Ubic
Uganda Biosciences Information Center

Our Year in 2016

February 2017
Vol. 1, Issue 1

Knowledge-sharing . Public understanding . Impact creation .

UBIC is very grateful for the support grants from Nextgen Cassava Project and the Cornell Alliance for the biotechnology communication. We are grateful for the partnerships with the, Feed the Future's AgriKool and the Uganda Science Education Program with whom we conduct youth engagement activities.

UBIC crowned the year 2016 with a receipt of a grant from the Competitive Grants Scheme of the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) to document NARO's Success Stories of adoption of NARO technologies, and how they are changing farmers' lives. The one-year grant will see UBIC develop a compendium of these milestones and produce a documentary on the same.

In 2017, UBIC looks forward to amplifying the voices for biotechnology, biosafety and other modern biosciences for advancing the national narrative on food security, sustainable agriculture, and climate change resilience. UBIC and partners will hold the first ever Media Excellence Awards in Biotech Reporting, to recognize journalists' work in increase public knowledge of biotechnology.

We shall continue to engage and support our champions while grooming new ones. We plan to strengthen collaboration with Government agencies and departments so that we get champions for the Biosafety Bill/law and for case-by-case application of biotechnology.

Thank you for walking the 2016 journey with us and I look forward to working with you all in 2017. I invite you to visit our website to learn more about our work in 2016 and drop us a line on any of our social media sites. We love to hear from you.

Happy New Year

Barbara Mugwanya Zawedde (PhD
Coordinator, UBIC













Vision Better agricultural outcomes

Mission To foster public understanding of agricultural research for informed decision making

Goal A hub for information and knowledge sharing on agricultural biosciences research in Uganda









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Uganda Bioscience Information Center (UBIC) End of Year Message, 2016

Best wishes for New Year from the UBIC team. UBIC is an information hub of the National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO, whose goal is to share knowledge and information on agricultural biosciences research in Uganda. UBIC seeks to: enhance public understanding of modern biosciences including biotechnology; facilitate integration of these modern biosciences in the education system; and streamline biosciences communication through partnerships. The year 2016 brought us good fortunes and I wish to heartily thank you all for your support, friendship, and counsel that enabled us to make an impact in advancing scientific communication and bioscience research.

In 2016, UBIC in collaboration with Cornell Alliance for Science (CAS) and Science Foundation for Livelihoods and Development (SCIFODE) organized ten grassroots sensitization meetings targeting community and opinion leaders, farmers, youth groups, with the aim of increasing appreciation of biotechnology products under research in Uganda, and mobilizing support for the passage of the National Biotechnology and Biosafety Bill. In collaboration with the Uganda Biotechnology and Biosafety Consortium (UBBC), SCIFODE, (Program for Biosafety Systems (PBS) and Open Forum on Agricultural Biotechnology (OFAB), we organized thirteen (13) seeing-is- believing activities at the National Crop Resources Research Institute (NaCRRI) for policy makers including the new ministers for Science and Technology, and Agriculture; Members of Parliament; representatives from the President's office; media editors; regulators; university students; and researchers.

Together with Miss Uganda Foundation, UBIC conducted the third boot camp for 21 beauty contestants to build youth champions for the technology and the Bill because we believe that the beauty queens have the power to positively influence women and the youth. Furthermore, two Agriculture Champions were crowned during the 2016 Miss Uganda beauty pageant. UBIC, with partners, will support these two Agriculture Champions to use televised school demonstrations, and social media, to promote greater appreciation of modern biotechnology in agriculture, and the need to regulate the some of the biotechnologies.



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Distribution of information materials is critical during our activities and to get the message to our target audiences that we cannot directly engage.
We continued to distribute information material to our nodes including NARO institutes, media houses and extension services offices.
We also made new information materials including the Top 10 Facts about Biotechnology and Biosafety in Uganda by 2015; Quotable Quotes about Biotech in Uganda; Pocket-size briefs about the National Biotechnology and Biosafety Bill; and Facts and Figures on Crop Biotech Research in Uganda.



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UBIC also made progress in heightening integration of modern biosciences in the formal education system by conducting the fourth Annual National Biotechnology Essay Competition and the first-ever National Primary Schools' Poster Drawing Competition for Agriculture Development. The essay writing contest, themed "Uganda in 2025: How biotechnology will change agriculture" attracted 222 essays received from 43 tertiary institutions and secondary schools from different parts of the country. The drawing competition themed "Best Ways to Improve Agriculture in Uganda" attracted over 1000 submissions from schools countrywide. The award ceremony exposed over 100 teachers and students from all participating schools/colleges to the biotechnology research at NaCRRI.

In 2017, UBIC will hold a one-week internship for the top ten winners in the O' Level, A' Level, and tertiary categories at one of NARO's institutes. We shall also produce a booklet showing the status of the interns (2013-2017), and how the essay contest/internship has impacted on their live and career choices, with many pursuing biotechnology-related options.

In 2016, UBIC strengthened its global presence and collaborations by conducting joint-activities with the Cornell University Alliance for Science, and ISAAA. UBIC was also one of the organizers for the first Uganda Biosafety Forum organized by the National Council for Science and Technology. UBIC shared its experience during the FAO Biotechnology Symposium and international fora organized by Global Cassava Partnership (CGP21) and ICGEB.