

Twamuhabwa responds to poor's call

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Wilson Tamuhabwa wants to promote sustainable household incomes

What brings a smile to his face is when other people have a good life. And the executive secretary at UGAFODE, Moreen Namuwonge, attests to the fact.

"From the day he came here, there's one thing I have realised about him - he is a focused boss and he will always be at your back until something is done," Namuwonge says.

What strikes Namuwonge most is the fact that Twamuhabwa does not boss anyone around.

"You will find him talking to anyone in the corridors irrespective of position or status and anyone can access him even if they have no appointment," she says.

His recent election as the president for the Association of Microfinance Institutions in Uganda (AMFIU) is an indicator of the trust and potential people see in him. He attributes this to the will of God. Twamuhabwa is also credited for having pioneered direct health sector financing in Uganda, an initiative many hospitals and health centres have taken up.

At 44, Twamuhabwa is already thinking of retirement.

"I will not reach the retirement age, I want to give more time to my family, concentrate on my farm and also mentor other people who will at one time become assets to this country," he says.

Factfile

- Born July 4, 1968 to late Levi Bagaita and Novureli Bagaita in Rukanga, Kajara (current Ntungamo district)
- Master's degree in economic policy and planning from Makerere University
- BA social sciences at Makerere University
- Masheruka SS for A-level
- Muntuyera High School for O-level
- Kitungo primary school for PLE

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Whenever Wilson Twamuhabwa attended a Development Economics lecture at Makerere University, all he could see were opportunities to help the poor.

Initially, he had been a student of political science and economics, and he dropped the former.

"I knew that this is where I could be an asset," he says.

"I come from a remote village and these areas do not benefit much from development plans and policies."

It was then that the current chief executive officer of UGAFODE microfinance (MDI) devoted his life to anyone at the bottom of the economic pyramid. And today, after 15 years in the sector, Twamuhabwa knows he has found his calling.

"My goal is to see all SMEs in Uganda flourish as well as promote sustainable household incomes across the country."

Twamuhabwa had worked at Nile bank, Uganda Microfinance Ltd, Equity bank and Pride micro finance, all the while garnering valuable experience. When he was appointed CEO for UGAFODE microfinance in July 2010, nobody could doubt his potential. In less than a year, he had transformed the institution from a mere finance institution to a Microfinance Deposit Taking Institution (MDI).

"My current mission is to make UGAFODE the leading microfinance service provider in Uganda," he says.

And he knows exactly how to get there: through commitment, passion and knowledge.

"Just know what people want and give it to them," he says.