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TRANSFORMING UGANDA: THE NRM'S JOURNEY IN EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT

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CHIEF EDITOR

Dear Reader,

Welcome to Issue 20 of Rwenzori Times, a publication of the Rwenzori Sub-region District Communication Officers. This edition captures a compelling snapshot of governance in action across the Rwenzori sub-region—where policy meets people, and leadership translates into tangible outcomes. The stories herein reflect a shared commitment by local governments to improve service delivery, strengthen accountability, and empower communities.

From Bunyangabu District's bold investments in health and road infrastructure, to Kamwenge's renewed focus on innovative and accountable local revenue mobilisation, the issue highlights practical efforts aimed at strengthening local economies and improving livelihoods.

We also spotlight justice sector reforms in Kyenjojo, where coordination meetings held inside a prison setting demonstrate a people-centred approach to access to justice.

As the country prepares for the 2026 General Elections, this issue underscores the importance of peace and stability, with newly passed-out Special Police Constables urged to uphold law and order.

On the national development front, we feature government's long-term investments in education, human capital development, and empowerment under the NRM, alongside decisive action to resettle flood-

affected communities in Ntoroko District, reflecting Uganda's commitment to disaster response and climate resilience.

We further draw attention to capacity-building initiatives critical to grassroots transformation, including Uganda Pentecostal University's scholarship programme for Parish Chiefs, designed to strengthen implementation of the Parish Development Model (PDM).

Collectively, these stories demonstrate the vital role of strategic communication in documenting progress, promoting transparency, and fostering informed citizen engagement. We commend our contributors for their professionalism and dedication to telling development stories that matter.

We thank you for reading Rwenzori Times and invite you to continue engaging with us as we amplify the voices, initiatives, and achievements shaping our sub-region.

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BUNYANGABU UNVEILS MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE PUSH TO STRENGTHEN HEALTH AND ROAD NETWORKS

*By Christopher Tusiime,
Communication Officer,
Bunyangabu District*

Bunyangabu District has launched a multi-million shilling infrastructure drive targeting significant improvements in health service delivery and road connectivity across the district.

Under the health sector initiative, key projects include the completion of the general ward at Kibiito Health Centre IV, renovation of the Outpatient Department (OPD) at the same facility, and the construction of a retaining wall at Kateebwa Monument Health Centre III. In addition, staff quarters are being finalized at Rubona and Kabahango Health Centre IIIs, a move aimed at ensuring health workers reside near their duty stations for timely and reliable community access to services.

The remaining works at Kabahango Health Centre III involve completing the septic tank, installing internal



The staff house at Kabahango Health Centre III that is nearing completion

fittings, fixing water closets, and applying ceramic floor finishes. At Rubona Health Centre III, installations will include wardrobes, granite kitchen tops, electrical fittings, and sanitary fixtures.

In parallel, the district is rolling out three major road rehabilitation projects to boost transport and market access. These include the 5.2 km Kisomoro-Kyamatanga road, with a budget of Shs 80 million; the 2 km Kisabani-Kyamatanga road, allocated Shs 50 million; and a 7 km stretch from Kibiito-Rwengwara-Nyamugoro, funded at Shs 100 million.

According to Project Engineer

Ronald Mugume, the scope of the roadworks is comprehensive. "We shall unclog blocked culverts, construct head walls, and ensure that murram is applied where it is needed. Our focus is on widening, compaction, and improving drainage to create durable all-weather roads." Mugume explained.

Kibiito Town Council Mayor Wilson Kabagambe expressed his gratitude for the district's intervention on the Kibiito-Rwengwara-Nyamugoro road.

"We are grateful that the district offered to work on this road. It was in a very poor state, and our people were struggling to access markets and health centres," he said, commending District Chairperson James Ategeka Mugarama and the District Executive Committee for their support.

Hon. Amon Rutenta, Secretary for Works, contextualized the developments within national policy. "We applaud the NRM government for prioritising rural road infrastructure," Rutenta stated. "In the past, such roads were left to local communities to repair using rudimentary tools. Today, we are seeing strategic investment."

He urged residents to respect road reserves and to actively monitor



Complete Kitchen tabs within the staff quarters at Kabahango HC III

the projects to ensure proper use of resources.

Echoing the call for community stewardship, Assistant RDC Penninah Atwijkire emphasized protection of the new infrastructure. "I call upon community members to protect the rehabilitated roads by avoiding practices such as dumping rubbish in drainage channels," Atwijkire said.

She also highlighted the economic opportunity the roads present, adding, "I encourage residents to engage in income-generating activities so they can fully benefit from the improved road network by transporting goods and services more efficiently."

The projects are part of Bunyangabu's broader strategy to strengthen service delivery, stimulate local economies, and improve the overall quality of life for its residents.

The staff quarters at Kabahango Health Centre III that is nearing completion.

KAMWENGE LEADERS EMBRACE INNOVATION TO BOOST LOCAL REVENUE

*By Kiiza Joy, Senior IT
-Kamwenge*

Kamwenge District has embarked on a bold internal drive to strengthen its own revenue generation, following a high-level meeting that highlighted innovation and integrity as key pillars for financial sustainability.

The gathering, held at the District Council Hall on 16th December 2025, brought together Sub-county Chiefs, Town Clerks, finance officers, and technical staff to confront persistent gaps in local revenue collection, particularly from markets. With external funding increasingly uncertain, the district is shifting focus toward maximizing its own resources to support service delivery.

Setting a decisive tone for the discussion, Chief Administrative Officer Harriet Katusiime urged leaders to think creatively. "Without sufficient local revenue, our plans for roads, health centers, and schools remain just plans on paper.



Revenue officer making a presentation on revenue performance

The responsibility to mobilize these resources now rests squarely with our technical teams in the sub-counties and town councils," she stated.

Discussions revealed a critical disconnect: while most markets have been tendered, collected revenues are often not remitted through official systems, crippling district operations. Staff absenteeism, the use of parallel manual receipts alongside the digital IRAS platform, and vacant parish chief positions were identified as major bottlenecks.

District Revenue Officer Moses Mugabe highlighted a specific compliance gap. "We are finding that some parish chiefs are not



Cao Madam Harriet Katusiime Addressing the participants

collecting trading licence fees, while certain town councils mispost revenues. This affects the accuracy and transparency of our entire system," he noted.

Internal Auditor Ndyabahika Richard framed the challenge strategically. "With donor funding declining, revenue is now a top government priority. Key issues like system challenges and conflicts among leaders must be resolved, because every shilling collected locally is more crucial than ever." he explained.

In response, the district leadership agreed on concrete steps to turn the tide. A key resolution mandates that all sub-counties and town councils must either formally tender markets or appoint professional collection agents to improve efficiency. The full adoption of the Integrated

Revenue Administration System (IRAS) was also mandated to phase out unreliable manual methods.

The meeting further resolved to introduce clear revenue targets for officers, backed by accountability measures, and to launch continuous community sensitization on the importance of paying

local fees.

Wrapping up the session, CAO Katusiime called for renewed teamwork and commitment. I encourage every leader here to be proactive and innovative. Our communities are counting on us to build a revenue system that is efficient, transparent, and capable of funding our development." she affirmed.

According to the Chief Administrative Officer's Quarterly Performance Report for FY 2024/25, the district surpassed its local revenue target, realizing SHS 1,506,794,000 an impressive 106% of its goal. The current drive aims to secure and exceed such results consistently by addressing systemic weaknesses and fostering a culture of accountability.

KYENJOJO COURT HOLDS COORDINATION MEETING INSIDE PRISON TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO JUSTICE

In a move to enhance justice delivery, the Kyenjojo Chief Magistrate's Court held its third District Coordination Committee (DCC) meeting inside the premises of Kyenjojo Government Prison on Thursday. The gathering brought together a wide array of justice sector leaders with the aim of strengthening collaboration and addressing systemic challenges in the local judicial system.

The meeting was chaired by the Chief Magistrate, Her Worship Nimungu Ociba Gloria, who emphasized the value of inter-agency partnership. In her opening remarks, she stated, "When justice institutions work in unison, we become more effective, more transparent, and better placed to serve the people." Attendees included Judicial Officers, State Attorneys, the Resident District Commissioner, the District Police Commander, Probation and Community Service Officers, prison authorities, and internal security representatives.

Following the closed-door deliberations, the committee conducted an inspection of the prison facilities and held an open forum with inmates, allowing them

to voice concerns directly to the heads of various justice institutions. This rare interface revealed several pressing challenges, most notably the prolonged remand periods faced by inmates, especially capital offenders from neighboring Kyegegwa District.

The Resident State Attorney for Kyenjojo responded directly to the issue, committing to work alongside counterparts in Kyegegwa to expedite committal proceedings and reduce case backlog. Other operational and welfare concerns raised by inmates were also discussed, with stakeholders proposing actionable measures to improve case management, prisoner welfare, and inter-agency coordination.

Participants widely praised the decision to convene inside the prison, noting that it fostered greater transparency and provided a realistic platform for engagement with those directly affected by the justice system. The initiative reflects a growing effort within Uganda's judicial sector to adopt more accessible, humane, and

delivery.

The meeting concluded with a renewed commitment from all agencies to maintain regular coordination and to implement the agreed-upon interventions, with the shared goal of improving access to justice for all residents of Kyenjojo District.



collaborative approaches to justice

NEWLY PASSED-OUT CONSTABLES URGED TO UPHOLD LAW AND ORDER DURING 2026 POLLS

By Katya David

A fresh contingent of 2,000 Special Police Constables (SPCs) was formally passed out at a ceremony in Kasese Municipality this afternoon, with a clear mandate to help ensure peace and security during the forthcoming 2026 General Elections.

The ceremony, held at the Asumu Model School playground, was presided over by Gen. Wilson Mbadi Mbasu, the former Chief of Defence Forces and current State Minister for Trade. He challenged the newly trained officers to be guardians of stability and the democratic process.

In his address, Gen. Mbadi emphasized their critical role in the electoral period. "I take this opportunity, while closing this course, to urge you to keep peace and protect the nation," he stated. "You have been equipped not just to wear the uniform, but to uphold the rule



Gen. Mbasu Mbadi arriving at Asam Model Secondary School in Kasese Municipality.

of law, protect lives and property, and safeguard the developmental gains this country has achieved."

He further stressed that discipline, focus, and hard work would define their careers and could lead to greater responsibilities. The General also connected their duty to national stability with economic prosperity, warning that despite government efforts to secure better markets and prices for farmers, such gains could be undermined without a peaceful and secure environment.

The constables, recently recruited from across Kasese District, completed intensive training focused on election security, public

order management, and community policing. Their deployment is seen as a strategic boost to the police's capacity to manage the heightened political activity expected in the lead-up to the national polls.

The passing-out ceremony marks a significant step in security preparations for the 2026 elections, underscoring the government's emphasis on maintaining law and order through a visible and professional police presence.



Gen. Mbasu Mbadi speaking to passed out trained election support staff in Kasese.



Special Election Constables who were passed out

TRANSFORMING UGANDA: THE NRM'S JOURNEY IN EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT

By *Stephen Ainganiza-Communication Officer Kabarole*

When the National Resistance Movement (NRM) assumed leadership in 1986, Uganda faced profound human resource challenges marked by widespread illiteracy, limited skilled manpower, and fragile healthcare systems. In response, the government embarked on a deliberate, long-term strategy to rebuild the nation's human capital, placing education and health at the center of its transformative agenda.

Foundations of Access and Equity

A pivotal step in this journey was the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1996, followed by Universal Secondary Education (USE) in 2007. These policies dismantled financial barriers to schooling, enabling millions of Ugandan children to access formal education. The results speak to their impact: adult literacy rates have risen from 43% in 1986 to over 80% today, while life expectancy has climbed from 40 to 65 years nationally, with the Teso sub-region now averaging 70 years.

Parallel investments in healthcare including expanded immunization campaigns and improved maternal health services have not only saved

lives but also fortified the vitality of Uganda's present and future workforce.

Partnerships and Expansion

Recognizing the limitations of public-sector capacity alone, the NRM government actively encouraged private sector, faith-based, and cultural institutions to help expand education and health infrastructure. This inclusive approach led to a proliferation of schools, universities, and hospitals nationwide, significantly broadening service access.

Yet a critical challenge persists: aligning graduate skills with labor market demands. During the 21st graduation ceremony of Uganda Pentecostal University (UPU) in

Fort Portal Tourism City, President Yoweri Museveni represented by Hon. Margaret Muhanga Mugisa, State Minister for Primary Health Care addressed this gap directly. "The government has very few jobs in relation to the population, meaning that most graduates must seek employment in the private sector," he stated, urging institutions to tailor curricula to industry needs.

From Learning to Earning: Building a Productive Economy

The President underscored the government's role in fostering an enabling environment for investment through infrastructure development, reliable electricity, and road networks to spur industrialization and reduce import dependency. "More industries mean more jobs for the population and revenue generation for the

government," he emphasized, framing economic transformation as essential to absorbing Uganda's growing talent pool.

He also called upon graduates to adopt disciplined, forward-looking mindsets. "It will be a great indiscipline if you waste time and endanger your lives in infidelity after such sacrifices," he advised, reminding them of the collective investment in their education.

The Institutional Response

At the same ceremony, over 550 students received awards in disciplines ranging from law and business to information technology and education. Under the theme "Empowering Leaders for Community Transformation," UPU showcased its commitment to producing catalysts of development.

Vice Chancellor Prof. Pelucy



The graduates at the ceremony waiting to receive their awards



The Best Graduates that got first class degrees



Dr. Maggie Kigozi the University Chancellor

Ntambirweki acknowledged the government's consistent support for education and innovation. "We've successfully integrated Artificial Intelligence across university functions to strengthen digital learning and research," she noted, highlighting UPU's adaptation to a technology-driven global landscape.

Chancellor Dr. Maggie Kigozi pointed to the university's recent milestone full accreditation of all programs by the National

Council for Higher Education as evidence of institutional rigor.

"This year, we've introduced courses that respond to national and regional needs in entrepreneurship, sciences, and community development," she explained. Dr. Kigozi reminded graduates that their qualifications come with a responsibility to contribute meaningfully to society.

Looking Ahead

Uganda's journey under the NRM reflects a sustained effort to convert education into empowerment and human potential into national progress. While strides in access and literacy are clear, the evolving task is to ensure that learning translates into livelihood—and that every graduate becomes an active architect of Uganda's future.

UGANDA COMMITS 900 HECTARES AND SHS 6.6 BILLION TO RELOCATE NTOROKO FLOOD SURVIVORS

By Ismael Kasooha

The Government of Uganda has launched a comprehensive resettlement plan for thousands of households displaced by devastating floods in Ntoroko District, committing 901 hectares of land and Shs 6.6 billion to secure a permanent solution for affected communities.



Prime Minister Robinah Nabanja announced the plan during a high-level meeting held in Kanara Sub-county, where she was accompanied by State Minister for Tourism Martin Mugarra, Permanent Secretary Alex Kakooza, and technical officials from key ministries. The initiative follows a direct presidential directive to resettle communities in Kayanja II, Kayanja III, Kyapa, Rwakitura, and Kanara Town Council, among other areas.

“I am pleased to inform you that the Government has resolved to acquire land measuring 901.0131 hectares in Kyenyangi and Kibira in Ntoroko District for the resettlement of the affected households,” Nabanja

The Rwangara Health Center III constructed by the Office of the Prime Minister to help the flood affected persons access health care services

stated. The land, held under freehold titles by individuals including Kasolo Charles, Mpaka Keesi, and Mwamba David, has been verified by the Land Zonal Office in Kabarole and deemed suitable for resettlement due to its elevated location and access to water.

The Prime Minister detailed that meetings held on July 24 and 30, 2025, brought together ministers from Finance, Lands, Tourism, Local Government, and Disaster Preparedness to design



The Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Nabbanja Robinah being welcomed to Ntoroko District by the State Minister for Tourism Martin Mugarra and other local leaders at Rwangara Health Center III

implementation modalities. Valuation by the Chief Government Valuer has been completed, paving the way for acquisition and allocation.

Permanent Secretary Alex Kakooza confirmed that each affected household will receive two acres of land, in line with national resettlement policy. Additionally, Nabbanja directed his office to source resources for the construction of a school within the new settlement to ensure continuity of education. This follows the recent completion of a health centre III at Rwangara by the Office of the Prime Minister.

State Minister Martin Mugarra expressed optimism that the plan would provide a lasting solution and

urged displaced persons to accept the offered land. "Let us embrace this opportunity to start anew in a safer, more sustainable location," he said.

The floods, triggered in 2021 when River Semliki burst its banks, submerged homes and displaced an estimated 30,000 people across Ntoroko District. The resettlement program aims not only to restore stability but also to reduce vulnerability to future climate-related disasters.

Prime Minister Nabbanja reaffirmed the government's commitment to a dignified and sustainable resettlement process, in line with President Museveni's vision for resilient communities.

UPU LAUNCHES DEGREE SCHOLARSHIPS FOR PARISH CHIEFS TO CHAMPION PDM SUCCESS

By Stephen Ainganiza - Communication Officer, Kabarole



Hon. Margeet Muhamma Mugisa the State Minister for Primary Healthcare launches the Program

In a move to strengthen the backbone of the government's flagship development program, Uganda Pentecostal University (UPU) in Fort Portal Tourism City has unveiled a landmark scholarship scheme exclusively for parish chiefs and Town Agents across Uganda. The initiative aims to equip these frontline administrators with the advanced skills and knowledge needed to effectively implement the Parish Development Model (PDM) and drive meaningful community transformation.

Announced during the university's 21st graduation ceremony, the fully-funded degree program supported by the John Ntambirweki Foundation seeks to empower parish chiefs and agents with critical competencies

in leadership, governance, financial management, and community engagement.

According to UPU Vice Chancellor Prof. Pelucy Ntambirweki, this intervention responds directly to

the capacity gaps often observed in PDM implementation.

"This initiative is designed to empower parish chiefs and Town Agents with essential knowledge, leadership, and financial management skills necessary for effective stewardship of PDM funds, driving socio-economic transformation in our communities," she stated.

The program, which has already attracted 60 registrants for the March intake, covers leadership training, governance, practical skills development, financial management, computer literacy, and community engagement strategies. Prof. Ntambirweki emphasized that the scholarship aligns with Uganda Vision 2040 and the government's goal to transition households from subsistence to the money economy.

"The Parish Development Model is a bold initiative designed to empower communities, transitioning households from subsistence to productive engagement in the money economy and fostering the growth of a resilient middle-income class," she added.

The launch was presided over by Hon.

Margaret Muhanga Mugisa, State Minister for Primary Health Care, who represented President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni. Hon. Muhanga commended UPU for introducing a targeted program that builds the capacity of key PDM implementers. She praised the visionary leadership of Prof. Pelucy Ntambirweki and Chancellor Dr. Maggie Kigozi for their commitment to community-focused education.

Prof. Ntambirweki also appealed for additional government support to sponsor research, professional development, and practical exposure for parish chiefs, which would further enhance their ability to design evidence-based projects and innovate parish-specific solutions.

Launched in 2022, the Parish Development Model is a government-led strategy aimed at elevating rural households from subsistence farming into the money economy through a parish-based revolving fund and integrated service delivery. By upskilling the civil servants at the helm of this initiative, UPU's scholarship program seeks to turn systemic challenges into sustainable opportunities—ensuring that PDM does not just disburse funds, but delivers lasting development.



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