

BEYOND GOOD ENOUGH

Kiruhura District: The Transformational Leadership of Kiberu Charles Nsubuga



Public service is often viewed through a lens of limitations, few civil servants stand out as committed and available to serve as expected. Kiberu Charles Nsubuga, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of Kiruhura District, is one such figure. With a career spanning over three decades, his legacy is not just one of longevity—but of consistent, transformative impact.

From humble beginnings in Villa Maria, Kalungu to becoming a top-tier civil servant steering one of Uganda’s best-performing districts, Nsubuga has shown

that true leadership is about more than just occupying office—it's about leaving a trail of excellence that others can follow.

Born in 1966, Kiberu Charles Nsubuga carved his path through determination and academic excellence. He holds not one, but two master's degrees—an Executive MBA from ESAMI (2012) and a Master's in Management Studies from UMI (2002)—along with a Postgraduate Diploma in Public Administration (Makerere University, 1998) and a Bachelor's degree in Social Sciences from Makerere (1990).

His career in public service began in February 1990, as an Assistant Secretary in Greater Bushenyi. What followed was a steady and impressive rise through the administrative ranks, culminating in his appointment as Chief Administrative Officer in 2006. Since then, he has served in various districts including Bushenyi, Iganga, Sembabule, Mubende, and now, Kiruhura—where he has been since 2017.

When Nsubuga arrived in Kiruhura, staffing levels were below 50%, morale was low, and essential services lagged. Fast forward to 2025, and Kiruhura has become a national role model in public sector performance.

Staffing levels have shot up to 80%, with over 90% of staff promoted, and systems in place to absorb more Ugandans into civil service. This administrative renewal has directly fueled a wave of improvements across all key sectors.

“It's not about being better than others—it's about being better than you were yesterday,” Nsubuga says, echoing the humble philosophy that guides his leadership.

Under the leadership of Kiberu Charles Nsubuga, Kiruhura District has consistently earned national acclaim, ranking among the top-performing districts in service delivery assessments conducted by the Office of the Prime Minister. In the past four years alone, the district secured 1st place in 2019 and again in 2024, 2nd place in 2022, and 4th place in 2023. Notably, the health sector emerged as a standout performer, ranking 1st nationally in 2023 and 2nd in 2024—reflecting a robust, people-centered system designed not just to function, but to deliver meaningful impact.

In 2010, health staffing stood at just 21%. By late 2024, it had reached 83%, with visible, active professionals across facilities.

Maternal deliveries under professional care soared from 12% to 103.8%—a remarkable figure that includes mothers traveling from outside districts to give birth in Kiruhura. ART sites, once limited to one hospital, are now available at every Health Centre III, ensuring broader HIV/AIDS support.

Thirteen of the fourteen sub-counties now boast fully functional maternity wards, improving outcomes across maternal and child health.

Kiruhura's educational progress is not only visible—it is measurable and impactful. Since 2021, staffing levels in schools have improved significantly, rising from 63% to 88%, creating a stronger foundation for teaching and learning. This investment in human resources has translated into notable gains in academic performance, with the district rising steadily in national Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) rankings—39th in 2022, 18th in 2023, and an impressive 10th position in 2024. Today, Kiruhura's 74 government-aided primary schools and 7 secondary schools collectively serve over 36,000 learners, a number that continues to grow as community trust in the education system strengthens.

Access to clean water has dramatically increased under Nsubuga's leadership. Safe water coverage rose from 47% (2021) to 60% (2024).

Over 70km of pipelines have been laid in underserved areas. Institutions have been equipped with 60,000-litre rainwater tanks, and a new water treatment facility at Lake Kakyera now produces 5 million litres daily, serving multiple sub-counties.

With 88.2% of households engaged in commercial agriculture—compared to the national average of 61%—Kiruhura is a leading example of economic transformation.

Thanks to strong district leadership aligned with national development goals, local farmers have embraced market-oriented agriculture, helping lift thousands out of subsistence living.

What truly sets Kiberu Charles Nsubuga apart is his quiet, determined commitment to excellence. He doesn't seek praise—but his impact echoes loudly in the lives of the people he serves.

A dedicated family man with ten children, he balances personal life and public duty with grace. Beyond the accolades and statistics is a man driven by purpose, guided by humility, and defined by results.

"In every district I serve, I ask myself—how can we leave it better than we found it?" – Kiberu Charles Nsubuga

Muganzi Benon
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