CABI PlantwisePlus

Study visit to the Netherlands by PlantwisePlus Burundi partners



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Cover photo: The Burundian delegation jointly hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Agriculture of the Netherlands, 24 August 2026.

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Rationale

With Netherlands Embassy funding support, CABI is leading the PlantwisePlus Project in Burundi to help smallholder farmers increase crop productivity. The project is implemented in partnership with Institut des Sciences Agronomiques du Burundi (ISABU), Direction de la Protection des Végétaux (DPV), Agence Burundaise de Régulation des Produits Vétérinaires et Alimentaires (ABREVPA), Office National de Contrôle et de Certification des Semences (ONCCS) and other Burundian organisations.

As part of the efforts to strengthen the partnership between the Government of Burundi and the Netherlands through CABI, and to support Burundi's national agricultural transformation strategy, a high-level study visit to the Netherlands was organized from 23 to 30 August 2026. The delegation comprised five senior government officials from the Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock (MINEAGRIE), a representative of the presidency, and representatives of the PlantwisePlus Burundi project implemented by CABI.

The Netherlands provides a highly relevant model for agricultural transformation. Despite its relatively small geographic size, it is one of the world's largest exporters of agricultural products. Its success is widely attributed to the so-called **"Dutch Diamond" approach**, which emphasises strong collaboration between government, private sector, research institutions, and civil society.

The study visit aimed to expose the Burundian delegation to this integrated agricultural innovation system and facilitated learning from Dutch institutions across these four pillars.



Objectives

The study visit was intended to achieve the following key objectives:

- To learn from the Dutch agricultural development model based on the “Dutch Diamond” approach, which fosters collaboration among government institutions, the private sector, research organizations, and farmer associations;
- To enhance understanding of European Union market requirements, particularly in relation to phytosanitary standards and quality compliance;
- To gain insights into sustainable agricultural production systems, including integrated pest management and biological control;
- To contribute to the identification of practical actions to institutionalize and sustain approaches supported under the PlantwisePlus project in Burundi.



Participants

The study visit delegation consisted of **five senior government officials** from the Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock (MINEAGRIE) of Burundi, plus representation of the Burundian Presidency Office in addition to relevant CABI project staff. The visit was facilitated by Niek Botden of HollandDoor. Please see Annex 1 for delegates information.



Visits and key lessons

Study Visits Day 1

Kick-Off Meeting: Tour Objectives and the Dutch Diamond Model

Janny Vos welcomed the Burundian delegation and thanked them for making time and travelling to the Netherlands. She explained that the PlantwisePlus Project in Burundi organized the study visit to provide inspiration and learning opportunities from the Dutch Diamond Model, a collaborative approach that brings together the public sector, private sector, research institutions, and civil society to strengthen food security and agricultural development.

Janny highlighted the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships in addressing agricultural challenges and fostering innovation. She then invited Niek Botden to present the programme and provide organizational remarks.

Niek Botden introduced the objectives and agenda of the study visit. He provided an overview of Dutch agriculture and horticulture, emphasizing the factors that have contributed to the sector's productivity, innovation, and resilience.

He encouraged the delegation to focus not on the technologies themselves they would encounter during the visit, but more importantly on the underlying principles, approaches, and innovations that enable adaptation and resilience. He stressed that understanding these principles would help to identify key lessons that could be adapted to the Burundian context.

World Horti Center

World Horti Center is an international knowledge and innovation hub for the horticultural sector, situated in Naaldwijk, Netherlands. It unites education, research, and business, showcasing sustainable horticultural solutions and fostering collaboration to drive global advancements in the field. For more details, URL: https://worldhorticenter.nl/en/



Figure 1. The Burundian delegation at World Horti Center (Day 1)

Key Lessons Learned:

The Netherlands has strategically prioritized horticulture as a commercial sector, making it one of the world's leading exporters of horticultural products, including vegetables and flowers. The World Horti Center integrates education, research, and business activities, combining education (agricultural college), research facilities, and the flower auction.

A key lesson from the visit was the successful application of the Dutch Diamond Approach, which promotes strong collaboration among government, research institutions, educational organizations, and the private sector. This integrated model has enabled the Dutch horticulture industry to achieve high productivity, innovation, and competitiveness, allowing it to efficiently produce and distribute horticultural products to markets worldwide.

Presentations by Westland Municipality and Dutch Greenhouse Delta

The Municipality of Westland, known as the "Glass City," is the global heart of greenhouse horticulture. It hosts Greenport West-Holland, a premier innovation hub where businesses, researchers, and government collaborate on sustainable food production and agrologistics. This high-tech cluster generates billions annually, leading the world in horticultural technology (gemeentewestland.nl). Mrs Sisi Chou made a presentation.

Dutch Greenhouse Delta is a leading international foundation that promotes the Netherlands' horticultural ecosystem globally. It provides a comprehensive "Fork2Farm" solution by connecting Dutch expertise in technology, research, and government to help mega-cities achieve sustainable food security and efficient, high-tech greenhouse production. Mrs Mirjam Boekestijn made a presentation.

Key lesson: A key lesson from the visit was the critical role of local governments in creating an enabling environment for a thriving private sector growth and innovation. This demonstrates that effective local governance is essential for fostering a competitive business environment, attracting investment, and driving sustainable economic development.



Figure 2. The Burundian delegation visiting Westland Municipality (Day 1)

For example, the local administration plays a key role in bringing stakeholders together around shared sustainability goals, particularly the reduction of carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions. One innovative initiative connects greenhouse horticulture with CO_2 produced by manufacturing and heavy industries. Instead of being released into the atmosphere, the captured CO_2 is supplied to greenhouses, where it is used by plants during photosynthesis, thereby enhancing crop growth and productivity. In addition, the Municipality of Westland has facilitated the establishment of the Global Alliance of Horticulture Regions, which promotes collaboration among leading horticultural regions worldwide. This network helps create an enabling business environment and strengthens international partnerships.

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature (LVVN) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)

Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature

1. Mr. Ralf van de Beek; Director International Agribusiness and Food Security 2. Mr. Arno Rohde - Regional coordinator Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana, Nigeria, Ivory Coast and Senegal

Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Directorate General International Cooperation (DGIS)

1. Mr. Thijs Woudstra - Director Food Security Inclusive Green Growth Department

2. Mrs. Robin Breedeveld; Policy Officer Food & Nutrition Security - Inclusive Green Growth Department

Mr. Ralf van de Beek welcomed the Burundian delegation and introduced the members of the Dutch delegation. He provided further insights into the Dutch Diamond Approach, emphasizing its role in bringing together government, research institutions, educational organizations, and the private sector to jointly address challenges and drive agricultural development. He noted that the approach is based on collective problem-solving, with all relevant actors brought to the table to develop shared solutions and strengthen ownership. While this collaborative process may not always be the fastest route to addressing immediate challenges, it provides a foundation for more sustainable and broadly supported solutions. Mr Thijs Woudstra expressed appreciation for the study visit initiative and encouraged a spirit of two-way learning, with both delegations sharing experiences and identifying lessons that could be adapted to their respective contexts.

The Burundian delegation was then invited to introduce themselves and deliver a brief presentation on the achievements and results of the PlantwisePlus Project in Burundi. The presentation was done by ISABU DG on behalf of the delegation and highlighted the project's significant reach and contribution to strengthening plant health services, with the Dutch delegation particularly impressed by the scale of farmer outreach achieved by the project.

Following the presentations, both delegations engaged in a productive exchange of experiences and perspectives, exploring potential areas for collaboration, partnership, and future opportunities to strengthen Burundi's horticultural sector. The discussions also highlighted the importance of ensuring that the remaining institutions and stakeholders are fully onboarded into the collaborative approach, particularly given that sustaining and scaling such an approach will require clear institutional ownership and appropriate financing.



Figure 3. Presenting PlantwisePlus at the Netherlands Ministry of LVVN (Day 1)

Study Visits Day 2

Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries

The Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI) connects smallholders and small/medium-sized enterprises to European markets. For Burundi, CBI focuses on overcoming technical barriers to trade, improving export competitiveness, and establishing sustainable agri-food value chains that comply with international standards. Mr Edouard van der Haas provided a presentation. It became obvious that there is need for increased visibility of Burundian products for export (e.g. coffee) in order to promote and grow export volumes.



Figure 4. The Burundian delegation at CBI (Day 2)

Key lesson: A key lesson from the engagement with CBI was the important role it plays in helping businesses from non-European countries understand European market requirements and prepare for successful entry into international markets, particularly the Netherlands and the European Union. CBI supports exporters by providing market intelligence, demand assessments, trend analysis, and business development guidance. It also helps businesses identify market opportunities, navigate legal and regulatory frameworks, comply with quality and certification standards, and meet the sustainability requirements increasingly expected by European buyers. This approach

provides a valuable model for strengthening the capacity of Burundian businesses to understand and respond to international market requirements, while positioning them to take advantage of emerging export opportunities.

Koolhaas Gerbera Flowers

Koolhaas Natuurlijk specializes in sustainable, high-quality flower cultivation on substrate (gerberas), prioritizing eco-friendly techniques and biological pest management. For Burundi, visiting their nursery illustrates practical greenhouse management, pesticide- and water use-reduction protocols, and sustainable floriculture methods that local commercial flower producers can adopt to meet strict international standards and access export markets.

Key lesson: A major lesson from the visit was the importance of strategic planning and continuous optimization in responding to evolving environmental, market, and production challenges. The owner of the greenhouse was totally involved across different steps of production, supporting and motivating teamwork with consequent productivity. That may serve as good example in leading by example approach. The visit also highlighted the critical role of coordinated logistics and supply chain management in the global flower industry. Efficient harvesting, packaging, transportation, and distribution systems enable flowers to reach international markets in optimal condition and within required timeframes.

Another important lesson was the recognition of horticulture as a priority commercial sector. The Dutch floriculture industry has developed into a globally competitive sector through sustained investments in technology, innovation, quality standards, specialised production systems, and market-oriented value chains. For Burundi, this provides useful lessons on the importance of strategically prioritising high-value horticultural crops and developing the supporting systems required to orient the sector towards commercial production and international markets.



Figure 5. The Burundian delegation at Koolhaas Gerbera Flowers

The visit also provided insight into the international organisation of horticultural value chains, particularly the role of specialised propagation and tissue-culture production. The delegation learned that high-quality planting material can be multiplied through tissue culture and propagation facilities located outside the Netherlands, while remaining integrated into international horticultural supply chains. Countries such as Uganda provide a relevant regional example of this model, with established partnerships involving Dutch horticultural companies and local propagation enterprises. This presents a potential opportunity for Burundi to explore the development of local capacity for tissue culture, propagation, and production of quality planting material for domestic and potentially regional markets. Beyond strengthening access to quality planting material, such an approach could create new opportunities for skills development, employment, technology transfer, and private-sector investment in the horticultural sector. Such an opportunity would, however, require assessment of the technical, regulatory, phytosanitary, infrastructure, and commercial requirements needed to establish a viable propagation industry in Burundi.

Koppert Biological Systems



Figure 6. The Burundian delegation visiting Koppert BioSolutions, a private Dutch company manufacturing biopesticides to reduce use of chemical pesticide (Day 2).

Koppert Biological Systems is a global leader in biological crop protection and natural pollination. For Burundi's agricultural sector, Koppert provides scalable models for mass-rearing beneficial insects, micro-organism solutions, and biopesticides—offering smallholders safe, low-risk alternatives to hazardous chemicals. Bram Klapwijk introduced the history of the company, introduced Mathieu ter Haar (sales manager E Africa) and showed the delegation around the Koppert Experience Centre.

Key lesson: A key lesson from the visit to Koppert was the opportunity for Burundi to identify innovative biological crop protection and pollination products that could be evaluated for suitability under tropical conditions. The visit provided valuable insights into sustainable pest and disease management solutions and highlighted the importance of testing and validating these products in local environments before registration and commercialization.

Embassy of the Republic of Burundi

The Burundian Embassy in The Hague was visited and, in addition, Burundian embassy officials accompanied various study visit activities over the course of the study visit. We met with Stany Muhizi who expressed high appreciation for the study visit initiative and exchanged thoughts with the delegation about "how to do business in the Netherlands".



Figure 7. The Burundian delegation visiting the Burundian Embassy in the Netherlands (Day 2)

Study Visits Day 3

RoyalBrinkman

The firm Royal Brinkman is a global specialist in horticulture, supplying to professional glass-covered cultivation of horticultural produce. We visited their agro-dealer shop, with sales of spray equipment, including flat-spray nozzles and spray powder that can be used in practical learning exercises about spray contamination when personal protective equipment is not used.



Figure 8. The Burundian delegation at Royal Brinkman (Day 3)

Key lesson: The Netherlands has strict legislation governing the sale and use of agro-chemicals. Agro-dealers must be licensed to sell these products, and they are prohibited from selling pesticides to unlicensed growers or members of the general public. Growers must therefore also be appropriately licensed to purchase and use pesticides.

The visit also highlighted the potential benefits of using specialised spray nozzles. Although relatively inexpensive, these nozzles can improve application efficiency and effectiveness, while reducing product use, labour costs, and environmental contamination. This demonstrates how relatively simple technologies can contribute to more efficient and responsible pesticide use.

Delphy

The Delphy Improvement Centre in Bleiswijk excels in practice-oriented research, knowledge development, and sustainable cultivation innovation. The Burundian delegation was guided by Jacco Verheul who explained about the importance of testing horticultural technologies under practical conditions before growers adopt them. For Burundi's agricultural sector, the set-up demonstrated vital operational insights into data-driven crop management, digital pest scouting, resilient farming systems, and practical training models to modernize decentralized smallholder advisory networks.

Key lesson: Delphy provides an example of the Dutch Diamond model, which brings together the public sector, private companies, research institutions, and civil society to drive agricultural innovation and development. A key feature of the model is that research and innovation are not necessarily government-led or government-funded. Private sector actors can identify research needs, initiate or co-finance research, and invest their own resources, with government providing matching or complementary funding to enable the work to be undertaken at the scale required.

This creates a more demand-driven approach in which research responds to practical challenges and market needs, while public investment helps leverage private-sector resources and reduce the risks associated with innovation. Government also plays an important role in creating an enabling policy and institutional environment for research, knowledge transfer, and agricultural development.

Dalipa Sweet Pepper (Greenhouse Vegetable Production)



Figure 9. The Burundian delegation at Dalipa Sweet Pepper (Day 3)

Dalipa B.V. is a prominent Dutch sweet pepper nursery leveraging advanced, climate-controlled greenhouse and crop-protection technologies. For Burundi's agricultural sector, the visit provided high-tech operational insights into resource-efficient horticulture, optimal micro-climate management, and integrated pest control to maximize local crop productivity and yield stability. However, despite its "Champions League" quality of production and highly advanced systems, the business operates on relatively low margins / profitability, averaging around 5%. This highlighted that achieving world-class production standards does not necessarily translate into high profitability, underscoring the importance of carefully assessing production costs, market prices, resource efficiency, and overall commercial viability when considering the adoption of high-tech agricultural systems.

Key lesson: This is an example of both covered crop farming and the circular economy in practice, recycling water through a closed water management system. Carbon dioxide (CO_2) generated from industrial processes is captured and reused to enhance crop growth and productivity, while biological waste is recycled into compost, minimizing environmental impact. In addition, advanced technologies are integrated throughout the value chain, with post-harvest handling, processing, and packaging operations largely automated to improve efficiency, optimize resource use, reduce losses, and ensure consistent product quality.

CABI's publishing services and opportunities

A lunch-time presentation was provided by Lieke Boerefijn (CABI) about CABI's published products was provided by Lieke Boerefijn. She explained about CABI Digital Library including CABI's published products, Cases and more:

- Overview of CABI's publishing products
- Overview of CABI's Open Access resources
- More information about CABI's Cases (incl. Plant Health Cases):
- How to publish with CABI
- SDGenie, a tool to match text against specific targets set out in the Sustainable Development Goals
- Relevant book (Open Access): Principles of Integrated Pest Management - A Southern African Perspective.
- PlantwisePlus Knowledge Bank

Netherlands Food Partnership



Figure 10. The Burundian delegation visiting Netherlands Food Partnership (NFP) in the Netherlands (Day 3)

The Netherlands Food Partnership (NFP) accelerates sustainable food system transitions globally by connecting Dutch expertise with local priorities in specific low-medium income countries. Currently, Burundi has not been prioritised by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ivo Demmers and Wim Goris provided presentations. For Burundi, the principle of NFP facilitating multi-stakeholder coalitions between government, research, and private actors, improving sector coordination, scaling up safe bio-inputs, and strengthening food security frameworks is of interest.

Key lesson: A major lesson from NFP's approach is the importance of acting as a bridge-builder in transforming food systems. Sustainable change requires systems thinking, strategic planning, and strong collaboration among diverse stakeholders.

Ecofarm De Lingehof

Ekoboerderij De Lingehof (in partnership with Lekker Lupine) is a biodynamic, organic farm in Randwijk. Andre Jurius guided the delegation around his organic farm, explaining how a long crop rotation, including cover crops, potatoes and other vegetables, is designed around the nutritional needs and condition of the soil. The farm operates without chemical pesticides or synthetic fertilisers, instead relying on green manure, grass-clover mixtures for nitrogen fixation, resistant varieties, composted manure and other biological and agronomic practices to maintain soil fertility and manage pests.

The farm also demonstrates the value of collaboration within the wider agricultural system. Its relationship with a neighbouring dairy farm creates a mutually beneficial cycle in which livestock manure can contribute to soil fertility, reducing dependence on external inputs. The potato and onion storage facilities further demonstrated how appropriate post-harvest management can protect quality and value, complementing the farm's production practices.

Marieke Lameris presented how lupine, a relatively unfamiliar crop in the local context, can be introduced into such a low-input faming system. Beyond its potential as a source of protein, lupine can contribute to soil improvement and crop diversification while creating opportunities for new value chains and markets.

Importantly, the farm also provided a useful commercial perspective on organic production. Yields are approximately 25–30% lower than on comparable conventional farms, while the produce commands a premium of around 40%. At the same time, input costs are reported to be broadly comparable between the organic and conventional systems. This illustrates that the viability of organic farming depends not only on production efficiency, but also on securing markets that recognise and reward the additional value of sustainably produced food.

For Burundi, the farm demonstrates how regenerative crop diversification, soil restoration, biological pest management and market-oriented production can be combined into a coherent farming system. It also highlights the potential for integrating high-value legumes such as lupine into farming systems to improve soil health, strengthen climate resilience, support local protein production and create additional revenue streams.



Figure 11. The Burundian delegation at Ecofarm De Lingehof (Day 3)

Key lesson: Sustainable farming is not achieved simply by replacing chemical inputs with individual alternatives; it requires a knowledge-intensive and integrated production system built around soil health, crop diversity, biological processes and appropriate agronomic practices. De Lingehof demonstrates how green manure, grass-clover, composted livestock manure, resistant varieties, crop rotation and other biological approaches can work together to maintain productivity without synthetic fertilisers and pesticides. The experience also shows that lower physical yields do not necessarily translate into lower economic returns where farmers can access differentiated markets and obtain a sufficient price premium. For Burundi, the broader lesson is therefore to consider the whole production and market system (including soil fertility, input costs, yields, post-harvest management, farmer-to-farmer or cross-farm synergies, and market incentives) when promoting regenerative and low-input agriculture.

Study Visits Day 4

Soil valley

Soil Valley is a Dutch innovation hub fostering digital technology adoption for sustainable soil management. They connect startups, researchers, and farmers to develop and implement data-driven solutions, enhancing soil health, crop yields, and environmental resilience through smart farming practices.

The delegation was received by Fons Eijkelkamp, who provided a presentation. Royal Eijkelkamp is a Dutch specialist in soil and water research equipment, actively promoting digital technology adoption. They integrate smart sensors, IoT, and data solutions into their monitoring tools, enabling precise, data-driven insights for environmental and geotechnical applications worldwide.

Franske van Duuren then presented about the Soil Valley initiative, followed by Tamme van der Wal of AeroVision, Robin van Schie of Soil Valley and Aad Kessler of Wageningen University Research.

Key lesson: Discussions focused on soil amendments, soil restoration, integrated soil restoration approaches, improving water retention, agricycling, compost tea, and overall soil health. The Royal Eijkelkamp company expressed a strong interest in exploring potential collaboration opportunities with Burundi in these areas. It also specializes in generating and analysing soil and mining-related data.



Figure 12. The Burundian delegation at a tour visit of the Soil Valley, a private company specializing in soil analyses technologies and mining (Day 4)

FoodX / World Food Center

FoodX, based at the World Food Center in Ede, acts as the primary gateway to the Dutch agri-food ecosystem for international delegations. This agency supports the identification of opportunities and unlock potential innovation ecosystems by connecting relevant actors, facilitating collaboration, and supporting strategic partnerships. The agency also organizes meetings, networking events, and stakeholder engagement activities, bringing together government institutions, private sector actors, research organizations, investors, and entrepreneurs to promote innovation and accelerate organisational ecosystems. Huiberdien Sweeris and Chris Karman made a presentation.

A key feature of the approach is that ecosystem development is treated as a structured process: explore, share, agree, shape and execute. This involves understanding the capabilities and interests of potential partners, identifying the drivers and constraints that bring them together—such as productivity, access to finance, technology, markets and knowledge and defining a shared vision and clear criteria for success. Rather than attempting to establish a fully developed ecosystem from the outset, the approach encourages starting with a minimum viable ecosystem, bringing together the essential partners around a clearly defined opportunity and building progressively from there.



Figure 13. The Burundian delegation during a tour of the World Food Center (left), and Oskam Dairy Farm (right), (Day 4)

Key lesson: For Burundi, the ecosystem approach provides a practical framework for moving stakeholder coordination to a functioning innovation ecosystem. The study tour itself brought together institutions spanning public-sector leadership, research, extension, regulatory, and policy, providing a potential starting point for defining a Burundi agri-food and plant-health ecosystem. The immediate opportunity could be to map the current and potential partners, agree on a shared problem or opportunity, define what success would look like, and identify a few low-hanging opportunities that can be pursued through small, focused cluster action teams. This would provide a practical pathway for translating the relationships established through the study tour into sustained collaboration, innovation and investment in Burundi's agricultural and plant-health systems.

Presentation on the Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA)

The Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA) is in charge of plant health, animal health, food safety, nature and environment. As an inspector for animal products, Laurent Niyonkuru made a presentation on the functions of NVWA, sharing some insights on how they proceed in the inspection, law enforcement and supports to businesses. He has worked in the Netherlands for many years but is planning visit Burundi on a government-to-government support initiative to work with ABREVPA for capacity building on sanitary issues (as part of one health issues, hence also human, plant and environmental health are important).



Figure 14. The Burundian delegation during a presentation by the NVWA (Day 4)

Study Visits Day 5

Black Soldier Fly farm and Wageningen University Research (WUR)

New Generation Nutrition (NGN) pioneers sustainable insect-rearing solutions for food and feed. The delegation met with Marion Peeters, who presented about their approach to low-tech insect farming models to provide actionable strategies to turn organic waste into high-protein animal feed, creating a lucrative, circular revenue stream and strengthening local food security for smallholder farmers. She referred to a recent feasibility study on "flying food" production in Burundi and a World Bank publication about insect and hydroponic farming in Africa.

Wageningen University & Research (WUR) research insect farming explained about producing insects as a sustainable alternative protein source. Arya Rezaei and Anna Dorper presented about their research results.

For Burundi's agricultural sector, WUR's expertise in insect rearing (e.g. black soldier fly) offers smallholders a high-value, circular revenue stream by converting local organic waste into livestock feed and nutrient-rich organic fertilizer.

Advanced research findings on insect farming for both human consumption and animal feed were presented and shared with the delegation. The visit provided valuable insights into optimized Black Soldier Fly (BSF) rearing techniques, including efficient production methods and resource utilization.

Key lesson: For Burundi, NGN's low- tech insect farming models offer opportunity for practical and scalable solutions for converting organic waste into high-protein feed for poultry and pig production, creating sustainable circular revenues. In addition to Black Soldier Fly farming, the scientists also showcased opportunities for rearing crickets and termites for human consumption, highlighting their potential as nutritious and environmentally sustainable alternative protein sources.



Figure 15. The Burundian delegation at Black Soldier Fly farm (left) and Wageningen University (right), (Day 5)

Wrap-up session at CABI NL

During a study visit wrap-up discussion session, facilitated by Niek Botman, delegates confirmed key highlights and lessons learned as documented in this report. A quick study visit evaluation showcased that delegation members were overall satisfied with the quality of the programme, entities visited and logistics / organisational aspects. Please find the evaluation outcome here.



Conclusion from visits

The mission demonstrated that sustainable agricultural transformation is not driven by technology or investment alone, but by the strength of the ecosystem that connects government, private sector, research and knowledge institutions, farmers, investors, and civil society. Across the visits, a consistent lesson was the importance of moving from fragmented interventions towards demand-driven collaboration, where partners jointly identify problems, mobilise resources, generate and apply knowledge, and translate innovation into commercially viable solutions. The Dutch experience also highlighted the role of government as an enabler and co-investor, rather than necessarily the sole driver or funder of innovation.

Several opportunities emerged for Burundi. These include strengthening bilateral and institutional cooperation, including government-to-government engagement; leveraging organizations such as CBI and NVWA for market intelligence, standards, regulatory guidance and pathways to European markets; and expanding access to biological, climate-smart, and resource-efficient technologies. The visits also demonstrated that innovation should be assessed not only by its technical performance, but by its economic viability, market potential, resource requirements and ability to be adopted at scale.



Figure 16. The Burundian delegation during the wrap up session (Day 5)

The mission further highlighted the potential of regenerative and circular approaches to strengthen Burundi's agricultural resilience. Examples such as Black Soldier Fly production for alternative protein feed and organic fertiliser, vermiculture, cover crops, green manure, integrated crop-livestock systems, biological pest management, and diversified crop rotations demonstrate practical pathways for reducing dependence on external inputs while improving soil health and creating new value streams. At the same time, the experience of highly advanced horticultural enterprises showed that world-class production does not automatically guarantee high profitability, reinforcing the need to match technological ambition with sound business models and market realities.

Perhaps most importantly, the mission underscored the need for a shift in mindset—from working within institutional boundaries to deliberately building teamwork environment within institution and partnerships ecosystems. For Burundi, the institutions represented during the mission provide a potential foundation for developing a more structured agri-food and plant-health ecosystem. A practical starting point would be to map existing and potential partners, identify shared priorities, agree on measurable success criteria, and establish small cluster action teams around a few achievable opportunities. This would allow the relationships and knowledge generated through the mission to move beyond study-tour learning towards concrete collaboration, investment, innovation and ultimately a stronger, more competitive and resilient agricultural sector in Burundi.

Agreed Follow-up Actions by the Study Visit Delegation

Operational Actions (Short-term: 0-1 Years)

These actions focus on immediate interventions that should be implemented in Burundi without too much delay.

- Conduct a comprehensive Food System and Innovation Ecosystem Assessment to identify opportunities for developing a "Food Valley" model adapted to the Burundian context.
- Undertake a feasibility study for the avocado value chain, including production potential, market opportunities, export requirements, and investment needs.
- Develop and pilot a Black Soldier Fly (BSF) entrepreneurship model tailored to Burundi, promoting circular economy principles and sustainable livestock (pig and poultry) feed production.
- Facilitate the provisional registration of promising biocontrol agents and biopesticides to enable field testing and evaluation.
- Introduce selected biopesticides and biological control products for efficacy trials under local agroecological conditions.
- Organize a joint CBI-ODECA-OTB-CFCIB awareness and sensitization workshop, coordinated by CABI, to strengthen understanding of export market requirements and business opportunities.
- Conduct a situational assessment of agricultural cooperatives and implement targeted capacity-building interventions to improve governance, organizational performance, and market orientation.

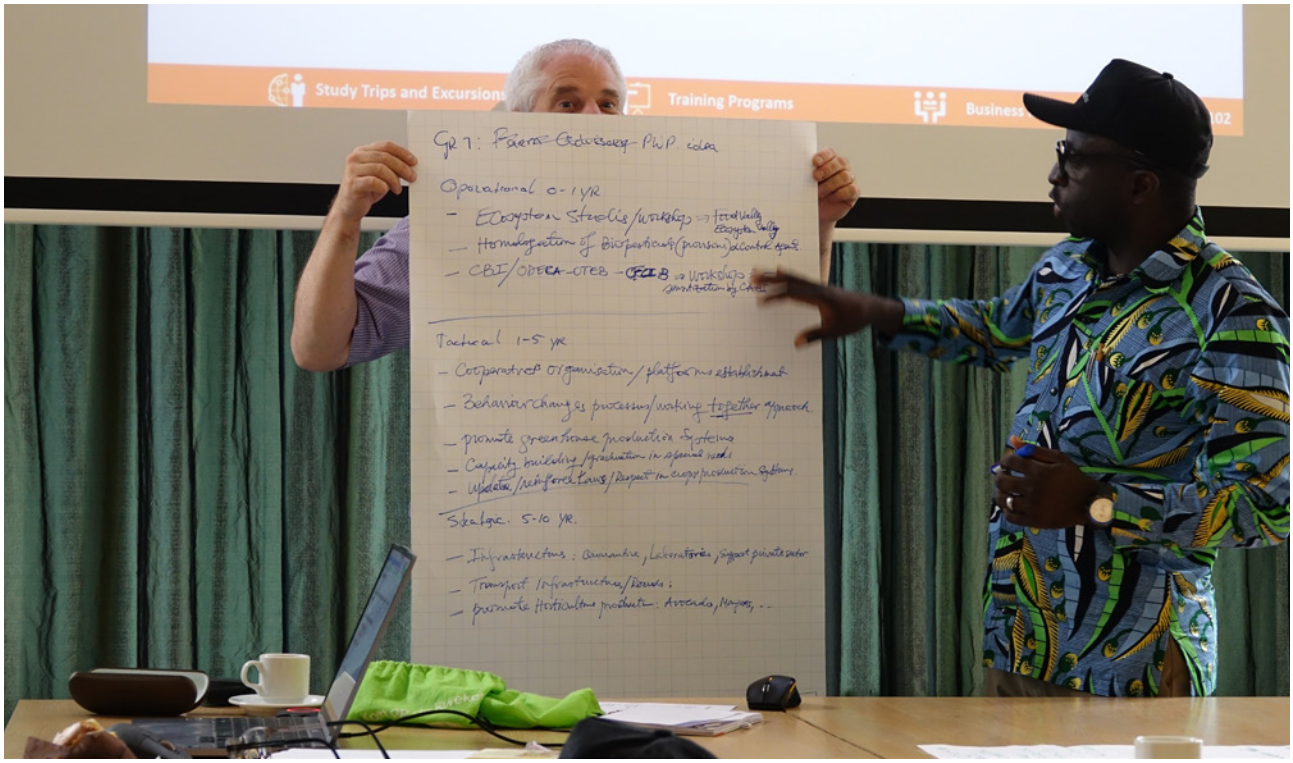


Figure 17. The Burundian delegation during the presentation of immediate, tactical and strategic actions after visit in the Netherlands (Day 5)

Tactical Actions (Medium-term: 2-5 Years)

These actions aim to strengthen the enabling environment and institutional capacity necessary for sustainable sector development.

- Promote a national behavioral change and collaborative working approach, inspired by the Dutch Diamond Model, to strengthen partnerships among government, private sector, research, and farmer organizations, in addition to, where possible, financial institutions.
- Accelerate the registration, commercialization, and adoption of biopesticides and biological control solutions.
- Strengthen and modernize the legal and regulatory framework governing avocado production and export promotion.
- Support the development and commercialization of BSF-based feed products to facilitate market entry.
- Establish multi-stakeholder platforms to strengthen market intelligence and export readiness programmes for high-value horticultural commodities.

Strategic Actions (Long-term: 5+ Years)

These actions focus on transformative investments and systemic changes required for long-term agricultural growth and competitiveness.

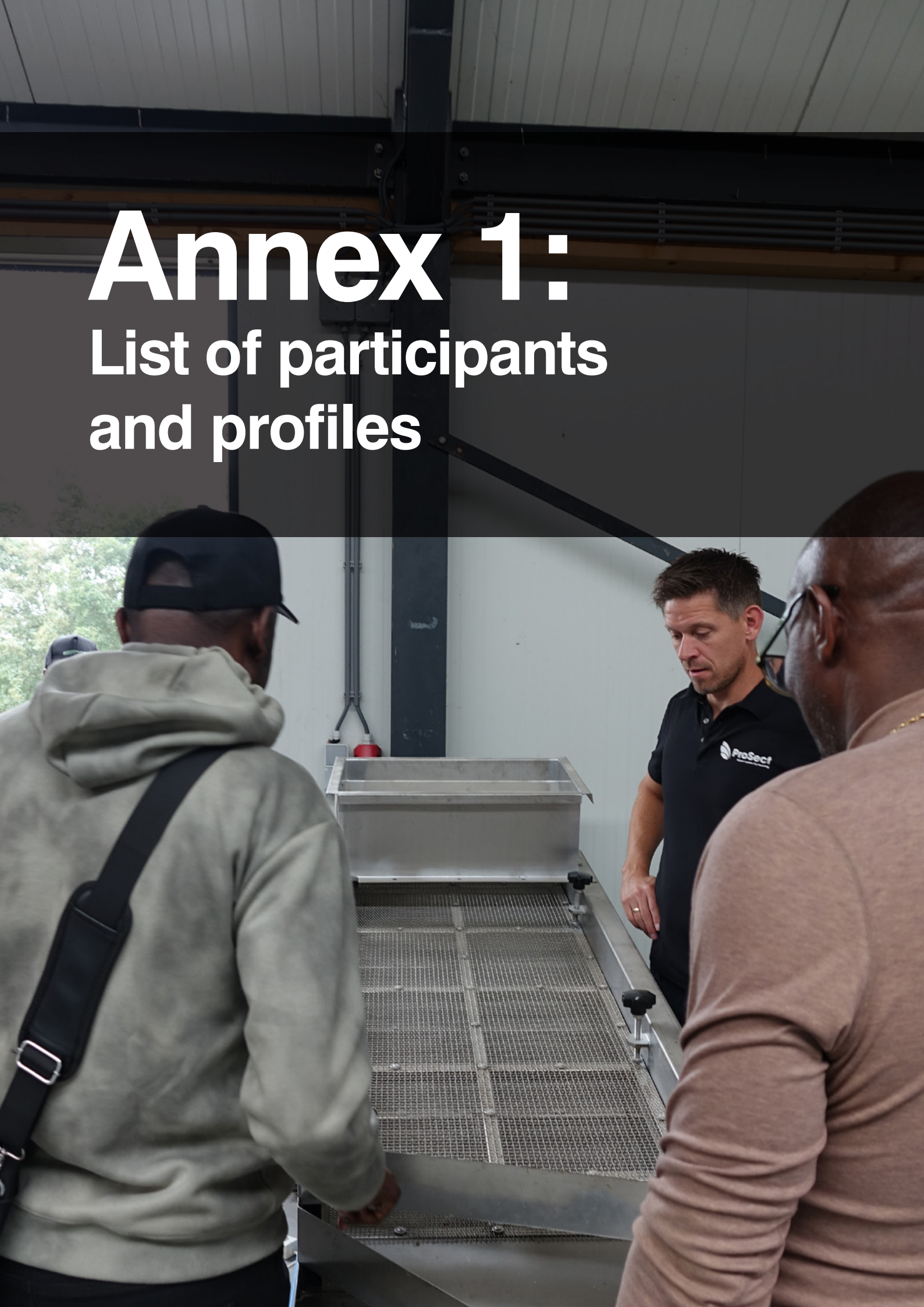
- Develop and operationalize strategic infrastructure to support horticultural development and exports, including:
  - Modern laboratories for quality control and phytosanitary testing;
  - Pre-export inspection and certification facilities;
  - Cold storage and warehouse facilities;
  - Aggregation and logistics centers for horticultural products, particularly avocado and mango.
- Initiate greenhouse and protected horticulture systems, including research, validation, and adaptation of technologies to local conditions.
- Invest in long-term human capital development and strategic skills enhancement.



Figure 18. The Burundian delegation during a farewell session at CABI Netherlands office (Day 5)

These actions are directly aligned with the key lessons from the Netherlands study visit, particularly the importance of the Dutch Diamond Approach, innovation ecosystems, biological solutions, circular economy models, market-oriented horticulture, and strong public-private partnerships.

Annex 1:
List of participants and profiles



Public Document



Plantwiseplus Burundi

Burundi Delegation: Study Mission to the Netherlands

22-30 August 2026

August 2026

KNOWLEDGE FOR LIFE

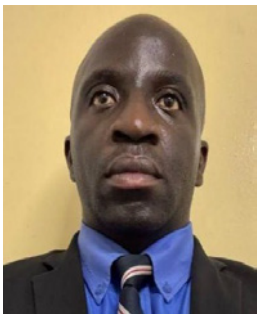
Introduction

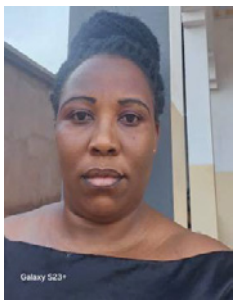
Agriculture remains the backbone of Burundi's economy, employing a significant proportion of the population and contributing to national food security, livelihoods, and economic development. The Government of Burundi is actively pursuing agricultural transformation, including among others strengthening agricultural advisory services, promoting sustainable pest management, improving export competitiveness, and enhancing plant health systems.

Supporting these efforts, a high-level study visit to the Netherlands is being organised for senior government officials, accompanied by representatives from the **PlantwisePlus Burundi** project implemented by CABI and its in-country partners with funding support from the Netherlands Embassy in Burundi. The Netherlands provides a highly relevant model for agricultural transformation. Despite its relatively small geographic size, it is one of the world's largest exporters of agricultural products. Its success is widely attributed to the so-called **"Dutch Diamond" approach**, which emphasises strong collaboration between government, private sector, research institutions, and civil society.The study visit aims to expose the Burundian delegation to this integrated agricultural innovation system and facilitate learning from Dutch institutions across these four pillars.

Meet the team

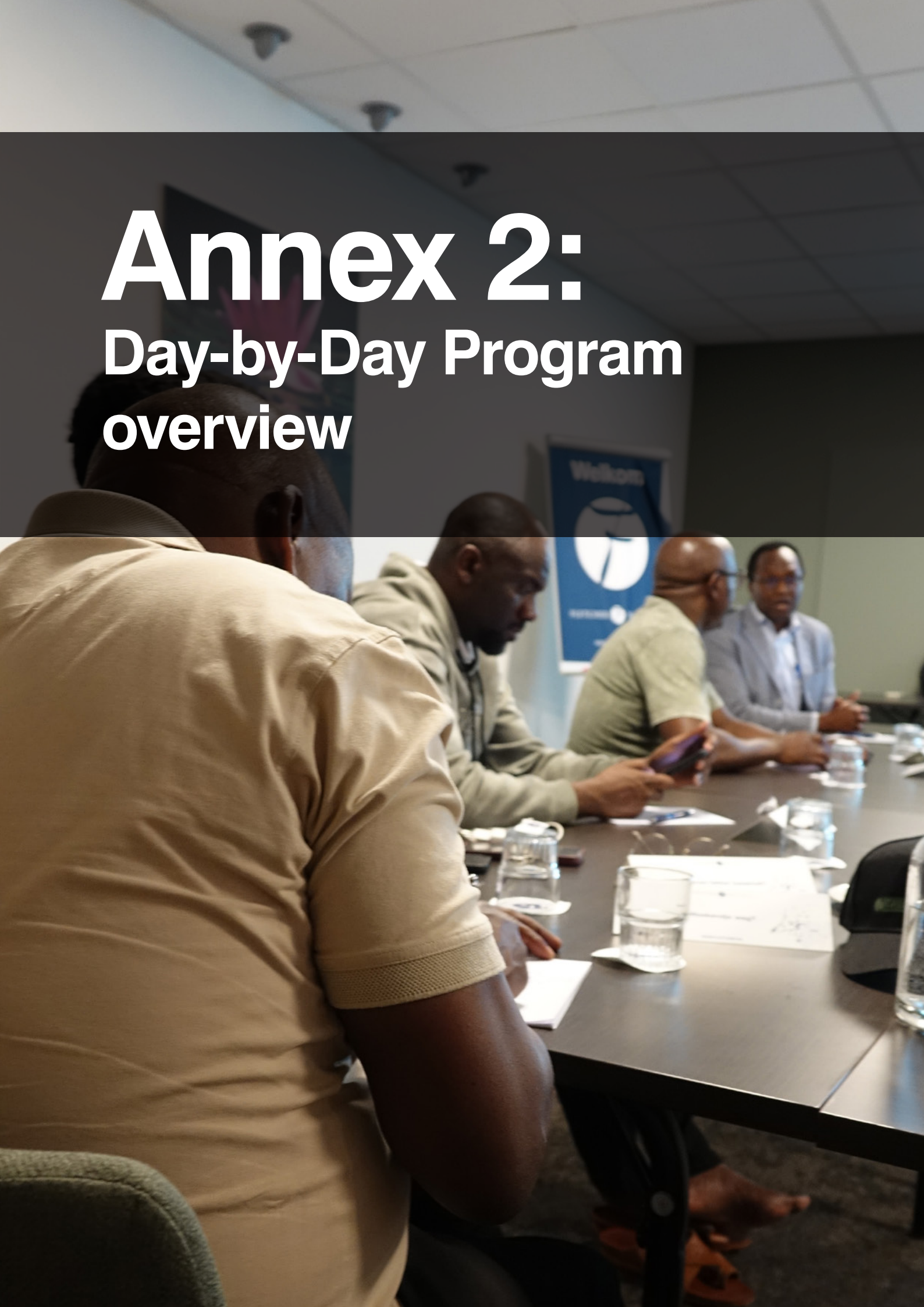
Delegation members are as follows:

	**Prof. Samson Musonerimana** **Director General, Institut des Sciences Agronomiques du Burundi (ISABU)** Prof. Samson Musonerimana is the Director General of ISABU, the national agricultural research institution and CABI's key liaison partner in Burundi. He provides strategic leadership for the implementation of PlantwisePlus activities and chairs the project's national steering mechanisms. In addition to his institutional responsibilities, he actively promotes agricultural innovation and supports capacity development through the supervision of young researchers involved in the programme.
	**Mr Alexis Mpawenimana, MSc** **Deputy Head, Policy, Strategic Studies and Socio-Economic Reforms Unit, Presidency of the Republic of Burundi** Mr Alexis Mpawenimana is an entomologist and policy specialist with extensive experience in crop protection and integrated pest management. Having previously served at ISABU, he has been a strong advocate for biological control, sustainable fall armyworm management, and circular economy initiatives involving black soldier fly technology. He continues to support PlantwisePlus through policy engagement and strategic guidance from his current post within the Presidency of Burundi.

	**Mr Fidèle Gahungu, MSc** **Director General, National Office for Seed Control and Certification (ONCCS)** Mr Fidèle Gahungu heads ONCCS, the national authority responsible for seed regulation, testing, variety registration, and certification. Through PlantwisePlus, ONCCS contributes to pest diagnostics, seed quality assurance, regulated pest management, and surveillance activities aimed at enhancing agricultural productivity and food security.
	**Mr Léopold Manirakiza** **Director General, Burundi Regulatory Authority for Veterinary Products, Pesticides and Food Safety (ABREVPA)** Mr Léopold Manirakiza leads the ABREVPA. His institution plays a central role in ensuring the safe and responsible use of pesticides while promoting alternative crop protection solutions. Within PlantwisePlus, ABREVPA supports biopesticide registration processes and capacity building for agro-dealers and farmers on safer pesticide management practices.
	**Ms Jeanne Francine Nkunzimana** **Head of Agricultural Extension Services, Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock (MINEAGRIE)** Ms Jeanne Francine Nkunzimana oversees Burundi's agricultural extension network. She plays a pivotal role in coordinating public extension officers and ensuring the effective operation of PlantwisePlus plant clinics across the country. Her leadership contributes significantly to strengthening farmers' access to advisory services and plant health information.
	**Ms Goreth Itangishaka** **Director of Plant Protection (DPV) and IPPC National Focal Point, Burundi** Ms Goreth Itangishaka leads the Directorate of Plant Protection within MINEAGRIE and serves as Burundi's National Focal Point for the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). She facilitates the introduction and regulation of biological control solutions and supports the strengthening of phytosanitary systems, pest surveillance, and export certification processes.

	**Dr Célestin Niyongere** **Country Coordinator, CABI Burundi** Dr Célestin Niyongere is CABI's Country Coordinator for Burundi. Prior to this appointment, he spent more than two decades at ISABU, where he held several leadership positions, including Head of the Plant Production Research Programme. He previously coordinated the Plantwise programme in Burundi on behalf of ISABU and currently leads the implementation of PlantwisePlus, CABI's flagship food security initiative in the country.
	**Dr Privat Ndayihanzamaso** **Project Scientist, PlantwisePlus Burundi** Dr Privat Ndayihanzamaso is a plant pathologist with extensive expertise in crop protection, pest diagnostics, seed quality assurance, biological control, mycotoxin management, and molecular biology. As Project Scientist for PlantwisePlus Burundi, he provides scientific leadership and works closely with national partners and CABI technical teams to ensure that project interventions are informed by sound scientific evidence and responsive to local agricultural needs.
	**Dr Willis Ochilo** **Project Manager, CABI** Dr Willis Ochilo is a Pan-African agrifood systems leader with 15+ years of experience translating agricultural science, innovation and evidence into programmes and partnerships across Africa. He is currently Senior Project Manager at CABI, providing strategic leadership for PlantwisePlus in Burundi and programme support in Rwanda, working with governments, research institutions, development partners and the private sector to strengthen agricultural and plant health systems. He holds a PhD in Entomology and an MSc in Agricultural Entomology from the University of Nairobi, and a BSc in Botany and Zoology, with more than 30 peer-reviewed publications and technical outputs. Willis is based in Kenya.
	**Dr Janny Vos** **Project Executive, CABI** Dr Janny Vos holds an MSc in plant breeding and PhD in integrated crop management from Wageningen University and has over 30 years' experience as an integrated crop management expert, working across more than 25 countries around the world, with a focus on reducing hazardous pesticide use. She has been involved in developing and managing many food security projects in Africa as well as Asia, is a member of the global CABI PlantwisePlus board and guides as well as supports the PlantwisePlus work in Burundi as project executive. Janny is based in the Netherlands.

Annex 2:
Day-by-Day Program overview



Program Book

High-Level Study Visit To Expose And Inspire Burudian Government Delegation
With Dutch Agricultural Diamond Approach With Focus On Plant Health Enforcement
The Netherlands, 24 - 28 August 2026
Version 1: 260820

Click here for Online actual detailed program book

Start Time	End Time	Program Title	Description	URL	Status
Mon 24-Aug-26					
08:30	09:30	Kick-Off Meeting - Tour Objectives, Dutch Diamond Model Orientation & Status-Quo Analysis Burundi Situation | Niek Botden (HollandDoor)	Strategic Alignment & Briefing. Delegation alignment, review of objectives and learning preferences - Introduction –Niek – 10 mins- explaining program, program approach& setup, objectives- harvesting learning goals of participants- Q&A: 10 mins- Group photo		Confirmed
09:30	10:30	Lecture: Intro to Dutch Agriculture & Horticulture | Niek Botden (HollandDoor)			Confirmed
11:00	12:00	Field Trip: World Horti Centre Tour | Niek Botden	World Horti Center (Naaldwijk):World Horti Center is an international knowledge and innovation hub for the horticultural sector, situated in Naaldwijk, Netherlands. It unites education, research, and business, showcasing sustainable horticultural solutions and fostering collaboration to drive global advancements in the field.	Link	Confirmed
13:00	13:30	Keynote: Westland and the Greenport West-Holland: cluster approach for local food & flower production by Municipality of Westland | By Mrs. Sisi Chou	Westland Municipality and Greenport West-HollandThe Municipality of Westland, known as the "Glass City," is the global heart of greenhouse horticulture. It hosts Greenport West-Holland, a premier innovation hub where businesses, researchers, and government collaborate on sustainable food production and agrologistics. This high-tech cluster generates billions annually, leading the world in horticultural technology.	Link	Confirmed
13:30	14:00	Keynote: Dutch Greenhouse Delta | By Mrs. Mirjam Boekestijn	Dutch Greenhouse Delta (DGD)Dutch Greenhouse Delta is a leading international foundation that promotes the Netherlands' horticultural ecosystem globally. It provides a comprehensive "Fork2Farm" solution by connecting Dutch expertise in technology, research, and government to help mega-cities achieve sustainable food security and efficient, high-tech greenhouse production.	Link	Confirmed
15:00	17:00	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature + Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Foreign Affairs | Open for meeting details	Hosts:Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature:Mr. Ralf van de Beek; Director International Agribusiness and Food Security - Mr. Arno Rohde - Regio coordinator Kenia, Tanzania, Ghana, Nigeria, Ivoorkust en Senegal - Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and NatureDutch Ministry of Foreign AffairsMr. Thijs Woudstra - Director Food Security - Mrs. Robin Breedeveld; Policy Officer Food & Nutrition Security - Inclusive Green Growth Department - The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature (LVVN) oversees national food production, plant health, and sustainable rural development. For Burundi, LVVN serves as a institutional template for government leadership within the Triple Helix model, guiding policy alignment, regulatory oversight, and international bilateral agricultural trade.Government Pillar. High-level discussion on bilateral cooperation and Dutch Golden Daimond ModelThe Inclusive Green Growth Department (IGG), operating under the Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) within the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, formulates and coordinates international development policies focused on energy, climate change, water, food security, raw materials, and polar regions. It plays a pivotal strategic role in funding and driving sustainable, multi-stakeholder partnership frameworks worldwide.	Link	Confirmed
Tue 25-Aug-26					
09:00	10:30	Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI); Market Intelligence Service | Edouard van der Haas	The Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI) connects smallholders and small/medium-sized enterprises to European markets. For Burundi, CBI focuses on overcoming technical barriers to trade, improving export competitiveness, and establishing sustainable agri-food value chains that comply with international standards.	Link	Confirmed
11:00	12:30	LTO Nederland (Dutch Farmer Association) | By Klaas Johan Osinga	LTO Represents over 35.000 farmers. For Burundi, it serves as a key Triple Helix model, illustrating how farmer cooperatives can actively influence national agricultural policy, champion sustainable input supply chains, and effectively bridge the gap between smallholders and government authorities.	Link	Tentative
14:30	16:00	Koppert Biological Systems | by Bram Klapwijk	Private Sector Biocontrol & Lunch. Scaling integrated pest management (IPM) and bio-pesticides.	Link	Confirmed
16:30	18:00	Embassy of Burundi | by Mr. Stany Muhizi	Tentative Agenda: a. Have the delegation present themselves to your embassy b. Evaluate the meetings/discussions we had till that moment, what did the delegation learn / conclude till that moment c. Have your feedback on this and project it on the Burundian context. I think it is also very useful for the delegation to receive your opinions / experiences working in The Netherlands. What is useful info for the delegation in context of the objectives of the mission. Will be finalized by Dr. Janny Vos and Mr. Stany in their meeting before mission arrives		Confirmed

Program Book

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Start Time	End Time	Program Title	Description	URL	Status
Wed 26-Aug-26					
09:00	10:15	Delphy Improvement Centre | by Jacco Verheul	The Delphy Improvement Centre in Bleiswijk excels in practice-oriented research, knowledge development, and sustainable cultivation innovation. For Burundi's agricultural sector, it offers vital operational insights into data-driven crop management, digital pest scouting, resilient farming systems, and practical training models to modernize decentralized smallholder advisory networks	Link	Confirmed
10:30	11:30	Dalipa Sweet Pepper / High-Tech Greenhouse Vegetable Production | By Niek Botden	Dalipa B.V. is a prominent Dutch sweet pepper nursery leveraging advanced, climate-controlled greenhouse and crop-protection technologies. For Burundi's agricultural sector, a field visit provides high-tech operational insights into resource-efficient horticulture, optimal micro-climate management, and integrated pest control to maximize local crop productivity and yield stability		Confirmed
13:45	15:15	Netherlands Food Partnership | By Ivo Demmers and Wim Goris	The Netherlands Food Partnership (NFP) accelerates sustainable food system transitions globally by connecting Dutch expertise with local priorities. For Burundi, NFP facilitates multi-stakeholder coalitions between government, research, and private actors, improving sector coordination, scaling up safe bio-inputs, and strengthening food security frameworks.	Link	Confirmed
16:00	17:30	Ecofarm De Lingehof & Lekker Lupine | by Andre Jurrius + Marieke Lameris	Ekoboerderij De Lingehof (in partnership with Lekker Lupine) is a biodynamic, organic farm in Randwijk. For Burundi, it demonstrates regenerative crop diversification, soil restoration, and local protein transition—showing how smallholders can integrate high-value legumes (lupine) to enrich soils, boost climate resilience, and generate new market revenue streams.	Link	Confirmed
Thu 27-Aug-26					
09:00	11:00	Soil Valley + Royal Eijkelkamp | by Fons Eijkelkamp and others	Royal Eijkelkamp is a Dutch specialist in soil and water research equipment, actively promoting digital technology adoption. They integrate smart sensors, IoT, and data solutions into their monitoring tools, enabling precise, data-driven insights for environmental and geotechnical applications worldwide. Soil Valley is a Dutch innovation hub fostering digital technology adoption for sustainable soil management. They connect startups, researchers, and farmers to develop and implement data-driven solutions, enhancing soil health, crop yields, and environmental resilience through smart farming practices.	Link	Confirmed
13:00	15:00	FoodX / World Food Center | By Huiberdien Sweeris	FoodX, based at the World Food Center in Ede, acts as the primary gateway to the Dutch agri-food ecosystem for international delegations. For Burundi's sector, it provides an immersive, tactical launchpad to study collaborative innovation, regenerative agricultural frameworks, and scalable models to overcome systemic food production bottlenecks.	Link	Confirmed
15:30	17:00	Oskam Dairy | Lisanne Oskam	Oskam Dairy facilitates unique insights into modern Dutch agriculture, highlighting the adoption of digital technologies. They connect visitors with innovative farms showcasing advancements in robotics, data management, and sustainable practices, promoting understanding of high-tech and future-proof farming solutions.	Link	Confirmed
Fri 28-Aug-26					
09:00	11:00	NGN + Wageningen University & Research (WUR) with focus on Insect Farming | Marian Peters + ??	Wageningen University & Research (WUR) researches insect farming as a sustainable alternative protein source. For Burundi's agricultural sector, WUR's expertise in insect rearing (e.g., black soldier fly) offers smallholders a high-value, circular revenue stream by converting local organic waste into livestock feed and nutrient-rich organic fertilizer. * New Generation Nutrition (NGN) pioneers sustainable insect-rearing solutions for food and feed. For Burundi, NGN's low-tech farming models provide actionable strategies to turn organic waste into high-protein animal feed, creating a lucrative, circular revenue stream and strengthening local food security for smallholder farmers.	Link	Confirmed
13:00	14:30	Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA) | By Mr. Laurent Niyonkuru	The NVWA location in Wageningen houses the Netherlands Institute for Vectors, Invasive plants and Plant health (NIVIP). For Burundi, it provides tactical frameworks for national pest surveillance, border control, and laboratory diagnostics, helping the DPV intercept emerging threats and secure local agricultural borders.	Link	Tentative
15:30	17:00	Concluding Meeting, Reflection and Burundi Roadmap Action Planning Workshop | Convenors Janny Vos + Niek Botden	A final 1,5-hour action-oriented reflection workshop to convert the gathered strategic, tactical, and operational findings into a concrete Burundian Action Roadmap		Confirmed



Annex 3:
Study visit evaluation

Metric	Answer scores (%)				
	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
Objective realisation: "To learn from the Dutch agricultural development approach, chich fosters collaboration among government institutions, private sector, research organisations and farmer associations"	0	0	30	50	20
Objective realisation: "To enhance understanding of European Union market requirements particularly in relations to phytosanitary standards and quality assurance"	0	10	40	40	10
Objective realisation: "Gaining insights into sustainable agricultural production systems including integrated pest management and biological control"	0	0	30	40	30
Objective realisation: "Contributing to the identification of practical actions to institutionalise and realize sustainable approaches supported under the PlantwisePlus programme in Burundi"	0	10	40	40	10
Overall content of the program	0	0	10	50	40
Overall quality of the program	0	0	0	50	50
The program was useful for me	0	0	0	30	70
The training linked up well with my practical experiences	0	0	10	60	30
The program had a good mix of theory, skills, field trips and leisure activities	0	0	20	60	20
There was sufficient opportunity to share and discuss my own ideas	0	0	10	50	40
How do you rate time punctuality?	0	0	20	60	20
Because I have taken this training, I'm better equipped for my job	0	0	10	50	40
How do you rate the hotels' accommodation?	0	0	10	80	10
How do you rate the quality of meals?	0	0	20	30	50
How do you rate bus transport quality?	0	10	10	20	60
Did you like this study tour?	0	0	0	33	67

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