

REPORT ON BUHWEJU ECO-TOURISM AND CULTURAL INITIATIVE (BETCI) LAUNCH



**CENTRE FOR INTEGRATED COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT - UGANDA
(CICD-UGANDA)
24th /MARCH/ 2023**





Introduction

- Centre for Integrated Community Development (CICD-Uganda) a Non Profit and Non Government organization working with partners organized Buhweju Eco-tourism and Cultural Initiative (BETCI) launch that happened on Friday 24th March 2023 at Bihanga Playground, Buhweju West Constituency, Buhweju District.
- The initiative aimed at contributing to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 10, 11, 13 and 15.
- Uganda is endowed with natural and cultural resources and through local tourism, Uganda has a better advantage to protect its rich biodiversity and cultural heritage.
- Buhweju district is unique with natural assets and untapped tourism potential. For example, river Waterfalls, food and other cultural heritage sites such as Buhweju Kingdom.
- There is existence of products, sites and information about Buhweju district that is not yet well documented and used for tourism purposes.
- CICD-UGANDA recognizes the global and national conservation efforts and tourism sector in Buhweju will contribute to SDGs and change the lives of people in Buhweju, conserve environment and transform communities.



About CICD-U



Centre for Integrated Community Development-Uganda commonly known as (CICD-Uganda) a non-profit , non governmental organisation and a social enterprise operating in Buhweju District. CICD-U targets works with vulnerable persons and communities to create bridges to prosperity and socio-economic transformation.

Vision:

Creating Equal opportunities for all for sustainable holistic development

Mission:

To promote sustainable holistic development for people and communities through participatory and collaborative planning, community action, skills development by connecting people, ideas and resources.

Values:

- Respect for life
- Learning
- Volunteerism
- Community Driven
- Teamwork
- Accountability

- Create

- Empower

-Transform



About Buhweju District

- Buhweju district was carved from Bushenyi district in July 2010. Buhweju District is bordered by Rubirizi District to the West and North West (separated by Kastyoha-Kitomi forest reserve), Ibanda District to the North East, Mbarara District to the East, Sheema District to the South East, and Bushenyi District to the South West.
- Nsiika, the location of the district headquarters, is approximately 53 kilometers (33 mi), by road, North West of Mbarara, the largest city in Ankole Sub-region.
- Buhweju district is approximately 310 kilometers (190 mi), by road, South West of Kampala, the capital of Uganda.
- The population of Buhweju is estimated to be 143,800 people according to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS Report, 2018).
- 80% of the topography in Buhweju district is hilly and mountainous with U and V shaped valleys.



History of Buhweju

- According to ancient history, Buhweju evolved as a legendary kingdom under a subterranean King Muramira of Bashambo Clan around the 4th and 5th Century.
- The Bachwezi dynasty was dominant in Buhweju and to-date many families still venerate Bachwezi with majority of them having mini shrines in their homes. Items or regalia associated with Bachwezi can be found in some rocky caves in hills known as enyanga z'amabare and these are also tourist attractions.
- According to history three (3) brothers, Rugo, Kinyonyi and Kateizi with their sister Iremeera aboard an eagle which carried them across Buhweju to Bunyoro Kitara in King Ndahura's Palace.
- Kateizi (Brother to Kinyonyi) remained behind in Kagorogoro in Bihanga – Buhweju where he founded the Bateizi clan with the totem "Ente ngoobe"



Buhweju History Continued

- Later on, Bunyoro Kitara King Ndahura married sister Iremeera giving Buhweju Kingdom to Kinyonyi and Buzimba kingdom to Rugo Kinyonyi goes down to Buhweju and kills King Muramira as he emerged out his tunnels at Bukiro establishing the Bariisa rule with their drum "MASHAIJA" around the 9th century.
- The Bariisa ruled Buhweju through 10 Generation up to 12th July, 1901 when the British colonizers killed King Ndagara.
- Buhweju is a kingdom as incorporated into the British Ankole protectorate in 1901. It was ruled by an Omugabe, which is often translated as "king of kings".
- The last hereditary Omugabe was Daudi Ndibarema 1901-1967 ("ex-Kangaho"). His father, Omugabe (King) Mugimba Ndagara III, was shot dead on 12 July 1901 at his palace at Kishungwe, Buhweju by a British colonial expedition commander Lt. Lacy.
- Buhweju fell under the British and Nkole King Kahaya. Buhweju was reduced to a hereditary county until the 1967 constitution which abolished hereditary rule in Uganda. It is important as Banyabuhweju we appreciate and celebrate this background that forms the cream of our history that makes us unique for Tourism.
- Buhweju King's Tunnel: The Omugabe's escape tunnel routes were dug from Bisya–Kyakangire through Mushasha to Rubindi, Kashari in Mbarara City. Another ran from the foothills of Kyamujumi-Kasharara, opening through Bukiro, also in Kashari in Mbarara. The king would use these escape tunnels whenever he sensed danger.
- Lastly, Buhweju is endowed with minerals, gold taking the first place. According to historical sources, Buhweju goldfield was first discovered in 1933, but mining began a year later. The business was, however, interrupted by the Second World War and the subsequent independence struggle of 1962.



How Buhweju is Known

- Buhweju District is a new district carved out of Greater Bushenyi in 2010 and the headquarters are located at Nsiika Town Council.
- Buhweju Kingdom History and Cultural Sites such as Buhweju Kingdom.
- Buhweju being hilly with V and U shaped valleys
- Gold, lime, stones and rocks and other minerals in different locations .
- Buhweju Tea Factories such as Igara Tea Factory that makes a contribution to foreign exchange for the country on world market.
- Fertile soils suitable for cash crops such as tea and coffee and food crops such as millet, cassava, matooke, peas, beans, irish, waragi and local brew, passion fruits peas and beans etc.
- Natural Forest Kasyoha Kitomi Forest Reserve separating Buhweju and Rubirizi district.



What is not Known About Buhweju District

- Kasyoha Kitomi Forest Reserve with unique features Bird watching, Baboons, Monkeys, indigenous tree species, hot spring s, butterflies, birds, primates trail, gold etc.
- Murum road from Nsiika – Bihanga, through Kasyoha Kitomi Forest Reserve to Kyambura connecting to Queen Elizabeth National Park with a road through connecting to Kyambura in Rubirizi district.
- Natural Water Reservoir at Katerera- Rubengye, Birds, Monkeys in Nzizi Forest Sector, Tropical rain Forest canopy at Mushojwa in Kasyoha Kitomi Forest reserve.
- Source of River Rwizi in Rwomushojwa and Ruceeri villages. River Mukazi-Anyara, Kanyara, Kanyara Nyungu and Ndurumo water falls, River Kyonyo and Buhindagi contributing to waters in Lake George and Kazinga channel. River Kijojo in Engaju Kyenjogyera Waterfalls in Bistya. Most Rivers originating from Buhweju help neighbouring districts such as Mbarara, Ibanda, Sheema, Bushenyi and Rubirizi .
- Buhweju cultural sites with rich fascinating history like Kishungwe, Kagorogoro, Kasharara, Kyamujuni all suitable for establishing community museum.
- Plateaus and Mountains with Spectacular view points to such as Runengo View sites, Kyamahungu , Nyakitaraka, , Kashambya with a view to Mt. Rwenzori, Kazinga Channel, Lake Edward and George, Queen Elizabeth National Park, neighbouring districts.
- Ebinyungu Byamugasha in Kyaniika , Ekitooma Kyomugabe, in Mpanga, Rwenkuba in Kako and Kengyeya.
- Abacwezi caves in Nyakahita owa Kabyemera, Gamiramira cultural site, Eibare Ryengwe Kibarya, Eibare Ryomuntu site, Kashambya, Kengyeya Rocks and Caves, etc.
- NRM War Historical Monument at Bistya Primary school, Security Tunnel near Firing Range in the Swamp Below Bistya., Buhweju Kingdom Kings security Tunnels etc.
- Faith Based Tourism such as Christianity in Buhweju(Butaare and Nsiika), cultural and traditional beliefs and practices that existed before Christianity.
- Agro-tourism opportunities. Prominent farmers in Matooke, tea , coffee, apples, pineapples, etc



Buhweju Major Challenges



- Poor roads especially central government roads connecting to neighbouring districts and Buhweju inter community access roads are not well maintained.
- Limited access to sustainable markets for farmers.
- Limited schools and poor performance of learners.
- Less value addition and agro-industrialisation of cash and food crops.
- Limited access to clean water for homes and Institutions such as schools etc.
- Poor telecommunication network in some locations.
- Inadequate and poor access to health facilities in the community.
- Environmental degradation due to human activities such as gold mining.
- Limited access to hydro electricity.
- Less and no existence Technical and Tertiary Institutions operating in the district.



Buhweju Ecotourism and cultural Initiative Objectives



- To mobilize and unite people, recognizing diversity, culture and exchange ideas for stimulating inclusive development.
- To celebrate and recognize the uniqueness of Buhweju and unveil tourism potential
- To raise awareness on environment conservation initiatives aimed at protecting endangered species.
- To link and network with strategic partners in environment conservation, community tourism and culture promotion.



Expected Outcomes

- Increased visibility of Buhweju tourism sites and community cultural initiatives.
- Annual Buhweju Eco-tourism and Cultural Festival/ Ishaazi rye Entunguka ya Buhweju launched in Buhweju district.
- Buhweju district profiled as a tourism destination.
- Initiated and strengthened partnerships, collaboration and linkages with local, regional, national and international partners in ecotourism, community based and agro-tourism, environmental conservation, culture promotion and rural development.
- Knowledge sharing and peer learning among community members on cultural and tourism products development and marketing.



Event Advertisement



EXPLORE

BUHWEJU

Event:

BUHWEJU ECO-TOURISM & CULTURE LAUNCH

Date:

24th March 2023

Venue:

Bihanga Playground, Buhweju district

Guest Of Honor

MINISTER OF TOURISM WILDLIFE & ANTIQUITIES AND THE TECHNICAL TEAM



ACTIVITIES (24/3/23)

- Official Launch of Buhweju Ecotourism Festival
- Trading and Exhibitions
- Community Tour to sites
- Entertainment and Fun Games

ACTIVITIES (25/3/23)

- Hiking Reloaded to Nduruuma Nyungu, Mukazi-anyara water falls and Katsyoha Kitani Central Forest Reserve Trails an much more

OUR PARTNERS



FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT: CENTRE FOR INTEGRATED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (CICD)
0782 046122 / 0772 432511 / 0703 910840



TULAMBULE

BUHWEJU

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BUHWEJU ECO-TOURISM & CULTURE LAUNCH

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24th March 2023

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Minister and Teams Hiking to Community Sites in Buhweju District





Tour to Sites in Buhweju District



Some of Sites visited Nduruumo, Nyungu falls and Kasyoha Kitomi Forest Reserve



Ndurumo Water fall and Gamiramira Caves Cultural Site





More Sites Explored ad Toured





Minister Unveiling Buhweju Ecotourism and Cultural Center – Ryengoma Site , Buhweju District.





Venue at Bihanga Playground, Buhweju District



Arrival of the Chief Guest with CICD-U Board Members, Buhweju MPs and Buhweju District Officials





Exhibitions and Displays at the Event





More Exhibitions and Displays at the Event



Inspection of Exhibition stalls and Minister talking to Exhibitors





Entertainment at the Launch





Hon Biraaro Ephraim, Hon. Mwijukye Francis and Chief Guest Participating in a Traditional Dance





Jonan Nduhuura Founder and Team Leader CICD-U giving his Speech





CICD-U Board Chair Mr. Arthur Babu Muguzi Giving his Speech at the Event





Launch of Buhweju Ecotourism and CICD-U Master Plan in Buhweju District





Launch of Buhweju Annual Ecotourism and Cultural Initiative





Launch of Buhweju Ecotourism and Cultural Initiative and Unveiling CICD-U Construction Master Plan





Gifts to the Minister by Exhibitors



Minister after the Launch Interacting with Hon. Biraaro Ephraim and CICD-U Team





Group photo of Minister Hon Martin Bahinduka Mugarra with CICD-U Team and Leadership





CICD-U Team with Guests





Networking after the Event





Event Partners



- Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities (MTWA)
- Buhweju District Local Government
- National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE)
- Advance Afrika (AA)
- Community Based Empowerment and Conservation Initiative (COBEC)
- Buhweju Community Transformation Initiatives (BCTI)
- ANOMA PVT.CO.LTD
- @OyesFarms
- Buhweju Business Community
- Primary and Secondary Schools in Buhweju District



Achievements

- Buhweju Ecotourism and Cultural Initiative Launched by State Minister of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities.
- Unveiling some of Buhweju Tourism Sites
- Unleashing Buhweju Ecotourism and Cultural Center at Ryengoma Site under management of CICD-U.
- Indigenous people celebrating, understanding and appreciating community Based Tourism activities.
- Unveiling and Launch of CICD-U Construction Master Plan.
- Trading, exhibitions by locals and business community. Many women groups and farmers sold their items at the event. Other people benefited in networking.
- Some level of media publicity of Buhweju sites.



Emerging Issues

- Buhweju District requesting to have District Tourism Officer and more technical guidance and implementation of Tourism initiatives.
- Community-led tourism activities to promote Buhweju tourism sites regularly.
- Most roads in Buhweju are impassable and there need for the Government of Uganda to heavily invest in upgrading major roads connecting Buhweju to neighbouring districts. Most sites are not easily accessible and need road construction, regularly maintain and if possible consider them under tourism roads at a national level.
- Need to document the Buhweju community tour sites and profiling each site with unique history.
- The private sector to interest and be directly involved in development of tourism in Buhweju district.
- Need for heavy investment in resource mobilisation to finance Buhweju Ecotourism and Cultural Initiative activities championed by CICD-U. This needs collective effort and networking with tourism sector players .



Recommendations



- Ensuring Buhweju sites are well documented with factual history. This needs heavy investment in documentaries and profiling.
- Continue to organise Annual Buhweju ecotourism Festival. Other Mini Community Based Tourism activities can be arranged to market the Buhweju. CICD-U to continue organising regular eco-tourism events in Buhweju District.
- Lobbying and advocacy to Government for Buhweju roads to be considered as tourism roads connecting to neighbouring districts.
- Follow up with promises made by Minister of Tourism and stakeholders at the event.
- Engage strategic partners especially Buhweju Local government and stakeholders to embrace and support Community Based Tourism in all possible ways.
- Benchmarking on Tourism especially at Queen Elizabeth National Park and ensuring there is training of Community Tour Guides(CTGs).



Contributors to the Event

Cash Contribution to the Event

- Arthur Babu Muguzi(Board Chair) 1M
- Joseph and Rose Mugisha (Board Member) 100K
- Hon. Biraaro Ephraim (Mp Buhweju West Constituency) 4M
- Jonan Nduhuura (Founder and Team Leader) 500K
- Hope Banga Mugenyi 580K
- Eng. JB Koy Kariisa 1M
- Rebecca Rukundo (Co- Founder and Board Member) 500K
- Justine Ayebaziibwe (Board Member) 200K
- Mark Turyasiima 50K
- Buhweju Community Transformation Initiative (BCTI) 500K
- Baguma James Natweeta (Co-Founder and Media Lead) 50K
- ANOMA PVT. LTD 1M
- Nathan and Alison Byamukama 200K
- Atumara Eddie Muhumuza and Kawotto Clays- Kajjansi 200K
- Isaac KansiiimeDirector NJ Hardware Mbarara 100K
- Sharon Atukunda Executive Director -Advance Afrika 400K
- M/s Deborah Natujuna- UNDP Eithopia(Board Member) 250K
- AGI and Associates 100K
- Muwanguzi Joseph- NTISD 100K
- Capt. Vicent Bitature 180K
- Mukasa Joseph- Kyambogo University 30K
- JB and sarah Arinaitwe 1M
- Mr and Mrs Tumwine C/O of Environmental Doctors 100K
- Nyandoi Jacinta – Kyambogo University 40K
- @OyesFarms 500K
- Mark Turyasiima (/Co-Founder) 50K
- Ninsiima Doreen (Executive Director HEDCO) 100K
- Eng Nelson annd Immy Mwije 100K
- Eng. Musinguzi Mark 50K
- Fr. Amen Mukasa 50K
- Ajuna Joshua 50K
- Otunga Rodgers (Executive Director COBEC) 100K
- Namusoke Luuba 30K
- Lawrence Tumwine 150K
- Dorah Mukasa 200K
- Nixon Kagonyera 500K
- Ddamulira Moses - (Patron and Technical Advisor) 200K
- Fred Mugarura (Co- Founder) 50K
- Late Eng. Ceriano Mbiika 100K
- James Mungyereza 5K
- Eng. Joshua Nomwesigwa Makuru 100K
- Nicholas and Jennifer Nsingwire 100K
- Cano Eric Waijahi (Co-Foudner) 50K
- Fortunate Ainembababazi 20K
- Angomandha 5K
- Kamuhanda Evadio 30K
- Beatrice Mirembe 100K
- Zibah T Kafureeka 20K
- Nathan and Alison Byamukama 200K
- Sister Ephrance Nuwamanya- Bushenyi 50K
- Moses Tumuhimbise 50K
- Osbert Asiiimwe 50K
- Eng Yazookire 400K
- Ahumuza Abrianana 10K
- Ayebazibwe Jackson(Administrator) 100K
- Obed Tumusiime (Co- Founder and Field Coordinator) 300K



Contributors to the Event in Kind

In Kind Support

- People of Buhweju (Host Communities)
- Rev Fr. Mukasa and St .Kizito Catholic Church Bihanga (Venue Premises)
- Buhweju District Local Government Leadership
- Ndurumo, Nyungu and Nyakishenyi Local Communities
- Bihanga Subcounty Leadership
- Buhweju District Security Agencies
- Buhweju University Students Association
- Innocent Rugyero-Block Technical Services
- Rebecca Rukundo (Printing and Stationery)
- Tumuhimbise Moses
- Madeliene Nuwagaba Makuru C/O Siima Bridals Services - Mbarara (Decoration Services)
- Muhumuza Ben
- Elasto Kwijakye Managing Director Signage Uganda Kampala (Graphic Designs and Promotional Materials)
- Jonathan (Graphic design and Posters) Kampala
- Buhweju Youth Development Association (BYDA)
- Ahamagala Yecho Kabunga
- Jonan Nduhuura
- Anthony Namanya N (Archetectual Designs)
- Mr & Mrs Kabandize and Family (Host for Lunch venue)
- Musimenta Yoram
- Dickson Bikwastizehi
- Nathan Okiror Imagine Her (IH)
- Twesigye Gloriusmary
- Jackson Ayebazibwe
- Obed and Ruth Tumusiime
- Rebecca Turyatunga Juna
- Brian Ayebare
- Elisa Abenaitwe
- Mr. Nicholas & Jennifer Nsingwire
- Afande John Sande 5 Litres of Sanitizers
- Ibanda Lawrence
- Silver Back Distillers
- Agaba Daisy
- Kaleke Kasome Foundation- Mpigi
- Community Based Empowerment and Conservation Initiative (COBEC)
- Angel Nagaba (Website Design and Development)
- Baron Ariyo
- Marx Muhe
- Baguma James Natweeta (Media Engagements)
- Twesigye Winston (Media Advertisement)
- Tumuhimbise Wyclif(Media Advertisement)
- Media Fraternity and Teams
- Zadock Amanyisa
- Aidan Bataringaya
- Bishanga Rogers Rwozi
- Lay canon Eric and Jaires Waijahi
- JB and Sarah Arinaitwe
- Eng. Nelson Mugisha
- Asimirwe Margret
- Loice Rwankangi (Catering)
- National Association of Professional Environmentalists(NAPE)



Awesome Buhweju Ecotourism Launch





Support Buhweju Ecotourism and Cultural Initiative (BECTI)



Target: USD25,000 for 2023.

Donate Once or Monthly to support the organisation.

The Payment Options are:

1. A/C Name: Centre for Integrated Community Development- Uganda

A/C NO: 01180010172049

DFCU Bank

2. Mobile and Airtel Money: (0785709882/0700873288)

Ariyo Baron

☐ **We thank you for your generosity towards development of Buhweju Tourism Potential.**



Find Us:



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Entebbe Road*

Buhweju Field Office:

*Standard Trading Center, Bihanga Subcounty,
Buhweju District, South Western Uganda,
Uganda*

Social Media:

Follow, Like and share

Face book: CICD-Uganda

Twitter: CICD_UGANDA

LinkedIn: CICD-Uganda

YouTube: CICD_UGANDA

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