



# NEWSLETTER

Hoima Marks World Down Syndrome Day 2026 with Call for Inclusion and Connection.



On 21st March 2026, Hoima City joined the rest of the world in commemorating World Down Syndrome Day, with vibrant celebrations held at Booma Grounds. Organized by Rowan's Down Syndrome Awareness Center, the event brought together over 200 participants, including children with Down syndrome, caregivers, health professionals, educators, and community members.

This year's theme, "Together Against Loneliness," highlighted the urgent need to address social isolation and promote meaningful inclusion for persons with Down syndrome. The date itself, 21/03, symbolizes the triplication of the 21st chromosome, the genetic condition responsible for Down syndrome.

The Hoima celebration served as both an awareness campaign and a community-building platform. Through a mix of activities, including a city march, traditional dance, music, and games, children with Down syndrome actively participated and led engagements, demonstrating their abilities while fostering a strong sense of belonging.

## Health and Community Impact

A key highlight of the day was a community medical camp, which significantly improved access to essential health services:

- Over 30 people did RBS testing.
- 48 people underwent HIV testing and counselling.
- 20 children went through speech therapy.
- 80 had blood pressure checks.
- 3 cases of hypertension and 2 cases of hypotension were identified and referred.
- 20 units of blood were donated.

These interventions provided health support and showed the importance of integrating healthcare access into community outreach initiatives.



Hoima City RCC, Badru Mugabi, at the event.



Singer, David King, entertaining participants.



## PARTNERSHIPS & RECOGNITION

We collaborated with the following partners:

- Kinyara Sugar Limited
- Diamond Trust Bank
- Tawingo Fund
- Flobetto Primary School
- Global Down Syndrome Foundation
- Talk Gadgets Limited
- St. Jude Primary School
- Nest of Harmony Primary School
- Little More

Recognition was also extended to the RCC for representing the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs.



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & ADVOCACY

The event recorded strong community participation, strengthening trust and collaboration between Rowan's Center and stakeholders across Hoima.

Notably, the Guest of Honour committed to advocating for the deployment of therapists in regional referral hospitals to support speech therapy services, an essential intervention for children with Down syndrome. Additionally, the Resident City Commissioner pledged ongoing support by offering monthly radio talk show opportunities to sustain awareness and mobilization efforts.



## CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

Despite its success, the event faced a few operational challenges:

- Limited funding and logistical resources constrained some planned activities
- Persistent community misconceptions about Down syndrome remain a barrier to full inclusion

These insights will inform improvements in future programming.

## Get in Touch

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## WAY FORWARD: BUILDING A MORE INCLUSIVE FUTURE

Following the event, several strategic priorities have been identified:

1. Intensifying Awareness Campaigns  
Expanded outreach, radio programming, and social media engagement will be used to combat stigma and misinformation.
2. Strengthening Resource Mobilization  
Early planning and proactive partner engagement will ensure better funding and logistical preparedness.
3. Advancing Policy Advocacy & Stakeholder Engagement  
We will engage with the Gender Ministry to elevate inclusion priorities and also reach out to local government stakeholders so they can get fully involved in our programs.
4. Improving Access to Specialized Services  
Advocacy will focus on deploying therapists in regional referral hospitals to enhance rehabilitation and speech therapy services.
5. Enhancing Child Safety Measures  
Future events will incorporate improved identification and supervision systems to safeguard children.
6. Promoting Inclusive Education  
We will continue to support schools championing inclusive learning, including Flobetto Nursery and Primary School and Nest of Harmony Primary School.



**Donate Now!**

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## CLOSING NOTE

The 2026 World Down Syndrome Day celebrations in Hoima were a powerful reminder that inclusion requires deliberate, collective effort. By bringing together diverse stakeholders in a shared space of learning, celebration, and advocacy, the event not only raised awareness but also strengthened the foundation for sustained action.

As momentum builds, Rowan's Down Syndrome Awareness Center and its partners remain committed to advancing a future where every person with Down syndrome is fully included, supported, and empowered to thrive.

