

DG Harish Bhatt Visits Nkondo: Adopt a Village Project

RC of Kampala North

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Nkondo-Kidera, a village in Buyende district, Busoga has about 18,000 residents and 4,000 households. This remote village now boasts of electricity, piped water, health center, credit association, dams for water harvesting and irrigation. It also has a library with computers. Rotary enabled the villagers to realize these, beyond their dreams.

“Members of the Rotary Club of Kampala North started to work closely with community leaders in 2010. We wanted a holistic program that would improve the lives of individuals and entire communities in the village,” says Club President Jane Nakato.

“Nkondo, Adopt a Village, is not a project. It is a program of transformation. It requires long term engagement to understand the community and its needs; long term involvement to see its implementation through,” says Rotarian



PDG Tusu introduces DG Harish Bhatt to Nkondo community leaders

Harriet Obbo, the Club’s Service Project Chairperson.

District Governor Harish Bhatt visited Nkondo-Kidera community on July 5th, 2014. He witnessed the progress Rotary has made in improving lives in this community. “Poverty is multi-faceted, starting with the mindset, and must be engaged on all fronts, involving all areas of focus,” he said, hailing the Club’s adopting a village to transform communities.

While launching a grain mill and water pump station at the village, DG Harish appealed to community leaders. “It is your responsibility,” he said, “to ensure that the program you started with support from Rotary is well managed.”

The UgShs400 million “Adopt a Village” program is funded under two Rotary grants. In addition to their time and expertise, Rotarians of North Kampala contributed more than UgShs 300 million.



The grain mill

The focus of the program is on capacity building and mindset change; pre-conditions for community ownership of the program. Investment by Rotarians in this community was a catalyst in getting Uganda Rural Electrification Agency to extend electricity

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from Immeri Township to power mega investments. Grain milling and other economic activities flourished. Clean piped water was extended to Nkondo at minimal cost to users. Likewise, availability of electricity made possible setting up of a computer lab for improved education, and equipping health facility for improved services.

The program is largely community led. The community donated land for a motorized borehole, five valley dams, and a grain mill, and it provided local materials and labor while Rotary provided machines plus some construction materials.



One of the five water dams

The community's KYENATU Development Association Micro Credit, funded by Rotary, is run along the Grameen bank model. It has a growing membership of 125 men and women engaged in small scale businesses. Its capital base has grown by 50%, with 100% debt recovery.

A 25 year old Sharif Rashid Babalanda, a member of the Micro Credit association recounts his journey to success. "I have always longed to be a successful businessman like my father," he said. "I

had the skills for making bricks, fabricating metal, and many other products but didn't have the capital to start my business."

When he joined the micro-credit association he was able to borrow 300,000 shillings which enabled him to start his business. Babalanda has so far borrowed twice and has bought a house where he lives, plus a shop where he runs his business. "I encourage everyone of you to take advantage of this program to improve your lives," said DG Harish as he addressed over 500 community members who had gathered to welcome him.

Rotary's setting up of the only computerized library in the district had a ripple effect. The Local government reciprocated by putting up three new classrooms, along with pit-latrines, making Immeri Primary a model school in the entire district and beyond.

Nkondo-Kidera community's health facility now has a mini maternity theatre and ward. Rotarians ensure that the facility is stocked with necessary drugs and medical equipments. "Since Rotary started supporting us, many people started to come to our health center. They come because



DG Harish together with villagers who are members of rotary supported Nkondo micro credit

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we offer good services and medicines at a very low fee,” explains Susan Namutebi, the Nurse in charge of the facility. Her team treats up to 30 patients a day. In addition they occasionally take medical services to distant communities, but their ability to do so is constrained by lack of transport.

Throughout the world, Rotary is providing humanitarian services to improve health, education,

avail clean water and sanitation, protect the environment, and to empower communities with income generating skills. In Uganda alone 2,300 Rotarians are engaged in projects country-wide, bringing much needed basic services and hope to remote communities.

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