

# Kagera RC commends Café Africa for support

From **MEDDY MULISA** in  
Bukoba

**K**AGERA Regional Commissioner (RC), Maj Gen Charles Mbuge has commended Café Africa (T) for supporting government efforts to improve the coffee industry, appealing for other NGOs to borrow a leaf.

Equally, he challenged youths to take a holistic approach by engaging in coffee production as this would create more employment opportunities to them instead of loitering in towns in search of jobs.

He made the appeal on Friday while launching the five-year Sustainable Rejuvenation of Robusta Coffee Production Project in Kagera Region being implemented with funding from Café Africa (T).

The project is aimed to increase coffee production and productivity and improve livelihoods of smallholder farmers.

"The government highly appreciated the support by Café Africa (T) to improve the production and productivity of coffee industry. Youths should take a holistic role in engaging in coffee production instead of relying on elderly people," he said.

Maj Gen Mbuge also tasked authorities in the eight district councils- Biharamulo, Muleba, Bukoba DC, Karagwe, Ngara, Kyerwa, Bukoba MC and Missenyi- to ensure that they allocate enough land to the youths for production purposes.

Café Africa (T) Executive Secretary, Ms Dafrosa Sanga informed him that under the five-year programme (2020-2024) at least 22,250 farmers would be reached while 415 Extension Officers would undergo training on modern coffee husbandry practices.

At least 250 demonstration plots would be established to enable the farmers get on farm best practices. To date several coffee nurseries had already been established at Birabo (Muleba), Ibrvera (Bukoba DC).

"In collaboration with researchers at TACRI Maruku we have identified clonal robusta varieties which are resistant to Coffee Wilt Disease (CWD). Under the programme we expect to produce over 600,000 Clonal Robusta varieties which would be distributed to the farmers for planting," she said.

In a message sent through video conference, Café Africa (T) National Coordinator, Ms Nadia Houru, on behalf of the donor (JDE-Holland), assured the government of continued support to improve the coffee industry.

"We congratulate President Samia Suhu Hassan for being sworn-in to the highest office. Café Africa (T) would also like to see more women and youths taking a big role in the production of coffee to increase the incomes at their households," she said.

Zonal Coffee Manager at TACRI Maruku, Dr Nyabisi Ng'oma, on the other hand, mentioned three major coffee diseases affecting Robusta varieties as Coffee Wilt Disease (CWD), Leaf Rust and Black Coffee Borer.

However, he said efforts were being taken by researchers to get best Robusta varieties which were resistant to the diseases, appealing for more funds.

Kagera Regional Administrative Secretary (RAS), Professor Faustin Kamuzora revealed that the region was implementing a five-year program aimed to increase production of coffee from 78,000 metric tonnes to 200,000 metric tonnes by 2025.

He called to all stakeholders in the coffee industry to work together to address the challenges facing the coffee sector.

According to Prof Kamuzora, Kagera region produces between 45 - 55 per cent of all the coffee produced in the country.