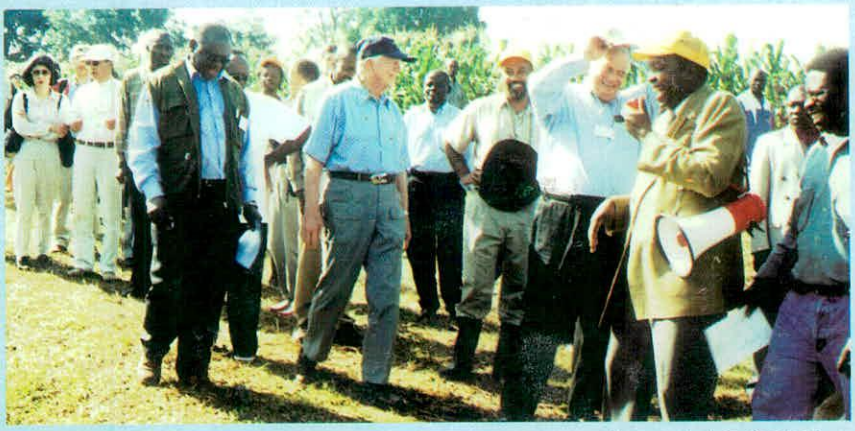
THE NARO Bulletin

A quarterly publication by National Agricultural Research Organisation, **Entebbe, Uganda**

Carter Hails NARO



Jimmy Carter(with blue hat) tours Mukono ARDC. On his immediate right is DG NARO Prof. Mukiibi and with microphone is Mr Peter Lusembo, Centre Manager of ARDC

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Former Presidents Jimmy Carter of USA and Soglo of Benin visited Mukono Agricultural Research and Development Center after a conference on food security in Africa, 6-8 June 2001. The organising committee for Sasakawa Conference on food security in Africa chose the centre to be one of the sites to be visited by participants that were categorised as very important personalities. The Director General, NARO, Prof. J Mukiibi received the visitors. Others present included Centre Manager, P. Lusembo, Mukono opinion leaders and farmers.

Mr Lusembo showed the visitors around the centre and its technology sites. The visitors were impressed with the management of the centre and its established close links with the farmers. Carter hailed NARO's initiative of reaching out to the farmers and the centre's strong partnerships with farmer's groups.

Mukono farmers were extremely happy to have hosted former President of USA, Jimmy Carter with whom they posed for a group photograph.

Ministers Visit NARO

The Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, Dr Kisamba Mugerwa, led a delegation from the ministry to review the activities of NARO on 31st July 2001.The delegation included Dr Kibirige Sebunya, Dr Fabius Byaruhanga, Hon Mary Mugyenyi and Chairman, Sectoral Committee on Agriculture and MP Mawokota, Henry Mutebi Kityo, among

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Dr Kisamba-Mugerwa, Minister of Agricultue, Animal Industry and Fisheries(right) and Dr Israel Kibirige-Sebunya, Minister of state for Agriculture congratulate each other upon being re-appointed to same ministerial posts.

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Ministers Visit NARO

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others. The Ministers had just assumed their new offices: Dr Fabius Byaruhanga handed over Animal Industry to Ms Mary Mugyenyi. Mr Fred Mukisa, who previously held the position, handed him over the instruments of power of the Fisheries portfolio. Drs Kisamba Mugerwa and Kibirige Ssebunya retained their posts of Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, and Minister of State for Agriculture, respectively.



Dr Fabius Byaruhanga(right), Minister of State for Fisheries hands over Instruments of Power for Animal Husbandry to Ms Mary Mugyenyi.

NARO Praised

Hon Kisamba Mugerwa, in his speech said that NARO had many achievements including overcoming cassava mosaic and reduction of water hyacinth, which had been a menace to Uganda natural waters. NARO also produced high yielding and disease resistant varieties of rice, groundnuts, maize, potatoes that had increased production and reduced poverty. The Minister promised to do everything possible to make working conditions comfortable for researchers to enable them carry out the noble task of generating technologies.

Newly appointed Minister of State, Animal Industry, Hon Mary Mugyenyi noted the challenge was in marketing agricultural and animal products. She pledged to work hard with all players and partners to ensure Ugandans get maximum benefits from their toil.

Professor Joseph Mukiibi, NARO DG, congratulated the Ministers for being appointed or re-appointed to their high offices. He handed over presents from NARO to congratulate the ministers upon their success. He said NARO strategy had five major pillars, viz. improving technology generation development and dissemination, broadening NAROs participation, incorporating gender and environmental concerns; increasing and maintaining the knowledge base; and strengthening NARO to enable it do the work. He pledged NARO's commitment to ensure generation and dissemination of appropriate technologies to farmers and other end-users to increase production, reduce poverty and improve livelihoods of Ugandans.



Mr Fred Mukisa(left) hands over files for fisheries portfolio to Dr Fabius Byaruhanga.

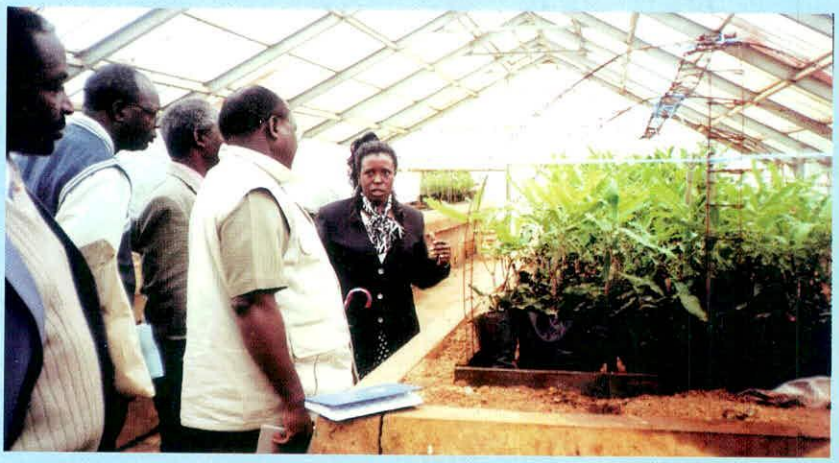
NARO Ends Visit to KARI-Kenya



DG NARO, Prof J.K. Mukiibi(left) receives an assortment of books from Dr Romano Kiome, Director, KARI.

A High-powered delegation from NARO led by Prof. J.K Mukiibi DG, visited Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI) Kenya, recently. The NARO team visited KARI to acquaint itself with the structure, management and activities undertaken by KARI, with a view of forging greater links in research and development. Specifically, the NARO team was interested in the areas of planting materials that were not easily obtainable in Uganda. They were also keen on developments in geographical information systems (GIS) and biotechnology that NARO plans to start in the near future. The team was also reciprocating an earlier visit by KARI to NARO in August 2000.

Areas visited included KARI headquarters, Research Laboratories at Kabete, Tigoni Potato Center, National Horticultural Research Center, Thika; Regional Agricultural Research Center, Embu; Muguga Research Station; National Animal Husbandry Research Centre and Naivasha and International Centre for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF).



NARO team visits green house at Thika

Prof. Joseph Mukiibi, in his closing remarks, praised the bilateral co-operation between the sister organizations and asked all scientists to work together for a better world and speak with a combined voice.

Dr Romano Kiome, Director of KARI observed that although Uganda and Kenya had a lot in common, they had not exploited their commonality. He said this was going to be eliminated by creating strong linkages between NARO and KARI.

The two parties noted that they shared a common research and development goal and therefore needed to work together. Technical areas of co-operation would be identified on both sides and technical visits would be made more often.

The two parties agreed to put in place and sign memorandum of understanding (MOU), which would include the identified areas of co-operation and activities.



NARO team visits farmers who use Leguminous plants to improve fertility of soils

NARO Workshop on Indigenous Knowledge Ends

A stakeholders' workshop to integrate indigenous knowledge into technology development and dissemination ended June 16,2001, at International Conference Centre, Kampala. IK is the knowledge that people in a given community develop over time and is based on experience, often tested over centuries of use and adopted to local culture or environment.

NARO recognizes the importance of IK and has incorporated it in its strategy 2001-2010. A NARO Task Force produced a proposal for integrating IK into its technology development and transfer process. This however, needed more stakeholders, thus one of the reasons for the meeting.

IK contributes to PMA and Poverty Eradication

Mr Reihard Woytek, in charge of IK for development Programme of The World Bank said "IK is good as it contributes to modernization of agriculture by enabling use of under-utilized untapped resources. It contributes to sustainable land use and poverty eradication because it offers affordable solutions especially to the poor and helps to increase efficiency as it is cost effective and uses appropriate technology." He said IK helped to increase sustainability as it empowered local communities and provided mutual adoption and learning. He said World Bank was concerned because IK was a component of human and social capital, element of global knowledge, gateway to empowerment and key to sustainable development. He noted that because IK reached the poor and was locally managed, it ensured effectiveness.



Mr Reihard Woytek, incharge of IK for development programme, World Bank delivers speech during the conference. On his immediate right isDr.Aluma, NARO's DDG and extreme left is Mr. Sakira W., NARO human resources chief.

NARO's achievements on IK

The Deputy Director General in charge of research, Dr John Aluma said that although IK had not officially been funded, NARO had made some progress. NARO established linkages with 125 IK practitioners; organized awareness workshops in four districts reaching 96,000 people. This led to demand for similar workshops in Uganda. NARO has documented IK related to medicinal plants; herbal concoctions and the treated diseases (human and livestock) crop protection and food preservation. Documentary proofs of IK that worked were collected and chemically analysed to determine active ingredients. NARO also contributed ideas to the intellectual property rights and IK law in Uganda Law Reform Commission.

Most Ugandans use IK

Mr Moses Male, IK practitioner, said most Ugandans use IK, but it was difficult to ascertain the number as most visit IK practitioners at night. He noted that it was high time IK was demystified for the benefit of all Ugandans. He encouraged participants not to regard IK as old fashioned. He said IK was a critical area of research because many Ugandan farmers trust and use IK in conjunction with NARO's modern technologies. "NARO should therefore integrate IK into its technology development process so that it is easy for farmers to adopt these technologies" he said. He said the collaboration between IK practitioners and researchers will go along way to improve IK for the betterment of Ugandans.

Way forward

NARO will develop a national strategy on IK, prioritize important IK, produce work

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NARO Workshop on Indigenous Knowledge Ends



President Yoweri K. Museveni(left) asks about the use of one herbal concoctions from a traditional healer. Next to him is Brig. Jim Muhwezi. Minister of Health. Traditional medicine must be demystified in order for people to maximise its benefits.

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plan and establish coordination mechanism. NARO will document and disseminate useful indigenous and traditional knowledge. NARO scientists will be sensitized on IK and some IK will be scientifically selected and integrated into TD and TT. Proven IK will be used to develop more or better technologies, complete with application guidelines for widespread use. A progamme to conserve sources of materials (plants/animals) would be developed to avoid their extinction. It is envisaged that some of the products will be processed industrially for home consumption and export. This will increase incomes and quality of lives and contribute to eradication of poverty.

NARO's IK awareness Campaigns

The National Agricultural Research Organization is intensifying public awareness on indigenous knowledge (IK). At a workshop held recently at Kamengo, discussions focused on role of herbal drugs (crops trees, shrubs and grasses) in human, livestock, crop protection and food preservation.



Dr Aluma(1st row with glasses), NARO's DDG incharge of research poses for a photograph with trainees on herbal medicine. NARO has carried out awareness workshops on herbal medicine in many parts of Uganda.

In attendance were Dr John Aluma , DDG in charge of research and Mr Moses Male Herbalist attached to NARO, who facilitated the workshop, attended by 197 participants.

The workshop was aimed at developing methods for effective and efficient use of medicinal plants without degrading the resource base. Participants were taught forest related actions that are intended to promote conservation of biological diversity among most people at the grass roots.

The workshop emphasized tree planting among the public not only for the objectives of conserving nature, but also for increasing the availability of medicinal stock.

Participants resolved to carry out research, document and disseminate information about medicinal plants, medicines and diseases that can be treated using medicinal plants in Uganda.

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Farmers Hail NARO Field Day at Bulindi

Farmers from Lake Albert Crescent hailed NARO for its initiative of taking technologies nearer to the rural communities through ARDCs. This was during farmers' field day organized by NARO, 7 June 2001, at Bulindi ARDC, barely four months after the official inauguration of ARDCs at the same place by Uganda President Yoweri K. Museveni. The field day follows a planning workshop at Bulindi organized by NARO, in which farmers prioritized enterprises and constraints to production for NARO's intervention. NARO carries out field days to show farmers technologies and information available and to facilitate interaction between farmers and scientists. Bulindi ARDC caters for Lake Albert Crescent zone, which includes districts of Hoima, Masindi and Kibale.



Dr. Rogers Kanzikwera(left), centre Manager, Bulindi ARDC, tells farmers how to plant and care for crops



Farmers learnt Animal traction

The field day was attended by hundreds of farmers, school children, NG0 representatives, extension agents, scientists, opinion leaders and policy makers. "We used to hear about NARO but now it is here and we know what it does. We shall use these modern farming technologies and methods to improve our farming practices," said Ms Ntairaho, who spoke on behalf of farmers. She encouraged her fellow women to use NARO technologies to get maximum benefits from their toil. She said that there was need for all those who had attended the field day to practice what they had learnt so as to be examples to others in the drive to modernize agriculture. She encouraged NARO to organize field days frequently to keep farmers abreast on latest technologies and to enable interaction between different players in the modernization of agriculture.

Dr Rogers Kanzikwera, Centre Manager, Bulindi ARDC said NARO created ARDCs to serve as zonal nodes for adaptive research and conduits for technology and information flow between clients. He noted that ARDCs would avail technologies to the farmers. "Farmers in the zone will now have access to improved technologies that are critical to increasing their farm productivity for poverty eradication", said Kanzikwera.

Farmers learn

The field day involved learning about NARO's technologies and sharing of experiences among researchers, farmers and opinion leaders. Farmers learnt about modern technologies of cassava, groundnuts, maize, millet and beans. They also learnt bee keeping, banana and pineapple growing and maintenance, fish farming and animal traction. Other areas included organic farming, sustainable agriculture, farm implements and tools.



Students take notes during the field day at Bulindi

AEATRI Building Capacity

The Agricultural Engineering and Appropriate Technology Research Institute (AEATRI) has embarked on capacity building activities through training in operation of tractors and repair and fabrication of ox-plough spare parts.

The tractor operators' course, 14 – 25 May 2001, covered modules such as tractor operation and maintenance implement operation and maintenance and field trips. Students were provided with theoretical and practical training. Twenty-Six participants attended the training from different districts in Uganda.



Participants of the workshop(left) explain how they manufacture farm implements to Dr. J. Aluma, extreme right. Next to Dr Aluma is Engineer Odogola, Director AEATRI

Modules studied under the repair and fabrication course of 17 August 2001, included practical use of essential blacksmithing tools and other fabrication equipment; workplace organisation and safety practices; basic welding and blacksmithing; fabrication of basic smithing tools and features of standard mould board plough. Other areas of study included fabrication of standard Ox- plough parts and spares; assembling and actual field testing of the fabricated plough; repair and maintenance of a plough and costing and pricing of farm tools and spare parts. Each participant was able to make tool-kit tools (chisels, punches and tongs) and assorted plough parts which were assembled into complete plough units.

Dr J. Aluma, NARO's DDG in charge of Research, while closing the workshop said NARO carries out demand driven research to answer farmers' problems and that the courses were tailored to meet the needs of end-users. He urged the participants to use tools to reduce drudgery and increase production so as to reduce poverty. He promised follow-up exercise by NARO.

Engineer Odogola, AEATRI's Director said the institute was to be turned into a fully-fledged training Centre for Uganda. He said future courses included storage of farm products, irrigation and water management, animal traction and energy technologies such as biogas and solar.

Mr Matovu, Project Co-ordinator of Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) said that NPA's aim was to assist and support vulnerable marginalised and oppressed people in the society. He said that the training would go along way in ensuring proper use and sustainability of the ploughs.



Dr. Aluma, DDG-Research(left) hands over certificate to one of the participants of the workshop

NARO Advises on Kabaka's Lake



Buganda Kingdom can get food and earn income from fish farming in the Kabaka's Lake if they follow NARO's advise

The National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO), through its Jinja based Fisheries Resources Research Institute (FIRRI) recently advised Buganda government, the owners of Kabaka's lake in Kampala, to rehabilitate the lake in order to get maximum benefits out of it. This advice is contained in a report released recently by NARO's FIRRI entitled "The status of the fish stocks and environment of Kabaka's Lake".

Established in the late nineteenth century by then Kabaka Mwanga to enable him connect to Lake Victoria via the lake, the latter had experienced mismanagement over the years and needed urgent rehabilitation. Many activities around the lake, including brick making, car washing, construction, fishing and swimming were potentially dangerous for the bio-ecological and socio-economic sustainability of the water body and for those communities who depended on it. The area also had shallow latrines around the lake. The Buganda government requested NARO to do research into the lake fisheries and advise on how the Buganda government could maximally use it for now and posterity. During their research, NARO scientists found out that the lake had been heavily polluted, had little fishery and was heavily silted.

Bright future

Specifically, practical steps need to be taken towards restoration of the lake environment and hopefully improve its fishery production potential, which include: cleaning up of lake bottom to remove wastes and restore the the health of the lake, restriction of human and animal access to the lake to reduce nutrient enrichment and avert eutrophication of the lake, stock lake with fish to feed on the abundant blue green algae, and put a plant buffer zone to reduce the rate of siltation. Water must also be treated if it is to be used domestically. Dumping should be discouraged. Good planning could turn the lake into recreation centre to fetch money for Buganda government. A sensitization effort about the lake for the lakeside communities. Fencing of the lake and a boat to facilitate movement across the lake.

FIRRI will continue monitoring the biological recovery of the Lake Ecosystem and pollution levels and advice accordingly.

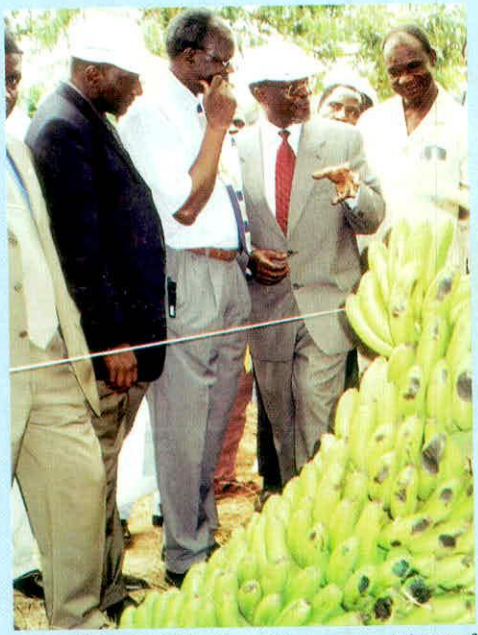
National Agricultural Show Ends

A one week National Agricultural show ended 22 July 2001, at Jinja show ground. Agricultural shows are held annually in Uganda to show farmers technologies available and promote interaction between technocrats and farmers and other end-users.

The Minister of Finance and Economic Planning, Hon. Gerald Ssendaula called on farmers to use the technologies exhibited to increase crop productivity, improve their livelihoods and reduce poverty. He said government had invested a lot in agriculture in terms of funding and human capital to make sure agriculture improves in Uganda. He said government policy was to modernise agriculture and make technologies accessible to farmers.

Dr Kisamba – Mugerwa, Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries said that his Ministry was ready to work with farmers to eradicate poverty through better farming practices. He urged government to improve working conditions of scientists to make them perform better.

Hon. Chebet Maikut, Chairman, Uganda National Farmers Association (UNFA) urged government to invest more into research, since it was the backbone of the economy.



From right: Dr Kisamba - Mugerwa, minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries; Hon Gerald Sendaula, Minister of Finance and Economic Planning and Dr Otim Nape, NARO's DDG in charge outreach discuss prize winning Matooke from Kawanda at the show



Lowland Arabica coffee



Children took terms to pump water using AEATRI's Treadle pump. The pump doesn't need much energy

NARO technologies exhibited

Many technologies were exhibited at the show from Uganda and abroad. NARO as usual exhibited cutting-edge technologies, including drudgery reducing types from Agricultural Engineering and Appropriate Technology Research Institute (AEATRI) such as threshers, shellers, biogas plants, pumps and grass choppers. Other technologies included high yielding and disease resistant varieties of cassava, potato, beans, maize, rice, sorghum, millet, coffee, banana and cocoa. Farmers asked for planting materials for lowland Arabica coffee. Appropriate fishing gears and methodologies were also on display. Improved breeds of animals such as rabbits, goats and pigs, complete with their management practices, captured interest of many visitors. There were also big crowds at the agroforestry demonstration plot. Several NARO publications including newsletters, reports, pamphlets, flyers, leaflets were distributed to visitors for reference. Crosscutting activities on post-harvest, soils and soil management practices were also on display.



This young boy found it easy to use AEATRI's manual maize sheller

Staff News

Transfers

Names	Designation	From	To
FINANCE/ACCOUNTS			
Nyakoojo Hosea	Finance Officer	KARI	NAROSEC
Nakibuule M. Kaddu	Accounts Assistant	NAROSEC	FIRRI-Kajjansi
Busuulwa Godfrey	Accounts Assistant	FIRRI-Kajjansi	LIRI
Nsanze Ignitius	AG.FO	FIRRI	KARI
Ochwo Richard	Audit Assistant	FIRRI	LIRI
Mugisha Charles	Finance Officer	LIRI	FIRRI
Bukenya Pison	Accounts Assistant	Kalengyere	Kachwekano
AUDIT			
Labeja Davidson	Audit Clerk	NAARI	AEATRI
Catherine M. Wamatsembe	Audit Assistant	NAROSEC	NAARI
Lukooto Harriet	Audit Assistant	FOSRI	CORRI
Woperu Stephen	Audit Clerk	LIRI	SAARI
Sebugwawo Peter	Audit Assistant	KARI	NAROSEC
Aloka Ali Audit Assistant	SAARI	KARI	
Kiyingi William	Audit Clerk	FORRI	FIRRI
Abaseret Ceceria	Audit Assistant	CORI	FORRI

Academic Achievements

Name	Institute	Qualification	University
Ruth Kabanyoro	RO/SAARI	PhD-Agronomy	University of New Castle Upon Tyne
Mubiru N. Drake	RO	PhD-Soil Science	University of Kentuky

Deaths

Name	Designation	Institute
Namanya Kundi	Technician	Kiige
Egau Ochen	Technician	FIRRI/Kajjansi
Nsimbe Fred	Driver	KARI
Mbowa Joseph	Driver	FORRI
Opolot Henry	Admin. Asst	LIRI
Mugisha Mutetika Mary	ROI	NAARI
Olani Nelson	ROI	SAARI
Owor Peter	Accounts Asst	Kitgum ARDC
Olowo J. Paul	RO	FIRRI
Mugume Fred	Senior Technician	FIRRI
Akello L. Grace	Typist cum Clerk	FORRI-EBG

I am Happy to be Associated with NARO-Kanakulya

Mr John Baptist Kanakulya NARO's former Associate Director, Finance and Administration said, 22 June 2001, at a farewell party organised by NARO, that he was proud to be associated with a highly organised institution such as NARO. Mr Kanakulya now works with Aids Commission in Kampala. He received an assortment of gifts from NARO and individual workers.

"I am proud to be associated with NARO. Even where I work now at AIDS Centre I always tell them that I was working with an efficient organization with the greatest concentration of brains in Uganda", he said. He said that he enjoyed working with NARO during his tenure of office.

Dr J. Aluma, DDG in charge research hailed Mr Kanakulya for his transparency and dedication to work that had enabled NARO to keep proper book accounts. " Recently, they released names of organisations that are corrupt and NARO was not among them. This shows that the Head of Finance by then (Mr Kanakulya) had done a good job" said Dr Aluma. He wished him a nice career in his new place of work.



Dr. A. Aluma, DDG incharge Research(left) hands over present to Mr John Kanakulya, outgoing Director, Finance and Administration. The former NARO employee was happy to be associated with NARO.

Mr Lino Musana, the current Director, Finance and Administration said that he enjoyed working with Kanakulya during the short time with him.

NARO boasts of a well-knit finance and administration system, comprising of competent professional staff, using cutting edge software such as Finpro among others to manage finances. Stakeholders have hailed NARO for its good financial management.

Departures

Name	Designation	Institute
Mr. J.B Kanakulya	ADF	NAROSEC
Dr. Siiim Nahdy	Director	KARI
Mrs. E. Lwanga-Semakula	Coordinator	ARIS
Agnes Akwang	Socio-Econ.	NAROSEC
Ms. Kate Kiisa	Secretary	KARI
Mr. Tukei Sowedi	Driver	KARI
Mr. A. Bagumire	RO	FOSRI
Mr. Erima Simon	Technician	LIRI
Mr. Muhigirwa Edward	RA	LIRI
Mr Okoth 0. Josue	SRO	LIRI

Back from UK, USA

Dr Ruth Kabanyoro got PhD at the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne, Department of Agricultural and Environment Science, UK.

The doctoral studies focused on weed control of the tropical couch grass, Lumbugu (*Digitaria abyssinica (A. Rich) Stapf).* The research indicated that application of high and low dose rates of post emergence and grass selective herbicides (fluazifop- butyl and sethhoxydim) affect the physiology of the weed. As part of the weed stress, the herbicides used inhibited chlorophyll accumulation and affected the activity level of the plant intracellular proteases.

During the investigation on the efficacy on the herbicides, research studies demonstrated that reduced dose rates give as good weed control as the high dose rates. It can therefore be cheaper to control *D. abyssinica* on a large acreage with these herbicides. The integration of two hand hoe weedings controlled the broadleaf weeds that are resistant to the grass selective herbicides used in the study. This study will assist in sustainable control of weeds in the tropics, and thus increased crop production and incomes.



Dr Ruth Kabanyoro



Dr Drake Nagulumbya Mubiru

Dr Drake Nagulumbya Mubiru got PhD at the University of Kentucky, USA, specialising in soil science. His doctoral studies focussed on the genesis of water dispensable soil colloids and their role in the co-transport of *Escherichia coli* (0517:H7) through the vadose zone to ground water. His research demonstrated the need to control mobilisation of soil colloids since they enhance the amount of pathogens that reach ground water resources. His studies have equiped him with tools to advance research in soil fertility and issues of water quality in relation to farming activities.

Obituary

Ms Mary Mugisa Mutetikka was working with NARO until her death as Research Officer, Socio-economist at Namulonge. Mary joined NARO in 1993. She studied at Makerere University, where she attained a Degree in agriculture and at Ohio State University, USA, where she obtained a Masters Degree in Agricultural Economics. Before joining NARO, she was scientific Officer of Beans Programme at Kawanda. Mary will be remembered by NARO staff for her hard work and down-to-earth, sociable character.

May her soul rest in eternal peace



Ms Mary Mugisa Mutetikka

Mbahinzireki is new Kajjansi chief

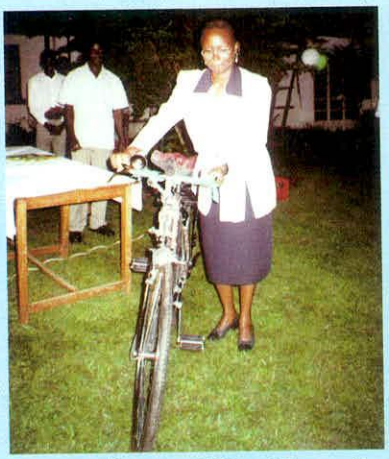
Dr Godfrey Mbahinzireki is new O/C Kajjansi Fisheries Research Staton. He replaces Mr A. Owori-Wadunde. Godfrey has BSc Zoology, Biochemistry from Makerere University; MSc in Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences from University of Dar-es-Salaam; and Ph D in Aquaculture from Ohio State University, USA.



Dr Godfrey Mbahinzireki

Namulonge Awards Best Performers

Namulonge Agricultural and Animal Production Research Institute (NAARI) awarded best performers of the institute recently. Miss Clementine Namazzi bagged best prize, which included a bicycle among other presents. Many others got prizes for discipline and hard work. Dr Theresa Sengooba also got prize for her exemplary performance as former Director, NAARI. Dr Fina Opio replaced her, present Director.



Best performer, Miss Clementine Namazzi was given a bicycle



Dr. Sengooba Theresa, former Namulonge Director shows her present

"I am very delighted to be given these presents. This will even make me work harder," said Namazzi. She called on fellow workers and staff to always work hard for excellence if NARO was to modernise agriculture and reduce poverty.

Dr Aluma, DDG Research, who represented the DG, NARO, attended the occasion. Other guests included Directors of research institutes and scientists within and outside NARO.

Dr Aluma commended the research work done by NAARI. He particularly pointed out the eradication of cassava mosaic and reduction of water hyacinth on lakes as important research achievements of Namulonge and NARO in general.

Dr Fina Opio pledged to work harder to develop appropriate technologies that answer the needs of Ugandan farmers for their betterment.



Left: Dr Kyetere(left) Director Coffee Research Institute takes to the floor with Dr. Sengooba, former Director, Namulonge



Right: Dr Aluma(right), DDG in charge of research opened the dance officially with Dr. Fina Opio, Director, Namulonge.

CORI Trains Cocoa Farmers

NARO's Coffee Research Institute (CORI) trained cocoa farmers from different districts in Uganda on 25 April 2001 at the institute. The training package included identification of good cocoa beans or seedlings for planting, nursery management, disease identification and treatment and harvesting of cocoa pods. Other areas studied included post-harvest handling activities of cocoa beans such as drying and fermentation. CORI jointly conducted the training with USAID funded IDEA Project.



Pauline Aluka(front), NARO researcher teaches farmers good Cocoa nursey management.

Farmers empowered

The training mainly focussed on practical skills and tools to be used for improvement of cocoa quality and the latest technologies for production of improved planting materials. Farmers were also taught field management, improvement and ensuring quality of cocoa. Ms Nabirye, a farmer from Iganga said the training went along way into empowerment of farmers. "This is a good development in NARO: that farmers can come here to learn and see for themselves management of cocoa. There are many things we did not know that we have learnt today," said Nabirye.

Farmers also had the chance to learn technologies related to other crops such as coffee and palm oil. A newly constructed cocoa fermentry was commissioned. It contains constructed fermenting area, fermentation boxes, a store and a cocoa office.

Cocoa production reduces poverty

Dr Otim Nape, DDG in charge of Outreach said government policy was to encourage cocoa production in order to diversify income and reduce poverty and that government was supportive of efforts to improve cocoa production. He said NARO puts farmers first in its planning and implementation activities and called on farmers to always forward their problems to NARO. He called on the farmers to use the available technologies to improve cocoa production and improve their incomes and livelihoods.

CORI to train more

Dr Dennis Kyetere, Director, CORI said that more farmers were to be trained in many areas to improve crop productivity. "The biggest problem is availing information to farmers and this is what we are going to take priority. We shall invite many more farmers to train here", said Kyetere.

More support

Mr Clive of IDEA project said USAID was ready to continue supporting NARO's cocoa production effort especially in areas of training and awareness. He noted that post-harvest handling needed improvement if farmers were to get maximum benefits out of their produce.



Dr. G. Otim-Nape(left) DDG incharge of outreach helps Mr. Clive of USAID cut tape to open the Cocoa fermentry officially. Behind him is Dr. Kyetere Dennis, Director, CORI.

Biotechnology Project to increase food security

A NARO project "strengthening Uganda's research capacity in agricultural Biotechnology" is to increase food security in the country. Biotechnology refers to manipulation of cells or genes of living things to get desired characteristics. The project, which is starting soon emphasizes improvement of animal health by controlling diseases such as trypanosomosis which infect both humans and animals causing severe consequences if not treated.

Tools will be developed to test drug resistance of animals, which is becoming common. A vaccine for control of Trypanosomosis will be developed as well as a sensitive test for ticks and tick borne diseases. A vaccine for African swine fever will be developed, together with sensitive tests for the disease. Other areas where biotechnology research will be used include: increasing and improving production of coffee by controlling major pests and diseases, better utilization of plant genetic resources and increasing overall food security.The two main institutions to carry out the task will be Makerere University, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Livestock Research Institute (LIRI). Both institutions will be turned into Centers of excellence in biotechnology research. The Centers will have laboratories stocked with top-of-range equipment such as ultra centrifuge, PCR workstation, thermocycler, spectrophotometer and carbondioxide incubators. Scientists and technicians will be trained in a wide range of biotechnology research applications such as cloning, DNA fingerprinting and mapping.

A rigorous planning, monitoring and evaluation strategy will be developed to ensure proper implementation of the programme and value for money.

NARO considers biotechnology as a way to improve research. "Modern biotechnology will speed up and increase efficiency of the research process and enhance the exploration of new opportunities", said Dr John Aluma, NARO's DDG in charge of research. He urged his fellow researchers to quickly tap beneficial biotechnology technologies from the developed world to improve livelihoods in Uganda.

The team leader of the project is Dr Theresa Sengooba of Namulonge and Co-coordinator is Dr Thomas Braunschweig, a research fellow from ISNAR.

Mukono Training Farmers



Former USA President Jimmy Carter poses for a photograph with Mukono farmers at Mukono ARDC.

Mukono ARDC has embarked on an initiative of reaching out to farmers and facilitating and establishing farmers groups. This is to enable farmers tap benefits of Plan for Modernization of Agriculture and the National Agricultural Advisory Services.

The ARDC invites up to twenty- five farmers as a group, through a one-day training session. Several organizations and groups have visited the center, to acquaint themselves with on-going developments. The farmers are taught improved agricultural technologies and provided with planting materials, especially of cassava mosaic resistant and improved sweetpotato varieties.

The center provides two piglets to two farmers among the members in each group. When the piglets mature and furrow, a recipient is expected to release a piglet and the female is passed on to other members. The process is repeated through all the members.



Mukono farmers take potato planting materials after learning good crop management practices from Mukono ARDC

NARO's Mukiibi Lands Posts at International Meet

Prof. Joseph. K. Mukiibi, NARO's Director General was recently unanimously re-elected in South Africa, Chairman of Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA). The FARA is a regional programme with mandate to co-ordinate agricultural research in Africa.

"It is an honour that a Ugandan is elected to high offices of this nature. I will continue to ensure that Africa speaks with one voice on matters concerning agricultural research in Africa. I will also ensure quality and relevance of science to stakeholders," said Prof. Mukiibi.

The DG was also appointed, among the more than 500 eminent distinguished scientists who attended the Durban meeting, to Chair the Scientific Council of the Consultative Group on the International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) in Durban, South Africa. The scientific council will work out modalities for creation of structures to oversee the way forward for agricultural research worldwide. Prof. Mukiibi was appointed because of his key role and experience in agricultural research.



From right: Mr Hans Biswanger, Chairman, SPAAR; Prof. J.K. Mukiibi, NARO DG and Chairman, FARA; and Ms Bongiwe Njobe, DG, National Department of Agriculture, S.Africa at the Durban Conference. Prof. Mukiibi landed posts at the meeting.

Agriculture Needs Money, Research to Create Growth

At the Durban meeting Prof. Mukiibi who presented the Durban statement called on governments and donors to fund agricultural research in order to create growth and development. The statement called for speedy growth of regional agricultural production and exports of agricultural products. Africa should also make affordable food available, be a strategic player in agricultural science and technology development, and develop a culture of sustainable use of natural resources.

Generally the delegates called on governments in sub-Saharan Africa to translate their political commitment to agricultural development into action to put Africa at the forefront of research in this field.

"We also need support from outside countries but this has been declining. We ask them to give us more support because Africa is the sick man of the World where poverty is rampant and very severe. We believe it is in the interests of every one to help Africa out of this situation." said the DG.

About Prof. Mukiibi

Prof. Mukiibi is currently the DG of NARO but prior to this, he was Secretary for Research in Ministry of Agriculture and researcher. He also worked as Lecturer and Head of Departments, crop science and forestry at Makerere University, Professor at Nairobi University, Kenya, Sokoine University Tanzania and Full bright Fellow at University of California, USA. He studied at Universities of London, England and St. Andrews, Scotland, UK. Prof Mukiibi is member to many international scientific organisations and is behind the formation of FARA, an organisation to promote agricultural research in Africa. A secretariat has already been created in Accra, Ghana and the Executive Secretary is soon to be appointed.