

The Rwenzori Region’s Annual Leadership Retreat – “Kasunga 3” (4-6 April, 2008)

AGENDA

The theme was turning “collective will” into a “collective action”.

After everyone had introduced themselves, Alex Ruhunda proposed the retreat theme of “turning collective will into collective action” – moving from donor-driven agendas that emphasize the planning over the implementation, to driving our own priorities and both planning them from our real starting points *and* implementing them well. Everyone was welcome as the Kasunga meeting’s role was reaffirmed as resolutely non-political. It aims to be fully inclusive, enabling all factions and interests in the region to come together to achieve common goals like poverty eradication and ‘prosperity for all’ more quickly and effectively.

Progress since the last retreat (Kasunga, May 2007) was reviewed, before moving to the main four agenda items. First the keynote address from Dr Kiyunga outlined the major potential for the economic growth region that can only be realized with effective cooperation amongst leaders. Second, additional guidance was obtained from the whole group on the region’s development priorities – opportunities where integrated regional activity will “add value” over what would otherwise happen. Third, the lack of an effective shared working culture was discussed – this is distinct from the varied family and tribal cultures in the region – one that will allow people from within and beyond the region to work together effectively and efficiently. Finally an organised and integrated approach to increase development momentum by adding an ongoing capability to guide regional initiatives between the annual Kasunga retreats was agreed, initially focused on research, selection, and building consensus, and later moving to implementation.

The full Agenda appears as Appendix 1

ATTENDEES

Attended by over 60 of the region’s leaders, including keynote speaker Defence Minister Dr Crispus Kiyonga, who stayed for the full two days of meeting, this third annual retreat was seen by all as a big success. Also attending were four other MPs, some district LC5s, ACAOs and Planning Officers, and various other District Officers from the five districts of Bundibugyo, Kabarole, Kamwenge, Kasese and Kyenjojo. They were joined by two ex-ministers, RDCs and Civil Society leaders, the University Chancellor, Kasunga Chair and KRC Director Alex Ruhunda, KRC facilitators, KRC consultant John Lamb, several NGO workers, two French embassy attachés and other supporting guests.

A full List of Attendees appears as Appendix 2

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Defence Minister and Bukonzo West MP, Dr Kiyonga delivered a strong message of support, as he outlined the role of leadership, and priority opportunities. He confirmed that history, geography and infrastructure bind the region, and that there are many opportunities to increase our GDP and home incomes. This is supported by government programmes like prosperity for all (PFA), our rich natural resources for agriculture and tourism and by realized and planned infrastructure improvements like paved roads to all districts, Kasese airport development and railway restoration. However, all these infrastructure improvements will significantly impact economic growth only if the response is well organized regionally.

Two types of approach were recommended. First to look at scaling up activities we already do well – tea, cocoa (processing), coffee (organic farming and wet processing), passion fruits, dairy farming (milk processing), and perhaps honey. For tea this might include public

support to nurseries and research into performance of different tea types. Second to look at new initiatives that will be more effective if coordinated regionally, like integrated tourism (hotel and catering management, accommodation standards and monitoring, technical assistance to investors, training tour guides, etc.), organic farming and infrastructure development for water and irrigation, power supply, financial services, etc.

Another reason for regional development coordination is to enable us to gain much more presence and leverage as we work with partners from beyond the region, including other regions, national government, private companies, NGOs and other donors.

Dr Kiyonga suggested a ‘roadmap’ of targets, milestones be prepared, along with developing an effective framework for implementation. He also reminded us that security and stability are critical if we are to realize any of this vision. Security concerns may accelerate the development of Kasese airport, as it is strategic for western border defence.

Finally Dr Kiyonga talked about the roles to make this happen, and proposed:

- Parliamentary group to identify national investment opportunities and advocate
- District Executive Committees to coordinate priorities, budgets and programmes, and fight corruption
- District councils to follow up implementation and link to CBO and NGO participation
- CBOs and NGOs to work within agreed areas
- Donors to provide financial and technical assistance, including help with market studies

SUMMARY OF AREAS COVERED

Broad Needs and Opportunities

Education, Food Production, Health and Water were the highest priorities for the attendees overall, with concurrent Regional Planning and Environmental/Conservation Management. Tourism was next. Population management education is also a new national initiative to consider, as it is a substantial factor in all of the top five categories selected. This is indicative only – specific programmes in these areas were not being considered, so everyone did not vote on exactly the same actions or value to the region.

Developing an Effective Working Culture

The lack of an effective shared working culture was discussed – distinct from the varied family and tribal cultures in the region – one that will allow people from within and beyond the region to work together effectively and efficiently. The meeting reviewed many issues involved in learning to adapt family/agricultural cultures to the needs of effective ‘business-like’ working environments, and saw solutions in very actively trying to remove all sense of fear and threat in tackling these issues, plus more frequent and specific discussion with responsible individuals clarifying expectations, checkpoints and feedback mechanisms.

A major opportunity appears to be in learning more ‘operational teamwork’ skills to share and own a collective mission, to plan together to achieve it, and to knowingly take charge of – and keep coordinated – a set of complementary roles and responsibilities. Planning ahead to arrive on time for meetings (at least for people without the tough schedules of politicians) seemed to be a major opportunity – a learned participant observed that other East African countries do much better than Uganda in this regard. Specific actions for leaders were identified to set strong examples and provide proactive and reactive micro-coaching to key people with whom they work. Developing this ‘common’ working culture can also create a

parallel pathway to resolving local differences – as it creates success for everyone working together across cultural boundaries, it tends to diminish each person’s focus on the need to resolve differences which are historically based. This is part of Rwanda’s recovery strategy.

The Development Pathway

Following Alex’s introductory remarks about the way donor-driven agendas leave communities alienated from their own responsibilities, John Lamb reviewed an analysis of development pathways, showing why the present model was often not successful in achieving sustainable progress. It prevents effective learning, both at the governance and project execution levels, and usually excludes the wisdom of the region’s best leaders from guiding programmes to sustainable success. Amidst the array of relatively un-coordinated projects, the key to effective and sustainable development is to migrate to a structure within which the region itself takes over management of an increasing number of development projects, and focuses only on donors who support that. The Rwenzori region can learn to develop, plan and run them in a “best practice” way that outside organizations seldom achieve. This structure will also enable effective programme coordination between government, civil society and donors at all levels and stages – something not possible now.

AGREED WAY FORWARD

Build regional database for evidence-based decisions and programmes

In ‘taking charge’ of development, Dr Kiyonga and John both strongly emphasized the need for the choices made to be “evidence-based”. This requires good data, research and analysis, to understand the relative added value of initiatives. The step the districts took with KRC/John in February, beginning to build a consistent database of key development metrics, needs to be completed and maintained. Analytical models should be explored to understand relative value and trade-offs, and measurement of GDP by districts and region should be added. Each proposed programme should be carefully researched to make sure it is fundamentally sound and represents high expected value for the region

Forming a Rwenzori Development Leadership Group

It was agreed to create a provisional Development Leadership Group (RDLG) to ‘represent’ the broad Kasunga group in guiding regional development initiatives during the year – a kind of interim steering role. This group will guide the evaluation of new ideas, help establish the priorities and then advocate for them. It will start to fill out a recommended ‘road map’. Its LC5s will keep this coordinated with district programmes, and it will look to ensure an effective regional management process is created as programmes move to implementation.

The RDLG will initially be made up of all LC5s, a male and female MP, plus the head of RANNET (local civil society network), the regional Presidential Advisor, and a donor if one with specific commitment to these activities in the region can be qualified. Chaired by The Hon Tom Butime – who has held five Ministerial positions, is a local farmer and MP for Mwenge North – and supported by Kamwenge MP Florence Hashaka, this team will work through District CAOs and planners for District resources. As agreed, all ministers from the region will be asked to advise the RDLG and become advocates for agreed priority regional programmes. LC5s and MPs will include some meeting expense support for this regional initiative including ‘Kasunga 4’ in next year’s individual district and national budgets.

Building ongoing coordination during the year

MPs present agreed to try to come together as a regional group and elect a chair (Tom Butime was proposed) to discuss the regional interests and development initiatives, to have

input and to work together to advocate for priorities. Other RDLG members will maintain coordination with their own peer groups – the Presidential Adviser with the President and RDCs, the Chair of RANNET with Civil Society. Also, when ready to join, the Elders representative will coordinate amongst regional elders’ groups, and the Youth representative will coordinate amongst regional youth groups.

Forming a “Think Tank”

The Development Leadership Group will be supported by a ‘think tank’ led by a focal technical person based at Mountains of the Moon University for research and evaluation assistance, including bringing in expertise when necessary and working closely with the district planners and government research teams. The ‘think tank’ will facilitate definition of regional value addition areas, will recommend terms of reference for studies and provide a diplomatic entry point to begin influencing regionally-coordinated planning at district levels. As the existing regional research organization KRC has recently affiliated with the university, this is a natural progression. KRC facilitation will also support these processes. Follow up on this recommendation needs the support of the regional parliamentary group and funding may be sought from Government or donors.

Targeted Outputs during the year leading to Kasunga 4 (K4)

- (a) financial contributions to Kasunga initiative from districts (modest, from the private and public partnerships category) and a symbolic contribution from the parliamentary group
- (b) each district taking the economic activities that are working well to higher scale
- (c) ‘think tank’ focal technical person in place, links established with district planners, terms of reference for at least three ideas identified for viability study and searching for (or found) funding (government and/or donor) for these
- (d) district councils formally briefed with written text for understanding and general support
- (e) regional parliamentary group reorganized to play a supporting role in the K3 initiative
- (f) ‘think tank’ has further articulated practical ways the partnerships can play roles in adding value to development at both district and regional levels
- (g) Someone (eg Hon Tom Butime) confirmed as leader of the region’s Parliamentary Group

Also, the specific recommendation was made to probe the opportunity to transform Kabarole’s District Agricultural Training Information Centre (DATIC) into a regional Rwenzori centre for agricultural *research* and extension services.

Kasunga 4 (K4)

It is anticipated that this meeting will review progress towards regional programmes, make recommendations about specific opportunities and priorities, and see how our mechanisms to manage progress through the year have been working. It may decide to fine tune them, and look at building strong advocacy skills for our regional initiatives. K4 will also revisit the challenges of creating a ‘common’ working culture the Rwenzori area, assessing progress, learnings and further opportunities.

Value of Regional Initiative

Dr Kiyonga offered enthusiastic encouragement in his closing address on Sunday afternoon, highlighting the many opportunities identified to make ‘one’ equal ‘five’, as the five Districts work together to develop as a region. Taking thematic guidance from the retreat, the Leadership Group will identify, validate and help establish the opportunities where regional scale adds value, using a cooperative and evidence-based approach, as it builds capability to strengthen and accelerate them for the benefit of all the districts and their communities.

Decisions and Responsibilities – Kasunga Three, 4th–6th April, 2008

	DECISION	RESPONSIBILITY
1	Establish Rwenzori Development Leadership Group (RDLG) to influence and coordinate regional ‘value added’ development initiatives – guide research, prioritize, recommend and advocate.	Tom Butime with KRC/John facilitating
2	Establish Regional Development “Think Tank” – focal technical person & evidence-based team tracking information, feeding growing knowledge/analysis to RDLG	Mountains of the Moon University with KRC (finding/hiring experts and consultants when necessary)
3	Complete the establishment of vital regional development data collection/maintenance . Add local GDP data	LC5s > CAOs > District Planners
4	Rwenzori MP group meet periodically to review Rwenzori issues and opportunities	Rwenzori MPs, suggest elect a chair (perhaps Tom Butime?)
5a	Build Kasunga initiative in District Budgets	Michael - LC5s
5b	Build Kasunga initiative in National Budgets	RDLG, other MPs
6	Every day, coach individuals and groups in developing a common stronger professional work culture in the region	All leaders
7	Recommend evaluate tea research and extension opportunities in Kyenjojo and Kabarole, and reaching beyond	RDLG guiding the “Think Tank”, facilitated by KRC
8	Examine ways to make DATIC a regional centre for agricultural extension services, including research on all aspects of production (eg species, disease and pest control) and training	RDLG guiding the “Think Tank”, facilitated by KRC
9	Prepare K4 to focus on advocacy skills, review of RDLG progress, adjustments, regional priority needs/opportunities/issues	KRC, working with RDLG

KRC –Kabarole Research and Resource Centre DATIC –District Agricultural Training & Information Centre

APPENDIX 1 – AGENDA

Friday 4th April

Dinner and watch video from Kasunga 2

Welcome – Alex Ruhunda, KRC Director

Saturday 5th April (am)

Introductions/New Issues/Major Changes /Lessons Learned in Last Year – all

Welcome, Opening Remarks and Agenda – Alex Ruhunda, KRC Director

Keynote address: Security & Economic Empowerment

– Hon. Dr. Crispus Kiyonga, Minister of Defence

Kasunga 2 (May 2007) Summary & Progress on Actions – Chris Busiinge, KRC

District Leaders' February 2008 Workshop Recommendations

– John Lamb, KRC

Saturday 5th April (pm)

Creating Development Databases and Models – John Lamb, KRC

Role of Leadership & Regional Government Priorities

– Hon Adolf Mwesige Minister General Duties – OPM

Discuss/Vote on our Priorities – John Lamb

Characterize Good Leadership – John Lamb

Contrast Family and Working Cultures – our gap – John Lamb

How to bridge the gap (break outs and group discussion) – John Lamb

Seeds of Success (video) – John Lamb

Sunday 6th April (am)

Review Governance Initiative – John Lamb

Discuss leaders team, scope, design team, other input – John Lamb, all

Final Planning Input (all together) – John Lamb

Confirm Decisions and Next Steps – John Lamb

Closing Address – Hon. Dr. Crispus Kiyonga

APPENDIX 2 – ATTENDEES at Kasunga 3, 4th–6th April, 2008

	NAME	Portfolio	District/Organisation	E-mail	TELEPHONE
1	Dr. Brian Asimwe	MP-Ntoroko County	Bundibugyo		772.500.838
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10	BUTIME John	FDC	Kabarole		782.748.61
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12	EDWARD B RUGUMAYO	Chancellor/Elder	Kabarole		772.451.662
13	GODFREY NYAKAHUMA	NRM Chairperson	Kabarole		
14	HALIMA WAKAABU	Woman Leader	Kabarole		772.590.066
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21	Patrick Rubongoya	Private sector	Kabarole		712.003.799
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23	BESISIRA Ignatius	RDC	Kamwenge		
24	GERALD TWEBAZE	District Speaker	Kamwenge		774.009.953
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27	Dr. KIYONGA, Hon. Crispus	MP/Defence Minister	Kasese	ckiyonga@infocom.co.ug	
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29	Rev. Canon Julius B Kitaghenda	LC V Chairperson	Kasese		772.875.070

30	Wilson Isingoma	RDC	Kasese			
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33	Butime, Hon. Tom	MP-Mwenge North	Kyenjojo			782.756.516
34	Hon. Kasoro Atwooki Silver	District Speaker	Kyenjojo			772.519.810
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37	KASORO ATWOOKI SILVER	District speaker	Kyenjojo		silveratwoki@yahoo.com	772.518.818
38	RUKAMBE Isiah	Youth councilor	Kyenjojo			
39	TIBAKANYA GETRUDE	DEO	Kyenjojo		tibakanyagertrude@yahoo.com	772.669.575
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44	BUSINGE Charles	Former DFID	Rwenzori			
45	KABANDA OBEDI	RANNET	Rwenzori			
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66	JYOTI UPADAHYAY	Intern	KRC		
67	KARINA Mouslid	Volunteer	KRC		
68	GUMISIRIZA Chris	French Embassy	Kampala		
69	Sarah AYITO	French Embassy	Kampala		
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