

CHARMAR MAGAZINE

it simply matters



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**“A desire
to serve drew me
to humanitarian
work.”**

**Irene
Nakasiita**

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Young school children at Citizen’s Dream, a school for underprivileged children in Kasese district, Western Uganda, play netball. The school was founded by William Bwambale, a certified tour guide, as a way of giving back to the community.

EDITOR'S NOTE

First Half of 2025: Lessons Learned and Seeds Sown

The first half of 2025 has flown by, a whirlwind of activity, challenges, and, hopefully, progress. As Ugandans, we stand at a crucial juncture, poised to reap the benefits of our efforts and navigate the obstacles that remain. It's time to pause, reflect on the first six months, and extract the valuable lessons they hold for the path ahead.

One of the most glaring takeaways is the undeniable importance of diversification and innovation in our economy. The global economic fluctuations, which we felt keenly in the early months of the year, served as a stark reminder that reliance on a few key sectors leaves us vulnerable. The small-scale entrepreneur, the tech startup pushing boundaries, the farmers experimenting with new crops: these are the engines of future stability. We must continue to foster an environment that nurtures these initiatives through access to funding, skills development, and supportive policies.

Furthermore, the challenges in the healthcare sector during this period underscored the urgent need for strategic investment in healthcare infrastructure and training. This isn't just about building more hospitals, but about empowering our medical professionals, investing in preventative healthcare programs, and leveraging technology to improve access and efficiency.

On a more positive note, the growing awareness of environmental sustainability offers a beacon of hope. The grassroots movements promoting responsible waste management, the initiatives focusing on renewable energy, and the increased advocacy for protecting our natural resources demonstrate a growing commitment to our shared future. However, awareness is only the first step. We need concrete action, from stricter enforcement of environmental regulations to incentivizing eco-friendly practices across all sectors. Let us bequeath a healthy and vibrant Uganda to future generations.

Finally, and perhaps most crucially, the first half of 2025 reinforced the critical importance of good governance and participatory leadership. Transparency, accountability, and constructive dialogue are not optional; they are the cornerstones of a thriving and just society. We must hold our leaders accountable, demand transparency in public affairs, and actively participate in shaping our nation's future. This means engaging in informed debates, holding peaceful demonstrations when necessary, and utilizing our voices to advocate for the changes we want to see.



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“A desire to serve drew me to humanitarian work” **Irene Nakasiita**



In a world often driven by ambition and self-promotion, Irene Nakasiita has carved a unique path defined by compassion, faith, and a deep-rooted sense of service.

A communications professional, humanitarian, and the newly elected President of the Public Relations Association of Uganda (PRAU), Nakasiita’s story is a testament to resilience, servant leadership, and purpose-driven work.

Charmar Magazine interviewed and below are the excerpts.

Can you tell us about your childhood and upbringing? What were some formative experiences that shaped the person you are today?

I was raised in a humble, close-knit family where values like hard work, empathy, and integrity were instilled early. Growing up, I was always encouraged to speak up and engage with others. I am an extrovert. I grew up with my dad (may his soul rest in peace), and he was so caring, loving, and kind to people and such an eloquent speaker.

I think witnessing my dad serve others selflessly planted the seed for my career in humanitarian work and communication. Every day my dad asked me to listen to the radio and give him a summary of what I heard or picked up from the news. So I had to sit in front of the radio every evening to listen to the news and make sure I have a summary for my dad.

This partly shaped my communication career, and I thought I would work with either radio or TV. My dad as an Anglican; we were raised with Christian values. I am the 8th out of 9 children, and I grew up in Sunday school. At my church I have equally served in Sunday school and ministered to children. The ministry to children introduced me to community service, and this shaped my passion for humanitarian service.

How has your family influenced your career path and your approach to leadership as we see you now?

My family has been my greatest source of strength. They've taught me the value of servant leadership—leading not for power, but for purpose. As a mother and wife, I've also learnt how to listen, nurture, and make tough decisions, which are all vital traits in leadership. I was also guided while young to lead.



Irene Nakasiita is a communications professional and humanitarian

In school I was a prefect. I also trained under the Compassion International Leadership Development Programme for 3 solid years, and here I learnt the principles and notions of servant leadership.

Can you share some pivotal moments that have defined your personal and career growth journey – any notable highs or lows?

One defining moment was joining the Uganda Red Cross. I came in with passion, but the field experiences, particularly during emergencies, transformed me. Another was being entrusted to lead communication during the COVID-19 pandemic, a challenging yet defining time. I almost lost my life in the battle. I was once pronounced dead.

I thank God who gave me a second chance at life. I even held a Thanksgiving service at my home with family and friends to celebrate a second chance at life. I was diagnosed with diabetes during Covid due to some drug called dexamethasone, a steroid which was used to treat us during Covid. It was very good for the virus but with adverse side effects. I lost my sight for 10 days; my heart even stopped beating, and that is when I was pronounced dead. Life didn't remain the same.

Another low moment was when I lost a baby in June 2023, after spending 21 days in the NICU at Mulago New Women's Neonatal Unit. I experienced placental abruption that almost took both me and my baby. All these are humbling moments.



Irene Nakasiita (L) recently tookover from Tina Wamala as President of PRAU

On a personal note, balancing motherhood with an intense career has been tough but deeply rewarding.

What are some of the habits or routines that keep you grounded and focused in life?

I begin each day with prayer and reflection—it centres me. I also keep a journal to track goals and personal growth. I read often, especially around leadership and communication, and I prioritise quality time with my family every day, no matter how small. I also give to my friends, family and the Lord. This is my small world!

How do you balance the demands of your professional life with your personal life, especially as a wife and mother?

It's not always easy, but I've learnt to be intentional. At my first workplace, Compassion International Uganda, we had a core value called “cherish family”. I always think about it even now and have since known that even if I work until the cows return home, at the end of the day, family is the only constant factor in my life. So I give my family all my all, in as much as I give time to my work.

I plan my days carefully, delegate where necessary, and communicate openly with my family about my responsibilities. They understand my work is purpose-driven, and their support makes a huge difference. My spouse is always supportive, and my boys always pray for me.

What are some of your favourite ways to unwind and recharge in order to maintain a healthy work-life balance, especially in demanding roles?

I enjoy spending quiet time at home with my family, sharing meals, watching news and some programmes, or just talking with my people. I also love listening to music, reading inspirational books, and sometimes, a simple walk in nature helps me reconnect with myself. I sometimes go to the spa and gym with my spouse. I rarely walk alone. I also have quiet time with the Lord, and this is space I enjoy without anyone infringing on it.

What inspired you to dedicate your career to humanitarian work, and what are some of the most impactful moments you've witnessed during your time at Uganda Red Cross?

Seeing the Red Cross touch lives during disasters, especially the smiles of people we help, reinforces my purpose. I joined the Red Cross thinking it was a Christian organisation because of the cross. I came to serve people, and inasmuch as the Red Cross is non-denominational, I find courage and draw satisfaction in knowing that we serve people, we save their lives, and they testify of God's goodness through the work we do as the Red Cross. Some impactful moments are when I am able to tell stories of those in need and they get help. And when I helped a person whom I found dead on the road and helped to take to Mityana Hospital mortuary, his people were able to connect with his body, buried it, and I got to learn that they were thankful. We experience so many life-threatening situations as we serve; we touch blood, we see sick people, and we support those in pain and agony. But what brings me joy is knowing that through my work, I am able to touch the lives of people directly and create impact.

As the PRO of the Uganda Red Cross, you've likely faced numerous challenges in communicating sensitive and sometimes difficult information. What are some key principles you follow when navigating these situations?

Transparency, empathy, responsibility, and truthfulness are values I cherish. In the Red Cross, we speak to the lives of people, so I can never compromise in any way. If we have made a mistake, we own it and take responsibility, apologise and draw lessons from that. We can never lie about anything because the public is watching our back. We serve people. I always strive to communicate truthfully but with sensitivity, especially when dealing with affected communities or delicate emergencies. I ensure information is accurate, timely, and grounded in the humanitarian principles we uphold as the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.

You were recently elected as the President of the Public Relations Association of Uganda (PRAU); how did it feel when you heard the news, and what were your initial thoughts?

It was a deeply humbling moment. I felt honoured and also aware of the responsibility ahead. My first thought was, “This is a chance to serve the profession that has shaped me.” I was excited but also reflective about what we can achieve together as a community. I am happy to serve the association, add value to what I found as a foundation laid by previous Governing Counsel and create a legacy that I will be remembered for. What inspired you to seek this leadership role at PRAU, and what are the key areas you hope to focus on during your presidency?

I’ve always believed in giving back. PRAU gave me a professional home, and I felt it was time to contribute at a higher level. My focus areas include strengthening professional standards through driving the PRAU Bill

(legislation), ensuring that PRAU gets a home, mentoring young practitioners, and enhancing professional skills for our members. The modern PR practitioner should get modern trainings that rhyme with the contemporary times.

The media landscape in Uganda is constantly evolving. How do you see the role of PR professionals adapting to these changes, particularly with the rise of social media and digital communication?

PR professionals must become more agile, data-informed, and digitally fluent. Social media has taken the space and influenced communication, which means we need to engage more, listen more, and respond swiftly. Our storytelling must also evolve. People want authenticity and engagement, not just statements. Plus, new dynamics in modern PR are influenced by the emergence of new trends such as AI. Question is; Are we aware? And are here to stay with us. Are we ready?

What are some of the biggest challenges facing PR professionals in Uganda today, and how do you plan to address them through your leadership at PRAU?

Challenges include limited training opportunities, undervaluing of the profession, and ethical dilemmas in the digital space. At PRAU, we plan to offer continuous professional development, advocate for recognition of PR roles in organisations, and create a strong code of ethics for members. The passing of the PR Bill will go a long way in addressing most of the



challenges we face as PR practitioners in Uganda.

What specific initiatives or programmes do you envision implementing at PRAU to enhance the skills and knowledge of its members?

We are rolling out mentorship programmes and hands-on training in different areas of PR and communication. We keep running PR health checks and ensure that members in our association get value. The topics we bring on board in our PR Symposiums are informed by lessons learnt and feedback we receive from members. We’re also planning a PR Summit to bring together thought leaders and showcase local success stories next year as PRAU makes 50 years. Keep posted and check our socials and website for more insights.



Irene Nakasiita has survived death as a result of her humanitarian work with the Red Cross something that she thanks God for all the time

What role do you see PRAU playing in promoting ethical practices and responsible communication within the PR industry in Uganda?

PRAU must be the ethical compass for our profession. We intend to champion responsible communication through our code of conduct, ethics training, and peer accountability. By leading with integrity, we elevate the entire profession and build public trust. The PRAU Bill will also ensure that we have proper statutory recognition, and this comes with professional conduct standards.

What legacy do you hope to leave behind, both personally and professionally?

God willing, I hope to be remembered as someone who served with purpose, inspired others to rise, and uplifted

the PR profession in Uganda. Personally, there are key things I want to see come to life, and once I do them, I will pat myself on the back and say, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” One is the PRAU Bill, and the other is the PRAU Home.

What legacy do you hope to leave behind, both personally and professionally?

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Finally, what message would you like to share with young aspiring PR professionals in Uganda?

I want the young people to stay curious, stay ethical, and stay human. PR is not just about visibility; it’s about building trust and telling stories that move people. Keep learning, seek mentors, and remember: your voice matters. Use it responsibly. I also pray that the young people can listen more than thinking they can do everything on their own. There’s still a lot of room over the head for learning and growth. Take one step at a time.

My family has been my greatest source of strength. They’ve taught me the value of servant leadership — leading not for power, but for purpose.

Yvonne Mpanga

The Visionary Powering Uganda's Business Transformation Movement



Yvonne Mpanga has nurtured Business Trendsetters' idea from a simple networking initiative into a transformative platform for business excellence, innovation, and mentorship.

In the heart of Uganda's rapidly evolving business landscape stands a woman whose mission transcends profit margins and boardroom politics. Yvonne Mpanga, founder of the Business Trendsetters' Forum & Awards, is a trailblazer redefining how innovation, sustainability, and leadership intersect in the 21st century.

A Journey Rooted in Purpose

Since conceiving the Business Trendsetters' idea in October 2017, Mpanga has nurtured it from a simple networking initiative into a transformative platform for business excellence, innovation, and mentorship.

The Forum is not just an annual gathering but a movement—bringing together CEOs, entrepreneurs, thought leaders, and innovators committed to building enterprises that are trend-setting, socially responsible, and environmentally conscious.

From the first modest Trendsetters' cocktail in 2020 to the dynamic Expos and Awards Galas introduced in 2022, Mpanga has steered the platform through highs and hurdles with steadfast resilience and a values-driven approach.

Championing Innovation with a Conscience

At the heart of Mpanga's leadership

is her belief that business should be both innovative and impact-driven.

Under her guidance, the Forum annually explores themes that challenge conventional thinking. The 2025 theme—"Innovations with Hyper Business Intelligence and Environmental Social Governance (ESG)"—reflects her bold vision. "Are we intelligent enough to manipulate big data and act with speed—hyperactively—without losing ethical governance or distorting the environment?" she asks, urging business leaders to embrace AI and digital tools responsibly. For Mpanga, hyper business intelligence is not just about technology—it's about using tools like AI and big data to drive disruption with purpose, scale solutions



Some of the high profile participants at the 2023 Business Trendsetters Forum and Awards Gala at Sheraton Hotel in Kampala.

with sustainability, and lead change without compromising values.

Creating a Stage for Change Agents

Mpanga's Forum recognizes Business Trends Pacesetters—remarkable individuals whose innovation and leadership are shaping Uganda's future. In 2025, these include: Joanita Mukasa Menya, the first female managing director at Vivo Energy Uganda, Eng. Joseph Kitamirike, founder of the Altx exchange platform, Dr. Abraham Nalwebe, a mediator, pastor, and former technician symbolizing occupational resilience and Racheal Higgins, founder of Because of Marketing. By showcasing such diverse figures, Mpanga celebrates Uganda's multifaceted entrepreneurial spirit and sets a new standard for leadership—one that values adaptability, integrity, and inclusivity.

A Forum with Lasting Impact

Over the years, the Business Trendsetters' platform has done more than host events. It has launched businesses, forged powerful partnerships, and sparked innovation. According to Mpanga, many participants have gained exposure, clients, and funding through their involvement. She has built a community where mentorship thrives, ideas are born, and bold dreams become tangible solutions. Through the Forum, companies like Jena Herbals, Africanbooks.com, and Youth Startup Academy have been recognized for their impact.

What Drives Her

Mpanga's leadership philosophy is grounded in value centrality, accountability, and visionary ambition. She believes in leading with purpose, creating platforms that inspire others, and ensuring

that the next generation of business leaders are equipped not just with skills but with clarity of vision and conscience. Looking Ahead: The 6th Edition of the Forum

The upcoming 6th Business Trendsetters' Forum & Awards Gala on Thursday, 31st July 2025, at Sheraton Kampala will be the most ambitious yet. Featuring pacesetter speeches, trend exhibitions, seed capital pitch competitions, and musical performances by artists like Kenneth Mugabi, the event promises to be a celebration of Uganda's brightest business minds.

Mpanga invites the public to attend (UGX 250,000) or exhibit (UGX 500,000), urging participation from forward-thinking enterprises ready to embrace the 3Ts standard: Trendy, Transferable, and Transcendent.

"Let's build legacies, one trendsetting story at a time," Mpanga affirms.

For Mpanga, the Business Trendsetters' Forum is not just a networking event—it's a movement.

Pre-exposure Prophylaxis

Uganda to introduce lenacapavir, a revolutionary six-monthly HIV prevention injection

The Uganda AIDS Commission (UAC) has announced significant progress in the nation's fight against HIV, with the impending introduction of lenacapavir, a groundbreaking injectable pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) offering 100% protection against HIV acquisition. Uganda was a key participant in the international research that successfully established the efficacy of this innovative, six-monthly jab.

This announcement marks a pivotal moment for HIV prevention strategies in Uganda, potentially transforming how individuals at high risk access and adhere to protective measures. Lenacapavir, after receiving approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), is set to be integrated into the national HIV prevention program following extensive consultations with all relevant stakeholders and adherence to established regulatory requirements. The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with other key institutions, has outlined a comprehensive roadmap for the introduction of lenacapavir. This strategic plan encompasses several critical steps including regulatory approval by the National Drug Authority (NDA). The NDA will undertake a thorough evaluation and licensing process to ensure the safety and efficacy of lenacapavir for use within Uganda.



Uganda has been using other forms of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to control the spread of HIV in the country.

Among the other critical steps to be undertaken will be the development of guidelines. The national HIV prevention guidelines will be updated to incorporate clear directives and recommendations for the appropriate use of lenacapavir. The other step is the healthcare provider training – a robust training program that will be implemented to equip healthcare professionals with the necessary knowledge and skills to prescribe and monitor patients receiving lenacapavir. Another step will be the essential medicines list integration. Lenacapavir will be incorporated into the country's essential medicines

list, ensuring its accessibility and availability within the public health system.

The data monitoring and accountability will be another steep. It will provide revised tools that will be developed and implemented to meticulously capture data on lenacapavir usage, enabling effective client monitoring and ensuring accountability within the program. "This development represents a significant leap forward in our efforts to control and ultimately end the HIV epidemic in Uganda," the UAC said in a press statement released in May.



Lenacapavir will be incorporated into the country's essential medicines list

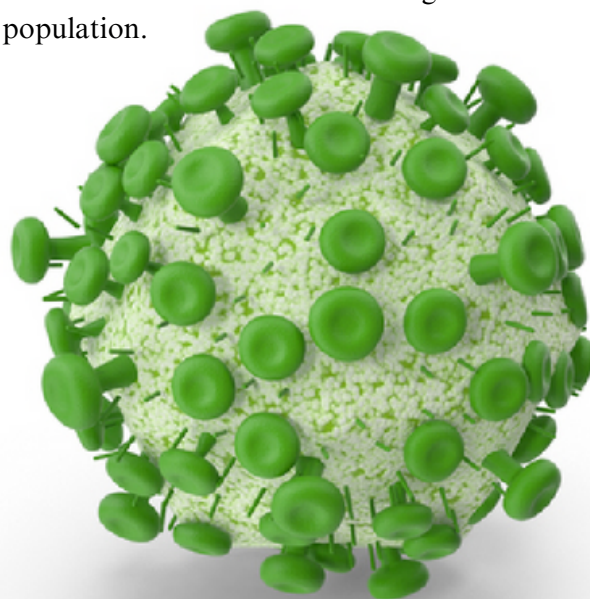
"The ability to offer a long-acting injectable PrEP that has demonstrated such high efficacy addresses key challenges related to adherence and access, particularly for individuals who may struggle with daily oral medication."

Once these preparatory stages are successfully completed, lenacapavir will be formally integrated into Uganda's existing HIV prevention framework. This will significantly expand the range of options available to individuals at high risk of HIV infection. In the interim, existing oral PrEP services will continue to be offered at designated health facilities across the country.

Furthermore, the UAC highlighted that cabotegravir, another highly effective injectable PrEP offering protection every two months, has already been incorporated into the Ministry of Health's HIV prevention guidelines. Efforts to make this medication locally available are also in advanced stages.

Uganda's commitment to providing effective and innovative solutions to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030 remains unwavering. The introduction of advanced preventative tools like lenacapavir underscores the nation's proactive and science-driven approach to tackling this persistent public health

challenge. Experts anticipate that these advancements will contribute significantly to reducing new HIV infections and improving overall health outcomes for the Ugandan population.



UBOS empowers Uganda's data future with major tablets donation



Dr. Chris Mukiza handing over tablets to the Second Deputy Prime Minister of Busoga Kingdom, Al-Haji Ahmed Osman Noor.

In a monumental stride towards bolstering its National Statistical System (NSS) and fostering a data-driven society, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) has commenced a significant donation exercise, distributing 5,195 tablets to twelve government higher institutions of learning and four prominent cultural institutions across the country. This initiative, leveraging technology previously used for the 2024 National Population and Housing Census (NPHC), aims to equip key institutions with the tools necessary for advanced data collection, research, and statistical analysis. The tablets, complete with essential accessories like chargers and power banks, represent a substantial investment in Uganda's digital future.

These devices, which served as vital tools for census enumerators nationwide, are now poised to empower a new generation of students and researchers, as well as cultural custodians, with the capabilities to conduct efficient and effective statistical work.

Dr. Chris Mukiza, the Executive Director of UBOS, highlighted the Bureau's commitment at the handover ceremony held at the UBOS headquarters in Kampala. He noted that the donation is part of UBOS's ongoing efforts to strengthen the NSS, fulfilling a promise made to public institutions after the completion of the NPHC. "Institutions have been requesting for these tablets, and the board has accepted," Dr. Mukiza stated, urging

beneficiaries to maximize the utilization of the gadgets to generate meaningful insights and support informed decision-making. The initiative has been widely lauded by recipients, particularly within the academic sphere. Dr. Allen Kagenyi, Coordinator of Academia at the National Council for Higher Education and a UBOS board member, underscored the pivotal role of this investment in a rapidly evolving educational landscape. "This investment is vital in enabling institutions of higher learning to meet the demands of 21st-century training and skilling in an increasingly data-driven world," she remarked. Dr. Kagenyi emphasized that this move reflects UBOS's dedication to partnering with institutions to cultivate a skilled, data-driven generation, essential for achieving national and global development goals, especially given Uganda's predominantly young population. Prof. Ikoja Odongo, the Vice Chancellor of Soroti University, echoed these sentiments, describing the donation as a profound empowerment for recipient institutions. He stressed the transformative potential of the tablets in improving the quality of reporting on critical societal issues. "We talk about poverty, but we don't know the poverty indices. And you cannot transform a country without information," Prof. Odongo asserted, highlighting the inseparable link between robust data and national progress.

Beyond the academic realm, the donation extends to cultural institutions, acknowledging their crucial role in preserving heritage and promoting development through organized data. Andrew Byakutaga, the Prime Minister of Bunyoro Kitara Kingdom, expressed gratitude and pledged to utilize the tablets to enhance data collection within the kingdom's territory. "When people think of kingdoms, they think of backcloth and calabashes, but we are a cultural institute that embraces technology," Byakutaga affirmed. He acknowledged the existing challenge of effectively processing collected

data, emphasizing that "These tablets will help us achieve that." This sweeping initiative by UBOS is more than just a donation of hardware; it signifies a strategic investment in Uganda's statistical infrastructure and a profound commitment to fostering a data-driven culture across diverse sectors. By empowering both academic and cultural institutions with the necessary tools to collect, analyze, and interpret data, UBOS is playing a crucial role in supporting evidence-based decision-making, ultimately contributing significantly to the country's socio-economic

development agenda. The institutions of higher learning included the National Council for Higher Education (75), Makerere (700), Kyambogo (350), Lira University (200), Gulu University (200), Kabale University (200), MUST (350), Busitema (200), Uganda National Institute for Teachers Education (200), Soroti University (150), MUBS (250), and Muni University (150). The cultural institutions included Buganda Kingdom (1000), Bunyoro Kitara (550), Busoga Kingdom (500), and Rwenzururu (120).



The donation of these tablets represents a significant investment in Uganda's statistical infrastructure and a commitment to fostering a data-driven culture across various sectors.

Peace and Stability

Electoral Commission working hard to deliver peaceful elections



The Commission engaged with the leaders of the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda to launch the National Mobilisation for Peaceful, Free, Fair, and Credible 2026 Elections campaign.

With the clock ticking towards the 2026 General Elections, the Electoral Commission (EC) of Uganda is leaving no stone unturned in its mission to ensure a peaceful and credible electoral process. From strategic meetings with security forces to engaging religious leaders and students, the Commission is actively fostering a collaborative environment where all stakeholders understand their roles in upholding a democratic process free from violence and intimidation.

At the helm of this effort is Justice Simon Mugenyi Byabakama, Chairperson of the Electoral Commission, who emphasizes the constitutional mandate to operate in a transparent and inclusive manner.

This commitment is evident in the Commission's proactive engagement with diverse groups across the nation.

Strengthening Security Partnerships

Recognizing the crucial role of law enforcement, the EC recently convened a strategic meeting with regional and District police commanders at the Uganda Police Headquarters in Naguru. Justice Byabakama underscored the police's vital role in ensuring the integrity and credibility of the electoral process, protecting citizens' rights throughout the electoral cycle.

Discussions centered on collaborative strategies to ensure a

peaceful environment before, during, and after the elections, reinforcing the importance of maintaining public order and safeguarding the electoral process.

Enlisting Religious Leaders for National Unity

The EC has also partnered with the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda to launch the "National Mobilisation for Peaceful, Free, Fair, and Credible 2026 Elections" campaign. This initiative, shaped by months of inclusive stakeholder engagement, aims to foster stability and social cohesion. Both the EC and the Inter-Religious Council are committed to ensuring that Uganda not only holds elections but does so peacefully, credibly, and in the spirit of national unity.

Warning Against Vigilantism and Promoting Civic Education

Justice Byabakama has explicitly warned the youth against forming illegal vigilante groups during the upcoming campaign period. He emphasized that security is the responsibility of the Uganda Police Force and urged citizens to avoid actions that could escalate tensions. Furthermore, the EC is actively engaging in civic education,

exemplified by a recent visit from students and teachers of Gayaza Church of Uganda Secondary School to the EC headquarters. Justice Byabakama used this opportunity to educate the students about the mandate and functions of the EC, as well as their roles, rights, responsibilities, and duties as responsible citizens.

Ensuring Inclusion for All

The Electoral Commission is also committed to ensuring that all Ugandans, including those with disabilities, are able to participate fully in the electoral process. The Uganda National Association of the Deaf (UNAD) recently attended a stakeholders workshop for special interest groups elections and advocated for inclusive electoral processes, including the provision of Ugandan Sign Language translation. The EC has responded positively to this advocacy, incorporating Ugandan Sign Language interpreters into their efforts.

Combating Violence and Torture

The Commission acknowledges the importance of a violence-free election, particularly addressing the issue of torture. The EC spokesperson, Julius Mucunguzi, recently participated in a panel discussion organized by African Centre for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture Victims (ACTV - Against Torture) and Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) to commemorate the international day in support of torture survivors. He called on all stakeholders to conduct themselves according to the law and ensure free

and peaceful elections, emphasizing that there is no place for violence of any kind. Mucunguzi also urged responsible and efficient use of technology, addressing the potential for misuse and abuse of digital platforms during the electoral process.

Looking Ahead

The Electoral Commission's comprehensive approach, characterized by proactive engagement, strategic partnerships, and a commitment to inclusivity, underscores its dedication to ensuring peaceful and credible elections in 2026.

The Commission acknowledges the importance of a violence-free election, particularly addressing the issue of torture.

By actively working with security forces, religious leaders, civil society organizations, and the public, The EC is striving to create a conducive environment for Ugandans to freely exercise their democratic rights and choose their leaders in a peaceful and transparent manner. The success of these efforts will be crucial in solidifying Uganda's democratic foundations and ensuring a stable and prosperous future for the nation.



The EC successfully conducted the update of the Voters' Registrar and is now engaging stakeholders like students to peacefully participate in the upcoming elections cycle.



The Gate Closed Quietly

When the person holding the door, was supposed to open it

BY: JINGJIN LIU

PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY

SOURCE: [HTTPS://WWW.LINKEDIN.COM/IN/JINGJIN-LIU/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jingjin-liu/)

Natalie was ready. 15 years in the business. Turned around a flailing portfolio. Cut regional costs by 11%. Designed the only cross-functional strategy that survived two regime changes. She never played "politics". She played clean. And it worked, until the Global Strategy Lead role opened.

Everyone assumed she was the pick. Then came the final meeting. Not with the CEO. With Anita J. the only senior woman at the table. The one Natalie had watched for years. The woman who, five years earlier, had keynoted a women's summit and said: "We rise by lifting each other." The conference room smelled like wood polish and tension. Natalie arrived early. Anita walked in five minutes late, still holding her phone. No handshake. Just: "Let's talk about how you see yourself scaling." Natalie straightened. "I've led two regional integrations. I know the moving parts, revenue, risk, retention. This role's scope aligns with what I already operate."

Anita looked up. "I've heard strong things. Especially about your visibility." Natalie paused. "I make sure the impact is felt, not just filed."

Anita smiled flat. "And that visibility... how's it being received?" "Results are landing." Anita's pen tapped once.

"Sometimes results can be... polarizing." Natalie blinked. "If they move the business forward, that's a trade-off I accept." No response. Just a nod, and: "Thanks for making time. We'll circle back." They never did. The role went to Adam L. who'd led zero strategy orgs, But "was easy to align with."

Natalie didn't speak about it publicly. But at dinner, she finally said to a close friend: "I don't think I threatened her. I think I reminded her of who she was" This isn't about sabotage. It was "self-protection", disguised as professionalism.

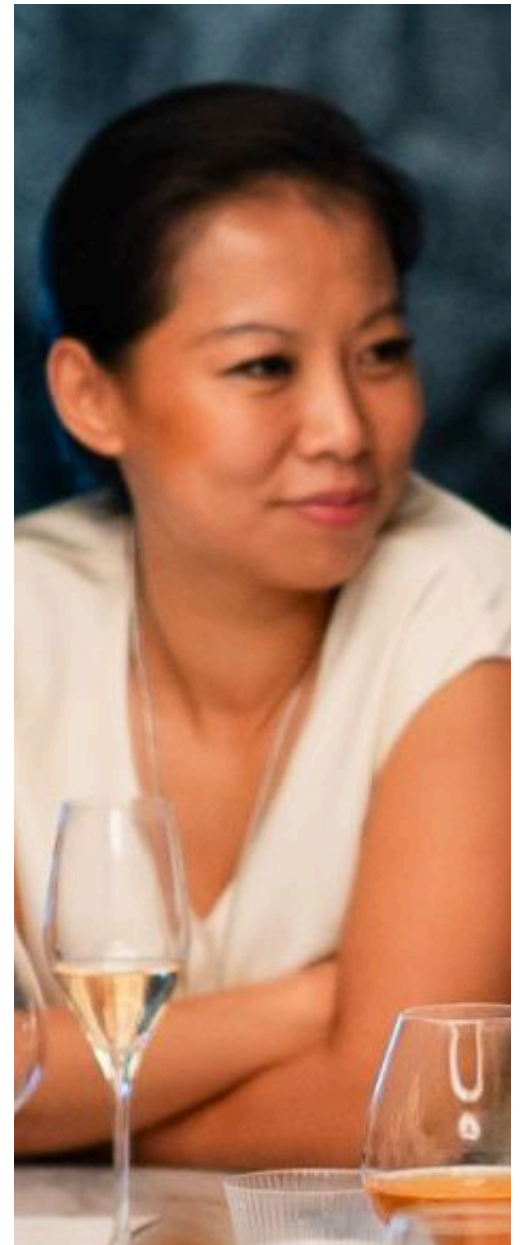
Sometimes the person who blocks you is another woman. Not because you're wrong. But because your presence unsettles the equilibrium she fought hard to keep.

Power doesn't always free you.

Sometimes it just teaches you how to stay safe by staying small.

Women

who've had to dim themselves to survive often protect the very rules that once kept them quiet. Not out of cruelty, but out of conditioning.



Ms. Jingjin Liu
Founder - The Elevate Group

How to overcome AI FOMO anxiety

BY: JOYCE NAIGA KYEYUNE

Photography: COURTESY

A lot of AI anxiety is brewing in corporate corners. Every time I propose integrating elements of artificial intelligence in company knowledge management processes, there is an uncomfortable shift in the room or the standard line about ethics and data privacy.

Executives say the biggest anxieties they have about AI include where to start, what AI to start with and how to keep up with the ever-burgeoning cache of new AI tools. This, ultimately, is leading to analysis paralysis, discouraging AI adoption and keeping them watching from the sidelines.

The problem with staying on the sidelines is that competitors are advancing rapidly by leveraging the speed of information availability, brand visibility, reduction in HR costs, and innovation that's coming from AI tools.

How to avoid overwhelm, confusion, feeling less than, and AI FOMO:

1. Learn the basics: In one afternoon of just 2 hours, sign up for a free Generative AI course on LinkedIn, Google, Udemy, Coursiv or Coursera. This will free your biased mind and build your confidence.
2. Identify your pain points: Write a list of the top three repetitive tasks you do, tasks you dislike, tasks that



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take more time than they should or tasks you feel should be done by someone else.

3. Start experimenting: Download any (or all) of the following free AI tools: ChatGPT, Gemini-Google or Claude. Where available, read the intro about their capabilities. It's usually super short and sweet.
4. Become a prompt engineer: Honestly, this is not as technical as they make it sound. In each of those tools, type out the problem (in plain English) you want the AI to solve. Here is an example prompt I used, which yielded powerful results: "I am a knowledge management and communication professional with 12 years supporting nonprofits, governments and the private sector to document their success stories and share the impact

of their work. However, getting stories is often missed out or neglected. Create for me a system that does the following: assesses story writing skills, sets reminders to collect stories, provides a template for story writing, consolidates the stories in one folder, and then creates an impact report."

The bottom line is that AI tools exist to solve problems, introduce efficiencies and innovation. And yes, ethics and privacy are built in. The more you hide from AI, the further you get away from relief, peace and simplicity.

The way to get started is to ignore all the noise, and follow the simple four steps I recommend, then rinse and repeat step 3 and 4 to solve other types of workflow (or personal 😊) problems.

For those in the knowledge management and communication function, I'll be sharing a longer piece on how I set up a fully autonomous, AI-powered field story collection and reporting system, all in a few hours, one evening, in the comfort of my kitchen.

Joyce Naiga Kyeyune, Communication and Strategist, ICT Creatives.

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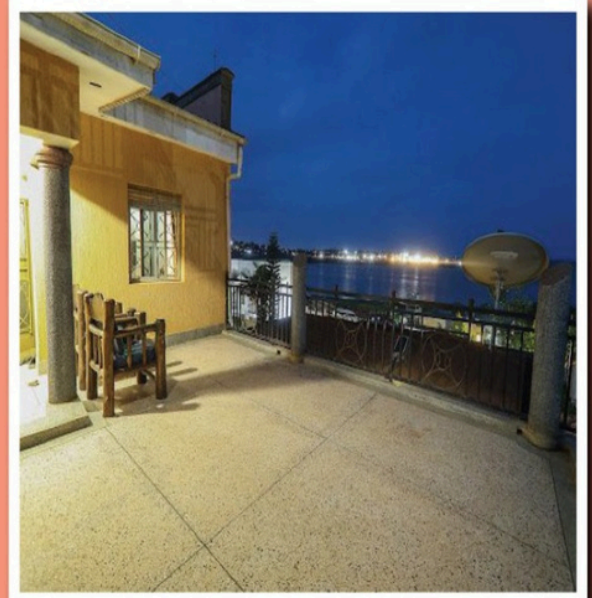
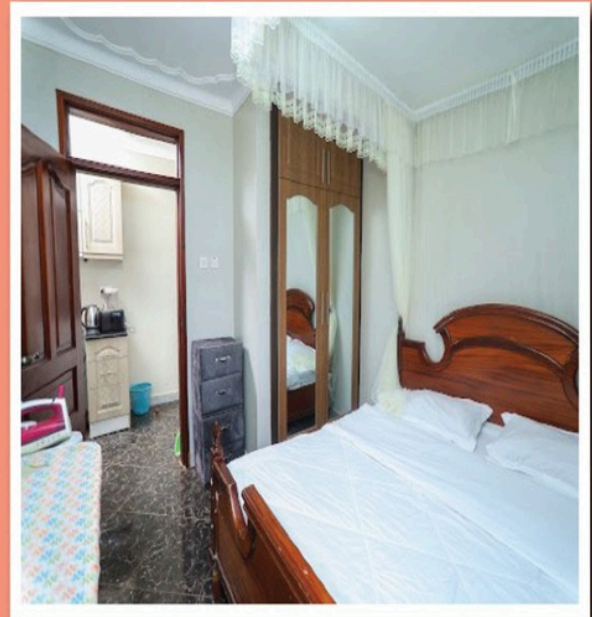
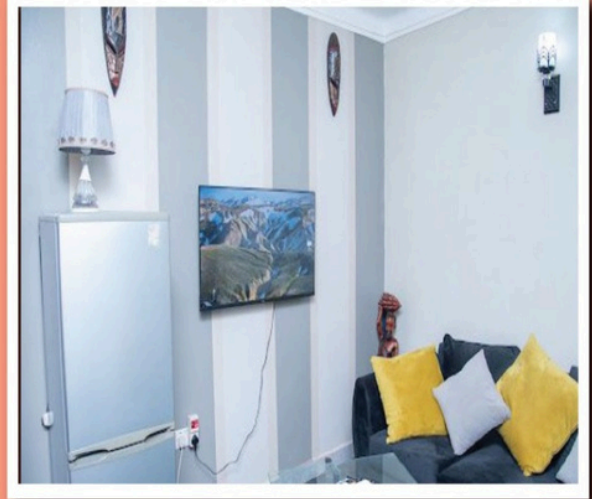
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Relationship Hack: Learn to say sorry before silence becomes your language

When Ada and Michael got married, everyone said they were a perfect match. She was sharp, ambitious, and quick with her words. He was calm, introspective, and kind. They had dated for three years, survived job losses, family drama, and even a long-distance season when Ada went to grad school. But nothing prepared them for the silent battles that would come inside their own home. In their third year of marriage, Ada was 36 and Michael was 42. They were old enough (everyone believed) to know how to handle conflict. But age, as they were slowly learning, wasn't the same as maturity. Their fights were rarely loud. They were cold wars, with dishes clinking harder than necessary, passive comments about unwashed laundry, and unspoken disappointment at a missed anniversary dinner. Apologies rarely came. Each believed the other should know better. "I'm not going to say sorry for something I didn't do," Ada would say. "And I don't see why I should always be the one to fix things," Michael would respond.



Days would pass in silence. They would go to work, smile at colleagues, attend church, and hold hands in public. But at home, there was an invisible wall — thick with pride, assumptions, and bruised egos. It all changed one Friday evening after a ridiculous argument about where to place the new shoe rack. Ada wanted it by the door; Michael thought it should go in the bedroom. The fight escalated. But this time, Ada said something she instantly regretted: "Sometimes I feel like you're just a roommate, not my husband."

The words landed with a thud. Michael didn't yell. He didn't walk away. He simply looked at her, his eyes tired, hurt, and deeply sad.

That night, he slept on the couch, not out of anger but exhaustion. Ada sat in bed, replaying her words. It hit her that being right had cost her warmth, connection, and peace. The shoe rack didn't matter. The pride did. In the morning, Ada got up early. She made tea just the way Michael liked it, with ginger and a little honey.

She sat beside him and whispered, "I'm sorry. That was unfair. You didn't deserve that." Michael looked at her quietly. Then he nodded and said, "Thank you. I'm sorry too, for not listening more, for withdrawing when you needed me to talk." They didn't hug immediately. There were no dramatic tears. But something shifted. They started using "I'm sorry" more often — not as an admission of defeat, but as a tool for healing. Apologies softened the tension, created space for understanding, and reminded them that being a team was more important than being right. Over time, they discovered the three things that helped keep peace in their marriage:

- Maturity isn't age. It is the willingness to grow, even when you think you already know. 2
- Pride kills intimacy. You can win the argument and still lose the connection.
- Saying sorry isn't weakness. It is the quiet strength that rebuilds trust, one word at a time.

Years later, a young couple asked them, "What's the secret to staying together?" Michael smiled and said, "Don't let your ego be louder than your love." Ada added, "And learn to say sorry before silence beco

How to deal with an unapologetic lover

Dating someone who rarely, if ever, apologizes can be frustrating, confusing, and even hurtful. It can feel like their actions have no consequences, and your feelings are constantly disregarded. So, how do you navigate the relationship terrain when your lover is unapologetic? Here's a guide to help you understand the situation and determine the best path forward:

Understanding the root cause Before reacting, it's crucial to understand why your partner struggles with apologies. Here are some potential reasons:

- Different communication styles: Sometimes, it's simply a communication difference. They might believe that offering solutions or changing their behavior is a more effective way of making amends than a verbal apology.
- Narcissistic tendencies: In more extreme cases, a lack of apology can be a symptom of narcissistic personality traits. They might lack empathy, feel entitled, and have a need for admiration.

Strategies for Addressing the Issue:

Now that you have a better understanding, here's how to approach the situation:

1. Choose the Right Time and Place
2. Use "I" Statements
3. Be Specific and provide examples
4. Explain the Importance of Apologizing to You
5. Listen to Their Perspective
6. Focus on Solutions
7. Set Clear Boundaries

When to Walk Away

Despite your best efforts, some individuals are simply unwilling or unable to change. End the relationship before it breaks you and hurts your mental health.

Navigating the Challenges of Student Discipline: A Blueprint for Ugandan Secondary Schools

By: NYAGO BOSCO

Photography: COURTESY

Discipline in schools is a cornerstone of effective learning and personal development. In Uganda's secondary schools, managing student behavior presents unique challenges, especially with the rising incidences of indiscipline among students. This article explores innovative strategies for managing discipline, fostering a conducive learning environment, and ultimately preparing students for responsible adulthood.

Understanding the Roots of Indiscipline

To effectively address indiscipline, it's important to understand its underlying causes. Many students grapple with psychological, social, and economic factors impacting their behavior. Issues such as poverty, family problems, peer pressure, and emotional distress can manifest in disruptive behavior. Understanding these roots can help educators approach discipline with empathy, which is a fundamental aspect of improving student behavior.

Adopting a Restorative Justice Approach

One of the most effective ways of managing discipline is to Shift from punitive measures to a restorative justice approach. This model emphasizes repairing harm over punishment. Rather than solely



Tr. Nyago Bosco

focusing on consequences, schools can facilitate dialogues that allow students to take responsibility for their actions. In this process, students learn the importance of accountability and the impact of their behavior on others. Restorative practices can be implemented through mediation sessions, community service, and reflective exercises that encourage self-awareness and personal growth.

Establishing Clear Expectations and Consistency

Consistency is key in establishing a disciplined environment. Schools should have a clear code of conduct that outlines acceptable and unacceptable behavior. Educators need to communicate these expectations regularly to both students and parents.

This communication fosters an understanding of consequences and reinforces a shared responsibility among the school community. Moreover, it is crucial that teachers uniformly enforce these rules. Inconsistency can lead to confusion and, ultimately, to more indiscipline.

Fostering Positive Relationships

Building strong, trusting relationships between teachers and students is integral to effective discipline management. Students are more likely to respect rules and engage positively in school when they feel a sense of belonging and connection to their teachers. Schools can implement mentorship programs where teachers serve not just as educators but as advisors and confidants. Such programs can facilitate open communication, allowing students to express their concerns and challenges, thus reducing feelings of alienation that often lead to misbehavior.

Promoting Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Incorporating socio-emotional learning into the curriculum can significantly enhance discipline management. SEL programs teach students important skills such as emotional regulation, self-discipline, effective communication, and conflict resolution. By equipping students

with these tools, educators can help them navigate their emotions and interactions with peers, thereby reducing incidents of indiscipline. Teaching empathy and respect also creates a culture of understanding and peer support, fostering a positive school climate.

Parental Involvement and Community Engagement

A well-rounded approach to discipline involves engaging parents and the community. Regular workshops and communication channels can involve parents in their children's education and behavior management. Schools can organize forums to discuss strategies for maintaining discipline at home while also reinforcing school policies. Community programs can provide additional support structures, offering guidance and resources for families dealing with socio-economic challenges that may influence student behavior.

Utilizing Technology for Monitoring and Engagement

In this digital age, technology offers innovative solutions for discipline management. Schools can use behavioral tracking systems to monitor student conduct and progress. Online platforms can also facilitate communication between teachers, parents, and students, ensuring everyone is informed and involved in the discipline process. Social media, when used responsibly, can amplify positive behaviors through recognition and rewards for good conduct. This approach not only motivates students but also builds a supportive community around them.



Managing student discipline in Ugandan secondary schools requires a multifaceted approach that encompasses understanding, communication, and community involvement.

Conclusion: A Holistic Approach to Discipline

Managing student discipline in Ugandan secondary schools requires a multifaceted approach that encompasses understanding, communication, and community involvement. By shifting to restorative justice practices, fostering positive relationships, establishing clear expectations, and promoting socio-emotional learning, schools can create an environment where students thrive both academically and personally. Additionally, engaging parents and leveraging technology can strengthen the collective effort towards instilling a culture of discipline.

Empowering students instead of merely punishing them ensures they learn from their mistakes, ultimately becoming responsible citizens. It is imperative for educators, parents, and the broader community to work together in this endeavor, nurturing a future generation that values respect, empathy, and responsibility. Thanks to Raising Voices Organisation that is implementing the Good School project. In our next issue we shall explore their approach on positive punishment vs negative reinforcement.



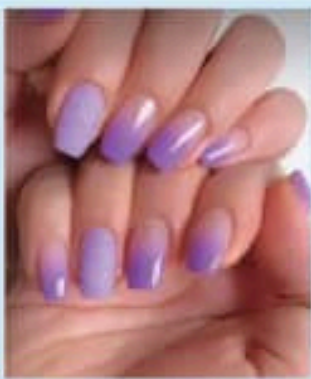
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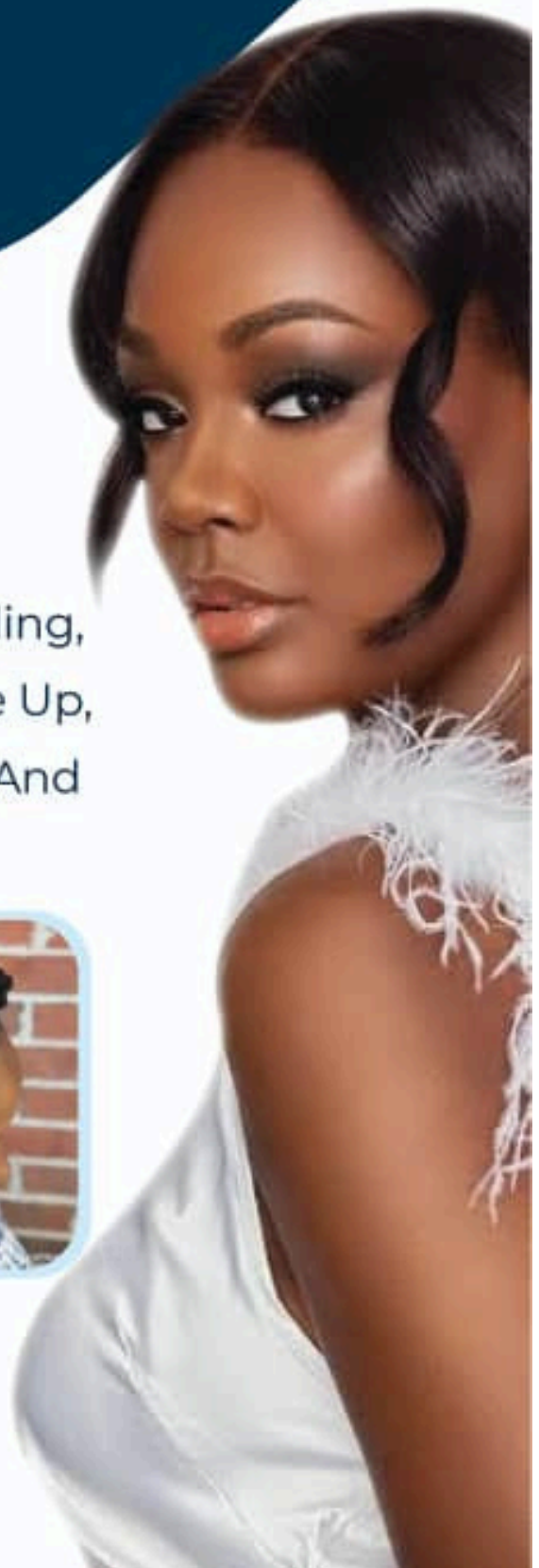
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Standard Chartered Bank unveiled its latest deposit campaign dubbed “Jaguza ne Standard Chartered,” designed to reward clients for saving, transacting and maintaining deposits with the Bank. Running from 1st July to 30th September 2025, the Bank’s clients will stand a chance to win monthly shopping vouchers, home appliances and a trip for 2 to Dubai for 5 lucky winners when they bank with Standard Chartered. The campaign offers clients entries into the monthly prize draws for every UGX 1 million deposited and maintained in their bank accounts. Prizes to be won include smart TVs, refrigerators, cookers, microwaves, washing machines and shopping vouchers.



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Africa coming to the East for CHAN

			
GROUP A	GROUP B	GROUP C	GROUP D
KENYA	TANZANIA	UGANDA	SENEGAL
MOROCCO	MADAGASCAR	NIGER	EQUATORIAL GUINEA
ANGOLA	MAURITANIA	GUINEA	SUDAN
DR CONGO	BURKINA FASO	ALGERIA	NIGERIA
ZAMBIA	CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC	SOUTH AFRICA	

The eagerly awaited detailed match schedule for the TotalEnergies CAF African Nations Championship (CHAN) 2024 was officially unveiled by Confederation Africaine de Football (CAF), igniting excitement across the continent. Co-hosted by Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda under the unifying "Pamoja East Africa" arrangement, the tournament promises a month-long celebration of African football, running from August 02 to August 30, 2025. This edition marks a significant return of the championship to East African soil, following the 2016 tournament in Rwanda.

A Grand Opening and Staged Finale

The Confederation Africaine de Football, in close consultation with the Local Organising Committees of the three host nations, strategically allocated the most anticipated fixtures to showcase the diverse venues.

The inaugural match will kick off on Saturday, August 02, 2025 at the iconic Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Co-host Tanzania will take on Burkina Faso at 20h00 local time (17h00 GMT), setting the stage for what promises to be a thrilling championship.

The journey to the trophy will

culminate in Kenya, with Nairobi's Moi International Sport Centre (Kasarani) playing host to the grand Final on Saturday, August 30, 2025, scheduled for 18h00 local time (15h00 GMT).

Prior to the final, the battle for third place will unfold in Kampala, Uganda, at the Mandela Stadium on Friday, August 29, 2025, at 18h00 local time (15h00 GMT). This strategic distribution of key matches underscores the collaborative spirit of the "Pamoja East Africa" bid.

Opening Weekend Football Frenzy

The opening weekend promises a feast of football across all three host

Opening Weekend Football Frenzy
The opening weekend promises a feast of football across all three host nations:

- Sunday, August 03, 2025, Nairobi, Kenya:
 - Kenya will play their opening fixture against Democratic Republic of Congo at 15h00 local time (12h00 GMT) at the Moi International Sport Centre, setting the home crowd alight.
 - Later that day, at 18h00 local time (15h00 GMT), football giants Morocco will lock horns with Angola at Nyayo Stadium.
- Sunday, August 03, 2025, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania:
 - Action returns to the Benjamin Mkapa Stadium at 20h00 local time (17h00 GMT) as Madagascar faces Mauritania in a bumper Sunday of matches.
- Monday, August 04, 2025, Kampala, Uganda:
 - Co-hosts Uganda will make their tournament debut against Algeria at 20h00 local time (17h00 GMT).
 - Before that, Niger will play Guinea at 17h00 local time (14h00 GMT) at the same venue, marking Kampala's entry into the tournament action.

Uganda's Cranes Kick-start Preparations

Uganda Cranes have commenced residential training in preparation for the tournament

Meanwhile, co-hosts Uganda are already deep into their preparations for the prestigious tournament. The Federation of Uganda Football Associations (FUFA) has announced a dedicated coaching panel for the Uganda National Team participating in CHAN 2024. Fred Muhumuza and Morley Byekwaso will steer the Cranes, operating under the supervision and monitoring of Uganda Cranes Head Coach, Paul Put. Following the unveiling of their coaching staff, the Uganda Cranes wasted no time, commencing non-residential training at the Prisons Grounds in Luzira. This initial phase, under the stewardship of coaches Byekwaso and Muhumuza, is focused on building early momentum, assessing player fitness, and identifying key talents ahead of their residential camp. In an early squad development, experienced midfielder Paul Mucureezi has been drafted into the provisional 41-man squad, replacing James Bogere, who formally requested to withdraw from the team.

FUFA confirmed the acceptance of Bogere's decision, paving the way for Mucureezi's return to national team duty.

Zanzibar's Strategic Inclusion

Adding another layer of excitement and strategic foresight to the tournament, Zanzibar has been designated as one of the host venues. This decision, according to CAF, underscores their commitment to expanding the reach and inclusivity of African football. Zanzibar's Amaan Stadium recently demonstrated its capacity by successfully staging the TotalEnergies CAF Confederation Cup 2024/25 Final in May, proving its readiness for another high-profile continental event.

As the days tick down to August 2025, the stage is set for a memorable celebration of African football, unity, and talent. The CHAN 2024 promises not only thrilling football action but also a powerful display of East African collaboration and hospitality, solidifying the region's place on the continental football map.



Countdown to CHAN 2024

A Kick-Off for economic growth and national pride



Ugandans will be cheering their own, the Uganda Cranes, at Mandela National Stadium Nambole during the CHAN tournament in August

August will mark a significant milestone for Ugandan football as the nation prepares to host the prestigious African Nations Championship (CHAN) 2024. While the tournament promises thrilling on-pitch action featuring home-based players from across the continent, its true impact is anticipated to extend far beyond the stadiums, delivering substantial socio-economic benefits and a powerful boost to national pride.

For Uganda, hosting CHAN isn't just about football; it's a strategic investment with the potential to unlock a myriad of opportunities, from bolstering local economies to elevating the country's international profile.

Economic Bonanza: Tourism, Hospitality, and Job Creation

The influx of teams, officials, media, and thousands of football fans from across Africa is set to provide a significant shot in the arm for Uganda's economy.

- **Tourism and Hospitality Boom:** Hotels, guesthouses, restaurants, and entertainment venues in host cities like Kampala and others, will experience a surge in demand. "We expect a full house during the tournament," remarked a manager at a prominent Kampala hotel. "This event is a lifeline for the tourism sector, still recovering from global

challenges." Local tour operators are also gearing up to offer excursions, showcasing Uganda's rich wildlife and cultural heritage, potentially converting football fans into long-term tourists.

- **Job Creation:** The tournament will generate a significant number of temporary jobs in security, logistics, transportation, catering, ticketing, and event management. Even informal vendors selling merchandise, food, and drinks around match venues will see increased activity. This provides much-needed income for many Ugandans.

- **Local Business Stimulus:** From small businesses supplying goods and services to the tournament organizers, teams, and fans, to artisans selling souvenirs, a wide array of local enterprises will benefit from increased spending. This circulatory effect of money within the economy can have a ripple effect on various sectors.
- **Foreign Exchange Inflow:** Visitors will bring in foreign currency, strengthening the Ugandan shilling and boosting the country's foreign exchange reserves.

Infrastructure Development and Modernization

To meet the requirements of a major continental tournament, significant investments have been made in upgrading existing facilities. The renovation of the iconic Mandela National Stadium (Namboole) is a prime example.

- **Improved Sports Facilities:** The refurbished stadiums will not only serve the CHAN tournament but will provide state-of-the-art facilities for future national and international sporting events, benefiting local clubs and national teams for years to come.
- **Enhanced Connectivity:** Improvements in road networks leading to stadiums and accommodation areas, and potentially public transport, will benefit residents long after the tournament concludes, easing daily commutes and commercial activities.
- **Brand Uganda:** The visible improvements demonstrate Uganda's capability to host



Mandela National Stadium - Namboole

world-class events, enhancing its reputation on the global stage and potentially attracting future investments beyond sports.

National Pride, Unity, and Social Cohesion

Sport has an unparalleled ability to unite people, and CHAN 2024 is expected to ignite a powerful sense of national pride.

- **Rallying Around the Cranes:** Supporting the national team, the Uganda Cranes, will bring Ugandans from all walks of life together, fostering a sense of shared identity and collective excitement.
- **Showcasing Ugandan Culture:** The tournament is an opportunity to showcase Uganda's vibrant cultural heritage through opening ceremonies, fan zones, and local

entertainment, promoting soft power and cultural exchange.

- **Youth Inspiration:** Witnessing high-level continental football on home soil will inspire a new generation of young footballers and athletes, encouraging participation in sports and promoting healthy lifestyles. It also offers a pathway for local talent to be scouted by international clubs.

International Exposure and Branding

Hosting CHAN puts Uganda squarely in the international spotlight. Broadcasts reaching millions across Africa and beyond will showcase not just the football, but also Uganda's landscapes, hospitality, and growing infrastructure. Beyond the thrill of competition, the tournament is poised to be a significant catalyst for economic growth, a symbol of national unity, and a powerful statement of Uganda's rising profile on the African and global stage.



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