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By Vivien Nakitende

Rising financial hardship in Kampala is increasingly being blamed for domestic violence, family breakdown and children dropping out of school, a crisis local leaders say demands urgent economic intervention at community level.

Local leaders say the pressure of meeting basic needs, especially school fees, rent and food, has heightened tensions in many homes.

Moses Luyinda, the Rubaga division councillor for Najjanankumbi, said financial hardship remains one of the leading triggers of domestic violence cases reported to local councils and police in the Kampala Metropolitan area.

It is estimated that roughly 33% of Ugandan households experience GBV while 56% of women aged 15-49 have experienced physical violence, according to the 2023 police report.

"Domestic violence is very common, and the main cause is financial hardship," Luyinda said, noting that disputes often arise when families fail to meet their responsibilities, with children sometimes forced out of school as a result.

Residents echoed similar concerns,

Financial strain fuelling domestic violence



NRM's Majambere (right) speaking during the launch of a SACCOS at Kabuusu, Kampala on Monday

linking shrinking incomes to rising stress levels within households.

It is against this backdrop that the NRM chairperson for Rubaga and senior presidential advisor on Buganda affairs, Ivan Majambere Kamuntu Ssemakula, launched a savings and credit co-operative

society (SACCOS) aimed at cushioning vulnerable households from deepening economic stress.

Dubbed 'Step Forward SACCOS', the scheme was unveiled at its offices in Kabuusu near the Monalisa area in Kampala on Monday.

Majambere, one of its founders,

said the initiative seeks to strengthen household incomes by enabling low-income earners to save and access affordable credit at an annual interest rate of 8%.

He contributed sh200m to capitalise the SACCOS, describing the move as both a personal commitment to community empowerment and a response to the growing economic strain among residents.

Jane Nakitto, a Rubaga resident, said the SACCOS brings hope at a time when many families are struggling to stay afloat.

"People's incomes are very strained these days, yet the needs are many, including school fees. But now that we have had the opportunity to join this SACCOS, we can see hope," she said.

She added that beyond financial services, the SACCOS offers counselling support to help families manage economic stress and resolve disagreements before they escalate.

POLITICAL CELEBRATION

Majambere said instead of organising

post-election celebrations following President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni's victory in the 2026 presidential election, he chose to invest in a long-term economic solution.

According to Electoral Commission results, Museveni secured about 71.65% of the vote, defeating his main challenger, Robert Kyagulanyi Sentamu, who garnered 25% in a race that featured eight candidates. Majambere said establishing a SACCOS aligns with the President's principle of "Okuceenuula" – helping one another to rise – by encouraging collective savings and investment instead of short-lived festivities.

SAVING FOR DEVELOPMENT

Majambere revealed that he receives at least 20 people daily seeking assistance with school fees, a reality that pushed him to incorporate bursaries and scholarships under the SACCOS framework.

Members can access school fees loans, with savings contributions starting from as little as sh1,000, making participation accessible even to low-income earners.

Rehema Nalunga, another resident said women increasingly bear the brunt of household financial responsibility.