

JUMBA - Strategic R4D platform for research and development in Babati District, Tanzania

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Introduction

JUMBA is a Kiswahili acronym for the Multi-stakeholder Research for Development Platform in Babati district (Figure 1). It was initiated by Africa RISING – ESA Project in April 2014 as a strategic tool for consolidating joint efforts amongst active stakeholders in response to needs of the farming community in the district. JUMBA is supervised by the District Council. Africa RISING lays ground for a functional JUMBA through capacity building and facilitation of stakeholder meetings.

Rationale

Development partners in Babati district operate individually, quite often addressing specific concerns affecting the livelihoods of targeted beneficiaries. This approach fails to respond effectively to inter-linked clients' needs which ultimately influence sustained uptake of candidate technologies /innovations leading to the desired impact. Africa RISING is about sustainable intensification based on sustained uptake of integrated technologies beyond project lifespan. Drawing lessons from previous projects, Africa RISING saw the need to innovate a system that fosters continuity of its initiatives beyond the project lifespan, first at the district level (strategic) and later at lower ward and village levels (operational). The interaction optimizes synergy and leads to more innovative ways of responding to client needs through joint efforts and co-learning.

Operational JUMBA

JUMBA operates at two levels; the Assembly and Committee levels, the committee being elected at plenary meetings of the Assembly (Plate 1). Membership comprises representatives from key stakeholder categories namely farmers, policy makers, extension services, private companies (especially input/output dealers), non government organizations, researchers and financial institutions. The Assembly meets once a year and determines strategic activities that should be implemented on assignment to different stakeholders. The Committee meets twice a year, monitors implementations of these assignments, lobbies support and reports back at the plenary. The current committee is composed of representatives farmers (2), policy makers (1), extension services (2), NGOs (2), researchers (2) and Agro-input dealers (1) .

Progress to-date

Developed a constitution (Figure 2 & 3), and identified priority areas for immediate action, namely (i) training farmers TOT, extension agents and youth on improved agronomic packages, farming as business, marketing skills groups dynamics/management (ii) establishment of platform at ward level (iii) linking farmers to credit facilities



Figure 3. Participants thoroughly reading a copy of JUMBA constitution before approving it at JUMBA General Meeting held on 17/11/2016 in Babati. (Photo credit: Gloriana Ndibalema/IITA)

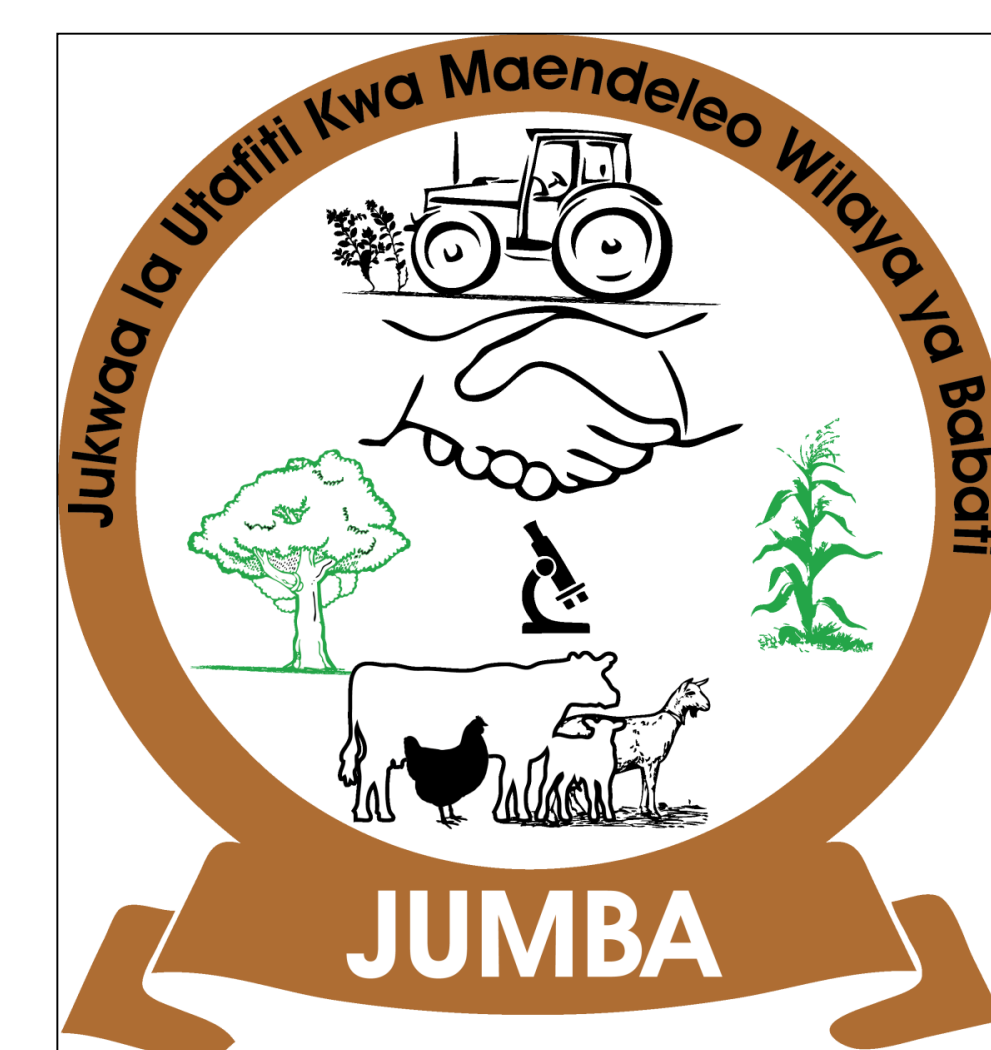


Figure 1. The JUMBA logo

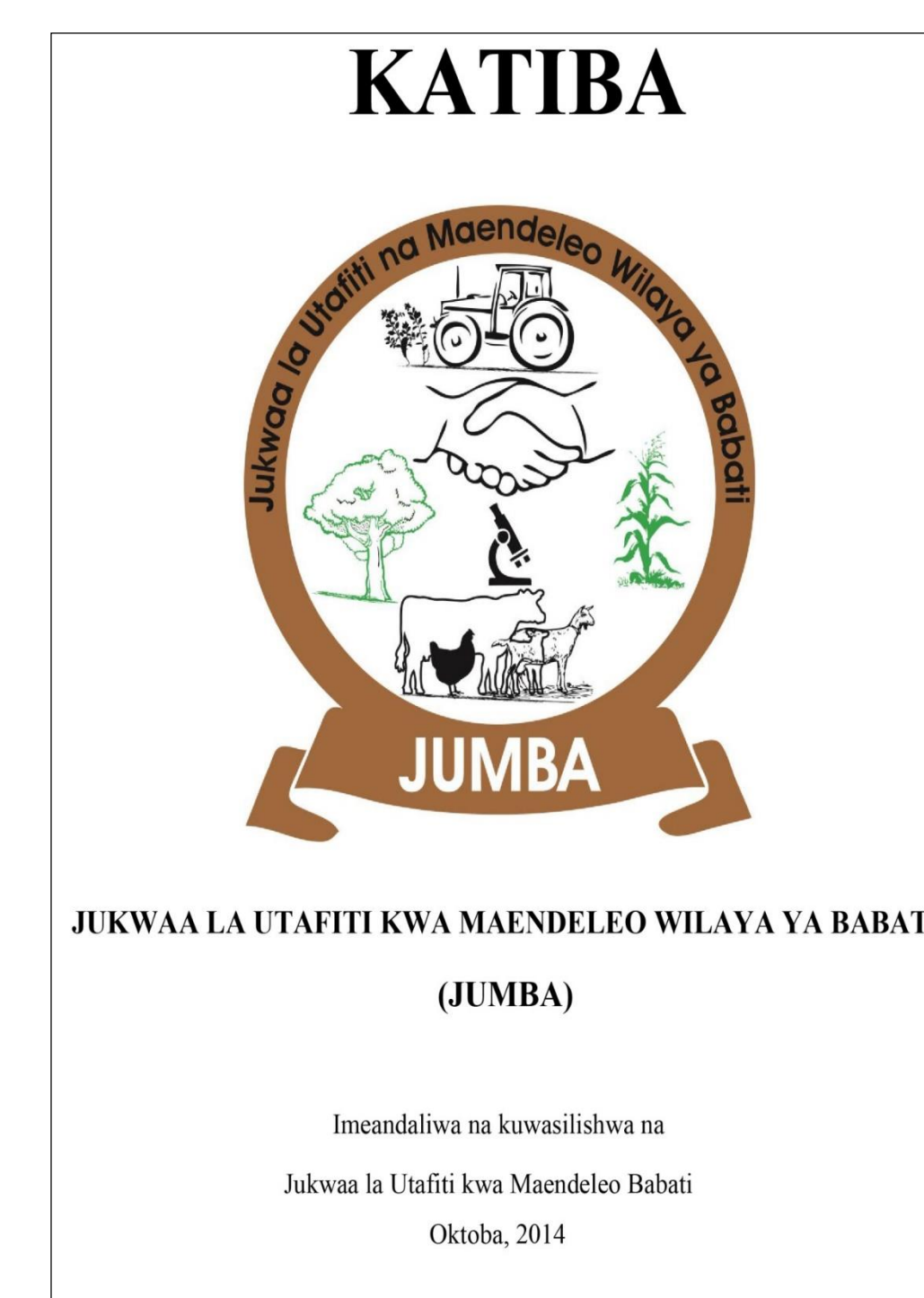


Figure 2. Front page photo of the Constitution

JUMBA in phase II

A functional R4D platform is in place at Babati district level; it still needs support in terms of logistics, mobilization of active participation of more stakeholders in the district and capacity building (agronomic /technical packages, group dynamics, entrepreneurship /business skills, lobbying. It will take leadership in forming operational platforms at ward level