inclusive economic growth.

Aisha Kabugho's success story stands

as a shining example of what happens when opportunity meets determination which is a proof that with the right support, rural communities can thrive and women can lead the way in transforming Uganda's local economies.

KING OYO CONDEMNS TRIBALISM, CALLS FOR UNITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN KITAGWENDA

By Ainomuhangi Justus, IT Officer-Kitagwenda District



King Oyo poses for a photo with district cultural leaders.

King Oyo Nyimba Kabamba Iguru Rukidi IV, has condemned the rising cases of tribalism allegedly being promoted by some political aspirants, urging them to embrace unity and focus on development.

The King made the remarks on Thursday 16th October, 2025 during his royal visit to Kitagwenda District at Ntara Christian Primary School playground, part of his ongoing kingdom-wide tour aimed at promoting peace, unity, and

socio-economic transformation among his subjects.

King Oyo expressed concern that tribal divisions were undermining peace and progress, warning that no community could achieve sustainable development while divided along ethnic lines. "Our strength as a kingdom lies in our unity. Tribalism is a dangerous seed that destroys societies from within. Kitagwenda must rise above it and focus on education, health, and development



King Oyo planting a tree at the district headquarters.

that benefits everyone," King Oyo emphasized.

He commended local leaders for their efforts to promote education and environmental conservation but challenged them to intensify programs that foster inclusivity, especially among the youth.

The King also encouraged residents to participate actively in government and kingdom initiatives aimed at improving livelihoods, such as agriculture, tourism, and skills development. "I strongly condemn any form of tribalism being fueled by some political actors," King Oyo said. "Tooro Kingdom is home to all, regardless of tribe or origin. Let us focus on working together for peace and development."

The monarch reiterated that all residents living on kingdom land are part of Tooro and should not face eviction. He encouraged them to regularize their ownership through the Tooro Kingdom Land Board



King Oyo visit to Jeni Model Farm.

to prevent disputes. "No one should be forced off land simply because they belong to a different tribe. Everyone living in Tooro is my subject. I urge you to acquire land titles through the Kingdom Land Board to avoid conflicts," he added.

Kitagwenda Resident District Commissioner (RDC) Isaiah Kanyamahane praised the King's leadership, saying his message of unity and poverty eradication complements the government's development agenda. "His Majesty's vision of empowering the youth and eradicating poverty perfectly aligns with the NRM government's objectives. We appreciate his guidance and leadership," Kanyamahane said.

He also appealed to the King to continue mobilizing his subjects in support of President Yoweri Museveni ahead of the forthcoming January elections.

Tooro Kingdom Prime Minister Calvin

Armstrong Rwmire hailed the King for championing peaceful co-existence among different tribes in Tooro. "We are grateful to His Majesty for uniting the people of Tooro. I particularly commend the Bakiga community for their harmonious living and contribution to the Kingdom's progress," Rwmire noted.

He thanked the people of Kitagwenda for supporting kingdom programs such as the Empaango celebrations and the Masaza Cup, and appealed for royal intervention to address poor road infrastructure in the district. "Our biggest challenge in Kitagwenda remains poor road conditions, which hinder service delivery and development. We humbly ask for the King's support to address this," he said.

Thousands of subjects turned up to welcome the King during the visit, which forms part of the Royal Development Tour launched on October 6 in Kyaka County. The tour seeks to strengthen the bond between the monarch and his subjects, monitor ongoing development initiatives, and inspire youth participation in productive ventures under the kingdom's vision of prosperity and self-reliance.

King Oyo's visit concluded with a tree-planting exercise at the district headquarters, symbolizing growth, unity, and environmental stewardship. As Kitagwenda continues to position itself as a fast-developing district within Tooro Kingdom, the King's message served as a reminder that unity remains the foundation of all meaningful progress.

NTOROKO CELEBRATES 15 YEARS OF GROWTH UNDER GOVERNMENT'S DECENTRALIZATION POLICY

By Sahula Ibrahim, Communication Officer- Ntoroko district



A bridge being constructed in Butungama Sub county (file photo)

Ntoroko is among the many beneficiaries of the NRM socioeconomic transformation initiatives as it recounts her journey

from Bundibugyo in 2010 then with only three health centres and two secondary schools to now eight functional health centres and seven secondary schools.

The 15- years old district proudly recounts the journey walked with the NRM government as “very crucial and impactful in the lives of the people of Ntoroko right from its inception way back in 2010 from Bundibugyo district as a way of extending services closer,” Mr Twahirwa Richard, Assistant Resident District Commissioner noted.

“As a people, we are grateful to the government initiative to the decentralization policy that has been pivotal in creating impactful administrative units for ease of resource mobilization, planning and implementation,” he added.

In the current term of office, Ntoroko district alone has witnessed a socioeconomic transformation drive ranging from infrastructural developments, to health services and notably, security in and around the region. This has enabled a clean and secure business environment as well as the transborder trade.

Ntoroko district has benefited through a number of projects in the current manifesto implementation period of 2021-2026 for example four seed



Rwebisengo-Kiranga road

schools of Nombe, Kanaara, Kibuuku and Butungama have been fully instituted breaking the chain of learners trekking long distances in quest for education in Fort Portal and Bundibugyo schools. This challenge precipitated early pregnancies and school dropout rates due to exposure to dangers associated with low parent control on the teens renting houses in urban centres just to access schools.

Talking health, two health centres of Butungama HCiii and Rwangara HCiii have been up graded. Today, mothers can safely deliver healthy babies in Rwangara and Butungama with ease unlike when a mother had to travel a distance of about 80kms to deliver in Karugutu risking the lives of the baby and the mother.

The district has also been supported with two ambulances attached to the two Health centre IVs of Karugutu and Rwebisengo making it possible and easy to handle emergency referrals.

About road infrastructure, the district received road equipment that currently



Kyobe bridge, constructed by LEGS under MoLG recently (file photo)

enables the opening and maintenance of rural production roads for market access and connectivity within and outside the district.

Rwenzori Times recently reported construction of water valley dams and turning floods into production resource.

Several other projects aiming at addressing the economic bottlenecks in the district. Some of the pertinent projects implemented between 2021 to date include and not limited to the following projects, namely Nyakatooke water gravity Scheme at a cost of 1.2 billions, Kisembo-Muleju road in Nombe at a cost of 1.27 billion, Nombe coffee storage and processing factory that cost 768 million, Itoojo Maize and rice storage and processing Factory at a cost of 907 million, Butungama Livestock market at a cost of 444million, rrehabilitation of Rwebisengo-Kiranga 7km road at a cost of 1.6 billion, and Rehabilitation of Kyobe bridge in Bweramule at a ccost of 480m all courtesy of the Islamic Development Bank funding to the Local Economic Support Services (LEGs) under the Ministry of Local Government.

The latest elephant on table for every under privileged Ugandan is the Parish Development Model (PDM) funding from Government of Uganda. The fund

targets 100 people per parish in Uganda where each beneficiary receives one million shillings for startup of small-scale enterprise. Today, the district is in final stages of disbursement of funding for the third phase.

The district has so far received and distributed 12 billion shillings through the PDM, close to one billion in EMYOOGA and Microfinance Support Centre which has Supported a number of SACCOs with over 1.3 billion under the financial inclusion component of the PDM.

However, the gains have not come without challenges. The district is prone to several disasters especially floods during the September -December rains (SOND) that are usually followed by a severe drought between January to April. The two extremes affect livelihood, livestock and agriculture productivity.

The office of the Prime Minister as a coordinating centre is saluted for the timely responses and support during such devastating times.

KITAGWENDA LEADERS STEP UP FIGHT AGAINST SCHOOL DROPOUTS IN FISHING COMMUNITIES

By Ainomuhangi Justus, IT Officer- Kitagwenda District



District leaders sensitizing fishermen at Mahyoro fish landing site.

Education authorities and local leaders in Kitagwenda District have continued to solicit all-round support to contain the growing challenge of school dropouts, particularly in fishing communities along Lake George and its surrounding wetlands.

Many children are abandoning school to join the lucrative but risky fishing business, raising concerns about the future of education in the area. Kitagwenda District, which shares Lake George with three major landing sites of Mahyoro, Nyakeera, and Kayinja has seen a worrying trend of school children turning to fishing.

According to reports from Mahyoro and Bukurungo Town Councils, dozens of pupils, especially boys, have dropped out of primary and secondary schools to engage in fishing, fish trading, and related activities.

The trend has alarmed education

stakeholders, who say it threatens to reverse the district's efforts to promote universal education. "Fishing is seen as a quick source of income, and children are easily tempted to abandon school," he said. "We have parents who even encourage their children to go fishing instead of studying. This undermines the government's investment in education." Mr. Asiimwe Sedas DEO Kitagwenda District said.

Local leaders have intensified community sensitization campaigns to encourage parents to keep their children in school. They are working with religious and cultural leaders to spread the message that education remains the key to long-term development. Mr Isiah Kanyamahane, the Resident District Commissioner, warned that child labor in the fishing industry exposes children to exploitation, accidents, and health risks. "We cannot build a strong nation when our children are growing up without education," he said. "Parents

must take responsibility and ensure every child stays in school."

Teachers in the affected schools say absenteeism and dropouts peak during the fishing season, with many pupils missing classes for weeks or leaving school entirely. Some schools have resorted to conducting outreach visits to families to persuade them to return their children to school.

The district's Vice LCV Chairperson, Mr. Ashaba Peter, called for stronger enforcement of child protection laws and closer monitoring of landing sites to prevent underage participation in fishing activities. "We need to strike a balance between supporting livelihoods and protecting our children's future. Education is the best fishing net we can give them," he noted.

John Vincent Bimbona, the Chairperson LCIII Mahyoro Town Council, acknowledged the ongoing efforts but noted that some children still resist returning to school. "As leaders, we have done our part to ensure school children stay away from fishing. We have chased them from the landing sites and sensitized their parents. Now, it is up to the parents to take responsibility and ensure their children remain in school," Bimbona said.

Local authorities have been conducting routine meetings with parents, urging them to prioritize education over quick earnings from fishing. Some schools have

also taken proactive measures to bring back affected learners.

John Tumwijkye, the head teacher of Kanyabikyere Primary School, has resorted to house-to-house mobilization to convince dropouts to return. "I use the class register to track students who miss lessons. If a child is absent, I personally follow up at their home to understand the challenges they face," Tumwijkye said.

While some children have returned to school through these efforts, others continue to struggle with financial hardships. "We have managed to bring some back, but for others, the issue isn't just refusal, its financial difficulties. Many families struggle to provide basic school requirements, making it hard for children to stay in class," Tumwijkye explained.

With increased parental involvement and ongoing support, leaders are hopeful that more children will leave the fishing nets behind and return to the classroom for a brighter future.

The struggle to keep children in school remains a pressing issue one that will determine whether the district's next generation thrives in classrooms or gets lost on the shores of Lake George. Despite these challenges, local leaders and educators remain committed to fighting school dropouts.

KABAROLE DISTRICT WINS NATIONAL AWARD FOR LEADING FIGHT AGAINST TEENAGE PREGNANCIES

By *Stephen Ainganiza, Communication Officer-Kabarole*

The Ministry of Health has recognized Kabarole District as a model in the fight against teenage pregnancies after successfully reducing the prevalence rate from 28% to 20%, a remarkable milestone in improving adolescent health and education outcomes.

The award, presented to Kabarole District Local Government, commends its "outstanding collaboration in leadership, governance, initiatives, and innovations aimed at addressing gaps in Sexual and Reproductive Health access, with a particular emphasis on reducing teenage pregnancies."

Dr Stephen Kalyegira, the District Health Officer (DHO), described the achievement as a result of relentless effort and teamwork.

"We have managed to reduce teenage pregnancies from 28% to 20%, which is a considerable achievement. It has been a tough journey, but we are determined to bring the rate down further to 17%.



Kabarole District heads of department receiving the award from Dr Kalyegira with excitement.

The national average stands at 24%, and our long-term goal is to help Uganda reach 15%," Dr. Kalyegira explained.

Dr Kalyegira attributed the success to a strong, multi-sectoral strategy that involved health workers, schools, cultural institutions, and community leaders.

"We adopted a multi-sectoral approach that engaged parents through a campaign titled 'Go Back to School, Keep in School, and Complete School.' We conducted sensitization sessions during Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, organized school visits by health workers and school inspectors, and utilized cultural festivals such as Ekyoto Hampango. Additionally, our adolescent clinic models have significantly contributed to our fight against teenage pregnancies," he said.

The district also strengthened adolescent-friendly health services by setting up model clinics offering counseling and reproductive health information. A partnership with Right

Here, Right Now and the Reproductive Health Alliance further boosted efforts through an “Alliance Week” that emphasized peer-to-peer education and open discussions between teenagers and parents in “Straight Talk” sessions.

While the overall trend is positive, some sub-counties still face high teenage pregnancy rates. Karangura leads with 29%, followed by Mugusu (28%), Rwengaju (27%), and Harugongo (22%). Meanwhile, Hakibaale, Ruteete, and Kicwamba have shown progress, recording rates as low as 17%.

Dr. Kalyegira noted that cultural practices and economic challenges remain major barriers. “This practice severely impacts the girls’ future opportunities,” he stated.

“Gender-based violence (GBV) is prevalent in families. When a girl is defiled or married off, parents and relatives often conspire to conceal the situation, leading to delayed

reporting of GBV cases. In areas like Busoro, Hakibaale, and Kijura, some girls have dropped out of school to work in tea plantations, which often results in early marriages,” Dr. Kalyegira added.

During a senior management weekly meeting, staff members expressed their excitement upon receiving the award and called for increased efforts to combat teenage pregnancies. The Chief Administrative Officer of Kabarole, Mr Rubaihayo Stephen, urged department heads to collaborate and strive for a zero-tolerance policy toward this issue. However, Dr. Kalyegira emphasized that achieving this goal is complex, as it requires the commitment of all stakeholders, including parents, police, leaders, teachers, and civil society.

To further reduce the prevalence of teenage pregnancies, the district has strengthened its collaboration with national and local partners. They have established the District Committee on Adolescents Health (DICAH) to oversee and address adolescent health issues while increasing awareness through various platforms, including sensitizing worshippers on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays.

BUNYANGABU GETS FRESH HOPE AS PARTNERS STRENGTHEN WATER AND SANITATION EFFORTS

By Christopher Tusiime, Communications Officer-Bunyangabu

Development partners working in Bunyangabu District including the Joint Effort to Save the Environment (JESE), Simavi, and WaterAid Uganda have pledged renewed support to boost the district's Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) initiatives.

The commitment was made during a meeting held in the office of the District Chairperson on Wednesday, attended by representatives from the partner organizations, including WaterAid Uganda's Country Director, Ms. Joyce Magala.

During the meeting, it was announced that Simavi, a long-standing partner of Bunyangabu District and JESE, is transitioning to become part of the WaterAid Federation in the Netherlands.

According to Ms Diana Kazooba, who represented Simavi, the transition will not only bring a new name but also greater opportunities through access to a broader network and improved resource mobilization.

“This transition will not affect our structure or programming. We shall remain the same people you know, but moving forward, we will operate under the name WaterAid Netherlands,” Ms Kazooba explained.



WaterAid Uganda Country Director, Joyce Magala promised more opportunities for Bunyangabu District in the WASH efforts.



Bunyangabu District LCV chairman talking to partners in his office.



Officials from Simavi, JESE, WaterAid Uganda and leaders from Bunyangabu District pose for a photo.

Representing the District Education Officer, Mr Steven Mukugize commended the partnership between Simavi and JESE for significantly improving WASH conditions in several primary schools.

He noted that the collaboration has facilitated the construction of latrines, incinerators, bathrooms, and water tanks in schools such as Kyamatanga, Rubona, Kiboota, Kibate, Kaburaisoke, Nyabwina, and Kanyamukale.

“The partnership has promoted sanitation and hygiene in schools through initiatives like Sports for WASH, where competitions are used to spread hygiene messages,” Mr Mukugize said.

He added that school clubs and parent open days have played a crucial role in sensitizing learners and parents about hygiene and keeping homes clean. Community outreach activities, such as street cleaning, have also helped spread the WASH message to wider audiences.

These interventions have led to tangible improvements for example, at Kaburaisoke Primary School, enrollment increased from 130 to 330 pupils after new sanitation facilities were constructed, ending the struggle of shared toilets between teachers and learners.

Mr Godfrey Rugumayo, the JESE Deputy Executive Director, shared that since

2016, their partnership with Simavi and Bunyangabu District has benefited at least 12,500 pupils across 14 primary schools and about 9,200 community members through projects such as water tank construction.

“We are proud to have contributed to improving WASH in Bunyangabu and remain committed to doing even more under the new partnership,” Mr. Mulinda said. “As Simavi transitions into the WaterAid family, the collaboration will now be managed through WaterAid Uganda.”

Ms. Magala expressed optimism about the merger, noting that joining a global federation would strengthen collaboration and reach.

“We are excited about this transition. WaterAid is a global network with member countries such as Japan, the UK, India, and the Netherlands. This will enhance our capacity, expand programmes, and enable us to reach more people,” she said.

Bunyangabu District LCV Chairperson, Mr James Ategeka Mugarama, welcomed the development, praising the partners for their visible impact and pledging the district’s continued support.

“As district leadership, we are ready to work closely with you. We only ask that you extend your interventions to more sub-counties such as Kiyombya that also need your services,” Mr. Mugarama said.

WORLD FOOD DAY: KABAROLE CHAMPIONS AGRO-INDUSTRIALIZATION AND NUTRITION AWARENESS

By Stephen Ainganiza, Communication Officer-Kabarole



Dr. Willington Bessong, Country Team Leader for FAO's Emergency Program on Transboundary Animal Diseases.



Frank Tumwebaze (in yellow) inspects the stalls at celebrations. Photo by Jonan Tusingwire.

Kabarole District Chairperson Dr Richard Rwabuhinga has appealed to the government to establish an industrial park in the region to boost value addition, create employment, and increase farmers' incomes.

Speaking during World Food Day celebrations held at Rwebitaba ZARDI, Dr. Rwabuhinga said that despite the region's vast agricultural potential, farmers continue to earn low returns due to limited agro-processing facilities and poor market access.

Kabarole District Chairperson Dr Richard Rwabuhinga has urged the government to support the establishment of an industrial park in the region to enhance value addition to agricultural products and create employment opportunities.

"We need an industrial park that can accommodate agro-processing plants,

packaging facilities, and storage units to transform our agriculture into a source of wealth," he said.

Frank Tumwebaze, the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries(MAAIF), who was the chief guest at the event, reaffirmed the government's commitment to agricultural transformation by focusing on three key enablers: agricultural research, access to financing, and balancing food production with ecosystem protection.

"Food is the universal equalizer, and we must engage in discussions about the sustainability of our food systems," Tumwebaze emphasized.

He commended institutions like the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) for their

contributions to developing climate-resilient crops, improved animal breeds, and promoting modern farming techniques.

“Research is the foremost enabler of food security. The inputs, seedlings, technologies, and knowledge about agronomy all stem from research. Next time, we should be recognizing our scientists for their invaluable work,” the Minister added.

The minister also called upon agricultural extension workers across the country to fulfill their responsibilities, noting that they are among the better-paid public servants and must deliver tangible results.

“There is a reason you are paid well. You are not merely supervisors of programs; you are the vital link between government policy and the communities on the ground,” he remarked.

He stressed that extension workers play a crucial role in enhancing productivity and must ensure that innovations reach farmers at the grassroots level.

Despite numerous government initiatives aimed at combating hunger and poverty, food insecurity remains a pressing crisis in many parts of Uganda, leaving millions vulnerable to malnutrition and hunger-related health complications.

Recent reports from humanitarian organizations and local authorities indicate that food insecurity levels remain alarmingly high, particularly in the Karamoja sub-region, parts of

northern Uganda, and among urban poor communities.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), while Uganda continues to make strides toward achieving food security, significant challenges persist. The organization reports that approximately 1.7 million people still face acute food insecurity, with 29% of children experiencing stunting and nearly half of all women suffering from anemia.

The same report highlights that agricultural productivity remains low due to high post-harvest losses and widespread land degradation, with 40% of arable land already affected.

Dr. Willington Bessong, Country Team Leader for FAO’s Emergency Program on Transboundary Animal Diseases, emphasized the urgency of building resilient agrifood systems through partnerships and sustained investment.

“This year’s theme reminds us that no single actor; be it the government, researchers, extension workers, farmers, civil society, academia, or development partners can address these challenges alone,” he stated.

Figures from last year’s Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) report indicate that only 54% of households in Uganda were food secure. The Ankole sub-region had the highest proportion of food-secure households at 70.4%, while Karamoja

recorded the highest proportion of severely food-insecure households at 62.9%.

Dr. Bessong urged the government to adopt a holistic, cross-sectoral policy approach that prioritizes access to affordable and nutritious diets for all Ugandans.

FAO emphasized the need to invest in smallholder farmers, particularly women and youth, reduce post-harvest losses, and improve market access through sustainable agricultural practices that protect soil, water, and biodiversity. The World Food Day was commemorated under the theme : "Hand in Hand with

the better food foods and better future".

While others were showcasing foods, KRC Uganda partnered with Kabarole District Local Government through an interactive nutrition clinic.

A total of 86 people, 33 males and 53 females were supported to learn their nutrition statuses after being screened.

Overall the findings were an eye-opener to the district nutrition coordination meeting and the implementing partners. 30% of men screened were underweight and 60% of women screened were overweight, mostly youth.

PRESIDENT MUSEVENI PUSHES MODERN APPROACHES TO LIFT PEOPLE OUT OF POVERTY

Tusingwire Promise, Guest writer



President Museveni waves at district leaders as he made way to Kaunda Grounds.

President Yoweri Museveni has called for modern approaches to wealth creation in different regions urging

people to move beyond government jobs and embrace agriculture, livestock, and trade as pathways to sustainable employment and economic growth.

The President emphasized the government's commitment to both economic and social infrastructure. "As NRM, we have worked on development; the economic infrastructure at least road—you know the road from Kampala to Gulu, which we have done several times, the road from Karuma to West Nile,

the road from Olwiyo all the way to Kitgum and beyond, and Gulu to Nimule. We are also going to work on the roads connecting Awere-Corner Kilak to Patongo,” President Museveni said.

He added that investments in electricity, telephones, piped water, and railways are all part of the broader economic infrastructure, while social infrastructure includes schools and health facilities.

He made these remarks while addressing a rally at Kaunda Grounds in Gulu City on Wednesday 22nd, 2025.

The President stressed the importance of modern approaches to wealth creation. “Our people work a lot but in the traditional way and they get little because they do things which are outdated. We must get out of poverty by listening to our programs of utilizing small land and differentiating between development and wealth,” he said.

He outlined government programs designed to lift people out of poverty: “In the next government, since you are supporting NRM, we are going to ensure that this program of wealth creation

continues. All the money we have been spending like NAADS, OWC, Entandikwa, was to help you get out of poverty. We are going to continue those programs.”

On practical initiatives, the President highlighted agriculture, fish farming, and livestock restocking.

“In the coming government, we are going to emphasize fish farming at the edge of the swamps, instead of putting it in the center. That water can be used for irrigation,” he said.

“Now, as part of wealth creation, the areas of Teso, Lango and Acholi had cows, but they were destroyed by wars and cattle rustling. When peace returned, we tried to restock, and we directed that each homestead receives five cows. Some had rejected the idea, but I am glad that it has been agreed on, and we are taking that position, so that compensation of the five cows per household has been agreed on.”

President Museveni also addressed the issue of employment, cautioning against the misconception that jobs are only government positions. “When people talk about jobs, jobs come from wealth. If we don’t create wealth, you can’t create jobs.

Some people only think about government jobs.

This is misleading. Government jobs are very few altogether, about 480,000. But these factory jobs alone are now employing 1.3 million people, almost three times the number working for the government.

He also referenced regional integration as key to sustaining industries.

"As we speak today, Uganda produces more than 5 million tonnes of maize per year, yet within a year, Uganda consumes only 1 million tonnes, leaving a surplus of 4 million tonnes. If we did not have the East African market, the maize industry would collapse. The same applies to milk, bananas, beer, cement, and many other products. This is why NRM emphasizes regional integration for economic purposes," he noted.



Thousands gather to garner support for the President.



Excited residents wave yellow t-shirts, welcome the President on his arrival.



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**Rwenzori
Times**

The logo for Rwenzori Times, featuring the word "Rwenzori" in a large, bold, blue sans-serif font. The letter "i" has a small mountain peak on its vertical stroke. Below it, the word "Times" is written in a smaller, bold, blue sans-serif font, with a mountain peak integrated into the letter "i". The entire logo is set against a blue silhouette of the Rwenzori mountain range.