

Entebbe marathon to support UPE schools

The third edition of Entebbe Marathon, will be held on March 30 (this Saturday). It will bring enthusiastic professionals and novice runners to one platform. It will be a definition of the true spirit of humanity, sportsmanship as well as generation of awareness for education and fitness for all.

It will start at 6:30am at Entebbe Botanical Gardens.

The marathon is officially sponsored by the Uganda Chinese Enterprise Chamber of Commerce (UCECC).

The aim of the marathon is to boost the country's education system which has a number of setbacks, especially for schools under the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme. We look towards contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of "Education for all" and an attempt to ensure a comfortable studying environment.

We consider the structure of the classrooms and the sanitation facilities as these have forced many girls drop out of school. We also pay attention to water for hygiene.

Aim of the marathon

Proceeds from the Saturday marathon will be used to renovate specific schools with dilapidated structures.

The renovation will consist of refurbishing the classrooms, administration blocks. Each beneficiary school will be given a computer set and have its latrines renovated.

Participants will include people from corporate bodies, non-governmental organisations, government institutions, civil servants, parents, students, faith-based organisations, athletes, security organs and diplomats.

By this, we believe, the initiative will increase the number school-going children through the improvement of the study environment.

Last year's marathon organised on March 24, under the theme, *Run for improvement of Universal Primary Education Schools*, was a success having registered over 7,000 participants in the 42km, 21km and 10km categories. The winners in the 42km and 21km categories participated in the Wuhan International Marathon organised in Wuhan city China.

A total of sh125m was raised for 15 public schools in Entebbe. Of this, sh80m was cash and non-cash pledges of sh45m.

Previous sponsors of the marathon were China Construction and Communication Company, African Gold Refinery, Sinochem, Lake Victoria Hotel, Victoria Mall, Stanbic Bank, Movit Products Limited, Riham, Civil Aviation



St. Theresa Primary School in Entebbe, Wakiso district after renovation by the Chinese Enterprise Chamber of Commerce



**THE RUN
KICKS OFF
AT ENTEBBE
BOTANICAL
GARDENS
ON
SATURDAY**



Before renovation, St. Theresa Primary School had a leaking roof



Commissioning of Nakiwogo Primary School water project

Authority, Airserv Ltd, Entebbe Handling Services, & Chinese Embassy. Last year's marathon was flagged off by the Chinese Ambassador with the representative of the Minister of State for Sports being the chief runner.

Why run?

Education is rewarding when it gives back to the community that funds it.

If this young generation studies in a safer environment, they will like what they are studying and aim to achieve more in life. The students will be more influential in life and will aim at educating their children too, and make sure they have a better life.

Education cannot be sustainable without social responsibility. The UPE schools are receiving inadequate funding from the Government. This makes it difficult for them

to compete with private schools which have better facilities.

We want to reach out to vulnerable children, most of whom attend UPE schools. It is for this reason that UCECC decided to give back to the community.

Support to St Theresa PS

We believe that social responsibility encourages community engagement and brings leaders together towards one goal. Giving life to once a dilapidated structure of St Theresa Primary School, is giving life to the pupils and the

teachers of that school. Today, they are not worried of the rains and the hot temperatures that come with the asbestos roof known to be one of the leading causes of cancer.

A computer set was donated to help the school reach out to the global world. The world is developing at a tremendous rate and no one should be left behind.

UCECC plans to extend computer literacy to both pupils and teachers because learning is advancing with new technology is being discovered every day that requires one

to be up-to-date with what is going on.

Water for Life Project

UCECC Water for Life Project is aimed at extending clean water supply to pupils in school and reduce the time they would have spent fetching water for use at school.

Many children trek long distances to fetch water for domestic use. Besides, children are assigned some chores before going to school. Such children end up missing classes because they have to first do house chores before

going to school.

This project was implemented after a study that showed the high rate of school drop-outs and exposure of girls to sexual abuse. The study revealed that many young girls were being defiled and raped, all in the name of fetching water for either school or home use.

UCECC Water for Life Project not only aims at extending clean water, but also saving drinking water as this is one of SDGs. This will help families to save money that they would have spent on treatment of water-borne diseases.

Conclusion

As UCECC, we are here to give back to the community that has made us who we are today.

Education is a prerequisite to everyone and we want to engage with children from humble backgrounds in UPE schools to enable them enjoy their learning. This can only come true by a little change of the study environment.

We pledge to uplift the standards of UPE schools through renovation of classrooms, extension of ICTs, providing clean water supply and other resources required to boost education for all.

Tickets are available at sh10,000.