



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



Federal state – partner country
Saxony – Uganda

Title
Traditional medicinal plants in Uganda

In cooperation with the GIZ programme
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Financing arrangements

BMZ contribution EUR 200,441

Saxony contribution EUR 131,400

* 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

01.04.2022 – 31.03.2023

Responsible ministry

Saxon State Chancellery

Experts from Saxony visit the lab at Mbarara University

Standardising the Use of Traditional Medicine

Local situation

In rural Uganda, traditional medicine plays a key role in the treatment of open wounds, burns and infections. For those on low incomes in particular, herbal remedies are the first option for treating a range of illnesses. In virtually all cases, these individuals will seek hospital treatment only if traditional medicine cannot help.

Uganda's tropical vegetation offers a rich variety of plants that have pharmacological effects. However, the medical properties of many medicinal plants have yet to be investigated, and there is no basic approach for identifying their pharmacologically active elements and areas of application. In the absence of sufficient scientific data, acceptance of traditional medicine is limited among members of the health profession. This makes it more difficult to incorporate the use of medicinal plants into conventional treatments.

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



“In Uganda, there is only one doctor for every 500,000 plus people, and the limited supplies of medication that hospitals do have rarely include the drugs necessary for treating patients. Most individuals 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



Trial cultivation of traditional medicinal plants in the greenhouse in Lugazi

Cooperation arrangements

The Saxon State Chancellery, the Institute for Drug Discovery at Leipzig University and the German Association for International Development – Saxony (Geninsa) are working with the Pharm-Bio Technology and Traditional Medicine Centre (PHARMBIOTRAC), Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) in Uganda, and two Ugandan civil society organisations, Lugazi Rural Finance Development Trust and Katosi Women Development Trust, to deliver the project.

What we are doing – and how

Forming part of the German Government and Federal States Programme (German: Bund-Länder-Programm, BLP), the project seeks to identify and describe traditional medicinal plants and test out a standardised process for their production. By conducting scientific trials of local varieties of such plants, it is strengthening the Ugandan health sector, especially in rural areas, and, by extension, boosting the sector's resilience to the challenges it faces, such as the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic.

The Ugandan and Saxon partners select suitable plants during a fact-finding mission in the African country. PHARMBIOTRAC and Leipzig University work closely together to investigate the selected plants. The process is then rounded off with a three-months methodology training course in Leipzig for two scientists from MUST, and a number of practical training sessions in Uganda. This training prepares the ground for the Ugandan and Saxon experts to then technically analyse the medicinal plants for their pharmacological

plausibility and effectiveness. At model sites in Katosi and Lugazi, the plants are being cultivated on a trial basis under standardised conditions. Geninsa is supervising the construction and fitting out of the greenhouse, the implementation of the required technology and the trial cultivation of the medicinal plants. The project results will be made available to specialists and the local population by means of monograph-like publications written in plain language.

Useful links

- Further information on the German Government and Federal States Programme
<https://bund-laender-programm.de/en>
<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/91262.html>
- Institute for Drug Discovery at Leipzig University (German only)
<https://www.uniklinikum-leipzig.de/einrichtungen/wirkstoffentwicklung>
- German Association for International Development – Saxony (Geninsa)
<https://www.geninsa.org/en/index.php/about-us>
- Pharm-Bio Technology and Traditional Medicine Centre (PHARMBIOTRAC) at Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST)
<https://pharmbiotrac.must.ac.ug>

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