



PATHWAYS TO EMPOWERMENT

IGNITING CREATIVE RESEARCH AND SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION FOR RURAL TRANSFORMATION



In partnership with
Africa Rural University (ARU)

25 August - 5 Sept
Kagadi, Uganda

SUMMARY

Professors Without Borders, in partnership with African Rural University (ARU), delivered its 2025 programme in Kagadi, Uganda, from 25 August to 5 September under the theme “Igniting Creative Research and Sustainable Innovation for Rural Transformation.”

Students explored Community-Based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR), research ethics, and survey design, developing their own research questions and community asset maps. Photovoice assignments encouraged students to document local realities and connect theory to practice, preparing them for upcoming survey construction and data analysis.

Hands-on sessions in upcycling gave students the chance to turn plastic waste into earrings, bangles, and necklaces. Facilitator Tabi Mughal guided participants through design thinking and product creation, while Professor Akbar Saeed introduced small business planning and cost analysis, showing how upcycling can become a viable enterprise.

The programme concluded with an Indigenous Knowledge Exhibition, where students showcased their research projects, upcycled products, traditional foods, and cultural performances. Guest of Honour Ms. Alija Christian, Community Development Officer of Bwikara Subcounty, praised ARU and Professors Without Borders for empowering rural youth with practical skills in research, entrepreneurship, and environmental stewardship. Certificates were awarded to participants, who left motivated to apply their new knowledge in creating sustainable solutions for their communities.



Dr. Akbar Saeed delivering a well-structured and interactive session that promotes participant learning and engagement.

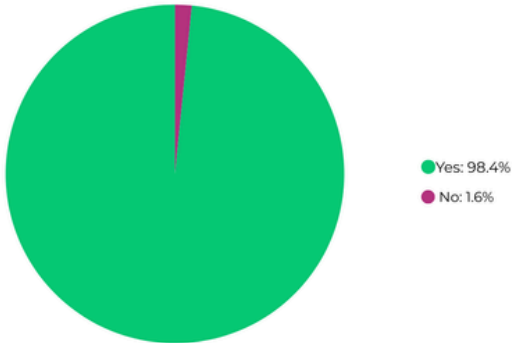


A group photo featuring (from left to right) Tabi Mughal (PWB Volunteer Professor), Jackline Katusabe (Emeritus Guild President ARU), Milly Muhindo Desire (Administrator to Faculty Dean ARU), and Namuli Grace (Assistant Procurement Officer ARU)

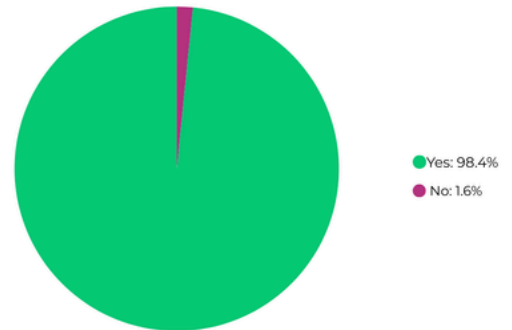
REFLECTIONS

Feedback received from programme participants

98% of the programme participants said they would recommend the programme.



98% of the programme participants said the programme was relevant to their needs.



"It has made me more confident when speaking before an audience. I am inspired to become a future entrepreneur, particularly in the field of fashion and design through jewelry making. I am now also able to conduct my own research in different fields, such as agriculture." **(Nanyonga Marylydia)**

"It has helped me improve my creativity and innovation skills, and I can now start a business project as one of the ways of reusing plastics, like turning plastic bottles into earrings, necklaces, and using other materials like beads." **(Nanyonjo Teddy)**

"I was able to make a bracelet out of plastic for my sick mom and I gave it to her while she was in the hospital bed. She felt as if she has recovered from her sickness because she was really proud of me." **(Programme Participant)**



REFLECTIONS

Feedback received from our partners, volunteers and other participants

"Prowibo has had a great impact on my understanding, especially about plastic materials. I used to think plastics were not useful, but this programme has made me aware of their importance through upcycling. I also learnt how to turn a small business into a big one, and this will help me share ideas with people at home on how they can start small businesses and grow them over time." **(Twinobusingye Voronica)**

"This programme was such a rewarding experience for me. Although the students were a bit shy at first, they soon opened up and became fully engaged. I loved designing practical, hands-on activities for them, and it was so inspiring to watch their confidence grow. Seeing them stay late, excited to finish their projects and add their own creative touch, was truly fulfilling." **(Akbar Saeed)**

"This programme was a powerful reminder of what we can achieve when we work together. The preparation and planning made it possible for everyone to get the most out of the sessions, and it was inspiring to see students so engaged. I look forward to continuing this spirit of collaboration and learning in future programmes." **(Jerome Bagenda)**

"This programme reinforced the value of working hand in hand with the community. I learned to really listen, respect their priorities, and collaborate with them throughout the process. The facilitators were so supportive and flexible, which made the sessions enjoyable and meaningful. It was wonderful to see even first-year students get excited and actively participate." **(Jackie Kats)**

I would demonstrate the steps to the students, and they each applied their own approach. Many stayed late to complete their work. By the last day, they had done an amazing job and were eager to finish. Jackie later sent pictures showing the students using the cement bags as grow bags to plant vegetables for the upcoming season, demonstrating the real, tangible impact of the programme. **(Tabi Mughal)**

