

... public
... a role in community
health and individual well-being. It
has even been asserted that mental
well-being is enhanced when people
are out with families and friends and
know a place "to go" is available.

This is not withstanding the fact
that the location houses probably

... benefits such as a refund or waiver?

On the flip side, lack of public
toilets tends to spoil the party and
hence perimeter walls, street corners,

... in exchange for some token benefits
such as a refund or waiver of certain
tax or endorsement and or a higher
rating and public recognition and
certification as CSR practitioner?
Many restaurants and hotels are
already delivering well in this area
and all they may need from KCCA is
recognition of their efforts to offset

When this is done, KCCA will have
demonstrated that it is not all about
policing toilet manners but delivering
vital amenities to the city dwellers
like Abtriga.

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Why we should all regularly donate blood

Over the past two months, there has been severe shortage of blood in hospitals across the country. This shortage is not a once in a time event but has been a recurrent problem occurring whenever students are on holiday. The difference this time was that the problem was more pronounced.

What is the donated blood used for?

Blood transfusion saves lives and at the time blood is needed, that pint is the hope between life and death.

I work in the Acute Care Unit of Mulago hospital where we receive critically ill children and I have the difference a unit of blood makes so many times.

There are times you will see us running around like mad men and women looking for a unit of blood to save the life of a child. Unfortunately, this scenario does not only occur in Mulago, but is common in all emergency units in the country.

The challenge in Mulago is exaggerated because other hospitals refer patients to us, if they have no blood.

Most of the donated blood is given to children with severe anaemia due to malaria, children with sickle cell anaemia, people of all ages requiring surgery, women who have lost so much blood while giving birth or following a miscarriage, people involved in road traffic accidents and patients with cancer.

These are our brothers and sisters, our nieces and nephews, or neighbours but even if you are well, you may never know when you will be knocked down by a boda or be involved in a car crash, fracture a leg and end up needing blood.

How much blood do we need in Uganda and who can donate blood?

The provision of a constant supply of safe blood and in adequate amounts should be an integral part of every country's national health program.

Blood is not manufactured in



some factory somewhere but has to be donated freely by someone and so, also provided freely to whoever needs it.

Donated blood expires after about 30 days and so, donations have to be continuous to maintain supply. It is, therefore, the responsibility of every adult capable of donating blood to do so, not once, but regularly.

Each healthy adult male (18 years or

older) can donate blood once every three months and healthy female adults once every four months.

Blood transfusion services rely on people of such goodwill to obtain blood.

With a population of about 39 million, Uganda requires at least 390,000 units of blood every year.

To achieve this target, the World Health Organisation estimates that each country should at a minimum have 1% of its people donating blood at least once every year.

Unfortunately, Uganda Blood Transfusion Service only collects 200,000 - 250,000 units every year and herein lies part of the problem.

The challenge to you today

My challenge to all adult Ugandans, but especially to you, who is reading this paper today, is get up, go and register as a blood donor, donate a unit and make a commitment to donate blood regularly.

Let us not leave this responsibility to our young people or hope

someone else will do it. Let us take charge and give life. That blood you held on would have saved someone's life yesterday.

Do not fear to donate blood. An adult has more than five litres of blood and you will donate less than half a litre at a time.

Moreover, your body will quickly replenish what you gave out. Mobilise two friends or workmates to come with you to the blood collection centre to donate. You would have saved several lives by these two actions.

Since Uganda Blood Transfusion Service made the call, the effort to donate has been tremendous.

Let this be the beginning of change and let us sustain it by continuing to donate otherwise, another crisis will crop up in a few months' time.

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