



UGANDA WEEKLY FOCUS

INFORMING MINDS • INSPIRING CHANGE

VOL 02 ► NOV 10, 2025



GOVT OFFICIALS INSPECT OIL PROJECTS AS UGANDA EDGES TOWARD FIRST OIL

Pg. 27

Top highlights

€217M AfDB Boosts
Uganda–Rwanda Road
Connectivity

Every Vote Counts:
Voices of 2026

From Markets to
Medicine — Building a
Resilient Nation

Thanks to
CONTRIBUTORS

Omulongo Annet
Martha Kyosimire
Fortunate Ankunda
Carolyn Muyama
David Sserumaga
David Muwonge
Florence Mukankusi
Catherine Namuddu
Sarah Nanteza



UGANDA
WEEKLY
FOCUS

Informing Minds
Inspiring Change

The EDITOR'S COLUMN



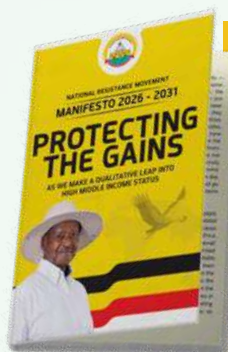
**UGANDA
WEEKLY
FOCUS**

Informing Minds
Inspiring Change

MANIFESTO DIGEST

Understanding the Manifesto:
What It Means for You

📞 0780 646 115 ✉ ugandaweeklyfocus@gmail.com



“The mission is to protect the gains we’ve made and use them as a springboard into high middle-income status.”
NRM Manifesto 2026-2031

Why This Column Matters

As Uganda enters a new policy cycle guided by the NRM Manifesto 2026–2031, the *Manifesto Digest* appears within Uganda Weekly Focus to help readers unpack and understand the ideas, priorities, and programmes contained in the document.

This column’s purpose is public education to translate technical plans into plain language and highlight how proposed government actions relate to citizens’ daily lives. Whether in agriculture, education, infrastructure, or job creation, the *Manifesto Digest* focuses on clarity and accountability, helping Ugandans understand both the intent and the impact of key commitments.

Protecting the Gains

The 2026–2031 Manifesto outlines Uganda’s next phase of transformation building on peace, stability, and economic growth, while pursuing what it calls a “*qualitative leap*.” This means not just expanding services, but improving their quality from better schools and hospitals to stronger local economies and jobs for the youth.

Through this column, *Uganda Weekly Focus* reaffirms its commitment to objective journalism, civic awareness, and participatory governance. The *Manifesto Digest* is a citizen’s guide designed to help readers follow national plans, ask informed questions, and track progress toward Uganda’s development goals, regardless of political affiliation.

The 7 Words that Define the Next Five Years

The Manifesto is anchored on **seven** pillars of progress:

- ✓ **Peace** – Security that guarantees life and investment.
- ✓ **Development** – Expanding infrastructure and social services.
- ✓ **Wealth** – Empowering households to earn and save more.
- ✓ **Jobs** – Creating sustainable work through industries and skills.
- ✓ **Services** – Delivering better health, education, and utilities.
- ✓ **Markets** – Building demand for Ugandan goods at home and abroad.
- ✓ **Federation** – Strengthening East African unity for shared prosperity.

These are more than political statements – they are lifestyle commitments, the very foundations of a Uganda where every citizen has the opportunity to thrive and prosper.

What does “Protecting the Gains” mean?

It means keeping the peace we have enjoyed, safeguarding our roads, schools, and health centers, and ensuring that corruption or conflict does not reverse Uganda’s progress.

What is a “Qualitative Leap”?

It means not only having more things, but **better things**: better schools, smarter farming, stronger industries, and higher household incomes.

It’s about *quality life for every Ugandan* rural and urban, young and old.

From the People: Maria’s Story (Bushenyi District)

Maria, a farmer from Kyamuhunga, has seen her income grow after joining her Parish Development Model SACCO. “Before, we sold raw milk at low prices. Now we have a small cooling center and make yoghurt,” she says with a smile.

Her story mirrors thousands across Uganda: moving from subsistence to commercial, from survival to success. That’s what the Manifesto wants for every household to *move from hand-to-mouth to hand-to-market*.

By the Numbers

- ✓ **GDP Growth:**
6.3% projected in 2026
- ✓ **Electricity Access:**
Expanded to **70%** of households
- ✓ **Road Network:**
Over **6,000** km paved since 2021
- ✓ **PDM Beneficiaries:**
Over **1,000,000** households accessing capital

“We don’t want promises; we want progress we can see. The new manifesto must be lived in our homes and we are optimistic.”
Joseph Adriko, boda rider, Arua.

AFDB APPROVES €217M FOR UGANDA–RWANDA KEY ROAD PROJECT

By Omulongo Annet, Freelance writer

The African Development Bank Group has approved an additional €217.37 million to accelerate completion of the Busega–Mpigi and Kagitumba–Kayonza–Rusumo Roads Project, strengthening regional connectivity between Uganda and Rwanda.

The Kagitumba–Kayonza–Rusumo Road is a major 208-kilometer road in Rwanda's Eastern Province that connects Kagitumba at the Uganda

border, passes through Kayonza, and ends at Rusumo on the Tanzania border while the Busega–Mpigi road project, also known as the Busega–Mpigi Expressway, is a major 27.3 kilometer dual carriageway road connecting the Busega neighborhood in Kampala to Mpigi town.

The funding will support the construction of new interchanges, bridges, toll plazas, and service lanes, including the Busega Interchange linking to

Kampala's Northern Bypass. These upgrades aim to ease congestion along the Northern Corridor, a vital trade route between Kampala and Kigali.

The Uganda section's total cost now stands at **€424.61 million**, up from **€176.26 million**. The Bank's contribution includes an ADB loan of **€188.18 million**, an ADF loan of **€28.31 million**, and a NEPAD IPPF grant of **\$1 million**. Uganda will provide **€30.98 million**.



☆ One of the 13 bridges along the Busega–Mpigi Expressway, showcasing ongoing progress on this vital transport corridor



An artist's impression of the Busega Interchange, the key junction linking the Kampala–Entebbe Expressway to the Northern Bypass

Once completed, the 27.3-km expressway will reduce travel time from over two hours to under 45 minutes, benefiting more than one million residents and traders. The project will also generate over 1,200 jobs – 30% reserved for women and youth – and empower local women through roadside entrepreneurship and skills development.

Additional components include seven new bridges and 54 km of lined drainage channels. Funding will also cover land compensation, project management, and capacity building for Uganda's Ministry of Works and Transport.

George Makajuma, the Bank's Principal Transport Engineer explained that this

project is more than a road but a lifeline for communities and a gateway for trade.

Construction under the new financing is set to resume in January 2026 and conclude by December 2029, with full project completion expected in 2030.

WHY 2026 WILL BE MY FIRST TIME TO VOTE

Martha Kyosimire,
Communication Officer,
GCIC

"I don't want to vote for the loudest voice or the coolest slogan. I want to vote with intention guided by facts, faith, and the fruit I've seen."

"Let each citizen remember, at the moment he is offering his vote, that he is executing one of the most solemn trusts in human society for which he is accountable to God and his country." **Samuel Adams**

Born and raised in Uganda, I have watched our political scene from a distance for far too long — from the campaign trails filled with promises and posters to the tense moments at the polls. Yet, for reasons I can't fully explain, I never felt compelled to vote. Perhaps it was laziness or the comfortable assumption



that others would do it for me.

But not this time. 2026 is my turning point. I have followed every step closely from the NRM primaries to the opposition selections, nominations, and now the countrywide campaigns. I've read manifestos, listened to speeches, and studied candidates. And yes, I already know who I'm voting for. Come January 15, 2026, I will step out and cast my first vote not as an observer, but as a participant in shaping my country's future.

Voting, I have come to realize, is not just marking a paper. It is my voice. It says, *I exist*. It says, *I care*. My vote counts and so does

yours.

For my presidential choice, I support President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, the NRM flagbearer. He is tried and tested. From leading a successful liberation struggle that ended years of dictatorship, to steering economic reforms that stabilized our nation, his record speaks for itself. Under his leadership, Uganda has enjoyed relative peace, regional influence, and steady growth in infrastructure and development.

As **Matthew 7:16** reminds us, **"By their fruit you will recognize them."** I have looked at the fruit. I have weighed the facts. I believe in continuity, experience, and steady progress.



So on that day, I will walk to the polling station and vote for President Museveni not because he is perfect, but because I have thought, prayed, and chosen intentionally. Voting is not just my duty it is my identity.



UGANDA WEEKLY FOCUS

Informing Minds
Inspiring Change

VOTER EDUCATION SERIES



UNDERSTANDING YOUR POWER: THE MEANING OF REPRESENTATION

“Your MP, Your Mirror:
What Representation
Really Means”

Every Vote, Every Voice

In a democracy, power ultimately belongs to the people. The 1995 Constitution of Uganda declares that *“all authority in the State emanates from the people who shall govern through their freely chosen representatives.”* Every time a citizen votes, they are not merely ticking a box they are delegating their voice,

their concerns, and their hopes to a representative who acts on their behalf.

Representation allows citizens to participate in decisions that shape their lives, from local development priorities to national policy. Through their elected leaders, the people express their will and consent on who governs them and how. This is why voter participation remains at the heart of democracy it is both a right and a responsibility.

Levels of Representation

Uganda's governance structure provides for representation at several levels, ensuring that citizens have a say in decisions that affect them locally and nationally.

At the national level, the **President** represents the entire nation and leads the executive arm of government.

At the local level, elected district, municipal, and subcounty chairpersons, councillors, and administrative unit leaders (LC I and LC II) bring decision-making closer to communities.

In Parliament, directly elected Members of Parliament, district women representatives, and special interest groups such as youth, persons with disabilities, workers, and the army ensure that diverse voices are heard.

Together, these structures form the bridge between citizens and the state, making it possible for people's voices to influence governance at every tier.

Qualities of a Good Representative

A good leader should be a true reflection of the people they serve. The *Electoral Commission's Voter Education Handbook* highlights that good representatives must demonstrate **integrity, humility, dedication, teamwork, and accountability**

They must listen, communicate effectively, make objective decisions, and place public interest above personal gain.

When citizens choose leaders who embody these values, democracy flourishes. When they fail to engage, representation becomes weak and power shifts away from the people it was meant to serve.

Why Every Vote Counts

The strength of Uganda's democracy lies in an active, informed electorate. Every ballot cast contributes to shaping the country's direction. Choosing to abstain is, in itself, a silent decision that allows others to decide the future on your behalf.

Your vote is your power, your voice, and your responsibility. When you vote, you transfer your voice to a representative who carries your dream for Uganda.

.....

GEN. OTAFIIRE SHOCKED BY MUSLIM EXTREMISTS IN YUMBE

Gen. Kahinda Otafiire, the Minister of Internal Affairs, must be deeply concerned by the recent events in Yumbe District, where members of the Muslim community reportedly attacked their fellow citizens of the Christian faith. Over the past few days, Muslims in Yumbe, led by the District Khadi, Sheikh Abdala Kassim, allegedly carried out violent acts targeting Christian residents engaged in the sale of pork and alcohol. Several businesses and pork-selling outlets were destroyed during the incident. The attackers claimed that the sale of pork in their district, where Muslims form the majority, was offensive to their faith. This was an unfortunate occurrence which, had the police not intervened promptly, could have resulted in significant loss of life.

Gen. Otafiire, known for his outspoken and often unconventional views on matters of religion and faith, must be

questioning what has gone wrong with our Muslim brothers in Yumbe. To begin with, Article 29(c) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda guarantees “the freedom to practice any religion and to manifest such practice, which includes the right to belong to and participate in the practices of any religious body or organisation, in a manner consistent with the laws of Uganda.” Therefore, the Muslim leaders in Yumbe who allegedly orchestrated attacks against their Christian counterparts for engaging in the sale or consumption of pork should be held accountable under the law.

Religious extremism, whether within the Muslim or Christian faith, is a grave threat to humanity. Such extremists act not out of devotion to the living God, but to mislead their followers into believing



Obed K. Katureebe

that they are divine messengers sent to rid the world of sin. As a result, their followers are often conditioned to accept their words without question.

While speaking at the requiem mass of his fellow UPDF comrade, the late Maj. Gen. Levi Karuhanga, at St. Luke Church in Ntinda some years ago, Maj. Gen. Kahinda Otafiire startled many men and women of the cloth when he openly expressed doubt about the second coming of Jesus Christ. “Personally, I am not sure about the so-called second coming of Jesus Christ. What I am sure of is that Jesus will not find me alive,” he said. He went on to add humorously, “But if I were Jesus, I would not return,

because if you people stoned him to death, then what would you do to him now that the world is full of nuclear weapons?”

As Ugandans, we need to reflect deeply on the gospel according to “St. Otafiire”, particularly his suggestion about how Jesus or Prophet Muhammad would react if they were to return to Uganda today. Indeed, we have distorted God’s message to such an extent that if the two holy men were to appear now, they would be utterly shocked by what they would find.

We have become such a selfish and uncultured group of believers that we are defiling this beautiful land that God entrusted to us. What is most disturbing and shameful is that we have carried our immoral behavior into places of worship, where the most gullible often gather, and have lured them into our deceitful and self-serving schemes.

There are countless stories of pastors and sheikhs across the country masquerading as preachers of God’s word, when they are

conmen and women who have mastered the art of deceit to extort money and property from their unsuspecting followers. Having realized that many of our people struggle with financial and health challenges, these impostors exploit their desperation, convincing them to part with their meagre savings in the false hope of receiving miracles or blessings after special prayers.

Some Ugandans living with HIV/AIDS have even been deceived into abandoning their medical treatment in favor of so-called healing prayers offered by these fake “men and women of God.” Tragically, many of them have died because of discontinuing the medication that had sustained them for years.

Perhaps these are the false prophets we were warned about in the Book of Matthew 7:15-16: ***“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles?”***

The Bible further cautions in Matthew 24:11: “Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many.” It continues to warn that in such times, numerous false prophets will appear, performing fake miracles and wonders to deceive God’s people.

Maybe Gen. Otafiire is right to suggest that perhaps our Lord Jesus Christ should delay His return, for we have become more sinful and corrupt than ever before. As a nation, we must begin serious conversations on establishing a regulatory framework for religious leaders. While this may not be an easy task, it is necessary because some of the actions of these so-called pastors and sheikhs amount to outright criminality. We could establish a legally mandated body to monitor and regularly inspect religious institutions nationwide to expose and decisively deal with those engaging in illegal activities under the guise of preaching the word of God.

The writer is the Ag. Executive Director Uganda Media Centre

ASPHALT SEALING WORKS PROGRESS ALONG JINJA HIGHWAY

Road maintenance efforts along the Jinja Highway have entered a new phase, with the In-House Construction Unit advancing asphalt sealing works from the recently completed Bulyantete section toward the Walusubi–Kampala Cement stretch. The intervention is part of ongoing government measures to ease traffic congestion and improve road safety,

targets key bottleneck areas that have long affected smooth travel between Lugazi and Jinja.

Engineers on-site say the works will enhance surface quality, extend pavement life, and ensure a safer, more efficient experience for motorists and commuters along this vital transport corridor



EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENTS IN EASTERN UGANDA (2021-2025)

TRANSFORMING ACCESS, QUALITY & INFRASTRUCTURE ACROSS TESO SUB-REGION

By Fortunate Ankunda, Public Affairs Officer,
Uganda Media Centre

Growth in School Enrolment

Across the Teso sub-region, Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Universal Secondary Education (USE) enrolments have surged steadily:

District	UPE		USE	
	2021	2025	2021	2025
Amuria	60,787	67,974	3,541	3,553
Bukedea	73,816	93,836	5,902	9,165
Kabera maido	36,687	43,599	2,317	2,673
Kalaki	53,559	62,266	2,527	3,097
Kapelebyong	30,070	41,105	2,796	3,222
Katakwi	40,568	59,289	3,528	6,067
Kumi	84,309	89,704	7,460	20,988
Ngora	42,476	44,454	5,200	6,916
Serere	85,018	114,045	6,277	9,171
Soroti District	52,417	63,539	2,862	3,779
Soroti City	22,965	24,618	6,912	8,015

Overall: Over **660,000 learners** are now enrolled in UPE schools across the 11 districts, with **more than 75,000** in USE institutions a strong indicator of improved access to education in Eastern Uganda.

Expansion of School Infrastructure

Over **40 new Seed Secondary Schools** and **hundreds of classroom blocks** have been constructed or rehabilitated since 2021. Highlights include:

- ✓ **Katakwi:** 6 new Seed Schools – Toroma, Okore, Akoboi, Okulonyo, Getom, and Palam
- ✓ **Bukedea:** Aligoi, Kabarwa, Kolir, Kwarikwari, and St. James Seed Schools
- ✓ **Amuria:** Amolo, Orungo, Apeduru, and Morungatuny Seed Schools
- ✓ **Kabera maido:** Aperkira and Oriamo Seed Secondary Schools
- ✓ **Kalaki:** Apapai, Kakure, and Katiti Seed Schools
- ✓ **Kapelebyong:** Alito, Akoromit, and Obalanga Seed Schools
- ✓ **Serere:** Kagwara, Olio, Ojetenyang, and Olikol Seed Schools

- ✓ **Kumi:** Dr. Aporu Okol Memorial and Ojie Seed Secondary Schools
- ✓ **Ngora:** Agirigiroi, Odwarat, and Kobwin Seed Schools
- ✓ **Soroti District:** Kamuda, Dakabela, and Asuret Seed Secondary Schools

In addition, hundreds of classrooms, laboratories, dormitories, and ICT blocks were constructed or rehabilitated significantly improving learning environments.



Improved infrastructure, seed schools, and Government bursary programs have been pivotal in keeping children- especially girls in school.

3. Teacher Recruitment and Staffing

Teacher numbers have steadily risen due to ongoing recruitment and deployment drives:

- ✓ **Bukedea:** 1,215 → 1,339 UPE teachers; 134 → 169 USE
- ✓ **Kaberamaido:** 557 → 656 UPE; 119 → 168 USE
- ✓ **Serere:** 1,296 out of 2,152 in UPE; 285 out of 305 in USE
- ✓ **Kumi:** 1,458 out of 1,652 in UPE; 219 out of 365 in USE
- ✓ **Soroti District:** 798 → 849 UPE; 89 → 132 USE
- ✓ **Soroti City:** 392 → 423 UPE; 231 → 246 USE

4. Reduction in Dropout Rates

School retention has greatly improved:

- ✓ **Bukedea:** Dropout reduced from **40% to 15%**
- ✓ **Kaberamaido:** **15% → 10%**
- ✓ **Ngora:** **30% → 22%**
- ✓ **Serere:** **31% → 19%** in UPE and **4.3% → 1.2%** in USE
- ✓ **Katakwi:** **40% → 30%**

5. Key Modern Facilities and Innovations

- ✓ **ICT & Science Laboratories:** Built in Amuria, Bukedea, Soroti, and Katakwi seed schools

Technical Institutes:

- ✓ Ecwou Memorial Technical Institute – Kalaki
- ✓ Epel Memorial Technical School – Katakwi
- ✓ Olio Community Politechnic – Serere
- ✓ Ongoing construction of Ongino Secondary &



Technical School – Kumi

- ✓ University Infrastructure: Anatomy block at Soroti University; Olympic-standard swimming pool at Teso College Aloet

Regional Impact Summary

- ✓ Over **40 new Seed Secondary Schools** constructed
- ✓ Over **650,000 primary learners** enrolled regionwide
- ✓ **Average dropout reduction:** 25–40% to below 15%
- ✓ **Teacher staffing levels:** Improved by over 20% regionwide
- ✓ **ICT & science labs:** Introduced in 8 districts
- ✓ **Tertiary expansion:** 5 new technical institutes and 1 new university facility

The transformation of Eastern Uganda’s education landscape from 2021–2025 reflects **Government’s sustained investment in access, quality, and equity**. New Seed Schools, enhanced teacher staffing, and improved learning environments have restored hope for thousands of learners setting the stage for a skilled, literate, and innovative generation.

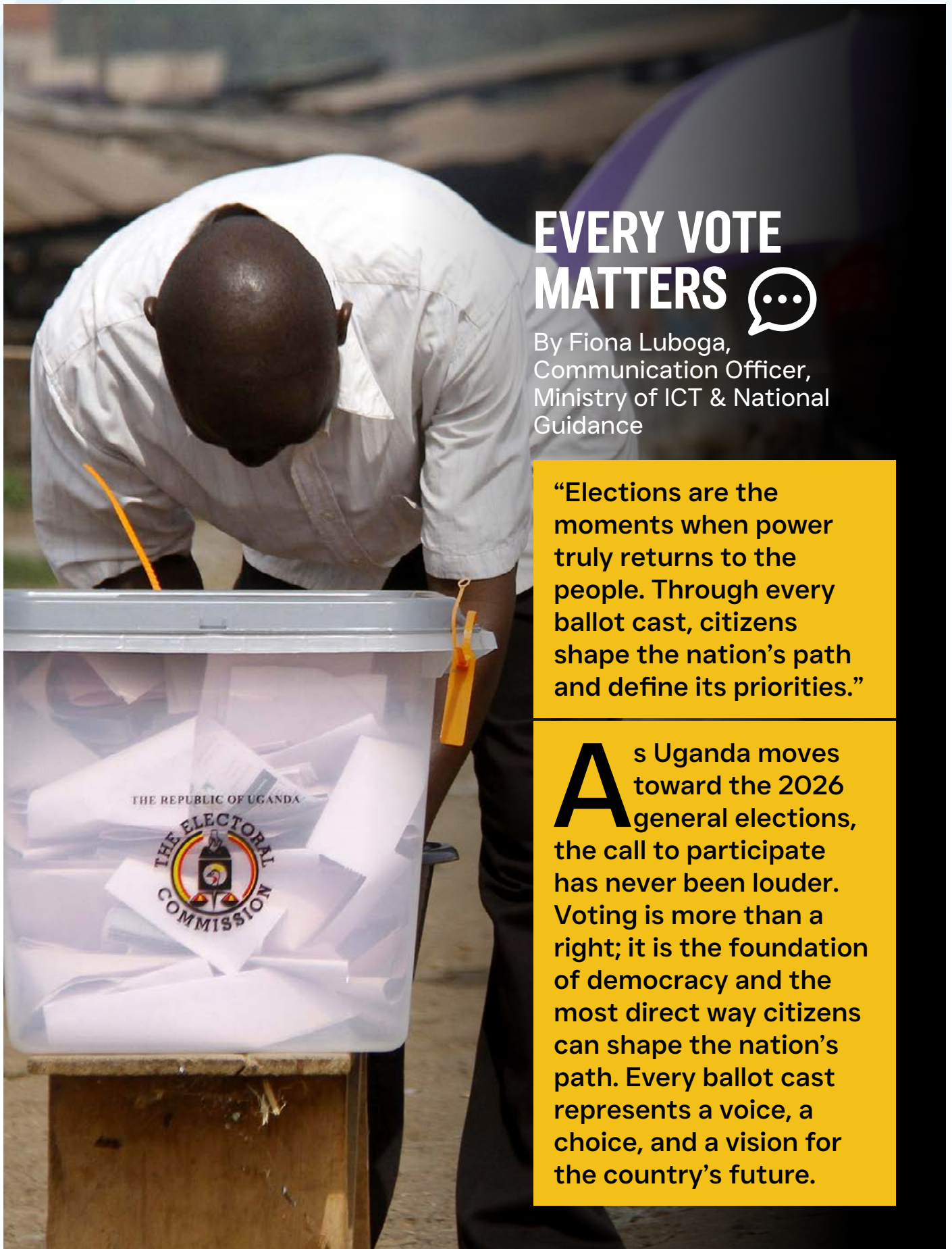
“Education remains the master key to community transformation.”
Uganda Weekly Focus, Education Desk - Uganda Media Centre

EVERY VOTE MATTERS

By Fiona Luboga,
Communication Officer,
Ministry of ICT & National
Guidance

“Elections are the moments when power truly returns to the people. Through every ballot cast, citizens shape the nation’s path and define its priorities.”

As Uganda moves toward the 2026 general elections, the call to participate has never been louder. Voting is more than a right; it is the foundation of democracy and the most direct way citizens can shape the nation’s path. Every ballot cast represents a voice, a choice, and a vision for the country’s future.



Elections are moments when power truly returns to the people. Through the vote, citizens decide who leads, how resources are managed, and what priorities define national progress. When people choose to stay silent, decisions are made on their behalf. That silence weakens democracy and limits accountability.

According to the Electoral Commission, the number of registered voters for the 2026 general elections is projected to reach about 22 million. EC Chairperson Justice Simon Byabakama noted that the figure reflects Uganda's growing population and underscores the importance of ensuring every eligible citizen participates meaningfully in the process.

Uganda's population, according to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, stands at 45.9 million people as of May 2024, growing at an average annual rate of 2.9% since 2014. This surge underscores the country's youthful and expanding electorate, with a substantial number of first-time voters anticipated to

cast their ballots in 2026. Their participation will shape how the country addresses challenges such as unemployment, digital inclusion, and social development.

The importance of voting goes beyond individual preference. It is a collective act that strengthens national unity and legitimacy. A high voter turnout demonstrates faith in the system and ensures that leaders derive their authority from the will of the people. When citizens participate fully, policies are more likely to reflect shared priorities such as healthcare, education, jobs, and security.

Women and marginalised groups also play a critical role. Their voices enrich the democratic space and ensure representation of diverse perspectives. Inclusive participation

makes governance more balanced and fairer, fostering policies that respond to the needs of all citizens.

Casting a vote is an act of responsibility that demands reflection, awareness, and integrity. It means taking time to understand candidates, question promises, and vote for ideas that align with both personal values and national interests.

Beyond election day, the spirit of participation should continue. Holding leaders accountable, following up on campaign pledges, and staying engaged in civic life complete the circle of democracy.

As the 2026 elections approach, the message from the Electoral Commission remains clear: every Ugandan's participation is vital. Democracy depends on the will of the people, and the future will be shaped by those who take part. Each vote counts. Each citizen matters. Uganda's tomorrow begins with the choices made today.

MARKETS DEVELOPMENT ACROSS UGANDA: TRANSFORMING LOCAL ECONOMIES

**By Carolyn Muyama,
Public Affairs Officer,
Uganda Media Centre**

Building Prosperity, One Market at a Time

Uganda's marketplace transformation is one of the country's most visible urban development success stories. Under the Markets and Agricultural Trade Improvement Programme (MATIP), the Government has constructed 21 modern markets across the country each designed to uplift livelihoods, improve sanitation, and formalize business for vendors,

farmers, and traders.

The programme, funded jointly by the Government of Uganda and the African Development Bank, has directly changed the lives of thousands of market vendors—most of them women and youth—by providing modern, hygienic, and well-managed trading environments.

Where the New Markets Stand

MATIP-2 Markets: Arua, Busia, Kitooro (Entebbe), Kabale, Kasese, Kitgum, Lugazi, Moroto, Masaka, Mbarara, Soroti, and

Tororo.

Each of these markets now serves as a regional economic hub linking farmers to urban consumers, stimulating rural production, and creating ripple effects of business growth in surrounding communities.

“I used to earn between UGX 500,000 and 1,000,000 in the old market. Now I make over UGX 3 million, save regularly, and have been able to buy three plots of land and educate my five children.”
**Margaret Cecilia,
Vendor, Tororo
Central Market**

The Impact in Numbers

Indicator	Before	After MATIP	Change
Annual Vendor Income	UGX 231B	UGX 351B	+52%
Average Farmer Income	UGX 1.5M	UGX 4.2M	+180%
Produce Trader Income	UGX 8.6M	UGX 10.5M	+UGX 1.9M
Vendors Accommodated	—	17,399	—
Jobs Created (Direct & Indirect)	—	70,000–90,000	—
New Businesses Induced	—	28,000	—



Tororo Central Market, Tororo Municipality built on 17,830 square meters, housing 1,246 facilities and accommodating 1,320 vendors (528 male and 792 female). The upgraded market offers clean, secure, and organized trading spaces that have transformed local commerce and boosted vendor incomes under the Markets and Agricultural Trade Improvement Programme (MATIP-2).

Inside the Modern Market

Each MATIP market features modern facilities that prioritize dignity, hygiene, and safety for all users:

- ✔ Lock-ups, produce stalls, and food courts
- ✔ Cold rooms for fish and meat storage
- ✔ Water, electricity, and sanitation services
- ✔ Childcare centres and restaurants
- ✔ CCTV security and public address systems
- ✔ Space for banking, microfinance, and clinics
- ✔ Value addition units (e.g., peanut butter processing)



Arua Central Market, Arua City – One of Uganda's largest urban markets, built on 18,333 square meters with 3,398 facilities and accommodating 3,836 vendors (1,534 male and 2,302 female). Completed in 2021 under MATIP-2, the market has become a thriving hub for trade in the West Nile region, enhancing livelihoods, business diversity, and local revenue generation



The arrival of H.E the President during Commissioning Ceremony of Kitgum Main Market – Kitgum Municipality on 9th October, 2023

These amenities have revolutionized the traditional market experience making trade more efficient, safe, and inclusive.

Women and Youth at the Heart of Progress

Over 70% of traders in the new markets are women and young people, many of whom now earn stable incomes and run registered enterprises. The

improved environment has also enhanced food safety and customer satisfaction while encouraging savings and business expansion.

Looking Ahead: MATIP-3

Building on the gains of Phases I and II, the Government is now rolling out MATIP-3, targeting 18 additional markets in towns including Masindi,

Nebbi, Kotido, Iganga, Mpigi, Kisoro, Karuguza, Nyahuka, Rukungiri, Ibanda, Bushenyi, Ntungamo, Koboko, Kumi, Bugiri, Kapchorwa, Mubende, and Buikwe (Njeru).

This new phase is expected to further expand market access, promote agro-trade, and strengthen urban economies across all regions.

GOVERNMENT COMMITS TO DEEPENING ACCESS AND USAGE OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

By David Sserumaga

high-level event brought together policymakers, financial sector leaders, and development partners to review progress and chart new strategies for inclusive growth through finance.

Presiding as Chief



Hon. Matia Kasaija, Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, poses for a group photo with delegates and key stakeholders during the Annual Financial Inclusion Forum 2025 at Sheraton Hotel Kampala

“Financial inclusion is not a solution but a means to the solution of poverty eradication – success must be measured not only by access, but by usage.” Prof. Augustus Nuwagaba, Deputy Governor, Bank of Uganda

The Annual Financial Inclusion Forum 2025 was held on November 6, 2025 at the Sheraton Hotel, Kampala

, under the theme ***“Access to Usage: Advancing Inclusive Financial Product Uptake in Uganda.”*** The

Guest, Hon. Matia Kasaija, Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, reaffirmed government’s commitment to accelerating access and usage of financial services across all segments of society. He was flanked by Professor Augustus Nuwagaba,



Deputy Governor of the Bank of Uganda, Prof. Augustus Nuwagaba, delivers remarks during the Annual Financial Inclusion Forum 2025 at Sheraton Hotel Kampala

Deputy Governor of the Bank of Uganda, who represented Governor Michael Atingi-Ego.

The Minister highlighted key milestones achieved under Uganda's financial inclusion agenda, noting that substantial progress has been made in expanding access to financial products and services through government-led programs.

Among the notable achievements, he cited:

- ✓ **Wealth Creation Initiatives:** Programs such as the Parish Development Model (PDM) and *Emyooga* continue to empower

communities at the grassroots, driving savings, enterprise growth, and inclusion.

- ✓ **Farmer and Business Financing:** Implementation of the Large-Scale Farmers Financing Scheme, Small Business Recovery Fund, and Agriculture Credit Facility, alongside capitalization of the Uganda Development Bank, has boosted access to affordable credit.
- ✓ **Agriculture Insurance:** The Uganda Agriculture Insurance Scheme has disbursed

over **UGX 40 billion**, benefiting **885,623 farmers** and covering agricultural loans worth **UGX 2.47 trillion**.

- ✓ **Capital Market Growth:** The Capital Markets Authority has expanded alternative financing options for both public and private sector investment.
- ✓ **Improved International Standing:** Uganda's removal from the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey list marks strengthened compliance and global confidence.
- ✓ **Banking Reforms:** The rebranding of PostBank to Pearl Bank symbolizes transformation into one of Uganda's leading performing banks.
- ✓ **New Mortgage Legislation:** The enactment of the **Mortgage Refinance Institution Act 2025** aims to address

loan maturity mismatches in the financial sector.

✓ **Microfinance Expansion:** The Microfinance Support Centre has opened a new branch in Gulu, aligning operations with **NDP IV** priorities.

✓ **SACCO Regulation:** The Bank of Uganda has licensed three large SACCOs, a move expected to enhance regulation and consumer protection in the sector.

In his remarks, Prof. Nuwagaba emphasized that true financial inclusion means leaving no one behind including women, persons with disabilities, and refugees. He urged financial institutions to design products that reflect the realities of affordability, trust, and user needs.

“Despite ongoing efforts, 37% of Ugandans remain excluded from the money economy. This is something we must address,” he said. “In 2013, only 23% of Ugandans had bank accounts; today that figure has risen to 73% a remarkable transformation.”

He concluded by noting that *financial inclusion is not an end in itself, but a means to eradicate poverty*. Success, he said, should be measured not just by access, but by actual usage of financial services.

The forum featured panel discussions on designing inclusive financial products for the underserved, mainstreaming green financial instruments for a climate-resilient Uganda, and building consumer trust in financial services signaling a stronger push toward an inclusive and sustainable financial future for all Ugandans.



Hon. Matia Kasaija, Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, presents a certificate of recognition to a participant

GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES MV RAFIKI TO BOOST ISLAND TRANSPORT

By David Muwonge, Public Affairs Officer, Uganda Media Centre



MV Rafiki, the newly launched government-supported vessel operated by Nation Oil Distributors Limited

The Government of Uganda has officially launched MV Rafiki, a modern passenger vessel operated by Nation Oil Distributors Limited, marking a major milestone in efforts to improve safe, affordable, and reliable transport for island residents.

and community representatives.

Speaking at the event, Gen. Katumba Wamala acknowledged delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic but reaffirmed government commitment to strengthening water transport infrastructure

He noted that government plans are underway to introduce larger vessels and construct additional docking piers on Buyovu, Kitobo, and Sserinya Islands to support safe landings and expand transport capacity across the region.

For years, residents in Kyamuswa County—comprising four sub-counties—have relied on cargo boats and small canoes, often risking capsizing and drowning. The arrival of MV Rafiki introduces a safer, more reliable transport option that will benefit residents, traders, tourists, and service providers.

The vessel has a capacity of 250 passengers and will charge UGX 15,000 for ordinary passengers and UGX 20,000 for VIP passengers, making it both accessible and affordable.

Resident District Commissioner Hon. Fred Badda expressed gratitude to President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni for prioritizing marine transport development in island regions. He urged Nation Oil Distributors Limited to fast-track



Residents of Bukasa Island celebrate and warmly welcome the Government delegation during the launch of MV Rafiki

The vessel will operate between Bukasa Island in Kalangala District and Nakiwogo landing site on the Entebbe peninsula.

The launch ceremony, held on Tuesday, 4th November 2025, was presided over by the Minister of Works and Transport, Gen. Edward Katumba Wamala, alongside senior government officials, local leaders,

across island communities.

“Efforts to develop stable marine transport in Kyamuswa County have faced setbacks, but we remain determined to build resilient infrastructure that fosters economic growth and enhances safety,” Gen. Edward Katumba Wamala, Minister of Works and Transport

construction of the Kiwungu docking pier to enable deployment of additional vessels.

developments to ensure compliance with safety standards and protect passengers.

access to markets, healthcare, education, and other essential services. Enhanced connectivity is expected to stimulate trade and accelerate development across the islands.

Hajji Sadala Musoke, operator of Nation Oil Distributors Limited, pledged adherence to strict marine safety regulations and highlighted the company's commitment to creating jobs for local residents.



Minister Gen. Edward Katumba Wamala poses with the Nation Oil Distributors Limited crew and staff aboard MV Rafiki after commissioning the vessel



Minister of Works and Transport Gen. Edward Katumba Wamala (centre) stands with government officials and leaders during the commissioning ceremony of MV Rafiki at Bukasa Island, Kalangala District

Chief Administrative Officer Charles Ssebandeke assured residents that government will closely monitor marine transport

Residents welcomed the new vessel with enthusiasm, expressing hope that improved transport will reduce travel costs and expand

“MV Rafiki will not only provide safer transportation but also open doors for employment and community growth,”
Hajji Sadala Musoke, Nation Oil Distributors Limited

The launch of MV Rafiki marks a major step forward in transforming marine transportation in Uganda's island districts, reflecting government's long-term vision of improving mobility, enhancing safety, and unlocking socio-economic potential for island communities.

GOVT OFFICIALS INSPECT OIL PROJECTS AS UGANDA EDGES TOWARD FIRST OIL

By Florence Mukankusi, Communication Officer, Ministry of ICT & NG



“This is a generational opportunity, and we must manage it responsibly for the benefit of every Ugandan.”

Ms. Lucy Nakyobe, Head of Public Service



A high-level government delegation commenced their inspection tour of key oil and gas operational sites in the Albertine Graben as Uganda prepares to enter the oil-producing phase on 29th October 2025. The team, led by the Head of Public Service and

Secretary to Cabinet, Ms. Lucy Nakyobe, went on a mission to assess the progress of operational sites and evaluating government readiness to deliver First Oil.

The delegation included the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance, Dr.

Aminah Zawedde, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, Eng. Irene Batebe, and the CEO of the Uganda National Oil Company (UNOC), Ms. Proscovia Nabbanja. The visit aimed to strengthen coordination among government agencies, review project timelines, and reinforce oversight of service delivery.

Speaking during the tour, Eng. Batebe reiterated Government's commitment to transparency and accountability throughout the oil development process. “This visit allows us to align government efforts and ensure all institutions are adequately prepared to support First Oil,” she said. “Our goal is to deliver a sector that benefits Ugandans through jobs, infrastructure, and long-term economic value.”

On Day 1, the officials visited the Kingfisher Development Area (KFDA) in Kikuube District, where production is



projected to reach 40,000 barrels of oil per day, contributing to Uganda's anticipated peak production of 230,000 barrels per day. They inspected critical facilities, including the crude oil treatment plant, gas processing units, water treatment systems, and power generation facilities.

Government figures show steady progress in the petroleum sector. To date, more than USD 7.5 billion has been invested in Uganda's oil projects, with USD 2.7 billion awarded to Ugandan

companies. Meanwhile, construction of the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) stands at 70% completion. Uganda is also advancing the 60,000-barrels-per-day refinery project and the Kabalega Industrial Park, both critical components of the oil value chain.

On Day 2, the team inspected the Tilenga Oil Project in Buliisa District, operated by TotalEnergies. Development works commenced in 2022 following the signing of the Final Investment Decision on 1st February

2022, and are expected to be completed by July 2026. The field will host a total of 420 wells—198 production wells and 198 water injection wells—of which 158 have been drilled so far. At full production, Tilenga will yield approximately 190,000 barrels of oil per day.

The delegation also witnessed the launch of the Kasuruban 2D seismic survey in the Bugungu Wildlife Reserve, where UNOC is collecting subsurface data across 1,909 kilometers. UNOC CEO, Ms. Proscovia



Nabbanja, emphasized the significance of the survey: “This seismic work strengthens Uganda’s data portfolio and enhances our capacity to make informed development decisions. It is a major step in building indigenous technical expertise.”

Officials further highlighted ongoing community support and resettlement efforts. A total of **235 houses** have been constructed for project-affected persons under Tilenga, alongside **177 houses**

for families affected by the EACOP route. Additionally, more than **14,000 Ugandans** have benefited from oil-and-gas-related skills training and certification programs.

Dr. Zawedde encouraged young Ugandans to pursue STEM careers, noting, “The oil and gas industry holds great promise for your future one built on skills, innovation, and opportunity. That is the cornerstone of Uganda’s digital and industrial growth.”

Ms. Nakyobe reaffirmed

Government’s focus on value for money and national interest. “We are here to ensure that public investment translates into real benefits for citizens,” she said. “Ugandans must see results in infrastructure, social services, and employment.”

Government maintains that the petroleum sector is central to Uganda’s industrialization agenda and will support the creation of new manufacturing hubs, logistics capacity, and local enterprise development.

The Steady Hand **STILL NEEDED**

I have heard the whispers, the weary sighs,
Of forty years beneath the same sunrise.
They say, "Let another lead, let the old guard fade,"
But they forget the storms that change has made.

Look across borders torn by haste,
Where power passes like a relay race
Each handover spilling dreams on the ground,
Each new anthem, a recycled sound.

I have seen nations crumble overnight,
Trading peace for the thrill of a fight.
Elections like tides that wash away
Every root before it finds its stay.

But here, we have built slowly, steady, strong
From the ashes of chaos, we wrote our song.
Roads where once there were only paths,
Schools where children dream and laugh.

We have seen the dawn of light where war once slept,
Fields that feed where widows wept.
A generation raised on peace's floor,
Now yearning to climb, to build, to soar.

Change is not in the swapping of chairs,
But in the spirit that leads, that dares.
A nation still mid-journey needs the guide
Who knows both valley and mountainside.

Museveni the steady hand, the seasoned eye,
Has watched storms form, and seen them die.
He carries the map drawn by sacrifice,
And still believes the dream has a price.

For forty years, he has tilled the ground,
And though the critics' drums still sound,
The fruits of labour now must bloom
Would you change the gardener too soon?

Let others learn, let the youth arise,
But wisdom must not be despised.
Until the torch is safely passed,
The captain must still steer the mast.

I have heard, I have seen, and I still believe
Uganda's story has more to weave.
So let him lead to the promised crest,
For nations rise when they finish their quest.



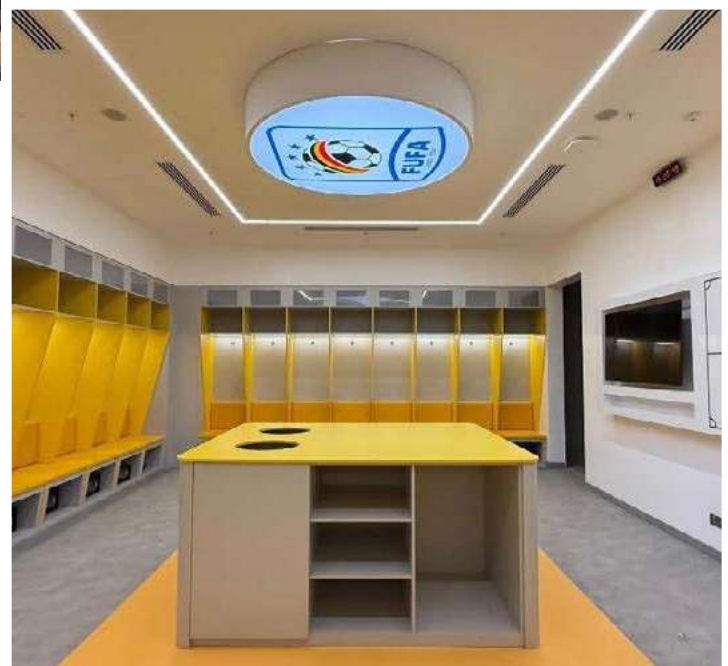
Hoima City Stadium

UGANDA'S NEW FRONTIER FOR SPORT, SAFARI, AND SOUL

By Catherine Namuddu, Public Affairs Officer,
Uganda Media Centre



Hoima City has just scored its biggest goal yet the completion of the magnificent Hoima City Stadium, a \$130 million architectural masterpiece that fuses football passion with tourism potential. As Uganda prepares to co-host AFCON 2027 with Kenya and Tanzania, this stunning 20,000-seater arena a gateway to adventure and a symbol of national pride.



Built in record time by Summa Construction of Turkey, the stadium's sleek design, vibrant national colors, and world-class facilities from a FIFA-grade pitch to floodlit tracks and a multi-purpose indoor arena make it a crown

jewel of East African infrastructure. Beyond the pitch, the project has sparked job creation and business growth across the Bunyoro sub-region, embodying Uganda's vision for inclusive development. "This stadium is a Christmas

gift to Uganda delivered ahead of schedule," remarked Minister of State for Sports Peter Ogwang, celebrating the milestone.

But Hoima's magic doesn't end with football. Just a short drive from the city is Murchison Falls National Park, where the Nile forces its way through a narrow gorge in a powerful and beautiful scene. You can also enjoy chimpanzee trekking in Kibale Forest or learn about the rich traditions of the Bunyoro-Kitara Kingdom. Whatever you choose, Hoima offers experiences you will never forget.

As new hotels, eco-lodges, and restaurants spring up, Hoima is evolving into Uganda's next tourism hotspot alive with street food aromas, drumming rhythms, and the hum of anticipation for AFCON 2027.

So pack your bags, catch a flight via Uganda Airlines, and experience Hoima where the roar of the crowd meets the call of the wild. Come for the goals, stay for the gorillas, and discover the heartbeat of Africa.



KATONGA BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION REACHES KEY MILESTONE

By Sarah Nanteza, Public Affairs Officer, Uganda Media Centre



Minister of Works and Transport, Gen. Edward Katumba Wamala (in grey), engages engineers during an inspection of ongoing works at Katonga Bridge



Construction crews guide a SANY crane lifting a precast concrete beam into position at Katonga Bridge along the Kampala–Masaka Highway

The reconstruction of Katonga Bridge along the Kampala–Masaka Highway has entered an advanced phase, marking significant progress toward restoring full connectivity along one of Uganda’s busiest transport corridors.

On November 1, 2025, Minister of Works and Transport, Gen. Edward Katumba Wamala, inspected the ongoing works and confirmed that the main support structures (abutments) have been fully completed. He noted that all precast concrete

beams which will form the foundation for the bridge deck are ready and will soon be mounted onto the support structures.

The inspection revealed steady progress not only on the bridge itself but also on the approach roads, which are under active construction to ensure smooth linkage once the bridge is reopened.

The Katonga Bridge was severely damaged by flooding in 2023, disrupting transport between Kampala and Masaka for months and forcing motorists onto alternative routes. The current reconstruction, led by the Ministry of Works and Transport, aims to deliver a more resilient and climate-proof structure capable of withstanding future flooding incidents.

Once complete, the new bridge is expected to restore seamless travel, enhance trade, and improve road safety along the critical central corridor connecting Kampala to southwestern Uganda.

UGANDA ADOPTS UNIFIED APPROACH TO DISEASE CONTROL



Minister of Health Dr. Jane Ruth Aceng Otero greets delegates during an exhibition tour at the First National Communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases Conference and 19th Joint Annual Scientific Health Conference (NACNDC & JASHC 2025) at Speke Resort Munyonyo

By Kenson Bugembe

Uganda has concluded the landmark First National Annual Communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases Conference (NACNDC), held jointly with the 19th Joint Annual Scientific Health Conference (JASHC) at Speke Resort Munyonyo. The five-day gathering brought together more than 500 health leaders, researchers, development partners,

policy makers, and frontline practitioners to chart a unified path for tackling Uganda's dual disease burden.

The conference theme, "Unified Action Against Communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases," set the tone for robust discussions on integration, innovation, and collaboration across health programs and sectors. Delegates explored advancements in diagnostics, digital

health, community engagement, One Health approaches, epidemic preparedness, health financing, and integrated service delivery.

Officiating the closing, Minister of Health Dr. Jane Ruth Aceng Otero emphasized that Uganda's commitment to disease prevention and people-centred care remains unwavering.

"Disease prevention, early detection, and equitable access to quality services remain our top priorities... The structure and breadth of this conference reflect our commitment to unified action in disease prevention, control, and care," she noted .

She praised the growing role of community-based health initiatives, highlighting progress under the Community Health Extension Workers program and the strategic shift toward integrated models of care that align with NDP IV and the Health Sector



Permanent Secretary Dr. Diana Atwiine follows proceedings during the plenary session of the inaugural NACNDC and JASHC 2025 conference

Strategic Plan.

Permanent Secretary Dr. Diana Atwiine echoed this commitment, stressing integration and efficiency in a constrained financing environment.

“This conference is a clear testament that the leadership of the Ministry is more than committed to ending diseases through an integrated approach... We must protect our gains despite financing challenges,” she said.

Dr. Atwiine underscored

the importance of partnerships between government, academia, and implementing partners, noting that evidence-based policies are key to achieving national health goals.

The conference closed with calls for accelerated implementation of jointly-developed recommendations, deeper community participation, and continued investment in research, digital tools, and resilient health systems. As

Uganda faces persistent infectious diseases and rising NCDs, speakers urged stakeholders to sustain momentum beyond the conference.

With firm resolve and collaborative leadership, Uganda has signaled a new era in health system integration and innovation – uniting science, policy, and action toward a healthier nation.

UGANDA LAUNCHES NATIONWIDE FMD VACCINATION DRIVE



Lt Col (Rtd) Dr. Bright Rwamirama, Minister of State for Agriculture addresses the Media at Uganda Media Centre

Kampala, November 4, 2025 – The Government of Uganda has officially launched a country-wide Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) vaccination campaign supported by a farmer cost-recovery model, marking a major shift in the fight against livestock disease.

The programme, announced by Lt Col (Rtd) Dr. Bright Rwamirama, Minister of State for Agriculture, will see all susceptible livestock including cattle, goats, sheep, and pigs vaccinated twice a year starting January–February 2026.

Uganda has 44.5 million animals at risk of FMD, and about 70% of households depend on livestock.

Dr. Rwamirama said Uganda is transitioning from emergency, small-scale vaccination to a nationwide biannual system to break recurring cycles of outbreaks and animal movement restrictions.

“This is a decisive step to protect livelihoods, stabilise markets, and build a resilient livestock sector. Sustained vaccination is the only long-term solution”

Farmers will pay UGX 8,000 per cow and UGX 4,000 per goat or sheep, covering the vaccine cost only. Government will handle vaccinators, logistics, storage, and surveillance.

Payments will be made through Post

Bank Uganda, Housing Finance Bank, mobile money, and agents, with funds deposited into a Revolving Fund at Bank of Uganda to ensure consistent vaccine supply.

A National Farmer Onboarding Exercise has started. Each farmer will register once through District Veterinary Officers and receive a Unique Farmer Identifier. Vaccination will only proceed upon proof of payment, and certificates will later be required for animal movement and market access.

District veterinary teams, farmer organisations, local leaders, transporters, and processors will coordinate mobilisation, vaccination points, and compliance. Special attention will be given to pastoral and remote communities.

“Together, we will build herd immunity and unlock markets for our farmers,” Dr. Rwamirama noted.

UGANDA WEEKLY FOCUS



ugandaweeklyfocus@gmail.com

Subscribe or send stories, photos,
and development updates to:



@UgWeeklyFocus