Bulindi Zonal Agricultural Research and Development Institute (BuZARDI)

NEWSLETTER



July - December 2023

Our Mandate:

Our Mission:

Our Vision:

To conduct applied and adaptive research and to spearhead the promotion and dissemination of technologies to uptake pathways for increased adoption in Lake Albert Crescent Zone To innovate for sustainable agricultural transformation in Lake Albert Crescent Zone

A competitive society supported by a dynamic agricultural research innovation system





Director's Message





As you join the rest of the world to celebrate Christmas Day and New Year 2024, I would like to reaffirm our stern commitment to transforming the livelihoods of the people in the Albertine Graben through demonstration and scaling out best agricultural technologies.

t is with great joy that I present to you the July - December 2023 issue of BuZARDI newsletter. I acknowledge all the contributors and the editorial team. In a special way, I thank the Government of Uganda through the Office of the Prime Minister for organising farmer mobilisation and education in the Bunyoro sub-region. Through this drive, we reached out to thousands of farmers in Kagadi, Kibaale and Kakumiro districts in the second farming season of 2023 with new NARO-released varieties, agromachineries and accompanying information materials. We are prepared to showcase in many such events for the benefit of all farmers in the Albertine Crescent Zone. Working with our sister institute (National Agricultural Research Laboratories) and partners in development, we strengthened the seed system by establishing and commissioning the Nyatonzi Community Seed Bank in Masindi district. This brings to two, the total number of community seed banks we have set up in the Bunyoro sub-region since 2018. We hope that farmers will utilise these gene banks to fast-track seed production, and conservation and in turn, contribute to improved agricultural production and productivity. On the station, we hosted high-profile events including the Seeds of Gold Farm Clinic and the PARI Directors Forum. These enabled us to further skill hundreds of

farmers on the priority commodities in the Zone and share our research experiences and lessons with other NARO institutes. As management, we value human resources as the most important resource in an institution. To this end, we have continued to sharpen our staff in their line of duty through long-term studies and refresher courses. In this edition, you will be acquainted with what Dr. Abaho Ivan and Mr. Senabulya Steven achieved during their studies in South Africa and South Korea respectively and how the knowledge they have acquired will help to address emerging issues in the agriculture sector. I congratulate and wish the very best to the staff who were promoted and those who have been transferred to Bulindi ZARDI. As you join the rest of the world to celebrate Christmas Day and New Year 2024, I would like to reaffirm our stern commitment to transforming the livelihoods of the people in the Albertine Graben through demonstration and scaling out best agricultural technologies. I encourage you to send your feedback on director.buzardi@naro.go.ug; and aborbob@gmail.com



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Bulindi ZARDI



Editor's Note

Dear reader,

Kyakulaga.

welcome you to the July – December 2023 issue of BuZARDI newsletter. We are cognizant that quality information is indispensable for the development of all aspects of agriculture. In this edition, we are delighted to share with you stories about

the tremendous work Bulindi ZARDI executed in collaboration with like-minded institutions geared at agricultural transformation in the Albertine Graben Zone. We thank you for the time spent to comprehend the articles herein and look forward to receiving your feedback to enable us to serve you better. Bob Abor,

Development Communication Officer



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Cover Picture: The Prime Minister of Uganda, Rt. Hon. Robinah Nabbanja (in yellow Gomesi), inspecting NARO exhibition st	tall



during the agriculture expo in Kagadi district. On her immediate right is the State Minister for Agriculture, Hon. Fred Bwino



ARO in collaboration with the Nation Media Group (NMG) and partners organised the 35th edition of Seeds of Gold Farm Clinic on September 30th, 2023 at BuZARDI focusing on apiary, goat, fish, cassava and banana farming. The event, which ran under the theme: "Smarter Farming for Bumper Harvests", was the first of its kind to be physically hosted in the Bunyoro sub-region since the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic. While addressing hundreds of participants, Dr. Sylvester Dickson Baguma, Director of BuZARDI, recognised NMG and sponsors for facilitating technology transfer to the end -users. "We're doing research and at the same time we can't be expected to be doing extension work. So, when we get partners like NMG, Bank of Uganda and the like, they're helping us [NARO] to run the last mile of the relay of taking technologies to the people," he said. The Deputy Director General of NARO in-charge of agricultural technology promotion,

Dr. Sadik Kassim, emphasised that NARO innovates to enable people to harvest the "gold" in agriculture. He revealed that the five commodities were selected because they are perennial in nature, widely adapted in Bunyoro, environmentally friendly, have industrial potential and ready market. The Head of Disbursement at Bank of Uganda, Ms. Prossy Namaala, urged participants to take advantage of the agriculture credit which she said supports the entire food value chain. She also pointed out that to be eligible to access the credit, one should do business with financial institutions [such as banks] and keep farm records. Apart from providing agriculture credit, Mr. Gerald Byaruhanga, Relation Manager at Stanbic Bank, said the bank has offered to distribute tree seedlings to all attendees to support the agenda of protecting the environment. In the closing moments, representatives from NARO, NMG and Stanbic Bank planted some of the tree seedlings on station in

Seeds of Gold Farm Clinic returns to Bunyoro after a three-year hiatus

NARO innovates to enable people to harvest the 'gold' in agriculture. The five prioritised commodities are perennial in nature, widely adapted in Bunyoro, environmentally friendly, have industrial potential and ready market.

Dr. Sadik Kassim,

Deputy Director General of NARO

memory of this historic event.

Farmers share skills acquired

Two training sessions were held for each of the five selected commodities which enabled participants to gain maximum skills from the experts. "My weakness was on how to manage goat kids. I've lost a number of kids because there are certain things I had neglected to handle at that stage. We've learnt that these kids need some warmth at night and they also need to be de-wormed twice a month," Mr. Joseph Musinguzi, Goat Farmer said. Meanwhile Ms. Nyamaizi Christine, Banana Farmer, was happy that she learnt how to disinfect banana suckers before planting so as to minimise spread of diseases and mix soil with manure (like goat dung) before planting to boost soil fertility. A video highlighting the farm clinic event can be viewed on YouTube using the link: https:// www.voutube.com/watch?v=6svbaOCO2kw&t=7s



Excitement as NARO and partners launch community seed bank in Masindi district

With the seed bank launched and collective effort, I'm optimistic that Nyatonzi will bounce back to the time when it had quality and diverse seed.

Mr. Sunday Eyotu,
Chairperson Local Council III,
Nyatonzi sub-county, Masindi district

ARO commissioned Nyatonzi Community Seed Bank in Masindi district to enhance quality seed production and conservation in the Bunyoro sub-region. The gene bank was refurbished by the National Agricultural Research Laboratories through the Plant Genetic Resource Centre (PGRC) with funding from the Alliance of Bioversity International and International Centre for Tropical Agriculture. The colourful event, held on 16th August 2023 under the theme: "Quality Seed Production for Conservation, Food and Nutrition Security for All", was attended by farmer groups and Nyatonzi sub-county leaders. The Chief Guest, Dr. Sylvester Dickson Baguma, underscored the role quality seed plays in socio-economic transformation of Uganda. "Good quality seed is the beginning of a good life. If you've a good seed, you'll have a good crop and therefore, a good harvest if everything remains normal," he said. He added that good seed is a security issue at individual, household and national levels because when one gets a good harvest, there is an adequate and nutritious amount of food in the house and people are happy. Mr. Sunday Eyotu, the Local Council III chairperson of Nyatonzi sub-county, applauded NARO

and her partners in development for prioritising his constituency. "If there's any community who are adversely affected by changes in seed and crop development, it's been this community [Nyatonzi sub-county]," he said. He observed that Nyatonzi was once the food basket for the district where different types of crops existed but all these disappeared and today only sugar cane is grown. He expressed optimism that with the seed bank launched and collective effort, Nyatonzi will bounce back to the time when it had quality and diverse seed. Dr. Gloria Muthoni from Bioversity International said they have a vision to make Nyatonzi a big centre of diversity of millet. "We've a diversity of millet that will be supplied by the gene bank. We're putting our hopes in you that you're going to grow this millet and multiply it so that when we come here next time this seed bank will be full," she said. Six teams exhibited seed varieties during the launch. Using an assessment tool, Ms. Joyce Adokorach, Research Officer at PGRC declared Rwempisi village the overall best exhibitor, Hoima Community Seed Bank (First Runner Up) and Ambaka village (Second Runner Up). The winners received gumboots, hoes and carpets.













Quality LONGE 5 maize seed that was being sold by NARO Holdings Limited to farmers for planting.

NARO takes improved technologies to farmers in the greater Kibaale

ricultural research extension plays a pivotal role in promoting new technologies to rural communities and ensuring their adoption for increased productivity and improved quality of life. This was the case during the greater Kibaale agriculture expo held from 6th-8th October 2023 where BuZARDI and NARO Holdings Limited (NHL) showcased and availed cutting-edge technologies generated by NARO to the end-users. The greater Kibaale comprises the districts of Kagadi, Kakumiro and Kibaale. It is gratifying to note that in each of the 3 districts, BuZARDI was allocated one hour to educate the masses and respond to raised questions Addressing stakeholders in Kagadi district on day one of the expo organised by the Office of the Prime Minister, Dr. Sylvester Dickson Baguma (Director of BuZARDI) said that NARO exists to ensure sustainable agricultural transformation. "We want you to adopt improved agricultural technologies so that you get

sufficient food for home consumption and sell to increase your household incomes," he said. Thousands of participants flocked to the NARO exhibition stall where the latest technologies on coffee, banana, cassava, rice, beans, maize, cage fish, black soldier larvae and agromachineries were being showcased and sold. In coffee, focus was on Kituuza Robusta varieties which are drought tolerant, resistant to Coffee Wilt Disease and Coffee Rust, fast maturing (2.5 years) and high yielding (4-6 tonnes of dry beans per hectare). With regards to cassava, Mr. Ozuma Geoffrey (Crop Technician) informed the participants that Cassava Mosaic Disease (CMD) and Cassava Brown Streak (CBSD) are a serious threat to cassava production in the area. It is on this basis that farmers were introduced to NAROCAS 1, a NARO cassava variety that he said is resistant to CMD and tolerant to CBSD. Another aspect of cassava that was of great interest to farmers was cassava value addition

(chipping) using manual and light-duty motorised cassava chipping machines. The Prime Minister of Uganda, Rt. Hon. Robinah Nabbanja who was the chief guest implored farmers to embrace intensive farming because it gives high returns on investment. She advised them to emulate Mr. Lubega, a model farmer she visited in Bushesha, who earns approximately 245 million Uganda shillings annually from piggery, poultry and cattle keeping on half an acre. She also commended the minister for finance, Hon. Matia Kashaija, for disbursing funds for implementation of programmes such as EMYOOGA, Parish Development Model, anti-tick vaccine research, seed production and certification. Rt. Hon. Robinah Nabbanja, who doubles as the Kakumiro district woman member of parliament, encouraged farmers to use such interventions to acquire farm inputs. Similar messages were given in Kibaale and Kakumiro on day two and three respectively.





ulindi ZARDI in collaborative efforts with Rwebitaba ZARDI has established the first-ever tea mother garden in the Bunyoro sub-region on-station to supply quality tea seedlings to farmers to improve their livelihoods. The two tea clones (Uganda Tea Research [UTR] 6/8 and 303/577) planted on two acres were sourced from Rwebitaba ZARDI. Rwebitaba ZARDI is a sister institute based in Kyenjojo district and has a national mandate to spearhead tea research in Uganda. According to Mr. Kawooya Ronald, a Research Officer at Rwebitaba ZARDI, the mother garden was established under a competitive grant scheme CGS Project "Accelerating tea development in Uganda through healthy-rich tea varieties, efficient seed system and value addition; Project ID: CCGS/6/VAA01/21". One of the

project targets is to streamline the tea seed system by setting up tea mother gardens in the different agroecological zones in the country. "We've brought our first tea mother garden off our station to BuZARDI which will act as a source of quality tea planting material to tea farmers within the Lake Albert Crescent Zone," he said. On the attributes, Mr. Kawooya disclosed that UTR 6/8 is a standard clone good for quality whereas UTR 303/577 clone is best for yield (with potential yield of 7,817 Kilograms of Made Tea Per Hectare Per Year). Both tea clones will take two and half to three years to start providing the cuttings and can last more that than 50 years provided that they are well maintained. The cuttings will be multiplied in the nurseries at BuZARDI and then the quality tea clones will be available to

farmers in the form of seedlings. One (1) bundle of whips on average consists of 2,500 whips which can give a total of 10,000 cuttings. Since the prices of black tea are collapsing internationally, Mr. Kawooya said that in future they intend to expand the acreage and establish production fields so that BuZARDI is able to produce her own quality packed green tea which fetches premium prices on the market. It is imperative to note that value-added tea fetches more money and makes tea as a crop more competitive as NARO drives towards the government agenda of agro-industrialisation. Therefore, BuZARDI will become a hub for tea cottage training. Producing specialty tea like green tea requires a cottage set up with little machinery unlike starting a black tea processing factory which requires billions of shillings.



PARI Directors elect new chairperson

. Nkalubo Winnie, the Director of Research at the National Fisheries Resources Research Institute, is the new chairperson of the Public Agricultural Research Institutes (PARI) Directors Forum. The announcement was made during PARI Directors meeting held on August 31, 2023 at BuZARDI in Hoima district. She takes over from Dr. Hillary Agaba, the Director of National Forestry Research Institute who served diligently during his term of office. PARI directors forum exists to ensure strategic development and guidance by facilitating sharing of technical and administrative experiences, lessons, challenges and proposed solutions with NARO top management. In his remarks the then chairperson of PARI Directors Forum, Dr. Hillary Agaba, thanked Dr. Baguma for accepting to host the meeting and BuZARDI staff for sharing their views. He welcomed and congratulated the recently appointed Directors. These are: Dr. Titus

Alicai (Rwebitaba ZARDI), Dr. Jerome Kubiriba (Kachwekano ZARDI), Dr. Robooni Tumuhimbise (National Agricultural Research Laboratories) and Dr. Swidiq Mugerwa (Deputy Director General of NARO in-charge of Research Coordination). Dr. Sylvester Dickson Baguma, the host Director briefed the meeting on staffing, staff recognition, ongoing research efforts, readiness to host seeds of gold farm clinic and exhibit during Office of the Prime Minister-led farmer mobilisation and education drive in the greater Kibaale. He was thrilled to inform the meeting that recent adoption studies have shown that the Bunyoro sub-region has the second highest adoption rate of improved technologies in the country. Dr. Baguma also applauded the new Deputy Director General of NARO in-charge of Research Coordination, Dr. Swidiq Mugerwa, for securing the release of development funds. This, he said, will enable PARIs to conduct scientific research, reach out and





transform more lives. BuZARDI staff called for enhanced collaboration among PARIs, laboratory accesses, access to newly released varieties and breeds for demonstration and multiplication, acknowledgement in research publications, procurement of a new tractor and staff promotion. Dr. Swidiq Mugerwa, who previously served as Director of the National Livestock Resources Research Institute, tipped the directors on how PARIs can move forward with research.

PARI Directors meeting is rotated on a quarterly basis across all the 16 institutes of the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO).



WFP to partner with Bulindi ZARDI to empower refugees and host communities



A visit at the vegetable demonstration garden in Kyangwali settlement, Kikuube district.

orld Food Programme (WFP) is seeking to partner with BuZARDI in skilling and demonstration of best agricultural technologies to ensure self-reliance and improved livelihoods of refugees in Kyangwali settlement and host communities in Kikuube district. This follows increasing influx of refugees in the settlement without corresponding increase in donor support. According to team leader at WFP Kyangwali Office, Mr. Emmanuel Turyamwijuka, the humanitarian organisation is moving away

from providing relief assistance to building resilience of refugees and host communities. Mr. Tommy Otoo, Livelihoods Officer at WFP Kyangwali Office, said that the process of building resilience through agriculture necessitates partnership with experts and reputable agricultural research institutions like NARO. With funding from the MasterCard Foundation, WFP under the livelihoods programme has established a one-stop incubation hub in Kikuube district so as to promote skills acquisition in modern agriculture practices among refugees and surrounding communities. The commodities

demonstrated at the incubation centre are aquaculture, vegetables, orange fleshed sweet potatoes, banana, coffee, beans, small scale irrigation, piggery and rabbit keeping. However, due to limited expertise and experience, Mr. Otoo said that the programme has struggled to achieve planned results. On November 8th, 2023 a team of researchers from BuZARDI conducted a scoping study at the incubation hub and bulking centre in which areas to strengthen were identified. While a follow up meeting between the two institutions to chat a way forward is imminent, BuZARDI has committed to disseminate up-to-date information materials on the various enterprises at the hub.



BuZARDI research team and World Food Programme staff after the fruitful engagement in Kyangwali, Kikuube district.

Statistics from the Office of the Prime Minister of Uganda indicate that Kyangwali refugee settlement, as at March 2022, had a total population of 135,043.



Management of BuZARDI recognises Dr. Abaho Ivan



Dr. Sylvester Dickson Baguma (left) and Dr. Guma Williams (right) displaying a certificate of recognition awarded to Dr. Abaho Ivan after successful completion of his studies.

r. Abaho Ivan, now Senior Research Officer (Aquaculture), was in awe when he got the news in May 2019 that he had been admitted to pursue a Doctor of Philosophy in Fisheries Science at Rhodes University (South Africa), one of the world's most prestigious universities. He won a scholarship from the European Union under the Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Project: Collaborative Training in Fisheries and Aquaculture in East, Central, and Southern Africa. Although the journey that lay ahead seemed endless and the fact that his family was thousands of miles away, Dr. Abaho was determined to chase his childhood dream. His research focused on harnessing the androgenic and anabolic effects of phytocompounds from pine pollen (PP) to produce all -male Nile tilapia populations, which exhibit faster growth than female individuals. The study envisioned providing an alternative to the widely

used synthetic chemicals since they are associated with human health and environmental risks. The research confirmed that pine pollen induces femaleto-male sex change in Nile tilapia and enhances fish growth. From his research, three papers have so far been published and can be accessed on the following links: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-7451-9_7, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.agrep.2022.101407, and https://doi.org/10.1111/jwas.12863. The research findings provide a foundation for using PP in Nile tilapia production, with broad potential application in the aquaculture industry. Further, the generated information contributes to the production of safe and ecologically sustainable fish products. Overall, the research fits into NARO's vision of developing and promoting technologies and innovations for agricultural transformation, as enshrined in her strategic plan for 2018/19-2027/28. Having fulfilled the requirements, Dr. Abaho was

recently elevated to Senior Research Officer. The management of BuZARDI organised a staff get-together party on 14th October 2023 in which he was awarded a certificate of recognition for the remarkable career milestone. Reflecting on this journey, Dr. Abaho said he learned, grew and he is now better equipped to create a fulfilling career. He, however, acknowledged that PhD study is a long, arduous, and lonely undertaking. Dr. Abaho advised that hard work, tenacity, dedication, and perseverance are all that one needs.





Meet Mr. Senabulya Steven: Our newest graduate from South Korea



The scenic campus of Kyungpook National University became my academic haven, where cuttingedge research and a dynamic learning environment fuelled my passion for agricultural sciences.

Mr. Senabulya Steven, Research Technician, Bulindi ZARDI

mbarking on a transformative academic journey, Mr. Steven Senabulya (Research Technician) had the privilege of pursuing a Master's Degree in Agricultural Production at Kyungpook National University (KNU) in South Korea, under Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) scholarship. This not only opened doors to world-class education but also paved the way for a profound exploration into the realm of agricultural innovation. He said that the scenic campus of KNU became his academic haven, where cutting-edge research and a dynamic learning environment fuelled his passion for agricultural sciences. The master's programme, designed to be comprehensive and forward-looking, provided him with a holistic understanding of the intricacies involved in modern agricultural production. His thesis made a deep dive into the promising domain of nanoparticle fertilisers focusing on sustainable agriculture and resource

optimisation. He unravelled the potential of these microscopic particles in revolutionising conventional fertilisation practices. The crop production laboratory at KNU became his workshop, where he meticulously conducted experiments on the impact of nanoparticle fertilisers. During his research, Mr. Senabulya synthesised and evaluated silicon and S nitrosoglutathione nanoparticles in *Glycine max*, which are known to have beneficial effects on plant growth, development, and stress tolerance. He believes the findings will contribute to the advancement of nanotechnology-based controlled release of sustainable fertilisers, which can be a viable solution for

the challenges faced by the agricultural sector in the era of climate change and food insecurity. Under the guidance of his supervisor, Mr. Senabulya and his course mates published a research paper which can be accessed via https://www.mdpi.com/2223-7747/12/11/2190. Besides enriching his academic pursuits, the KOICA scholarship programme also fostered cultural exchange and international collaborations. He participated in several international crop science conferences and visited several Korean Agricultural Research Centers. Interacting with prominent scholars from diverse backgrounds broadened his perspective and added a global dimension to his studies. He graduated on 12th December 2023. As he returns to BuZARDI to continue offering his services, Mr. Senabulya has set sights on applying the acquired knowledge to drive positive change in crop productivity and contribute to the overarching goal of food security in Uganda.





Inside staff transfers, recruitment and promotion

he reporting period saw several staff posted to new duty stations in accordance with NARO Human Resource Policy. The staff who were transferred to BuZARDI were welcomed officially by the Director of Research, Dr. Sylvester Dickson Baguma, during a get-together

party that took place on 14th October 2023 on station. He emphasised that management expects value added and new good ideas from the new staff. Speaking on behalf of the new members, Mr. John Kennedy Ssemanda (Human Resource and Administration Officer) thanked the director for the warm reception,

adding that they have settled in well and are eager to deliver desired results. In another development, BuZARDI in liaison with the NARO secretariat recruited a new research scientist (Agronomist), Mr. Ekwangu Joseph, to spearhead crops and natural resources research programme.

Name of Staff	Designation	Transferred From	То
Nakimuli Madina Mable	Human Resource & Administration	Bulindi ZARDI	NARO Secretariat
	Officer		
Ssemanda John Kennedy	Human Resource & Administration	National Coffee Research Institute	Bulindi ZARDI
	Officer		
Bulega Lawrence	Ag. Accountant	Bulindi ZARDI	Abi ZARDI
Mukiibi Caroline	Accountant	National Coffee Research Institute	Bulindi ZARDI
Namukasa Zahara	Assistant Inventory Management Officer	Bulindi ZARDI	Rwebitaba ZARDI
Wabuyere Laban	Assistant Inventory Management Officer	Rwebitaba ZARDI	Bulindi ZARDI
Lukooto Harriet	Internal Auditor	Bulindi ZARDI	Mukono ZARDI
Acuma George Robbins	Ag. Internal Auditor	Rwebitaba ZARDI	Bulindi ZARDI
Nassali Gladys	Assistant Accountant	Bulindi ZARDI	National Livestock Resources
			Research Institute
Najjuko Faith	Assistant Accountant	National Livestock Resources Research Institute	Bulindi ZARDI
Mangeni Bernard	Procurement Officer	National Semi Arid Resources Research Institute	Bulindi ZARDI
			Bulindi ZARDI

Promotion

Name of Staff	Former Rank	New Rank
Dr. Abaho Ivan	Research Officer	Senior Research Officer
Acuma George Robbins	Ag. Internal Auditor	Internal Auditor
Musasizi Daniel	Assistant Accountant	Senior Assistant Accountant



NARO Bulindi in the news media







Bulindi ZARDI registers trademark for her bee products

n July 7, 2023 Bulindi ZARDI acquired a Certificate of Registration from the Uganda Registration Services Bureau for a trademark developed to enhance commercialisation of her unique bee products such as honey, propolis and bee venom. The trademark (pictured right) which is protected under The Trademarks Act No. 17 of 2010 will make it easier for consumers to identify and distinguish the institute's bee products in the market. During all stages of the trademark development, Bulindi ZARDI received technical support and guidance from a dedicated team of officers at the NARO Incubation Centre in Mukono ZARDI.



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