Every week *New Vision* will profile some of Uganda's Teachers Making a Difference. The 12 most innovative teachers will share a cash prize of sh18m and the five most outstanding will go for a week-long all-expenses paid study tour to Ireland courtesy of New Vision, Irish Embassy in Uganda, Trocaire and Simba Travelcare, one of Uganda's leading tour and travel management companies. Today, we bring you the stories of **Michael Mabwasa** of Bukhooli Technical School and **Jane Nansubuga** of Mengo Senior School in Kampala city

Mabwasa changes face of Bukhooli Technical School

By George Bita

Although Michael Mabwasa became the principal of Bukhooli Technical School when it lacked a land title and classrooms, a decade later, the institute has its own land title.

The institute, located in Bugiri municipality, is now fenced off with a storeyed building now taking shape.

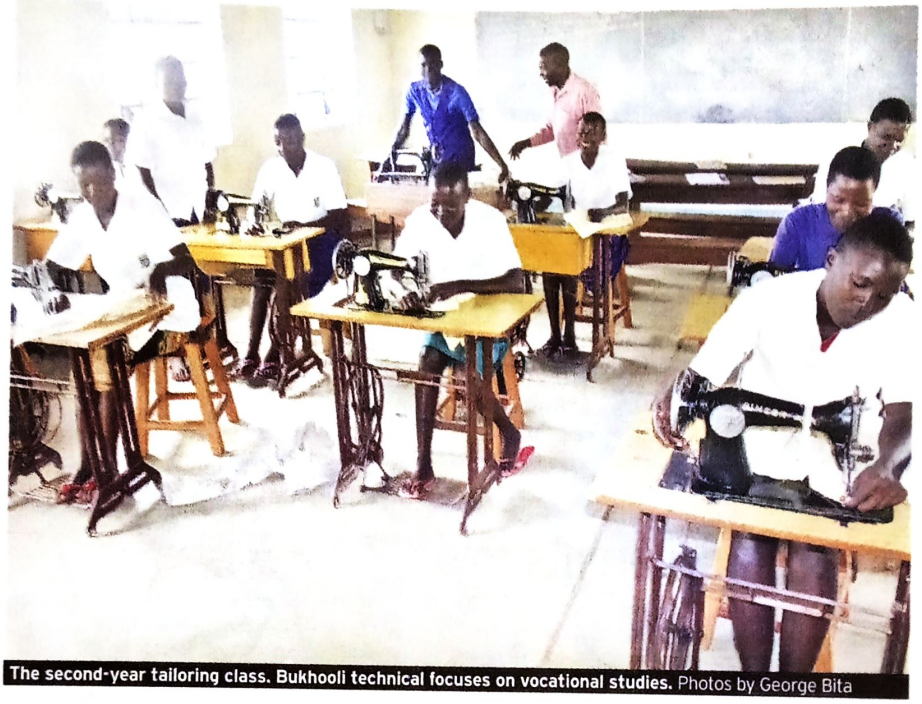
Beatrice Kalembe, a student, reveals that when she joined in 2016, one would enter the school compound from any direction without any restrictions.

"The fence and gate, installed in 2017, have changed all that. Our school is now organised, with a gatekeeper to monitor those entering and leaving," Kalembe says.

According to Fenard Mukuru, the municipal town clerk, Mabwasa secured the school's title deed for the 2.6 acres in 2015.

"This helped to scare off potential land grabbers. Such prime land in an urban neighbourhood needed to be well-guarded," Mukuru notes.

Mabwasa says before securing the deed, part of the school land was being threatened by encroachers.



The second-year tailoring class. Bukhooli technical focuses on vocational studies. Photos by George Bita

Building boost

Josiya Karaja, the chairperson of the school's board of governors, revealed that Mabwasa in 2017 lobbied for a sh1b three-storeyed classroom block, which is currently under construction.

"Once complete, the structure will have workshops, study rooms and a library. This is a major development for the technical school," Karaja says.

Rose Namatovu, the bursar, says: "The civil works are expected to be complete within two years."

Co-curricular contribution

Mabwasa discloses that the school playground is used daily to improve the learners' sports talent.

"An hour after 4:00pm is dedicated to sports each day and the students are expected to report to the field for practice," he says.

Mabwasa adds that since it is the only technical school in Busoga sub-region, sports contests are held with similar institutes in Budaka, Mbale and Namisindwa districts.

"Our intake is from PLE level. Instead of our students going to Senior One, they come to technical school to pursue vocational studies," Mabwasa says.

Henry Kabulo, the Bugiri district education officer, commended Bukhooli Technical School for its participation in co-curricular activities.

"The school budget clearly stipulates a vote for co-curricular as per the education ministry guidelines. This is a step in the right direction," Kabulo says.

Community engagement

Issa Mulumba, the deputy principal, narrates that the school's neighbours often request and are allowed to utilise the sports field.

"Some have had weddings, graduation and birthday parties at the premises. We also have football contests between local teams," he says.

According to Mulumba, some primary schools in the vicinity lack spacious sports fields and often seek permission to have their training sessions at the institute's playground.

He adds that the school's borehole is also used by the community during times of water scarcity in the municipality.

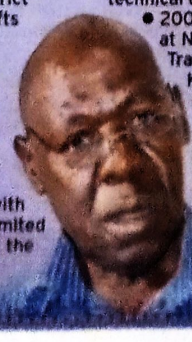
Mabwasa adds that members of the community sell snacks to both staff and students to boost their household income.

"Our school cook, gatekeeper and other casual workers come from Bugiri urban neighbourhood. This is a testimony that we have a good working relationship with the community," he says.

GOLDEN TIPS ✓

- *The best education is through skilling the learners*
- *Hardwork pays*
- *Always put God first*
- *Learning is a continuous process*

Mabwasa fact file



- 1975: Completed primary education at Butaleja Primary School in Butaleja district
- 1979: Got an O'Level certificate from Manjasi High School in Tororo district
- 1983: Attained a crafts certificate from St. Joseph's Technical Institute, Kisubi
- 1985: Obtained an advanced crafts certificate from St Joseph's Technical Institute, Kisubi
- 1985-1990: Worked with Roko Construction Limited
- 1991-1993: Studied at the Institute of Teacher Education, Kyambogo (ITEK) for a diploma in technical education
- 1999: Graduated from Makerere University, Kampala with a bachelor of education technical degree certificate
- 2000-2003: Tutored at Nakawa Vocational Training Institute, Kampala
- 2003-2008: Taught at Jinja Vocational Training Institute
- 2009 to date: Principal of Bukhooli Technical School, Bugiri district



The sixth storeyed building under construction at the school

Teachers Making a Difference

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WHAT OTHERS SAY

DOROTHY BWANIKA, student
I like the way our principal has changed the face of the school. Trespassers have been kept off and we have a new building being constructed.

EDWARD WACHI, headprefect
Mabwasa is a good administrator. When he fenced the premises, he made it easier for prefects to enforce discipline especially, when it comes to students who sneak out of school.

SARAH BIRYELI, student
The principal has ensured that we get all the machines needed for tailoring lessons. Every learner has access to a sewing machine.