



## FEATURE STORY | PG.14

### TOORO'S CLERGY APPEAL TO KING OYO TO RESTORE TOORO'S 1999 CONSTITUTION FOR BETTER GOVERNANCE

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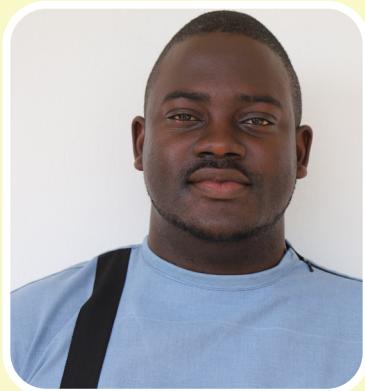
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## TUSIIME CHRISTOPHER

*Chief Editor*

### Dear Reader

Welcome to the 13th edition of the Rwenzori Times. True to our mission, we continue to bring you authentic stories from the districts framed by the majestic Rwenzori Mountains in Western Uganda.

In this edition, we share the latest updates, thoughtful analyses, and comprehensive features influencing Uganda and the wider East African region. From political developments and economic trends to social initiatives and community-driven projects, our aim is to keep you well-informed and connected to the issues that truly matter.

We also take a closer look at the challenges and opportunities shaping our region. Whether it's

examining sustainable development projects, understanding the impact of government policies, or exploring cultural initiatives preserving our rich heritage, our coverage aims to provide context and clarity.

As a united people, the visionary leadership of His Majesty, King Oyo Nyimba Kabamba Iguru Rukidi IV cannot go unappreciated. Under his guidance, the kingdom of Toro has continued to thrive, fostering unity, cultural pride, and development initiatives that uplift the community. King Oyo's commitment to preserving tradition while embracing modernity serves as an inspiring example of leadership in Uganda and the wider region. His efforts in promoting

education, social welfare, and community cohesion resonate deeply across generations, reinforcing the enduring significance of the Toro monarchy in shaping a brighter future for its people.

Finally, we believe in celebrating the triumphs that often go unnoticed. Each edition brings you inspiring stories of resilience, creativity, and community spirit—reminding us that even in the face of challenges, the people of the Rwenzori region are shaping a brighter future.

Thank you for joining us on this journey. Dive in, explore, and stay connected with the stories that define our region.

**The Editor, Rwenzori Times**

### KABUGHO SHARON

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### AINGANIZA STEPHEN

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# EMPOWERING YOUTH AND TRANSFORMING LIVES: THE BUZZ OF BEEKEEPING IN KABAROLE

By Ainganiza Stephen – Communication Officer, Kabarole



Trainees being taken through the types of bee hives good for the project.

**K**abarole District, is steadily becoming one of the major booming agricultural hubs in Western Uganda with its remarkable initiative in the vast field of apiculture.

Over 512 beekeepers have been empowered; producing an impressive 40 tons of honey annually. This initiative, driven by the Kabarole Youth, is not merely about honey production; it represents a transformative movement

aimed at enhancing household incomes and fostering sustainable livelihoods among the youth.

Kikora Masereka Yonah, a 35-year-old media practitioner at Voice of Tooro 101 FM and from Kyabwire zone, Nyakitokoli parish, Karangura mountainous sub-county, is the visionary behind the Bulhalho Foundation, which he founded in 2017. The foundation began with just 45 youths, many of whom were former



The group being trained in Bee Keeping for two weeks.

members of the Rwenzururu Royal Guards (Kirumira Mutima), who had surrendered to the government after engaging in rebellious activities due to a lack of employment opportunities. "We provided them with skills in beekeeping, hairdressing, carpentry, and bricklaying as pathways to employment, and since then, over 1,349 youths have graduated," Kikora explains.

*"Beekeeping is a lucrative business that everyone, especially unemployed youth, should engage in. It's not labor-intensive, requires low capital, and pays well," Kikora states. This shift in the industry is noteworthy; traditionally male-dominated, beekeeping now sees 27% of its participants as women and 35% as youth. The market for bee products is thriving, both locally and internationally, providing ample opportunities for the beneficiaries.*

With branches established in Karago Town Council, Fort Portal Tourism City, Ntoroko and Bundibugyo, the initiative

has formed 19 groups of beekeepers in the region, generating a staggering total of 480 million shillings from honey production. This success is bolstered by partnerships with organizations like the German Embassy and Bees Abroad, which provide training resources to ensure sustainable practices.

### The Ripple Effect of Beekeeping

The benefits of beekeeping extend far beyond financial gain. Kikora highlights its role in reducing gender-based violence and unemployment while promoting environmental conservation through tree planting for forage. "Beekeeping supports households and institutions, and it involves all ages at the family level," he notes.

Success stories abound among the trainees.

Nyama Ronald, a 24-year-old from Kibaga B, proudly shares how his training in beekeeping has transformed his life. "I attained a certificate in beekeeping and apiary management from the Directorate of Industrial Training at Bulhalho Foundation. As a beekeeper, I engage in value addition, inspection, installation, setting, and harvesting,



Trainees during the practical work of Bee Keeping.

which pays me over 400,000 shillings monthly. I use this money to support my family and pay for my children's education."

Similarly, Natukunda Evas, a 31-year-old beekeeper from Buhikira zone, Kamabale parish, expresses her gratitude for the training she received. "After the training, I was given eight bee hives. Having been in the beekeeping business for two years now, I can confidently say it's a lucrative venture that has increased my income. I encourage the youth and women to engage in beekeeping, as it requires minimal inputs and little supervision."

### Overcoming Challenges

**Despite its successes, the beekeeping initiative faces challenges, including land fragmentation and misconceptions about beekeeping. Mr Eribankya Nicolas, a trainer at Bulhalho Foundation vocational school, emphasizes the importance of proper training and care for the bees. "We're currently receiving a good number of people interested in bee training from various districts such as Arua, Gulu, Lira, Kamwenge, Bunyangabu, Bundibugyo, Ntoroko, Kabarole, and it's vital that people**

**understand the potential of this enterprise," he states.**

The impact of the training is evident in the testimonies of participants like Mr. Charles Opobo, chairperson of the Lira Community Bee Keepers in Barowo village, Alworo parish, Amach Sub County. Found in a training session, Opobo recounts how the training has equipped them with essential skills, enabling them to support 110 beekeepers in their group. "We started our group to address the high dropout rates among youth, and beekeeping has become a vital intervention," he explains.

Mr Ogwal Samuel, a member of the Lira Community Bee Keepers, reveals how the training has changed his life. "Before I came here for training, I didn't know how to separate bee hives, colonize them, or stock them. But now, the knowledge we acquired will be used to transform my life and the entire community in Lira."

### A Greener Future

In addition to beekeeping, Mr Ogwal, said Lira Community Beekeepers operates central tree nursery beds, distributing indigenous tree species that are environmentally friendly to the community at a free cost and plant some in their plantations for income generating. This holistic approach not only enhances the livelihoods of the community but also contributes to a healthier planet.

# KAMWENGE ADOPTS NEW COMMUNITY-BASED STRATEGY TO TACKLE CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

By Joy Kiiza, Senior IT Officer- Kamwenge

Madam  
Prime  
Birungi  
Senior CDO  
Kamwenge  
District LG



Kamwenge District, in collaboration with the International Justice Mission (IJM), on October 23rd, 2025, convened a critical stakeholder meeting aimed at identifying and supporting the formation of Community-Based Child Support Units (CBCSUs). The meeting, held at the District Headquarters, brought together Community Development Officers (CDOs), probation officers, law enforcement officers, and representatives from civil society organizations.

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**The initiative is part of a broader effort to strengthen child protection structures at the community level. It seeks to ensure that cases of child abuse, neglect, exploitation, and other forms of violence**

**are identified, reported, and effectively addressed through coordinated community and institutional action.**

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During the meeting, participants engaged in discussions on the roles and responsibilities of various actors in the protection and promotion of children's rights. The International Justice Mission team provided insights into practical approaches for establishing and sustaining community-based child support units, emphasizing community participation, early reporting mechanisms, and collaboration with district child protection committees.

Speaking during the training, the Senior Community Development Officer, Madam Birungi Prime commended the International Justice Mission for its continued partnership and commitment to strengthening the district's capacity

to protect children. According to Madam Birungi, empowering communities to take part in child protection will reduce incidences of abuse and improve the well-being of vulnerable children.

The training also equipped Community Development Officers with knowledge and skills on case management, referral pathways, and psychosocial support for children in need of care and protection. Participants pledged to take the knowledge acquired back to their sub-counties and spearhead the formation of Community-based screening units as part of their ongoing community outreach programs.

In her remarks, Madam Ruth Ongom co-ordinator legal from the International

Justice Mission reaffirmed the organization's dedication to working hand-in-hand with local governments to ensure that every child grows up in a safe and supportive environment. She noted that community-based structures are the most effective first line of defense in identifying and responding to child-related concerns.

This stakeholder engagement marks a significant step towards building a sustainable, community-driven child protection system in Kamwenge District. With the continued collaboration of government agencies, civil society, and development partners, the district is moving closer to achieving its goal of creating a safe and nurturing environment for every child.

## RESTORING RIVER SEMULIKI: HOW NTOROKO COMMUNITIES FOUND HOPE IN CONSERVATION

*By Christopher Tusiime, Communications Officer, Bunyangabu District*



Part of the River Semuliki buffer zone that is being restored with indigenous trees.

**F**or decades, communities in Rwamabale Sub-county, Ntoroko District, depended on River

Semuliki for survival. Yet this vital resource also posed a grave threat, as frequent crocodile attacks and severe riverbank erosion turned a source of life into a source of danger.

“We used to lose cows every month, and sometimes even people. We had no choice but to take our cattle to the river to drink water, even when we knew the danger,” recalls Ms Sefuroza Kabonesa, a resident of Rwamabale.

According to Mr Sebastian Walaita, the LTC 2 project coordinator at Tooro Botanical Gardens (TBG), a partner

organization working with WWF—the root of the problem ran deeper than the crocodiles.

*“The major cause was the destruction of the River Semuliki buffer zone. Cattle grazed and trampled the riverbanks, causing severe erosion and destroying the vegetation that once protected the river,” Mr Walaita says.*

The uncontrolled grazing left the soil bare, accelerating erosion and washing away Uganda's land into the river at an alarming rate. “We established that the country was losing about two meters of land every year to the river. If it continued, it could have even caused boundary disputes between Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo,” Mr Walaita explains.

The erosion also turned the once-clear waters of River Semuliki brown with silt, making it unsafe for household use and reducing water quality for aquatic life.

However, in order to save both the river and the people, Tooro Botanical Gardens, with funding from Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and support from WWF through the Lead the Change (LTC 2) project, launched an ambitious restoration effort.

The team began with a site-species matching exercise to identify tree species that could thrive along the river's buffer zone. They then fenced off a 23-acre stretch using barbed wire, chain link, live hedges, and bamboo effectively keeping cattle out while promoting

natural regeneration.

Among the trees planted were Croton, Spathodea, Cordia, Albizia, and bamboo, all chosen for their ability to stabilize soil and provide lasting green cover. “What was once a cracked, dry landscape is now full of life. The green cover has returned, the soil is firm again, and the riverbanks are healing,” Mr Walaita says.

### Water for People and Cattle

While protecting the river was critical, TBG and WWF knew the community needed an alternative source of water to keep the solution sustainable.

**A solar-powered water system was installed; complete with household taps and a 5,000-litre cattle trough. The water is pumped from the ground into a 10,000-litre storage tank, serving more than 75 households along the river. “Our cows no longer go to the river and die from crocodile attacks. The water trough is close by, and our animals drink safely,” Ms Kabonesa adds.**

For Ms Ruth Mugume, another community member, the new water system brought peace of mind to mothers who once lived in fear. “Our children used to walk long distances to fetch water and sometimes never came back,” she recalls. “Crocodiles would attack them. But now, water is right here near our homes. We no longer risk our lives.”

### A Win-Win for Nature and People

The restoration of River Semuliki is more than an environmental success - it is a story of human resilience and hope. Through the LTC 2 project, both the community and the ecosystem are thriving again.

Erosion has slowed, wildlife habitats are recovering, and families now have safe,

clean water. What was once a place of fear is now a symbol of harmony between people and nature. "This project has shown that conservation and community well-being can go hand in hand. When people see the benefits, they become the best protectors of nature," Mr Walaita says.

## ELDERLY AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES THRIVE UNDER GOVERNMENT GRANTS IN KITAGWENDA DISTRICT

*By Ainomuhangi Justus IT Officer Kitagwenda District*



*One of the older persons who benefited from NSG program showing her goats .*

Elderly persons and persons with disabilities (PWDs) in the Kitagwenda District are steadily breaking the cycle of poverty, thanks to two government livelihood initiatives the National Special Grant (NSG) for older persons and the Special Enterprise Grant for Persons with Disabilities (SEGOP).

The two programs, launched by the

Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) in 2019, aim to empower older persons aged 60 to 79 and people with disabilities by providing funds to start income-generating projects.

Each district initially received Shs15 million in the 2019/2020 financial year, while the PWD grant component was rolled out in 2022/2023.

For many beneficiaries, the impact has been life-changing. Yustina Mugisha, 72, a resident of Rwenjaza Parish in Rwenjaza Sub County, said she had no stable income before joining the Rwenjaza Elderly Group.

“Before this initiative, I could hardly afford my basic needs. But when I received Shs1 million, I bought three pigs and a cow. The pigs reproduced, and I sold the piglets to start a poultry business. Now I sell piglets and eggs, which earn me enough to meet my needs,” Mugisha said.

Similarly, in Nyabbani Sub County, Johnson Bakabulindi, Secretary of the Rwesigire Disability Group Association, said teamwork and planning helped them grow their goat-rearing business.

**“Our group received Shs5 million and invested it in goats. We started with 10, and within a year they had multiplied to 18, then to 28. We later sold 14 goats for Shs5.3 million, bought a motorcycle through a loan scheme, and saved the rest in our SACCO,” he stated.**

Another beneficiary, Seforoza Kalibate, Treasurer of Kicwamba Central Balema Mchomo Sellers in Kitagwenda Town Council, said the support had restored her confidence. “As a disabled person, I never thought I could run a business. This initiative has given me dignity,” she said.

In Kabujogera Town Council, Konrad Bamunoba of the Babiito Elders Group said their group invested Shs5 million

in coffee trading, which now helps members meet family needs like school fees and medical bills.

Local leaders in the district have praised the program but urged the government to increase funding.

Tumwesigye Lawrence, the Senior Community Development Officer Kitagwenda District, said his office provides continuous monitoring and technical support.

*“We help the groups choose viable enterprises and guide them throughout, but the funding is still too low given the high demand,” he said.*

Nicholus Rugumayo, Chairperson for Older Persons in Kitagwenda District, echoed the same concern. “Many elderly people who started with goat rearing have now bought cows. The challenge is that the money is too little to reach everyone who qualifies,” he said.

According to Christine Opio, the Rwenzori Regional Program Coordinator for Older Persons and PWDs at MGLSD, monitoring has shown encouraging results. “From the districts we have visited, the initiative is doing well. Most beneficiaries have used the funds as intended,” she said.

Opio urged more eligible people to apply through their sub-county offices, noting that a National ID is required.

Recent statistics from the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) 2024 Census show that Uganda has 5.5 million persons with disabilities 13.2 percent of the population up from 4.4 million in

2014.

The elderly (aged 60 and above) make up 5 percent of Uganda's 46 million people, equivalent to 2.3 million individuals. In the Rwenzori region alone, there are 60,274 older persons out of a household population of about 1.2 million.

Despite limited resources, the success stories emerging across the region demonstrate that with targeted support, Uganda's elderly and persons with disabilities can lead productive, independent, and dignified lives.

## DIGITAL REVOLUTION BEGINS IN KASESE AS ICT SKILLS CENTRE OPENS

*By Kabugho Sharon, communications officer.*



*ICT Skills Training and Business Centre set up at Kasese DLG headquarters.*

**K**asese District has taken a bold step toward digital transformation following the establishment of a fully equipped Community ICT Skills Training and Business Centre at the district headquarters. The initiative, implemented in partnership with the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance, with support from Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) and NITA-U, aims to bridge the digital divide and promote e-governance in the region.

According to the Senior ICT Officer, Kasese,

Samuel Mumbere, the project's main goal is to empower youth, women, civil servants, and community members through ICT training. "The Centre is a government facility designed to promote the use of ICT in governance, business, and service delivery. It also has a business component for self-sustainability," he explained.

The facility will serve as a hub for digital skills development, providing the community with tools to engage in online opportunities, improve efficiency in local service delivery, and enhance access to information.

The district has so far received 10 computers, a printer, and a fully installed power infrastructure, all donated by the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC). More equipment comprise 15 additional computers expected soon from the Ministry of ICT.

Enterprise Uganda, one of the project's implementing partners,

will handle software installation and training programs to ensure the Centre's services meet the district's digital needs. "The trainings will be inclusive. People with disabilities and other special interest groups will also benefit," the ICT officer said.

The equipment delivery and installation were handled by a ministry-approved service provider, ensuring that all systems were professionally set up and ready for use. Mr Mumbere described the project as a game-changer for Kasese District: "Digital transformation has taken over the world, and this is our opportunity to catch up. It will open doors for innovations in tourism, agriculture, and business. People can now engage in smart farming and access digital markets more easily," he noted.

He added that the initiative would improve communication and service delivery in local government offices by addressing long-standing ICT capacity gaps.

Although the centre is still in its early stages, Mr Mumbere mentioned that

district leaders and staff are already excited about the development. "Everyone is looking forward to the next phase. For one year, the Ministry of ICT will handle maintenance, and we plan to include ICT upkeep in our local government budgets," he said.

He encouraged other districts to prioritize ICT and actively engage with the Ministry of ICT to access similar support. "We are now in a digital world. Everything is going smart from business to agriculture. ICT officers should stop lamenting and start building partnerships. Be proactive and work closely with the ministry," he noted.

Kasese's new ICT Skills and Business Centre marks a significant milestone in digital inclusion and local capacity building. Through strong partnerships, proactive leadership, and community engagement, the district is setting an example of how technology can transform governance and improve everyday life.

# TOORO'S CLERGY APPEAL TO KING OYO TO RESTORE TOORO'S 1999 CONSTITUTION FOR BETTER GOVERNANCE

By Nyakojo William, Journalist- Fort Portal



Tooro Religious Leaders in a Photo after their meeting

**R**eligious leaders under the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda, Tooro Chapter, have called upon His Majesty King Oyo Nyimba Kabamba Iguru Rukidi IV to reinstate the Tooro Kingdom constitution. Their demand stems from a profound belief that the restoration of this foundational document is crucial for achieving holistic development and good governance within the Kingdom.

The constitution, originally drafted in 1999 to guide the administration of Tooro, was suspended by King Oyo in 2012, pending the creation of a new one. This prolonged constitutional vacuum has been a point of concern for many, and the religious leaders' recent pronouncement underscores the urgency of addressing this issue.

The call was made during a pivotal meeting held at the Fort Portal Catholic Diocese Bishop's Residence in Virika, Fort Portal Tourism City. The esteemed gathering included prominent spiritual figures such as Bishop Robert Muhiirwa of Fort Portal Diocese, Bishop Reuben Kisembo of Ruwenzori Diocese, Pr Richard Rusoke of the Seventh Day Adventist Church, Bishop Jimmy Katuramu of Uganda Pentecostal Churches International, Bishop Sanyu Joseph of Christian Fellowship Church, Bishop Charles Bamuloho of Renewal Evangelical Ministries, and Sheikh Tibenda Swaibu representing the Muslim community.

In a statement read by Bishop Robert Muhiirwa Akiiki, the leaders said the restoration of the Kingdom's constitution would help strengthen

institutional systems, promote accountability, and guide decision-making for the benefit of all subjects.

Beyond the constitutional matter, the spiritual leaders emphasized the critical need for the protection of Kingdom properties and the renovation of royal tombs, envisioning them as significant tourist attractions that could boost the region's economy and cultural heritage.

*“A constitution is not merely a document, it is the soul of a Kingdom. It defines leadership, unity, and direction. Restoring it will ensure stability and accelerate development within Tooro,” Bishop Muhiirwa said.*

The religious leaders also commended Queen Mother Best Kemigisa for her continued guidance and counsel to King Oyo as a “pillar of wisdom and stability” in the Kingdom.

They further encouraged the King to consider taking a wife, noting that

having a Queen would enhance the cultural identity, warmth, and hospitality of the Tooro Palace enriching the Kingdom's traditions and strengthening its social harmony.

**Beyond governance, the faith leaders urged the restoration and protection of Kingdom properties and the renovation of the royal tombs, describing them as vital heritage sites with great potential to attract tourism and investment.**

They also stressed the importance of fostering unity within the Kingdom and ensuring the successful implementation of all planned development projects.

This collective appeal from Tooro's religious leaders highlights their deep commitment to the well-being and progress of the Kingdom, urging a return to constitutional governance as a cornerstone for a prosperous future.

## BUNYANGABU JOURNALISTS URGED TO PROMOTE PEACE DURING ELECTION PERIOD

*By Christopher Tusiime, Communications Officer- Bunyangabu*



*Deputy CAO, Mr Baker Akampurira during the meeting.*



Bunyangabu RDC Mr Nicholas Kamukama speaking to journalists at the district headquarters on Tuesday.

**D**istrict leaders and stakeholders in Bunyangabu district have urged journalists operating in the district to refrain from using inflammatory language in their news articles and programmes, but instead exercise professionalism and ethics during this election period.

During a media engagement meeting held at the district headquarters on Tuesday, 28th October, 2025, the Resident District Commissioner (RDC) and Chairperson of the District Communications Task Force, Mr Nicholas Kamukama, noted that his office had received reports indicating that some reporters and radio presenters were acting unprofessionally — a practice that could trigger unnecessary clashes and cause public unrest in the district.

Mr Kamukama advised journalists to desist from such acts and instead use the media as a tool for social and economic transformation, which is part of their mandate.

“Use your youthful days well and profit from them. Don’t allow yourselves to be used by people with selfish interests, and

remember that wealth is not attained through mischievous acts. If someone wants to abuse another, let them do it themselves; not through you,” he said.

**He encouraged journalists to approach his office for assistance in case they meet any challenges while executing their mandate.**

In his remarks, the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO) of Bunyangabu District, Mr Baker Akampurira, emphasized that the media is regarded as the fourth estate in the country and should use its platforms to drive social and economic transformation.

**“People believe in what you journalists write and say. This means you are very important and crucial in building this country. So, try to be as balanced and professional as possible,” he said.**

Mr Akampurira also pledged to be available to journalists whenever they

needed information or clarification regarding government programmes in the district.

The District Police Commander (DPC), Mr Wilson Tumwesigye, urged journalists to form strong associations and SACCOs to benefit from government programmes. "If I may ask, who is the chairperson of journalists in Bunyangabu? You see, you don't have one. You need to get organized to benefit from government initiatives," he said.

The DPC also encouraged media managers and editors to strengthen their gatekeeping roles and ensure that all published and broadcast content

is factual and objective. "Focus on peace, stability, promoting tourism, and highlighting achievements in health, education, infrastructure development, and other sectors. We have brought you on board to ensure that Bunyangabu shines," Mr Tumwesigye added.

For their part, journalists from stations like Clouds FM and Ngabu FM shared that some of them work at radio stations owned by politicians, which sometimes influences their conduct. They were, however, reminded of the media laws and cautioned that any breach would have severe consequences not only for individual reporters but also for their media houses.

## KABAROLE DISTRICT COUNCIL APPROVES SHS 503 BILLION DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2025/26–2029/30)

*By Stephen Ainganiza, Communication Officer-Kabarole*

*Dr Richard Rwabuhinga  
District  
Chairperson  
addressing  
council on  
Tuesday.*



The Kabarole District Local Government Council has officially approved its fourth District Local Government Development Plan (LGDP IV) for the period 2025/2026 to 2029/2030, with a

substantial budget of Shs 503 billion.

This five-year initiative is anchored in the theme: "Sustainable Industrialization for Inclusive Growth, Empowerment, and Wealth Creation." The motion for this pivotal development plan was moved

by Dr Richard Rwabuhinga, the District Chairman, during a council meeting held on Tuesday, 28th October, 2025 at the Kitumba district headquarters.

According to Dr Rwabuhinga, the plan prioritizes essential sectors such as education, health, and water service delivery, alongside job creation through agro-industrialization and value addition to enhance household incomes. A key component of the plan is the operationalization of the industrial park at Kyembogo, aimed at achieving economies of scale to boost production and attract investment in the district's tourism potential.

In his address, Dr Rwabuhinga outlined the plan's focus on identifying new revenue sources, operationalizing property tax and rates, expanding the district's tax base, and supporting community-initiated income-generating projects, particularly for marginalized groups, including youth, women, and persons with disabilities.

**The district aims to adopt outward-oriented policies, encouraging both local and external investors to contribute to its growth. The implementation of LGDP IV is projected to cost Shs 503 billion, with over 95% of funding expected from central government releases, 2.5% from local revenue, and**

## **another 2.5% from external financing.**

Dr. Rwabuhinga called upon the central government, implementing partners, civil society organizations, cultural institutions, the private sector, religious groups, and the entire district community to approach the implementation of this plan as a collaborative effort. He urged stakeholders to view the district as a "corporate" entity, jointly owned by all, working towards a common vision.

The Chief Administrative Officer of Kabarole, Mr Rubaihayo Stephen, praised the development partners, technocrats, and the public for their contributions towards realizing this ambitious plan.

Madam Edinah Mukarwiza, the female councilor from Kicwamba sub-county, expressed confidence that this development plan would serve as a guiding framework for program implementation and service delivery. She urged district leaders to collaborate effectively to ensure the community receives the services it deserves.

Resident District Commissioner (RDC) Mr Ssekabiito Joseph Kitayimbwa encouraged councilors to embody the qualities of seasoned leaders rather than seasonal ones. He expressed gratitude for the council's approval of beneficial ordinances and the effective implementation of government programs.

# KAMWENGE: NRM LEADERS REKINDLE TEAM SPIRIT IN CONSOLIDATION MEETING

By Joy Kiiza, Senior IT Officer- Kamwenge



Hon Thomas Tayebwa (left) Mr Elijah Naturinda( independent candidate(center)shake hands with Hon Engineer Abigaba Cuthbert Mirembe Mp Kibale county NRM flag bearer kamwenge District.

The National Resistance Movement (NRM) Party leadership convened a high-level reconciliation meeting for party leaders who recently participated in the NRM primaries. The meeting, held on Friday 24th October, 2025 at Club Afrika Complex in Kamwenge District, brought together senior party figures from both district and national levels with a shared goal of fostering unity and strengthening party support ahead of the 2026 general elections.

Key attendees included Hon. Frank Tumwebaze, the District NRM Chairman; Ambrose Kabango, the Vice NRM Chairman; Eng. Jonard Asiimwe, the NRM Vice Chairman for Western Uganda; and Rt. Hon. Thomas Tayebwa, the Deputy Speaker of Parliament.



The meeting's main agenda centred on reconciliation and teamwork among party members, particularly between official flag bearers and independent candidates who had emerged from

the recent primaries. The leaders emphasized the importance of unity, collective responsibility, and loyalty to the party's principles as the foundation for electoral success.

Rt Hon Thomas Tayebwa commended the spirit of cooperation and maturity exhibited by various aspirants, noting that several colleagues who had initially been nominated as independents graciously stepped down in support of official NRM flag bearers.

*“I am delighted that several colleagues chose to step down in support of our NRM flag bearers. This is a true show of unity and teamwork. We must protect the gains we have made as a country and continue to build on our shared vision under the NRM,” Tayebwa remarked.*

Hon Frank Tumwebaze was lauded for his leadership and the strong foundation he has laid for party cohesion within Kamwenge District. Tayebwa praised him for his dedication and commitment to ensuring that NRM remains a united and people-centred movement.

“A big thank-you goes to my colleague, Hon. Tumwebaze Frank, for the

outstanding work he has been doing. We were simply building on the solid foundation he laid, and without his guidance and collaboration, today's success would not have been possible,” Tayebwa added.

**The Deputy Speaker also expressed optimism about the NRM's growing strength in Kamwenge, recalling that President Yoweri**

**Kaguta Museveni scored an impressive 94% in the district during the 2021 elections. With the renewed energy and unity witnessed at the meeting, he expressed confidence that the party could achieve an even higher margin in 2026.**

“With this renewed energy and unity, I am confident that in 2026, we can get even closer to the 100% mark!” Tayebwa said.

The reconciliation meeting concluded with a strong call for continued cooperation, collective mobilization, and discipline among party members to ensure overwhelming support for the NRM in the upcoming elections.

# RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN TOORO ADVOCATE FOR PEACEFUL ELECTIONS

By Nyakojo William, Journalist- Fort Portal



Tooro Religious Leaders in their meeting at Virika.

As Uganda approaches the 2026 general elections, religious leaders from the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda, Tooro Chapter, have united to advocate for peace, unity, and fairness among all political actors and citizens. This significant call to action was made during a meeting held at the Bishop's Residence of the Fort Portal Catholic Diocese in Virika, Fort Portal. The gathering included prominent figures such as Bishop Robert Muhiirwa of Fort Portal Diocese, Bishop Reuben Kisembo of Ruwenzori Diocese, Pr. Richard Rusoke of the Seventh Day Adventist Church, Bishop Jimmy Katuramu of Uganda Pentecostal Churches International, Bishop Sanyu Joseph of Christian Fellowship Church, Bishop Charles Bamuloho of Renewal Evangelical Ministries, and Sheikh Tibenda Swaibu representing the Muslim community.

Delivering a joint statement on behalf of the clergy, Bishop Muhiirwa, urged the people to reject divisive politics characterized by propaganda and malice. He emphasized the importance of avoiding electoral malpractice, such as vote rigging, and condemned any form of violence that could disrupt the electoral process. "We appeal to all political actors to practice tolerance, respect one another, and put the country's peace above personal ambition," Bishop Muhiirwa said.

The leaders called on security personnel to refrain from actions that could lead to oppression or abductions, urging them to maintain peace and order during this critical period.

The religious leaders also encouraged aspiring candidates to engage with voters peacefully and to graciously accept defeat if they lose, fostering an environment of mutual respect and

coexistence. They placed significant responsibility on the Electoral Commission, demanding that it perform its duties with integrity, ensuring the timely delivery of voting materials across all districts without bias.

Furthermore, they appealed to the judiciary to handle any election-related petitions with professionalism and impartiality, avoiding any semblance of favoritism.

In a bid to promote a balanced narrative, the leaders called on journalists to report on the elections with neutrality, steering

clear of bias and instead fostering unity among the electorate.

Bishop Reuben Kisembo of Ruwenzori diocese stated that the religious leaders would actively disseminate this message throughout churches and mosques, emphasizing the critical need for a peaceful electoral atmosphere.

This meeting comes in response to the rising tide of media-driven propaganda and political hostility, highlighting the urgent need for a collective commitment to peace as Uganda prepares for its upcoming elections.

## KASESE CIVIL SERVANTS CAUTIONED AGAINST PARTISAN POLITICS, URGED TO RECOMMIT TO QUALITY SERVICE DELIVERY

*By Kabugho Sharon, Communications Officer- Kasese*



District staff during the service delivery engagement.



District leaders with civil servants on service delivery engagement.

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of Kasese District, Mr Wakalira Paul has cautioned civil servants against engaging in partisan politics, which he said is contrary to the public service code of ethics.

He made these remarks during a joint engagement meeting spearheaded by the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), Kasese District Local Government top leadership, and the District Security Committee with civil servants at the Multipurpose

Hall in Kasese. The meeting focused on enhancing service delivery, re-aligning priorities, and strengthening commitment among public officers towards both personal and national development.

The meeting aimed to re-emphasize the roles, responsibilities, and obligations of civil servants in achieving improved service delivery.

Mr Wakalira Paul urged staff to prepare early for retirement and to maintain discipline by respecting their duties and adhering to official working hours. "As public officers, our focus must remain on serving the citizens diligently. Let us plan for our future and uphold integrity in service," Mr Wakalira advised.

The District Vice Chairperson, Hon. Monday Girivazio, applauded all civil servants who attended the engagement, recognizing their contribution to Kasese's strong performance in national assessments.

**He commended the district for emerging 10th nationwide, a position that earned Kasese over UGX 900 million in additional government funding. "You, the civil servants, are the strikers on the front line of service delivery. As strikers, we must be energetic, competent, and committed to achieving results," Hon Girivazio remarked.**

He appreciated the top district

leadership for organizing the engagement, emphasizing that teamwork and continued effort are key to sustaining the district's development progress.

Deputy Chief Administrative Officer Mr Begumya Eliab Ntarwete outlined the objectives of the meeting, stating that it was organized to:

- Remind civil servants of their roles and responsibilities.
- Address issues of personal and national development.
- Identify challenges affecting service delivery and devise strategies to overcome them.

"As civilized people, it is only right that we sit down and discuss issues affecting us. We must take stock of what has not been achieved and chart a clear way forward," he said.

Mr Begumya highlighted several challenges undermining effective service delivery in Kasese District, including: inadequate transport facilities, limited staff housing, absenteeism and failure to take annual leave, weak implementation of agreed programs and projects.

In addressing these issues, he proposed improved collaboration with subcounty staff, strict adherence to work plans, and transparency in the declaration and utilization of funds.

Resident District Commissioner Lt Joe Walunsimbi commended civil servants for their efforts in maintaining service delivery and assured them that the district's security remains stable. He, however, cautioned against absenteeism and actions that undermine government programs.

"We must all work in harmony with government objectives and avoid engaging in opposition activities that may derail our progress," Lt Walunsimbi said.

He reiterated that maintaining peace and security is a shared responsibility among all public servants and leaders.

The engagement provided a timely

platform for reflection, accountability, and renewed commitment to effective service delivery in Kasese District. The district leadership, together with the Ministry of Local Government and the Security Committee, pledged continued collaboration to ensure that government programs translate into tangible benefits for the people of Kasese.

## TOORO KINGDOM EMPOWERS YOUTH WITH COFFEE AND COCOA SEEDLINGS

*By Stephen Ainganiza – Communication Officer, Kabarole*

Tooro Kingdom has officially launched the distribution of coffee and cocoa seedlings to the youth across all nine counties. This ambitious project, inspired by the vision of King Oyo during his recent visits, marks a significant step towards empowering young people through agriculture and fighting unemployment.

The Kingdom, in partnership with the government on September 2025, unveiled the "Tooro Kingdom Youth Economic Empowerment Program (TOKYEP)". This initiative is designed to equip the youth of Tooro with the necessary tools for success in agriculture, entrepreneurship, and skills development. As part of this program, the first phase of seedling distribution has seen 400,000 coffee seedlings and 200,000 cocoa seedlings made available to aspiring young farmers.

Rt Hon Armstrong Calvin Rwomiire, the Prime



Tooro kingdom officials at the distribution center, Mucwa.



Tooro Kingdom Officials pose in a photo at Mucwa, the coffee and cocoa seedlings distribution center.

Minister of Tooro Kingdom, shared the distribution plan. "We've started with Kyaka, Mwenge North and South. On Wednesday, we will move to Fort Portal, followed by Bunyangabu and Burahya on Thursday, concluding

with Kitagwenda, Kibaale, and Ntoroko counties on Friday," Rt Hon Rwomiire said.

The selection process for the beneficiaries has been a collaborative effort. Hon Mugume Nicholas, the Kingdom Youth Minister, explained that district agricultural officers and extension workers played a crucial role in identifying the youth groups that would receive the seedlings. "We have selected 24 youth groups across the Kingdom, each consisting of eight members, to benefit from the seedlings, which will be planted on approximately four acres of land," he disclosed.

The seedlings have already been transported to sub-county headquarters, where youths will collect them and begin their journey into agriculture. Rt Hon Nyakake Harriet emphasized the importance of parental support in this endeavour, urging families to encourage their children to plant and nurture the

seedlings to ensure a fruitful harvest.

Rt Hon Henry Basaliza, the Deputy Prime Minister, commended President Museveni for his support of the youth in Tooro Kingdom and the King's vision for agricultural empowerment. He urged the young beneficiaries to take immediate action, stating, "Love and plant these seedlings before the season elapses; do not leave them under the tree to dry," Rt Hon Basaliza remarked.

As the youth of Tooro Kingdom embark on this new agricultural journey, the distribution of coffee and cocoa seedlings symbolizes not just a commitment of President Museveni and King Oyo to economic empowerment but also a hopeful future where young people can thrive through sustainable farming practices. With the support of their community and leaders, these young farmers are poised to cultivate not only crops but also their dreams.

## KASESE REAPS BENEFITS FROM UNICEF-SWEDEN PARTNERSHIP TO COMBAT DISEASE AND PROTECT CHILDREN

*By Kabugho Sharon, Communications Officer- Kasese.*

Kasese District Local Government recently hosted a high-powered delegation from UNICEF with the Members of Parliament from the Government of Sweden, whose government funds many of UNICEF's initiatives in Uganda. The delegation's visit underscored the strong partnership between UNICEF, the Government of Sweden, and Kasese

District in promoting the well-being of children, women, and communities at large.

The visiting team held a productive meeting with the Kasese District Local Government's technical and political leadership, where discussions centered on the



The CAO addressing the UNICEF delegation.

tremendous impact of UNICEF-supported interventions in the district. UNICEF, with funding from the Government of Sweden, is implementing several key programs in Kasese, including Nutrition, Immunization, Early Childhood Development (ECD), Maternal and Child Health, Child Protection, and emergency response to disease outbreaks.

In his welcoming remarks, Mr Walakira Paul, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), expressed deep gratitude to UNICEF and the Government of Sweden for their continued partnership and investment in the district's children.

***"Kasese is one of the largest districts in Uganda and among the most vulnerable. Our proximity to the Democratic Republic of Congo, whose weak health systems often affect us, exposes us to repeated disease outbreaks. UNICEF's support, backed by the Swedish government,***

***has been critical in helping us respond effectively to these emergencies," Mr Walakira noted.***

He further highlighted the district's challenges with child abuse and gender-based violence, noting that Kasese ranks third in the country for early pregnancies. He commended UNICEF for its unwavering efforts to address these issues through capacity building and community-based interventions.

The District Health Officer echoed similar sentiments, appreciating UNICEF's timely support during recent health crises, including efforts to curb the spread of MPOX (Monkeypox). "UNICEF's support in strengthening our data management and emergency response systems has made a tangible difference in how we protect our people," he said.

From the social welfare front, Mr Bagumira Faisal Kirarira, Senior Probation and Social Welfare Officer, shared remarkable progress stories of community transformation driven by UNICEF's interventions.

He revealed that with UNICEF's support:

- 1,013 parasocial workers have been trained to manage child protection cases at village level.
- 1,260 model parents have been equipped to promote positive parenting practices.
- 5,930 adolescents, both in and out of school, have been trained in life skills and reproductive health education.

These efforts have led to a significant increase in case reporting and community engagement in child protection. "Thanks

to UNICEF, we now have a functional child helpline in Kasese, enabling residents to report cases of abuse confidentially. This has strengthened our ability to respond and protect our children," Mr Bagumira added.

**During the meeting, Hon. Monday Girivazio commended UNICEF and the Government of Sweden for their steadfast commitment to improving lives in Kasese. "Kasese stands as one of Uganda's largest districts, and your continued support gives our children and communities a brighter future," he remarked.**

Representing UNICEF, Dr Robin Nandi

lauded the district's leadership and frontline workers for their dedication and collaboration. He emphasized that the success of any development intervention relies on strong local partnerships. "Nothing we do can replace the work you do. As UNICEF, our role is to support but it is the district that plays the most vital role in delivering results for children and families," Dr Nandi stated.

The visit by the Swedish delegation not only strengthened ties between Kasese District and UNICEF but also highlighted the power of global partnerships in driving local impact. From reducing disease outbreaks to empowering parents and protecting children, Kasese stands as a living example of what collaborative development can achieve.



Kasese district staff meeting with the Members of Parliament of the government of Sweden.

# GROW PROJECT EQUIPS KITAGWENDA WOMEN WITH TOOLS FOR ENTERPRISE SUCCESS

By *Ainomuhangi Justus, Information Technology Officer-Kitagwenda*



GROW beneficiaries in attendance during the sensitization workshop

Women entrepreneurs across Kitagwenda District have received renewed hope for business growth following a series of training and sensitization workshops organized under the Generating Growth Opportunities and Productivity for Women Enterprises (GROW) Project.

The sessions, held on 23rd October 2025 at Kitagwenda Town Council Headquarters, aimed to equip women with essential business management, financial literacy, and leadership

skills to help them expand and sustain their enterprises.

The training, conducted by facilitators from the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD) in partnership with Kitagwenda District Local Government, brought together women from all sub-counties of Kitagwenda District, including Ntara, Kanara, Nyabbani and others.

During the sessions, beneficiaries were taken through key modules such as record keeping, savings and credit management, digital marketing, group governance, and



Mr Tumwesigye Lawrence addressing the GROW beneficiaries

climate-smart business practices. The sensitization component also focused on promoting gender equality, environmental conservation, and inclusion of persons with disabilities in enterprise development.

*According to Mr Tumwesigye Lawrence, the District GROW Focal Person, the purpose of this training is to empower women with the right knowledge and confidence to run successful businesses. “We want every woman who benefits from this program to be able to manage her finances, access markets, and contribute meaningfully to the district’s economic growth.” Mr Lawrence said.*

The sensitization meetings also aimed to ensure that community members clearly understand the goals of the GROW Project, its funding structure, and the expectations for accountability. District officials urged beneficiaries to take full ownership of the program, maintain transparency in group management, and share knowledge with other women.

Mr Musinguzi Fred, the Kitagwenda District Commercial Officer, emphasized the importance of community engagement. “We don’t want GROW to be seen as just another donor program. It’s a chance for our women to grow their enterprises and inspire others. The district is committed to supporting all beneficiaries through continuous mentorship and follow-up,” Mr Fred said.

Many participants expressed excitement and optimism after the training. “I have

learned how to separate my business money from home expenses and how to plan for future investment,” Grace Ninsiima, a tailoring business owner from Kanara Sub County said.

Another participant, Jane Atuhaire, who operates a small-scale agro-processing enterprise, noted, “The sensitization on climate-smart practices opened my eyes. I now understand how to manage waste and use clean energy in my production.”

The GROW Project, funded by the World Bank, targets over 60,000 women-led enterprises across Uganda, including hundreds in Kitagwenda District. By strengthening women’s entrepreneurial capacity, the initiative seeks to promote inclusive economic growth, job creation, and financial independence among rural women.

District leaders believe that the ongoing training and sensitization will not only enhance women’s productivity but also improve household incomes and community welfare.

*“As women gain business skills, families become stronger and communities prosper,” Kitagwenda Resident District Commissioner Mr Isiah Kanyamahene said.*

The district team also plans to conduct monitoring visits to track progress and document success stories.



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