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**GERMAN GOVERNMENT AND FEDERAL STATES PROGRAMME**  
**BUND-LÄNDER-PROGRAMM (BLP)**

Visit of the team of international experts in Lugazi

**Federal state - partner country**

Saxony - Uganda



**Title**

Improving the use of traditional medicinal plants in Uganda

**In cooperation with the GIZ programme**

Promoting Rural Development in Uganda (PRUDEV)

**Financing arrangements**

BMZ contribution 380.000 EUR

Saxony contribution 276.720 EUR



\* This project is co-financed from tax funds based on the budget passed by the members of the Parliament of the Free State of Saxony.

**Duration**

01.07.2023 - 28.02.2025

**Responsible ministry**

Saxony State Chancellery

This project helps to achieve the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):



## Commercialising the Use of Traditional Medicine

### Local situation

For most Ugandans, traditional herbal medicine (THM) is the standard choice for primary medical treatment – and the only affordable one. Medicines extracted from plants play a crucial part in this. Knowledge about the identity and purity of the species used as well as the recommended applications and effects is handed down by word of mouth. Demand is strong, but the available data is minimal and plant substances are used that have little therapeutic benefit. The project goal is the development of a model value chain for the commercial use of traditional medicinal plants reaching from the producers of plant material via traders and intermediaries to end consumers. The project will support product development and design and, potentially, the approval process. The long-term aim is for the standardised, science-based cultivation of selected traditional medicinal plants and their sustainable commercial use to improve income opportunities for poorer sections of the population, especially women.

### Cooperation arrangements

The Saxon State Chancellery, the Institute for Drug Discovery, the Institute of Medical Physics and Biophysics and the Division of Infectious Diseases and Tropical Medicine at Leipzig University and the German Association for International Development – Saxony (GENINSA) are working with two Ugandan civil society organisations, Lugazi Rural Finance Development Trust (LRFDT) and Katosi Women



“In Uganda, there is only one doctor for every 500,000 people or more, and the limited supplies of medication that hospitals do have very rarely include the drugs necessary for treating patients. Most people use traditional remedies obtained from wild plants to treat the different illnesses they experience. I see an urgent need to cultivate medicinal plants to improve health care in rural Uganda and create new income opportunities.”

Olivia Makumbi

Chair of the Lugazi Rural Finance Development Trust and research biologist at Ndejje University in Uganda



Visit of a traditional healer in Busheni

Development Trust (KWDT), and the Pharm-Bio Technology and Traditional Medicine Centre (PHARMBIOTRAC) at Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST), Uganda, to deliver the project. The project cooperates during the implementation closely with the GIZ programme “Promoting Rural Development in Uganda” (PRUDEV)

### What we are doing - and how

Several earlier GENINSA projects (some, but not all of them, under the German Government and Federal States Programme (BLP)) provided support for developing the required infrastructure. They also piloted the cultivation of traditional medicinal plants under standardised conditions and developed an initial stock of defined parent plants. Building on these results, further medicinal plants will now undergo pharmacological evaluation in selected regions of Uganda. They will be cultivated under standardised conditions and a value chain will be established on a trial basis. Initially, a fact-finding mission with local partners will identify and analyse additional medicinal plants for cultivation for conservation purposes. Phytochemical analysis and pharmacological examination will be carried out by PHARMBIOTRAC and Leipzig University. Leipzig University will provide training on the ground to establish suitable analytical methods on a sustainable basis. Plant breeding for conservation will be conducted mainly by the local partner NGOs (LRFDT and KWDT) in greenhouses in

Lugazi and Katosi funded by the previous projects, and will be accompanied by training measures. With the support of PHARMBIOTRAC, LRFDT and GENINSA, the local communities involved in plant cultivation will prepare a market analysis. This will in turn serve as a basis for a strategy on the model use of a manufactured medicine in a phytotherapeutic product or a medical cosmetic. PHARMBIOTRAC will produce an initial trial series. A research visit to Leipzig by Ugandan scientists from PHARMBIOTRAC is planned in order to devise the methodology.

### Useful links

- Further information on the BLP:  
<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/132983.html>  
<https://bund-laender-programm.de/en>
- GIZ Programme “Promoting Rural Development in Uganda” (PRUDEV):  
<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/126185.html>

Published by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH  
Registered offices Bonn and Eschborn | Germany  
Bund-Länder-Programm  
An der Alster 62 | 20099 Hamburg  
blp@giz.de | [www.bund-laender-programm.de/en](http://www.bund-laender-programm.de/en)  
Editors Dieter Anders (legally responsible for content), Anja Glatzel, Jelena Jorcik, Julius Nebel  
Design kippconcept gmbh, Bonn  
Status February 2024

On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)  
Division G43 Federal states and municipalities  
Address of the BMZ offices  
BMZ Bonn  
Dahlmannstr. 4  
53113 Bonn | Germany  
T +49 (0)228 99 535 0  
poststelle@bmz.bund.de | [www.bmz.de/en](http://www.bmz.de/en)  
BMZ Berlin | Im Europahaus  
Stresemannstr. 94  
10963 Berlin | Germany  
T +49 (0)30 18 535 0

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