



SEPTEMBER 2025

RESILIENT COMMUNITIES RESILIENT ECOSYSTEM



Stakeholders come together to review project progress



Beneficiaries under the tailoring trade at Kyarusenzi during the field visit.

EDITORIAL

We are excited to share highlights of the September 2025 events. JESE envisions a community where nature and people flourish. Our strides are in Natural Resource Management, Livelihood Improvement, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), and Skills development.

We want to use the space to thank you for staying with us on our journey. We cannot do it alone. In our September 2025 issue of the Resilient Communities, Resilient Ecosystem, we bring you updates from various thematic areas of; Skills development, Natural Resources Management, Agricultural Enterprise, and operations to keep you tuned to our activities.

These updates are as a result of; collaboration, partnerships with other partners and stakeholders at local, regional, national and international levels.

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RAAP STAKEHOLDERS MEET TO PREPARE FOR THE ANNUAL RWENZORI INDIGENOUS SEED AND FOOD FAIR EXHIBITION.

On 17 September 2025, the Rwenzori Agro Ecology Actor's Platform (RAAP) convened an essential stakeholder meeting at Tooro Botanical Garden with the clear purpose of preparing for the upcoming Rwenzori Indigenous Seed and Food Fair Exhibition under the theme

"Harnessing Potential of Indigenous Seed and Food Fair as the Fight against Malnutrition and Food Security within the Region,"

This event is set to play a significant role in promoting indigenous seeds and addressing malnutrition and food security challenges in the Rwenzori region.

In attendance were; COSIL, NARO, Bunyangabu Beekeepers Cooperative (BBC), JESE, KIFECA, CARITUS, MMU, KRC, TBG, UMU, Kitagwenda Agriculture, BIGLAND, AID, and various media teams.

" We are consolidating for the exhibitors to be on the next level as we look forward to food security" Mwagushya Sam remarked.

Partners committed to sponsoring exhibitors, with AID supporting 10 exhibitors, COSIL 6, PELUM sponsoring youth exhibitors, and UMU sponsoring two. Discussions also covered the need for exhibitor T-shirts, panel composition including new faces and organizers, media conference scheduling, official event opening, and the involvement of kingdom representatives.

The meeting demonstrated RAAP's dedication to fostering community engagement, boosting indigenous agriculture, and advancing regional food security through cooperative action





A participant on discussion and reaction during RAAP meeting at Tooro Botanical garden Fort Portal city.

STAKEHOLDERS COME TOGETHER TO REVIEW PROJECT PROGRESS



Joint Effort to Save the Environment (JESE), with funding from the Water for Development Programme through IHE-Delft, Netherlands, organized a stakeholders' workshop on the 18th September 2025 to disseminate the SFR2CC project implementation progress, gather feedback on the research agenda, and stakeholders' engagement guidelines.

Speaking to the participants during the workshop, Ms. Kisakye Violet, Associate Professor, MMU, shared that farmers are faced with reduced water moisture retention in their farms, leading to the formation of a partnership with Indigenous NGOs in the Rwenzori and Kigezi regions.



“We are working with the farmers to investigate innovations specific to the highland regions of Rwenzori and Kigezi.” She noted.

SFR2CC-Strengthening smallholder Farmer Resilience to climate change through joint learning, development, and evaluation of Contextualised Solutions, case of the Rwenzori and Kigezi highland Regions of Uganda (SFR2CC) is a three-year project implemented by Mountains of the Moon University and JESE in the Rwenzori Region and Kabale University and Kigezi Women in Development in the Kigezi region.

According to Mr. BUSIINGE from JESE, the SFR2CC project focuses on strengthening farmer resilience to climate change. The project is attempting to tackle challenges of degradation within the Rwenzori highland due to climate change and population pressure, which are depleting the Natural Resources in the highland areas.



“Environmental degradation is a reality in the region. The River Mpanga catchment has been damaged due to human activities that have compromised the water quality.” Noted, Mr. Tusiime Samuel Tinkasimire, representative, Ministry of Water and Environment.



For more information, follow the link below:

<https://share.google/1Ogn0XI83qV175aJ>

<https://share.google/1Ogn0XI83qV175aJp>

HOPE RENEWED.



Female youth in Kyarusozi Sub-County being skilled at St. John Bosco Vocation Institute, Kyenjojo district, with funding from Welthungerhilfe WHH and BMZ.

Skill up! program phase 2 is being implemented by Joint Effort to Save the Environment- JESE. 5 out of the 22 youths enrolled in the program are females who, in one way or another, had lost hope. Coming from vulnerable homesteads, the young ladies shared how being in the tailoring program has renewed their hope, encouraging them to be intentional while the opportunity lasts.

Not everyone gets a chance to be part of the program, as evidenced by the number of people enrolled. The process is competitive, and they consider themselves lucky.

While interacting with the youth undertaking the tailoring trade, they shared their situation before and after. This clearly portrayed the change created in their lives since the program started.

“I was digging in the village before hearing about the opportunity. Now I am here learning so many life-changing lessons.” Shared Nyangwega.

“We have been able to sell some of our products like dresses, skirts, and uniforms.” Shared Noeline.

“At the beginning of the program, I did not know anything. With the practical skills acquired, I can run the machine,” Shared Moureen

“The leadership skills helped me gain confidence, and I now express myself better. Said Kenyange.

Their testimonies are indicative of the changes made since the program’s inception. To add value, the program incorporates life skills like Business planning, self-awareness, Life planning, and family planning, as shared by the participants.

The sales made are used to improve their living conditions, provide basic needs, and a percentage is ploughed back into buying materials.



Beneficiaries under the tailoring trade at Kyarusozi during the field visit.

JESE participates in the District Council Meetings

Following the joint field monitoring visit with the DEC members, Jese was invited to participate in the district council meetings in Kmawenge and Kitagwenda districts.

The commitments that were made by the DEC members during the joint field monitoring visit were presented, seconded, and endorsed by the Hon. Council Members.

The commitments endorsed included;

- Form by-laws, ordinances, and policies to be presented for approval in the council meeting.
- Continue mobilizing communities to observe and comply with regulations on buffer zone protection in Kamwenge
- Continue sensitizing community members adjacent to the River Mpanga and advocate for environmental protection.
- Support in the implementation of protection and conservation activities in Kitagwenda.





Top-down: The District Speaker, Mr. Twebaze Gerald, presiding while CAO, Ms. Katusiime Harriet, appends her signature during the District Council Meeting in Kamwenge.

As a way forward, the Natural Resources Committee recommended that the district establish bylaws to ensure that the water resources are not destroyed.

Add links for more information.

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7379148257425244161>



Joint Effort to Save the Environment-JESE, with funding from Welthungerhilfe WHH and BMZ, is implementing Skill Up!. The Skill Up! project is currently implementing vocational training for youth across various trades, including carpentry, hairdressing, tailoring, welding, and agriculture.

The program highlights a joint effort to support youth, especially those who face barriers to formal education due to various challenges, by providing them with reliable ways to a sustainable livelihood. As part of the first cohort, 17 youth undergoing welding training in Kyenjojo, Fort Portal, and Bunyangabu districts were selected for the learning exchange visit.

Speaking to the youth during the exposure visit, Mr. Mambo Joseph shared that business is about management. It requires discipline and the right attitude, proper documentation, and planning.

“Just like security guards hold on to their guns, hold onto your tape measure. This is your gun.” He noted.

He further shared insightful information with the youth, encouraging them not only to think of their customers but also to think of themselves, for them to grow.

Interacting with Kasamire Anna Mary, a 20-year-old youth from Kisomoro in Buyangabu,

“I have learnt how to talk and engage with the customers from the role play by Mr. Mambo Joseph.” She shared. I have also learnt how to properly use the tape measure, and I will surely put the newly acquired skills into practice. She added.

Speaking to Gerald Ayebare, a 22-year-old youth under the Skill Up! program at St. John’s Vocational Institute, Kyarusenzi,

“The trip has made me feel that I chose the right trade. The interaction with Mr. Mambo has provided room for sharing, encouragement, and empowerment since he shared his story with us. Remarked, Gerald. “From what Mr. Mambo shared with us, a welding engineer becomes his own boss, no capital is required, profit is enormous, and the outcome is evenly greater than the input.” He added.

This trade will help generate income to take care of my family. My appreciation to JESE for facilitating and empowering us.



For the details story, click the link below

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/joint-effort-to-save-the-environment_jese-organizes-an-exposure-learning-visit-activity-7376926179049701377-mwwZ?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_android&rcm=ACoAAArzw6EB2pAYf5wYZxXbTfPgNf8HtKzyB7U

THE STORY OF KAKURU IN KIGOYERA



Twenty-six years ago, Kakuru was a smallholder farmer in Kigoyera, Kyenjojo District. At the time, he owned only a small piece of land on which he grew food crops to feed his family. Like many of his neighbors, he lived a life of survival, producing just enough for household consumption.

In 1999, JESE identified and supported Kakuru with coffee seedlings, alongside extension services on modern crop management. According to Kakuru, this support came as an unexpected blessing:

“I never thought anyone would come to this remote village and support someone like me,” he recalls. Back then, Kakuru, like many natural resource-dependent community members, occasionally engaged in activities that contributed to forest degradation in Itwara Forest Reserve. Some resorted to charcoal burning or offering labor to illegal loggers for income. However, with the alternative livelihood introduced by JESE, Kakuru’s life took a completely new direction.

Today, Kakuru proudly attributes his achievements to the coffee support he received from JESE. He now owns about 15 acres of land, which he purchased using proceeds from coffee sales. Beyond coffee, he has embraced agroforestry, planting cocoa and vanilla—practices promoted by JESE to restore degraded forests in Kyenjojo District.

When I visited recently, Kakuru had just harvested 15 bags of Irish potatoes, ready for sale. His farm has become highly productive, enabling him to construct a permanent house and move away from his former mud-and-wattle home.

More importantly, Kakuru’s farm has become a learning site for fellow farmers and a demonstration ground for development partners, including Mountains of the Moon University, who frequently visit to share knowledge and encourage others to adopt sustainable farming practices.

Kakuru’s transformation is a living testimony of how small, well-targeted support can lift a household from poverty, reduce dependence on destructive forest activities, and promote sustainable land management.

JESE ORGANISES A DIALOGUE MEETING WITH STAKEHOLDERS WITHIN MPANGA CATCHMENT.

The advocacy dialogue meeting brought together stakeholders from Kamwenge, Ibanda, Kitagwenda, the AWMZ, and the media. The event that started with a field visit at Kiburara prison land, which was previously encroached on by the prison, has been left to regenerate following the demarcation and the dialogue held last year.



The RDC Kitagwenda echoed the need to plan for the sustainability of the work started by the development partners.

“We must wake up. It’s high time we taught our people to survive within their means. Let’s educate them to manage the available resources well.” He remarked.

He further emphasized that it’s important for the people within the River Mpanga catchment to take the lead in protecting and conserving the River Mpanga catchment.

The DNRO Ibanda shared the efforts put in place to protect the environment. We are collaborating with Kiburara prisons and Kitagwenda to properly utilize the prison land. There is also a plan in place to set up a waste management industry in the Ishogoro Town Council.



Left to right: DNRO Kitagwenda and the MWE-AWMZ representative addressing the participants during the advocacy dialogue meeting.

The stakeholders further encouraged the need to involve religious leaders, plan for regular monitoring and engagement, and plan for the tributaries to be restored too.

They further asked the RDCs to advocate for adequate resources to be considered within the natural resources departments.

Click on the link below to read the full story on our LinkedIn page

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/joint-effort-to-save-the-environment_community-sustainability-partnerships-activity-7377276356474101760-yUIL?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop&rcm=ACoAAArzw6EB2pAYf5wYZxXbTfPgNf8HtKzyB7U

You have changed my life.

Tusiime Oliver, a 29-year-old female from Kyembogo village, Mirambi parish, Kyembogo Sub-County, Kyenjojo district, is one of our beneficiaries in the Skill Up! program. Implemented by Joint Effort to Save the Environment-JESE with funding from Welthungerhilfe WHH and BMZ, the program aims to skill the vulnerable youth aged 18 to 30 years.

Tusiime's dream was to become a Nurse so that she could serve her community. Life had other plans for her. Having completed senior four, her dream felt impossible to achieve because her parents could not afford to send her to Nursing school.

The situation forced Tusiime to get married. When she got pregnant and gave birth to her daughter, her boyfriend declined to provide for and care for her and her child.

"I was home, and the Secretary, Kyarusozi, called and informed me of the opportunity under the Skill Up! program. Tusiime shared. I was encouraged to apply, and I did. Having lost my dream choice in Nursing, I looked at this as an opportunity to better myself." She continued.

Tusiime enrolled for the tailoring course under the Skill Up! program, and she has never looked back. She has been in the program and is already realizing changes in her life.

"With the skills acquired in tailoring, I have been able to make clothes for my child, sell some and rent a house at 20000 per month, and buy more materials to produce more clothes. She shared; I am now able to provide basic needs for my child and me." She added.

My message to the youth out there is not to lose hope. Always look out for opportunities. To the team behind the Skill Up! program, thank you; you have changed my life. Don't stop with me. I have

been here for three months, and I am a different person. Imagine what I will do after the six months of training.



Left to right, Tusiime Oliver carrying on with her work at St. John Bosco Kyarusozi Vocational Institute.