The earlier you start saving, the happier your Retirement will be

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For many youths, retirement is a farfetched idea, concerning people in advanced age. Many youths don't save for retirement, giving excuses and citing expenses like housing, education, loans among others. Some youth even think that saving is for the rich and well-to-do.

In its continuing efforts to inspire the youth to cultivate a saving culture, Uganda Retirement Benefits Regulatory Authority (URBRA), on 2nd June 2021, organized a webinar for students in tertiary education institutions. Over 100 students participated in the webinar and had an opportunity to delve deep into the key issues around retirement saving. Key speakers at the webinar shared the conviction that the youth must start saving as soon as they start earning.

This means that they will save over a longer period of time, thus accumulate a bigger amount in retirement savings and compounded interest.

Ms. Rita Nansasi, URBRA's Director Legal Services opened the webinar on behalf of the Chief Executive Officer. She challenged the youth to reflect upon the stages of life, paying particular attention to old-age.

"Nowadays, because of technological advancement and improvement in lifestyles and healthcare, people are living longer to a ripe old age of over 70, 80 or 90 years.

This is a period when your retirement plan is your only saving grace. The quality of life you live at retirement, depends on how well you planned while you were still youthful and productive."

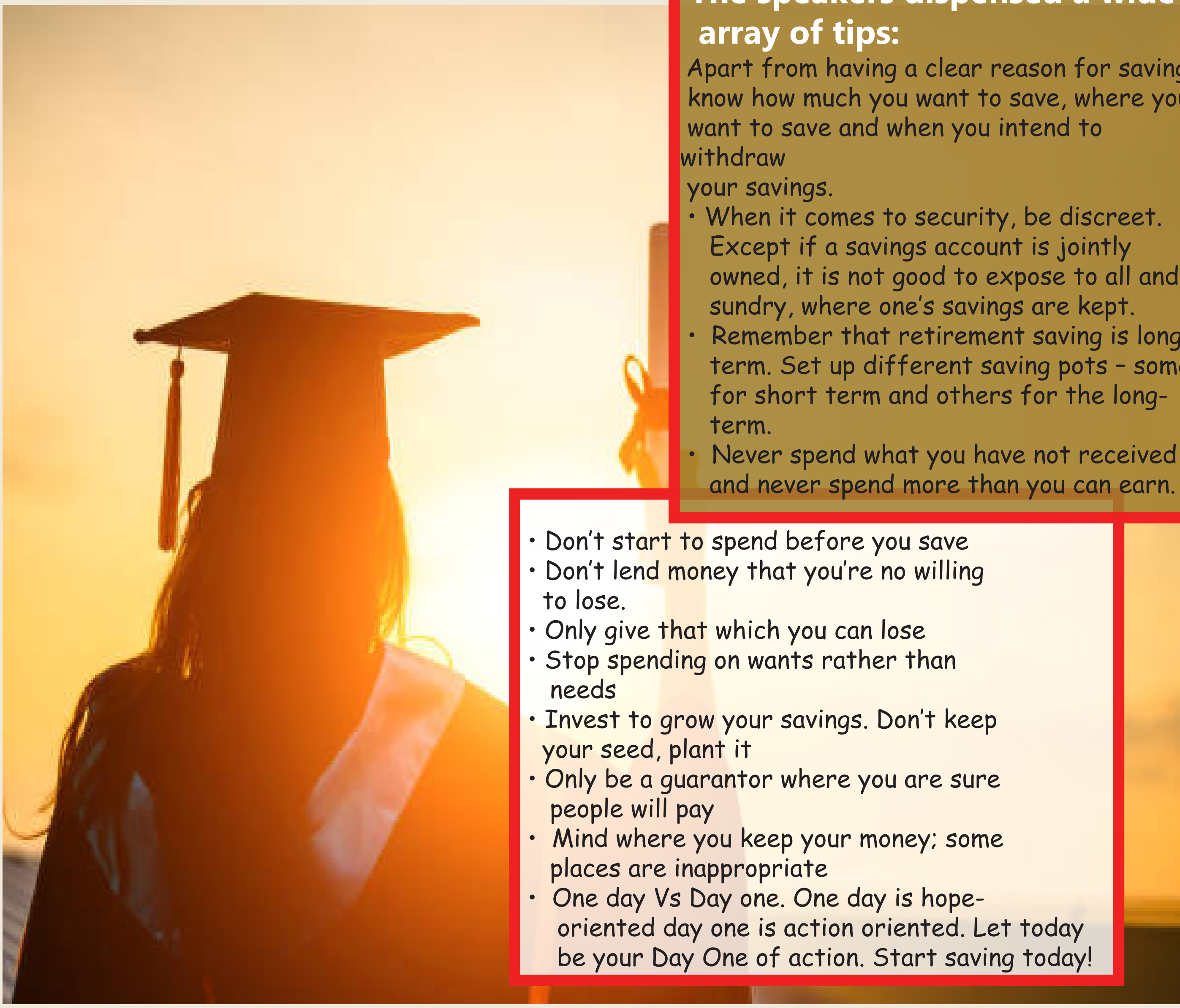
Speaking about the need for a saving culture, Hajj Jamil Ssebalu, the CEO of Namasuba College of Commerce, observed that saving had always been a practice in Uganda. He referred to the common practice where children are advised to save money given to them by the "tooth fairy" until it multiplies. Ssebalu noted that one doesn't have to be employed to save for retirement.

"Saving does not apply to only those with lots of money. Even before you start earning, you must think of saving. Youth always get funds in form of pocket money, gifts etc. All these are sources of income a portion of which you must save. Other things can drop off your budget but saving must never fall off. It must always be a part of the budget," he advised.

What next after saving? Any youth would be right to ask. When young people are advised to start saving early, it is important to back up that advice with information on the best way to invest, otherwise, they end up squandering the savings. It is important for the youth to know about the investment prospects and opportunities at their disposal, and how to tap into those opportunities.

Brian Bongomin, Enwealth Manager of Business Development and Operations, noted that youth should know the difference between saving and savings – saving is an activity while savings are the assets accumulated over a period of saving. "The difference is often misunderstood. Many people save (put aside) but they have no savings (cumulated assets). Put aside a little saving every day in order to build your savings," Bongomin advised.

In the ensuing discussion, the participants demonstrated a desire to know much more about the



The speakers dispensed a wide array of tips:

Apart from having a clear reason for saving, know how much you want to save, where you want to save and when you intend to withdraw your savings.

- When it comes to security, be discreet. Except if a savings account is jointly owned, it is not good to expose to all and sundry, where one's savings are kept.
- Remember that retirement saving is long-term. Set up different saving pots - some for short term and others for the long-term.
- Never spend what you have not received and never spend more than you can earn.

- Don't start to spend before you save
- Don't lend money that you're no willing to lose.
- Only give that which you can lose
- Stop spending on wants rather than needs
- Invest to grow your savings. Don't keep your seed, plant it
- Only be a guarantor where you are sure people will pay
- Mind where you keep your money; some places are inappropriate
- One day Vs Day one. One day is hope-oriented day one is action oriented. Let today be your Day One of action. Start saving today!

products and opportunities in the retirement benefits sector and how to take up such opportunities.

They wanted to know what proportion of one's income is appropriate or advisable to save and how long one should save. In terms of investment, participants wanted to know more about treasury bills and bonds; and whether there were initiatives that could teach young people about active and passive investment and the risks involve in each.

The students also expressed keen interest in the establishment of retirement benefits schemes and the advantages of subscribing to such schemes.

Noting that most of the participants would soon be out of tertiary institution and start a career, Susan Muhumuza, URBRA's Manager HR and Admin, urged them to feature retirement in their career planning. "As you plan for a career, plan for retirement. Think about the hours you've invested in education; what you would like to be when you graduate and whether your current training will lead to your career aspirations." She encouraged them to consider the retirement benefits sector, which is rich, vibrant and potentially a career goldmine for the youth.

In their parting shots, speakers reiterated the message that the youth must start to save early enough to ensure a happy future, especially in retirement.

"Our biggest problem in Africa is failure to save; we have turned into beggars. If we all save and looked at our budget properly, we shall not have a problem," Hajji Ssebalu advised.

Bongomin urged the students to take responsibility for their future, saying: "Retirement does not catch you by surprise. The quality of your latter days depends on how you manage your time now. If God does not call you home, you will end up in retirement. Let today b e day one of saving. Sometimes slow and steady is better than fast and volatile. Your retirement is in your hands. It's your responsibility."

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