

## **Fare Thee Well: Appreciation of Professor Bukenya-Ziraba's Service to Makerere University**

We pay tribute and celebrate the life of our colleague, friend, father figure and mentor, Professor Remegius Bukenya-Ziraba. It was with deep sorrow that we learned of the sudden death of Prof. Bukenya-Ziraba on Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2013. It was shocking because he was seen last on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2013 with plans to meet and finish planned work on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2013. Professor Bukenya-Ziraba was laid to rest at his ancestral grounds in Kyamaganda Village, Masaka on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2013. May his soul rest in peace.

The Professor served Makerere University for over 30 years; he was a strategic thinker, a visionary who was brilliant, innovative and creative. As such, he contributed much to the development of the Botany as a unit, department and research area; College of Natural Sciences and its predecessor the Faculty of Science. He generously gave us his knowledge, his expertise, his skills.

Professor Bukenya-Ziraba was a professor of Taxonomy and Systematics in Botany in the Department of Biological Sciences, College of Natural Sciences – Makerere University. He was the only Professor of Taxonomy and Systematics in Uganda and possibly in the region. He joined Makerere University in 1977 as a Special Assistant in Botany in the Faculty of Science. He was later promoted to the rank of Teaching Assistant in 1979; rank of Lecturer in 1981; rank of Senior Lecturer in 1986; rank of Associate Professor in 1996 and to the rank of Professor in 2001, a position he has held till his death. At the time of his death, he had been appointed on contract as a Professor from November 2013 to November 2017. This followed his retirement in September when he made 60years.

He completed his Bachelors Degree (BSc. Botany/Geography) in 1977 from Makerere University; MSc. in Plant Taxonomy from the University of Ghana in 1980 and his PhD in Plant Taxonomy from Makerere University in 1993.

In leadership capacity at Makerere University, Professor Bukenya-Ziraba served as acting Head of Department of Botany from 1987 to 1989. He served as substantive Head of Department of Botany from 1994 to 2002. He also served as acting Dean of the Faculty of Science from February to November 1998. He also served in the Senate of Makerere University and various committees of the university. He served as the coordinator of the Norwegian Programme for Development, Research and Education (NUFU) at Makerere University from 2005 till his death. NUFU supports partnership-based academic cooperation between researchers and institutions in developing countries and their partners in Norway focusing on research, education, capacity building and institutional development.

He taught several courses at both undergraduate and graduates level. He mentored and supervised many graduate students and many of them have stayed

to serve Makerere University. He won several research grants internationally and published over 30 research papers in various international peer reviewed journals.

He was an active Fellow of the Uganda National Academy of Sciences where he served as a member of the Research and Publications Committee; he was also a member of the New York Academy of Sciences and many other world bodies.