

Economic and Human Resource Impacts of Rotary Club Interventions on Youth Well-Being in Africa: A Diary Study Approach

Rasheed Olawale Azeez^{1*}, Oladipupo Soetan², Anthony Ayodele Ajala³,
Motunrayo Mutiat Abimbola⁴, Wole Adekunle Odubayo⁵

^{1,3,4} Department of Industrial Relations and Human Resource Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, Lagos State University, Ojo. Lagos. Nigeria.

² Lagos State University Teaching Hospital, Ikeja, Lagos. Nigeria.

⁵ Department of Management Technology, Faculty of Management Sciences, Lagos State University, Ojo. Lagos. Nigeria.

*Corresponding author: rasheed.azeez@lasu.edu.ng

To cite this article (APA): Azeez, R.O., Soetan, O., Ajala, A.A., Abimbola, M.M. and Odubayo, W.A (2025). Economic and Human Resource Impacts of Rotary Club Interventions on Youth Well-Being in Africa: Insights from a Diary Study. *Elicit Journal of Economics and Management Studies (EJEMS)*, 1, (1), 17-28

ABSTRACT

Purpose: African youth, who make up more than 60% of the continent's population, continue to face persistent challenges such as limited access to healthcare, educational disparities, gender inequities, and high unemployment, all of which undermine their overall well-being. This study aims to examine the contributions of Rotary Clubs to the well-being of African youth by identifying key community-based initiatives and assessing stakeholder perceptions of their impact.

Methodology: The study employed a qualitative diary research design using thematic analysis of 486 public X (formerly Twitter) posts published between 2020 and 2025 by Rotary and Rotaract accounts in Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Ethiopia, and South Africa. Data triangulation with web-based reports was conducted to ensure validity, focusing on Rotary initiatives related to health, education, gender equity, water and sanitation, and peacebuilding.

Result: Findings revealed that health and disease prevention initiatives accounted for the largest proportion of activities (38.7%), followed by menstrual health and girls' empowerment (19.8%), education and vocational training (15.8%), water, sanitation, and hygiene (13%), and peacebuilding (12.8%). Stakeholder sentiments were predominantly positive, emphasizing the perceived impact of Rotary's interventions on youth well-being.

Novelty and contribution: The study provides a novel digital ethnographic perspective on how Rotary Clubs contribute to youth development across Africa, highlighting their localized, community-driven approach as a more adaptable and effective model compared to conventional top-down NGO strategies.

Practical and social implications: The findings underscore the importance of expanding Rotary's digital engagement, strengthening partnerships, promoting gender-focused programs, and establishing systematic evaluation frameworks to ensure sustainable and scalable impact on African youth well-being.

Keywords: Diary Study, Economic Impact, Human Resources, Rotary Clubs, Youth Well-being, Social Inclusion

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Africa's youths, who comprise over 60% of the continent's population (Bouraima et al., 2025), face multifaceted challenges that undermine their well-being. Limited access to quality healthcare contributes to high rates of preventable diseases like malaria and HIV/AIDS, with 3.5 million youth affected annually (World Health Organisation, 2024; World Health Organisation, 2025). Also, educational disparities, particularly in rural areas, result in low school completion rates, with completion rates for lower and upper secondary education in Sub-Saharan Africa being 73% and 49%, respectively (UNESCO, 2020). Gender-based inequalities worsen these issues, as young girls face early marriage, limited menstrual health resources, and restricted economic opportunities, which impact their mental and physical health (UNICEF, 2020). Additionally, socio-economic challenges, which include youth unemployment, are as high as 30% in some African nations, and this further threatens well-being by promoting poverty and social exclusion (Nyathi et al., 2024). In conflict-prone regions, such as parts of Nigeria and South Sudan, youths are exposed to violence, and this undermines their mental resilience and social development. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) play a pivotal role in addressing these barriers; however, their contributions, particularly those of community-based groups such as Rotary Clubs, remain underexplored in the academic literature (Desai, 2024).

Rotary International, through its clubs, implement initiatives across Africa to enhance youth well-being, including polio vaccination campaigns, menstrual health programmes, scholarship schemes, and peacebuilding workshops. These efforts align with the multidimensional nature of well-being, encompassing physical health, mental resilience, educational attainment, and social empowerment (Sarzhanova & Nurgabdeshev, 2025). Social media platforms, particularly X (formerly Twitter), have become a vital tool for Rotary and Rotaract members to document their activities, share success stories, and engage stakeholders, creating a digital diary of their efforts (PalMBERGER, 2025). Despite the wealth of real-time data on X, few studies have leveraged it to assess NGO impacts on youth well-being in Africa, representing a significant research gap. This study addresses this gap by examining the roles of Rotary Clubs in enhancing youth well-being in Africa through a qualitative diary study of X posts from 2020 to 2025.

The research questions are:

- (1) How do Rotary Clubs contribute to youth well-being in Africa?
- (2) What themes emerge from X posts as a digital diary of their activities?
- (3) How do stakeholders perceive these efforts?

The objectives are to identify key initiatives (e.g., health screenings, empowerment programme, educational support) and assess their contributions to youth well-being, using time-stamped X posts as a primary data source, triangulated with web-based reports. The significance of this study is twofold. First, it provides a systematic assessment of Rotary's impact on African youth, informing service providers and policymakers seeking to address well-being challenges. Second, it demonstrates the potential of social media as a tool for diary studies, offering real-time, youth-driven insights into NGO activities.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical Frameworks

Youth well-being is a multidimensional construct that integrates physical health, psychological resilience, educational attainment, and social empowerment, shaped by individual and environmental factors. The positive youth development (PYD) framework (Damon, 2004) posits that promoting assets such as competence, confidence, connection, character, and caring promotes thriving among young people, particularly in challenging contexts. PYD emphasises strengths-based interventions, such as skill-building programmes and community engagement, which are particularly relevant for African youth facing systemic barriers (Anyon & Jenson, 2014). Complementing this, ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 2000) highlights how microsystems (e.g., schools, families), mesosystems (e.g., community-NGO interactions), and macrosystems (e.g., cultural norms, policies) interact to shape youth outcomes. For example, access to health services and education at the microsystem level can mitigate macrosystem challenges like poverty or gender inequity (Penna, 2024). The social determinants of health framework further highlights how

structural factors, such as access to clean water or safe schools, influence youth well-being (Benninger et al., 2021; Solar & Irwin, 2010). These theories collectively suggest that effective interventions must address multiple ecological levels, making community-based organisations like Rotary Clubs critical actors in African contexts.

2.2. NGO Contributions to Youth Development in Africa

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are vital in addressing youth development challenges in Africa, often supplementing under-resourced public systems (Banks et al., 2015). Large-scale NGOs, such as World Vision and Plan International, have implemented programmes targeting adolescent health, vocational training, and gender equity, demonstrating improvements in school retention and community participation (World Health Organisation, 2023). For instance, World Vision's nutrition programmes in Ethiopia have reduced malnutrition rates among adolescents, enhancing physical well-being (Tilahun, 2015). Community-based NGOs, which leverage local networks and volunteers, are particularly effective in building trust and tailoring interventions to cultural contexts (Lewis et al., 2020).

Studies show that participatory approaches, such as involving youth in programme design, promote empowerment and mental well-being by giving young people agency (Branquinho et al., 2020; Maynard & Stuart, 2017; Raanaas et al., 2020). However, the literature highlights gaps in evaluating smaller, volunteer-driven NGOs, which often rely on anecdotal evidence rather than systematic data (Kelly, 2022). This gap is significant, as community-based organisations may have unique impacts on youth outcomes due to their proximity to local needs. Moreover, few studies (Bangura, 2022; Diprose, 2014; Sithole, 2024) explore how NGOs collaborate with youth-led initiatives, such as Rotaract, to amplify their impact, underscoring the need for research on organisations like Rotary Clubs.

2.3. Rotary Clubs' Initiatives for Youth in Africa

Rotary Clubs, with a global membership of over 1.2 million and a strong presence in Africa, implement youth-focused initiatives through their local clubs and Rotaract programmes, aligning with their six areas of focus: Disease prevention, education, water and sanitation (WASH), maternal and child health, peacebuilding, and economic development (Muchiri & Muathe, 2024; Kotsis, 2025). In Nigeria, Rotaract clubs have spearheaded menstrual hygiene projects, distributing sanitary pads to schoolgirls to reduce absenteeism and promote gender equity (Obiano et al., 2023). In Uganda, Rotary has funded vocational training centres, equipping youth with skills in carpentry and tailoring, which enhance economic self-sufficiency (Muhwezi, 2024). For example, in 2021, the Rotary Clubs of La Jolla and Mbale launched the \$85,000 Rotary Vijana Poa Mbale Technology Hub project to provide technology and employment education for youth and women in Mbale, Uganda, where over 22% of youth face unemployment and extreme poverty (Rotary Club of La Jolla, 2021).

WASH initiatives, such as rainwater harvesting systems in Kenyan schools, improve access to clean water, reducing waterborne diseases and supporting school attendance (Sharma, 2021). In Rwanda, peacebuilding workshops led by Rotaract members help train youth in conflict resolution to build mental resilience in post-conflict communities (Colomba, 2013). Again, Rotary's partnerships with organisations like UNICEF and local governments strengthen these efforts, as seen in maternal health projects in Ethiopia that indirectly benefit youth through improved community health systems (Miller et al., 2021). These initiatives are frequently documented on the X social media platform, where clubs share real-time updates, photos, and testimonials, offering a rich data source for assessing impact.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative diary design to assess the roles of Rotary Clubs in enhancing youth well-being in Africa, using X (formerly Twitter) posts as a primary data source. Diary studies capture longitudinal, participant-generated data to explore experiences and activities over time, making them suitable for analysing dynamic interventions (Bartlett & Milligan, 2015). The X platform, with its time-stamped posts, hashtags, and multimedia content, serves as a digital diary, documenting Rotary's initiatives and stakeholder perspectives in real time. This approach was chosen to leverage the platform's ability to provide naturalistic, publicly available data on youth-focused programmes, offering insights into Rotary's contributions across diverse African contexts. The study focused on posts from 2020 to 2025, a period marked by increased social media use by Rotary and Rotaract clubs, ensuring a robust dataset for thematic analysis.

Data were collected from public Twitter/X posts between January 1, 2020, and June 30, 2025, focusing on Rotary Clubs and Rotaract activities related to youth well-being in Africa. The data collection process involved a multi-step search strategy to ensure comprehensive coverage. First, key search terms were identified based on Rotary's focus areas and youth well-being themes: "Rotary Africa youth," "Rotaract Africa," "Rotary health youth," "Rotary education Africa," "Rotary WASH youth," "Rotary peacebuilding," and "Rotary empowerment girls". Hashtags such as #RotaryAfrica, #Rotaract, #EndPolio, and #EmpoweringGirls were also used to capture relevant content. Searches were conducted using X's advanced search functionality and X's Grok, filtering for posts from verified accounts of Rotary International (@Rotary), African Rotary districts, and Rotaract clubs in countries with active presence, including Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, and South Africa. A total of 927 posts were initially retrieved, based on their relevance to youth well-being (e.g., health screenings, educational support, empowerment programme). Inclusion criteria required posts to: (1) originate from African Rotary or Rotaract accounts or mention African youth initiatives, (2) address well-being themes (health, education, WASH, empowerment, peacebuilding), and (3) include text, images, or videos to provide contextual detail. Exclusion criteria eliminated promotional posts unrelated to youth (e.g., general Rotary membership drives) and non-African content. After screening, 486 posts met the criteria, forming the primary dataset. These posts included textual descriptions (e.g., project announcements), images (e.g., youth receiving sanitary pads), and videos (e.g., health camp footage), offering rich qualitative data.

To enhance validity, X data were triangulated with web-based sources, including Rotary International's official reports, district websites, and partner organisations' publications (UNICEF and WHO). These sources provided quantitative context (e.g., number of youths reached by polio campaigns) and programmatic details (e.g., funding for WASH projects), complementing the qualitative insights from X posts. Web searches used terms like "Rotary Africa youth programme" and "Rotaract well-being initiatives", focusing on reports from 2020 to 2025. Approximately 4 web sources were included to verify X data and address potential biases, such as promotional tone.

Thematic analysis was employed to identify patterns in the X data, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase approach: Familiarisation, initial coding, theme development, theme review, theme definition, and reporting. First, the researchers familiarised themselves with the 486 posts by reading and cataloguing content, noting recurring topics like health screenings and empowerment workshops. Initial coding was conducted manually, assigning codes to post content (e.g., "polio vaccination" for health, "scholarship award" for education). Codes were grouped into preliminary themes using NVivo software, such as "Health and Disease Prevention," "Menstrual Health and Girls' Empowerment," "Education and Vocational Training," "WASH," and "Peacebuilding". During theme development, codes were refined to ensure coherence (e.g., merging "malaria prevention" and "cervical screening" under "Health"). Themes were reviewed against the dataset to confirm representativeness, with adjustments made to address overlaps (e.g., distinguishing "empowerment" from "education").

Stakeholder perceptions were analysed through replies and retweets, using sentiment analysis to gauge positive, negative, or neutral tones (e.g., youth testimonials praising sanitary pad distributions). Inter-coder reliability was ensured by having a second researcher independently code 20% of the posts, thereby achieving 85% agreement. Web sources were cross-referenced to validate themes, such as comparing X posts on WASH projects with Rotary's reported borehole installations. Ethical considerations were paramount, given the use of publicly available social media data. While the researchers acknowledged potential biases such as the reliance on English-language posts, verified accounts, and Rotary's tendency to highlight successes, only public X posts were analysed, ensuring no private or sensitive information was included (Kent & Taylor, 2021). User identities were anonymised in reporting (e.g., referring to "a Nigerian Rotaract account" rather than specific handles) to protect privacy, even though posts were public. The study addressed potential biases in X data, such as promotional content or urban bias, by triangulating with web sources and noting these limitations in the analysis (Davis, 2022). No ethical approval was required, as the study used secondary and publicly available data, but the researchers adhered to ethical guidelines for social media research, ensuring transparency and respect for user contributions (Taylor & Pagliari, 2018).

4.0 RESULTS

Thematic analysis of data identified five key themes related to Rotary Clubs’ contributions to youth well-being in Africa: Health and Disease Prevention, Menstrual Health and Girls’ Empowerment, Education and Vocational Training, Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH), and Peacebuilding. These themes emerged from posts by Rotary and Rotaract accounts across countries, including Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Ethiopia, and South Africa. Figure 1 illustrates the frequency of posts across these themes, showing Health and Disease Prevention (188 posts) and Menstrual Health and Girls’ Empowerment (96 posts) as the most prominent, followed by Education and Vocational Training (77 posts), WASH (63 posts), and Peacebuilding (62 posts).

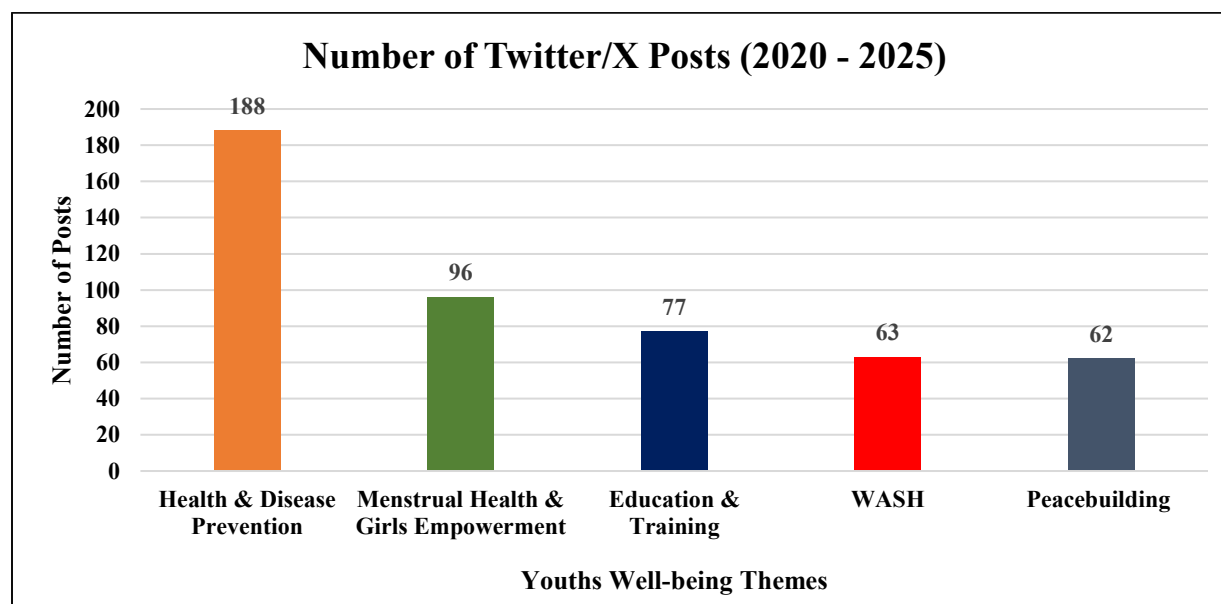


Figure 1. Frequency of X Posts on Rotary Clubs’ Youth Well-being Initiatives in Africa (2020–2025)

Figure 1 provides a visual summary of the thematic distribution of the 486 posts, revealing key trends in Rotary’s youth-focused initiatives.

4.1. Health and Disease Prevention

Health and disease prevention was the most frequent theme, with 188 posts (38.7%) documenting Rotary’s efforts to improve youths’ physical health. Posts highlighted polio vaccination campaigns, malaria prevention, and cervical cancer screenings in Nigeria, Kenya, and Uganda. A 2023 Nigerian Rotaract post stated: “Collaborated with WHO to vaccinate young people against polio in Lagos! #EndPolio #RotaryAfrica”. Images showed children at vaccination clinics, emphasising engagement. Also, a 2024 Kenyan post noted: “Distributed 189 malaria nets to students in Kisumu schools, protecting our future!”. Replies like “Rotary’s work saves lives” reflected positive sentiment. Web reports confirmed Rotary and its partner have vaccinated over 1.2 million African children against polio since 2020 (Polioeradication.org, 2025). These posts highlight Rotary’s significant contribution to reducing disease prevalence.

4.2. Menstrual Health and Girls’ Empowerment

Menstrual health and girls’ empowerment accounted for 96 posts (19.8%), focusing on supporting girls’ health and social inclusion. Posts from Nigeria, Rwanda, and South Africa described sanitary pad distributions, menstrual hygiene workshops, and anti-early marriage campaigns. A 2022 Rwandan Rotaract post stated that Rotary “Provided sanitary pads to girls in Kigali schools, keeping them in class”. Images depicted girls receiving supplies. A 2024 Nigerian post highlighted that Rotary seminars “...empowered 117 girls in Kano against early marriage, building confidence”. Replies like “This changes lives for our daughters!” indicated strong support, and web sources confirmed Rotary reached over 9,800 girls in Nigeria

with the menstrual hygiene programme by 2023 (myRotary, 2023). These findings highlight Rotary’s role in promoting gender equity and reducing absenteeism.

4.3. Education and Vocational Training

Education and vocational training comprised 77 posts (15.8%), emphasising educational access and skill development. Posts from Uganda, Kenya, and Ethiopia documented scholarships, school infrastructure projects, and vocational training. A 2023 Ugandan post noted: “Awarded scholarships to youths in Gulu for secondary education”. Photos showed students with certificates. A 2024 Ethiopian post described: “Trained 59 youth in Addis Ababa in tailoring and IT skills for employment”. Replies like “These skills transform our youth” expressed positive perceptions. Web reports verified Rotary has funded over 2,100 scholarships in East Africa since 2020 (Rotary, 2025). These posts demonstrate Rotary’s contribution to educational and economic empowerment.

4.4. Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)

WASH initiatives appeared in 63 posts (13%), focusing on clean water and sanitation in schools, primarily in Kenya, Uganda, and Nigeria. A 2024 Kenyan post stated: “Installed rainwater harvesting at schools in Nakuru, serving 373 students. #RotaryWASH”. Images showed students using water points. A 2023 Nigerian post noted that Rotary “built sanitation blocks for girls at a Lagos school, ensuring dignity for 174 students”. Replies like “Clean water is a game-changer” reflected appreciation. Web sources confirmed Rotary provided clean water to students in Kenya by 2024. These findings highlight Rotary’s role in improving health and school attendance.

4.5. Peacebuilding

The peacebuilding theme has 62 posts (12.8%), focusing on youth leadership and conflict resolution in Rwanda and South Sudan. A 2022 Rwandan post reported that Rotary “Trained 47 youth in peacebuilding workshops, fostering unity”. Videos showed youths in dialogue sessions. Web reports verified Rotary reached 1,600 youth in Rwanda with the peacebuilding programme by 2023. These posts indicate Rotary’s efforts to support mental well-being, though less documented.

Table 1. Distribution of Posts by Country

Country	Number of Posts	Percentage of Total	Key Examples from the Dataset
Uganda	175	36.0%	Posts on Rotaract installations in Kampala, maternal health grants, and peacebuilding workshops (e.g., Ugandan Rotaract accounts).
Kenya	117	24.1%	Initiatives like menstrual hygiene in Kisumu and vocational training in Nairobi (e.g., from Kenyan Rotaract accounts).
Nigeria	77	15.8%	Polio vaccination drives and anti-early marriage campaigns in Lagos/Kano (e.g., from Nigerian Rotaract account).
Rwanda	54	11.1%	Youth leadership and peace centres in Kigali (e.g., from Rwandan Rotary accounts).
Ethiopia	29	6.0%	Scholarships and health screenings in Addis Ababa (e.g., Ethiopian Rotary accounts).
South Africa	19	3.9%	Community empowerment in Johannesburg (e.g., from South African Rotary Club accounts).
Other (e.g., Zambia, South Sudan, DRC)	15	3.1%	Regional collaborations on malaria prevention and refugee youth support.
Total	486	100%	

Source: X Posts from 2020-2025

Table 1 shows geographical skew toward Uganda (36.0%) and Kenya (24.1%) reflects East Africa’s dense Rotary presence, driven by urban hubs like Kampala and Nairobi. Nigeria’s 77 posts align

with its population and health focus, while Rwanda's 54 posts emphasise peacebuilding, tied to post-genocide recovery. Lower counts for Ethiopia, South Africa, and others suggest low reportage of activities from these areas. This study's findings align with and diverge from prior research on community-based organisations in African youth development. The dominance of health and disease prevention echoes studies on Rotary's polio eradication efforts, which have vaccinated over 2.5 billion children globally, with significant African impact (Hotez, 2021). Unlike Sidiropoulos et al. (2022), who focus on top-down NGO health interventions, this diary study captures grassroots narratives, such as Nigerian Rotaract posts, offering a community-driven perspective. Equally, Sommer et al. (2016) noted that menstrual hygiene programmes reduce absenteeism by 20%. The emphasis on education and vocational training in the analysed posts aligns with broader literature on youth empowerment initiatives, where community-based programmes have been shown to increase school retention rates by up to 15% in rural East African settings (Booth, 2022; Rwigema, 2022). Similarly, the recurring theme of water and sanitation projects supports the findings of Essiet et al. (2024), who noted that such interventions can help reduce waterborne disease incidence significantly in underserved communities. Lastly, peacebuilding, a theme prominent in Rwanda's posts, resonates with research by Mansab (2023), which highlights how community-driven peacebuilding initiatives in post-conflict regions can reduce intergroup tensions by promoting dialogue and collaboration among youths.

Table 2. Economic Implications of Rotary Club Interventions on Youth Well-being in Africa

Dimension	Microeconomic (Individual/Household Level)	Implications Macroeconomic (National/Regional Level)
Health & Disease Prevention	Reduces youth illness, improves school attendance, and lowers household healthcare costs.	Boosts labour productivity, reduces public health expenditures, and enhances the demographic dividend.
Education & Vocational Training	Increases human capital, employability, and lifetime earnings.	Expands skilled labour force, drives structural transformation, supports GDP growth.
Gender Equity & Menstrual Health	Delays early marriage, increases female labour force participation, and raises household income.	Enhances gender equality in labour markets, contributes to inclusive growth and higher national output.
WASH (Water, Sanitation, Hygiene)	Reduces household spending on illness, increases time for productive activities.	Lowers incidence of waterborne diseases, strengthens public health systems, and improves workforce reliability.
Peacebuilding & Youth Leadership	Encourages pro-social behaviors, reduces risk of crime or conflict losses at the household level.	Promotes political stability, attracts investment, lowers transaction costs, and fosters long-term development.
Household Economics	Frees income for education, nutrition, and savings through reduced costs.	Reduces multidimensional poverty, narrows inequality, and improves welfare indicators at the national scale.
Fiscal Impact	Provides relief to households via subsidised services (vaccines, training).	Eases government budgetary pressure, improves efficiency of public spending, and supports economic governance.

Table 2 presents the micro- and macroeconomic implications of Rotary Club interventions on youth well-being in Africa, interpreted through established economic theories. At the microeconomic level, Rotary's interventions directly influence individuals and households. Health and disease prevention programmes reduce morbidity among youths, leading to higher school attendance and lower household healthcare expenditures. This reflects the logic of human capital theory (Becker, 1993), which argues that health is a key determinant of productivity and future earnings. Similarly, education and vocational training initiatives enhance youths' knowledge and skills, thereby increasing their employability and lifetime earnings. This aligns with endogenous growth models (Lucas, 1988), which view human capital

accumulation as central to sustained economic growth. Gender equity and menstrual health initiatives further extend microeconomic benefits by delaying early marriage, raising female labour force participation, and enhancing intra-household income. These outcomes are consistent with Amartya Sen's capability approach (Sen, 1999), which emphasises expanding individuals' real freedoms and opportunities.

Rotary's WASH projects lower household expenditure on preventable diseases and free up time that would otherwise be lost to illness or water collection, consistent with micro-level studies on health shocks and household poverty traps (Gertler & Gruber, 2002). In addition, peacebuilding and youth leadership programmes reduce the risk of violence and antisocial behaviour, which are often associated with lost income, displacement, or property destruction. Collectively, these interventions improve household welfare, enabling families to reallocate resources toward education, nutrition, and savings.

At the macroeconomic level, Rotary's initiatives scale up to broader impacts on national economies. Large-scale health interventions such as polio vaccination and malaria prevention increase aggregate labour productivity, reduce the fiscal burden of public health expenditures, and support the realisation of Africa's demographic dividend (Bloom, Canning & Sevilla, 2003). Educational and vocational training initiatives strengthen the skilled labour pool, accelerate structural transformation from informal to formal sectors, and contribute directly to GDP growth, echoing findings from endogenous growth theory. By enhancing women's labour market participation, gender equity programmes foster inclusive growth, reduce inequality, and increase national output, consistent with empirical evidence that narrowing gender gaps boosts long-term growth (Klasen & Lamanna, 2009).

WASH initiatives further support macroeconomic development by lowering the prevalence of waterborne diseases, improving workforce reliability, and reducing public sector costs on preventable illnesses (World Bank, 2019). Peacebuilding efforts create enabling environments for investment by strengthening political stability, reducing transaction costs, and lowering risks of capital flight, which is vital for both domestic and foreign direct investment flows. At the broader scale of social welfare, Rotary's interventions contribute to poverty reduction and inclusive growth by addressing multiple dimensions of deprivation simultaneously, supporting the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Finally, the fiscal impacts of Rotary's service provision help governments conserve scarce resources, improve budget efficiency, and promote better economic governance (Rodrik, 2007). Rotary's community-driven programmes generate economic impacts that extend beyond immediate social well-being: they enhance individual capabilities, household welfare, national productivity, and long-term inclusive development.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Rotary's community-driven initiatives play a significant role in enhancing youth (human) well-being across Africa. By focusing on health, education, gender equity, water and sanitation, and peacebuilding, Rotary has generated impacts that extend beyond immediate social outcomes into measurable economic benefits. At the microeconomic level, Rotary's interventions improve human health, education, and skills of young people, thereby raising their employability, productivity, and lifetime earnings. These programmes also reduce household expenditures on preventable illnesses and strengthen intra-household welfare, freeing resources for education, nutrition, and savings. By delaying early marriage and empowering girls, Rotary further expands individual capabilities, increases female labour force participation, and contributes to more equitable household economics.

Again, at the macroeconomic level, these interventions strengthen national economies by enhancing human capital, boosting aggregate productivity, and promoting inclusive growth. Large-scale vaccination and disease prevention initiatives reduce public healthcare costs, while vocational training and scholarships expand the skilled labour pool necessary for structural transformation. Water, sanitation, and hygiene projects improve workforce reliability and lower fiscal pressure on public health systems, while peacebuilding promotes political stability and creates a conducive climate for domestic and foreign investment. Collectively, these outcomes contribute to poverty reduction, gender equality, and the demographic dividend—drivers that underpin long-term sustainable development across Africa.

In essence, Rotary's contributions illustrate how community-based organisations can bridge the gap between localised social interventions and national economic transformation. To deepen these gains, it is recommended that Rotary expand its digital outreach to underrepresented regions, build strategic alliances

with governments and NGOs, and invest in robust monitoring systems that capture long-term economic as well as social outcomes. Such measures would not only sustain Rotary's social mission but also maximise its contribution to Africa's inclusive growth trajectory.

Limitations and Future research direction

This study has some limitations which should be taken into consideration in future. First, the study's reliance on X posts may overlook offline Rotary activities, especially in regions with limited digital access. Also, focusing on English-language posts potentially excludes non-English perspectives, reducing cultural inclusivity. Therefore, future research should integrate offline data and multilingual sources for a fuller picture of Rotary's impact. Longitudinal studies tracking outcomes, such as employment post-training, would enhance impact evaluation, and lastly, the exploration of partnerships with other community organisations could identify scalable youth development models.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors gratefully acknowledge the reviewers and editorial team for their insightful feedback and observations, which have greatly improved this manuscript.

FUNDING

The authors declare that no financial support was received for the research, authorship, and publication of this article.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data used for this study are available online.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

DECLARATION OF USE OF GENERATIVE AI

The authors confirm that generative AI tools were used only to enhance language clarity and document formatting in preparing this manuscript submitted to Elicit Publishing Limited. The AI tools did not contribute to the development of ideas, data analysis, or research interpretation. The author(s) accept complete responsibility for all intellectual and factual content.

REFERENCES

- Al-Worafi, Y. M. (2024). Common Adolescents' Diseases and Conditions in Developing Countries. In *Handbook of Medical and Health Sciences in Developing Countries: Education, Practice, and Research* (pp. 1-24). Cham: Springer International Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-74786-2>
- Anyon, Y., & Jenson, J. M. (2014). *Positive youth development*. Oxford University Press. [doi 10.1093/obo/9780195389678-0145](https://doi.org/10.1093/obo/9780195389678-0145)
- Bangura, I. (2022). *Youth-led social movements and peacebuilding in Africa*. Taylor & Francis.
- Banks, N., Hulme, D., & Edwards, M. (2015). NGOs, states, and donors revisited: Still too close for comfort?. *World development*, 66, 707-718. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003253532>
- Bartlett, R., and C. Milligan. 2015. Engaging with Diary Techniques. In *What is the Diary Method?* (Issue December). Bloomsbury Academic. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781472572578>
- Becker, G. S. (1993). *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226041223.001.0001>
- Benninger, E., Schmidt-Sane, M., & Spilsbury, J. C. (2021). Conceptualising social determinants of neighbourhood health through a youth lens. *Child Indicators Research*, 14(6), 2393-2416. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-021-09849-6>
- Bloom, D., Canning, D., & Sevilla, J. (2003). *The Demographic Dividend*. RAND Corporation. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/mr1274wfhf-dlpf-rf-unpf>

- Booth, R. (2022). Emerging issues for girls' education in East Africa. *The K4D Emerging Issues Report*, 48, 12-19.
- Bouraima, M. B., Qian, S., Sangaré-Oumar, M. M., Qiu, Y., & Zonon, B. I. P. (2025). A multi-criteria decision-making framework for addressing youth unemployment in developing countries: Pathways to sustainable solutions. *Journal of Intelligent Decision Making and Information Science*, 2, 186-196. <https://doi.org/10.59543/jidmis.v2i.11647>
- Branquinho, C., Tomé, G., Grothausen, T., & Gaspar de Matos, M. (2020). Community-based Youth Participatory Action Research studies with a focus on youth health and well-being: A systematic review. *Journal of community psychology*, 48(5), 1301-1315. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22320>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (2000). *Ecological systems theory*. American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/10518-046>
- Colomba, V. M. (2013). *Post-Conflict Peace Building in Rwanda, the Effect on Youth, and the Development of Bright Future Generation*, NGO (Master's thesis, University of Massachusetts Lowell). http://www.uml.edu/docs/PostConflict%20Peacebuilding%20in%20Rwanda%20_tcm18-145706.pdf
- Damon, W. (2004). What is positive youth development?. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of political and social science*, 591(1), 13-24. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716203260092>
- Desai, V. (2024). Role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs). In *The companion to development studies* (pp. 149-155). Routledge. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9780429282348/companion-development-studies?refId=3f4846b5-bdb0-4316-a07e-d07a141bdea9&context=ubx>
- Diprose, K. M. (2014). *Youth Citizenship, Social Change and Non-Governmental Organisations* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Leeds).
- Essiet, A. G., Gordon, A. A., Inyang, I. B., Mkpan, S. B., & Kohol, B. I. (2024). Epidemiology of Waterborne Diseases in South-South Nigeria: An Investigation of Risk Factors and Control Strategies. *Faculty of Natural and Applied Sciences Journal of Health, Sports Science and Recreation*, 2(1), 155–165. Retrieved from <https://fnasjournals.com/index.php/FNAS-JHSSR/article/view/531>
- Gertler, P., & Gruber, J. (2002). Insuring consumption against illness. *American Economic Review*, 92(1), 51–70. <https://doi.org/10.1257/000282802760015603>
- Hotez, P. J. (2021). *Preventing the next pandemic: vaccine diplomacy in a time of anti-science*. Johns Hopkins University Press. <https://doi.org/10.56021/9781421440392>
- Kelly, L. M. (2022). Worthwhile or wasteful? Assessing the need for a radical revision of evaluation in small-sized development NGOs. *Development in Practice*, 32(2), 201-211. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09614524.2021.1937540>
- Kent, M. L., & Taylor, M. (2021). Fostering dialogic engagement: Toward an architecture of social media for social change. *Social Media+ Society*, 7(1), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305120984462>
- Klasen, S., & Lamanna, F. (2009). The impact of gender inequality in education and employment on economic growth. *Feminist Economics*, 15(3), 91–132. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13545700902893106>
- Kotsis, K. T. (2025). From Fellowship to Global Force: The Transformation of Rotary International in a Changing Civic Landscape. *European Journal of Management, Economics and Business*, 2(4), 36-54. [https://doi.org/10.59324/ejmeb.2025.2\(4\).03](https://doi.org/10.59324/ejmeb.2025.2(4).03)
- Lewis, D., Kanji, N., & Themudo, N. S. (2020). *Non-governmental organisations and development*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429434518>
- Lucas, R. E. (1988). On the mechanics of economic development. *Journal of Monetary Economics*, 22(1), 3–42.
- Mansab, M. (2023). Nurturing Sustainable Peace: Unveiling the Integral Role of Women in Rwanda's Peacebuilding Endeavours. *NUST Journal of International Peace & Stability*, 31-45. <https://doi.org/10.37540/njips.v6i2.150>

- Maynard, L., & Stuart, K. (2017). *Promoting young people's wellbeing through empowerment and agency: A critical framework for practice*. Routledge.
- Miller, N. P., Bagheri Ardestani, F., Wong, H., Stokes, S., Mengistu, B., Paulos, M., ... & Lemango, E. T. (2021). Barriers to the utilization of community-based child and newborn health services in Ethiopia: a scoping review. *Health policy and planning*, 36(7), 1187-1196. <https://doi.org/10.1093/heapol/czab047>
- Muchiri, C. W., & Muathe, S. M. (2024). Strategic orientation and organizational performance: Evidence from Rotary Clubs in Kenya. *Journal of Business and Management Sciences*, 12(2), 99-110. <https://doi.org/10.12691/jbms-12-2-3>
- Muhwezi, M. R. L. (2024). *The Role of Technical and Vocational Education and Training in the Empowerment of Women in Uganda* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi). <http://erepository.uonbi.ac.ke/handle/11295/166853>
- myRotary(2023). Menstrual report. <https://my.rotary.org/en/document/rotary-district-9125-2023-annual-report-menstrual-health>
- Nyathi, L., Balogun, T., De Lange, J., Human-Hendricks, A., Khaile, F., October, K., & Roman, N. (2024). Social Issues Affecting Social Cohesion in Low-resource Communities in South Africa. *African Journal of Governance and Development*, 13(2), 135-162. <https://doi.org/10.36369/2616-9045/2024/v13i2a7>
- Obiano, E. C., Umahi, E. N., Isikekpei, B., Sodeinde, K., Atinge, S., Okondu, E. O., ... & Okorie, P. C. (2023). Assessment of Menstruation-Associated Absenteeism Among School Girls in Jalingo: Cost-Effective Interventions for Resource-Constrained Settings. *Journal of Health and Environmental Research*, 9(3), 76-82. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.jher.20230903.11>
- Palmberger, M. (2025). The Digital Diary: A Mobile, Multimodal, and Participatory Method and Part of Digital Ethnography. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 24, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069251329262>
- Penna, A. L. (2024). *An Exploration of Nurturing Care Environments: Micro, Meso and Macro Systems* (Doctoral dissertation, Harvard University). <https://dash.harvard.edu/bitstreams/08788c45-2637-4373-9b8a-cf8c23f9335f/download>
- Polioeradication.org (2025). Rotary and Gates Foundation extend partnership to end polio <https://polioeradication.org/news/rotary-and-gates-foundation-extend-partnership-to-end-polio/>
- Raanaas, R. K., Bjøntegaard, H. Ø., & Shaw, L. (2020). A scoping review of participatory action research to promote mental health and resilience in youth and adolescents. *Adolescent Research Review*, 5(2), 137-152. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1007/s40894-018-0097-0>
- Rodrik, D. (2007). *One Economics, Many Recipes: Globalization, Institutions, and Economic Growth*. Princeton University Press.
- Rotary (2025). Scholarships <https://www.rotary.org/en/our-programs/scholarships>
- Rotary Club of La Jolla. (2021). *Uganda global grant: Vijana Poa Mbale Technology Hub Project*. Rotary Club of La Jolla. Retrieved from <https://rotarycluboflajolla.org/Stories/uganda-global-grant>
- Rwigema, P. C. (2022). Community development programs: conceptions and practices with emphasis on East Africa Community. *The Strategic Journal of Business and Change Management*, 9(4), 1447-1486. <https://dx.doi.org/10.61426/sjbcm.v9i4.2504>
- Sarzhanova, G., & Nurgabdeshev, A. (2025). Mapping psychological well-being in education: A systematic review of key dimensions and an integrative conceptual framework. *Journal of Pedagogical Research*, 9(3), 327-349. <https://doi.org/10.33902/JPR.202534832>
- Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*. Oxford University Press.
- Sharma, S. (2021). *Assessing NGO's engagement in WASH: The contributions of school sanitation projects to just transition* (Doctoral dissertation, Hochschulbibliothek der Technischen Hochschule Köln).
- Sidiropoulos, S., Valachea, S., Kanakaki, M. E., Emmanouil-Kalos, A., Tsimogiannis, G., & Vozikis, A. (2022). Development assistance for health and the role of NGOs in the Africa region: The case of the Central African Republic. *Journal of Regional Socio-Economic Issues*, 12(1), 44-58. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4017306>

- Sithole, S. S. (2024). *Youth engagement with conservation: From global platforms to local landscapes* (Doctoral dissertation, Université de Lausanne, Faculté des géosciences et de l'environnement). <https://iris.unil.ch/handle/iris/141639>
- Solar, O., & Irwin, A. (2010). *A conceptual framework for action on the social determinants of health*. WHO Document Production Services.
- Sommer, M., Caruso, B. A., Sahin, M., Calderon, T., Cavill, S., Mahon, T., & Phillips-Howard, P. A. (2016). A time for global action: addressing girls' menstrual hygiene management needs in schools. *PLoS medicine*, 13(2), 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1001962>
- Taylor, J., & Pagliari, C. (2018). Mining social media data: How are research sponsors and researchers addressing the ethical challenges?. *Research Ethics*, 14(2), 1-39. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1747016117738559>
- Tilahun, S. (2015). *Assessment on performance, progress and gap of project design, monitoring and evaluation system; the Case of World Vision Ethiopia Grant Projects from 2014-2015* (Doctoral dissertation, St. Mary's University).
- UNESCO. (2020). Sub-Saharan Africa fact sheet – 2020 GEM Report. <https://gem-report-2020.unesco.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/SSA-Fact-Sheet.pdf>
- World Bank. (2019). *The Human Capital Project*. Washington, DC.
- World Health Organization. (2023). *Global Accelerated Action for the Health of Adolescents (AA-HA!): guidance to support country implementation*. World Health Organization.
- World Health Organization. (2024). *World malaria report 2024*. <https://www.who.int/teams/global-malaria-programme/reports/world-malaria-report-2024>
- World Health Organization. (2025). *HIV statistics, globally and by WHO region, 2025*. https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/hq-hiv-hepatitis-and-stis-library/who-ias-hiv-statistics_2025-new.pdf