

A case study of Mr. Batwaula George of Nabwigulu Sub-county, Nankulyaku Parish, Busiba Zone

Batwaula George, a born of 1965, lives in Busiba zone with his two wives' Nanyoro and Twabuwulira and 18 children. He attained education up to primary seven and dropped out of school in 1980 with financial constraints. He later started maize and sugarcane growing with his dad and this became the main source of income as he locally processed maize and sold at 80/= per kg and sugarcane locally processed to waragi and sukari glue. His greatest season of maize harvest was in 1988 where he got 5000kgs that he sold at 80/= per kg earning 400,000/=. The money earned, he used to build the unfinished permanent house he lives in with his family today. This shelter compared to his fellow farmers is of comfort and makes him a decent and respected person in the community.

In the late 1990s to 2000, maize a moderate commercial crop that earned bread to his family lost meaning when prices lowered. He saw no hope in continuing with it but thought of other means of livelihood. In 2004, Mr. Batwaula heard of Africa 2000 Network, an organization that came to teach people how to come out of poverty using modern sustainable Agricultural practices in Nabwigulu, his neighboring parish. Upon this, he decided to visit a friend, Mr. Waiswa Hassan, an A2N farmer trainer. While he moved around Hassan's farm, his interest fell on to a pineapple plantation. The trainer gave him basic training on pineapple growing and management practices. This gave him courage to start up his own plantation using 20,000 pineapple suckers he bought from Bugerere. These he established on a 2 acre piece of land surrounding his home area.

From this pineapple plantation Batwaula sells 500 pineapple suckers and fruits weekly at 500/=each to Kamuli market and 700/= to his close community. This earns him 350000/= weekly and shillings 17,000,000,000 annually. His other market comes from Bio-fresh who prefers small size fruits for their sweet taste. These pineapple suckers are of significance as he uses them as mulch to the banana garden nearby. The benefits realized from his earnings are a poultry house built, improved goats bought, a cow for milk, oxen for ploughing and 10 acres of land. His family also has also gained good health from eating these fruits and thus reduced sickness due to plentiful vitamin A.

When Africa 2000 Network moved to Nankulyaku in April 2007, they provided 100 tissue banana suckers. These he established to a well managed banana plantation that currently has expanded to stands of up to 470 plants. About his Banana plantation, Batwaula has this to say. " I harvest 3 bunches from each banana stand a year and sell at 10,000/=,I also sell suckers at 1000/= each to farmers who have realized how high yielding they are .My family has enough food to eat every day now that my vegetable gardens are also doing well .people buy vegetables and I get at least 2000/= from dodo and nakati every day. .My plantation earns me 100,000/= a week and at least 6,000,000/= annually". This

portrays Batwaula's home is food secure as they are able to eat well balanced foods round the day.

Being a model farmer, NGO organizations to mention NOGAMU and Bio-fresh came in to train him on passion fruit growing. An example of this is a local underground freezer that is dug in the mud and covered with banana fibres and polyethylene bags. This preserves passion fruit for long. Pertaining the refrigerator, Batwaula has this to say, "This refrigerator has helped me to preserve passion fruits for a week after harvest before I deliver them to bio-fresh every Thursday. The quality remains good. I harvest these fruits twice a year in [June, July], [November & December]. Each season gives me 3,000,000/= earning me 6,000,000/= annually. My main market is Bio-fresh, who export high breed purple passion fruit to Germany. Local market is also from within my neighboring community and Kamuli. We drink juice with my family, and my 16 children are in good schools and I hope they will qualify to be my marketers, secretaries as I look forward to setting up a big company". Self help also loaned him 400 poultry egg layers. These lay 9 trays of eggs every day. The sales are 4500/= per tray, thus 45000/= per day and 16,000,000/= a year. These eggs provide food to his family. It's the reason he is strong and hardworking. Much of this poultry earnings pay children's fees, and management of the poultry unit.

Batwaula thanks A2N Kamuli for their tireless efforts in helping to bring positive transformation to his life and community. About his future plans he had this to say, "I look forward to working with my fellow farmers as an association to do good work that will help me solve my marketing problems because as a group you can produce enough, and sell in large quantities. I plan to buy a transport van to help market my produce to far ends and set up an organization that will employ many people that work to earn their living. My farm will expand to employ many people and my children". This is a great vision and when fulfilled shall make him a model farmer and a point of learning not only in his community but Kamuli as a whole.