

By Lawrence Mulondo

Women have been urged to believe in themselves, take up leadership responsibilities and invest in their well-being if they are to contribute meaningfully to their families and the country's development.

Ruth Nankabirwa, the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development, said many women hold themselves back from opportunities simply because they doubt their own abilities.

"I have lived in communities where women step back from responsibility because they keep asking themselves whether they will manage," she said. "Some women say no simply because they do not believe in themselves."

Nankabirwa encouraged women to draw inspiration from biblical figures such as Mary, the mother of Jesus, who accepted the responsibility of raising the Saviour despite the uncertainty and fear surrounding the moment.

According to the minister, women should never reject opportunities simply because of their age. She shared that she recently celebrated her 60th birthday, a fact that often surprises people because of her energy and appearance.

"A close friend of mine once asked whether my mother had really told me the correct date I was born," she said humorously. "I told them clearly that I am 60 years old."

Nankabirwa said age should never be used as an excuse to avoid pursuing ambitions.

Nankabirwa urges women to invest in wellbeing

PHOTO BY LAWRENCE MULONDO



Nankabirwa (second-left), joined by Kaggwa (third-left) and other association members to cut cake in commemoration of the International Women's Day at Ark Gardens Bwebajja, Wakiso district on Sunday

"I have seven children and my last born is in the second year at university, but that does not mean I am old," she said. "The way I feel and the way I plan my life, I am not old. The world does not care about your age, but about what you contribute

to it."

Nankabirwa also advised women to strike a balance between work and marriage and to pray for supportive spouses who encourage their ambitions.

At the same time, she reminded

women to care for their partners and families, even during difficult moments.

"Buy him a nice perfume, nice stockings and underwear," she advised jokingly. "If you do not, the man may embarrass you out there."

Meanwhile, Dr Josephine Ndagire of Makerere University emphasised the importance of wellness in preventing long-term health problems.

She explained that many modern health challenges fall into three broad categories: non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and high blood pressure; mental health conditions, including anxiety and depression and autoimmune diseases like lupus and alopecia.

According to her, many of these conditions are linked to inflammation in the body caused by unhealthy diets, stress, lack of exercise and poor sleep.

"All these drivers can be reversed, and that is where wellness becomes important," Ndagire said.

She encouraged women to form support groups where they can exercise together, share healthy cooking ideas and discuss mental health challenges.

"Habits take time to build, and it is easier when done together as a community," Ndagire said.

The event was attended by several leaders, including Akright City Residents Association (ACRA) city President Simon Kaggwa, lawyer and human rights activist Sylvia Tamale and Rose Kabagyi, the former Kisoro district woman MP.