

Feeding the Future

UGANDA newsletter

May 2014

Take it to the farmer

Centenary of the birth of Dr Norman Borlaug

Uganda will be hosting a series of events in July this year, during the National Agricultural and Trade Show in Jinja, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Dr Norman E Borlaug, the Nobel Laureate, who was President of the Sasakawa Africa Association (SAA) until his death in 2009. Dr Borlaug was a champion of Africa's small-scale farmers and a fighter against hunger. The events are being organised by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), Makerere University, the Uganda National Farmers' Federation (UNFFE), and SAA.

SAA has been working in Uganda since 1996, with small-scale farmers and the Government's extension services, to increase yields and improve rural livelihoods. Indeed, Uganda is now one of four focus countries targeted by SAA to achieve a potential "green revolution" in Africa – the others being Ethiopia, Mali and Nigeria.

"The emphasis put by the Government of Uganda on the importance of agriculture is enormously encouraging," comments SAA's chairperson, Professor Ruth Oniang'o. "It is appropriate that this important anniversary is being celebrated in Uganda".

Inspiration for events

Dr Borlaug was one of the founders of SAA/Sasakawa-Global 2000 in 1986, with former US President Jimmy Carter and Japanese philanthropist, Ryoichi Sasakawa. His last words before he died were an appeal to "Take it to the farmer". These words will be the overall theme of the commemoration, in Uganda, of his life.

"They will also be the inspiration for the events we are organising around the commemoration," says Ruth Oniang'o. "SAA is now reaching out to marginalised farmers underserved by extension – such as women farmers – while promoting employment opportunities for the youth. We strongly believe that boosting agriculture will help eradicate poverty – a theme which local media organisations have taken up. Incentivising the youth is critical for Uganda and other African countries.

"Dr Borlaug believed in young people as future farmers and as advocates against hunger", she adds.

Central to the commemorative events will be competitions – for farmers as well as an essay competition for secondary schools. These competitions will cover the districts across the country where SAA operates. They will stress the opportunities offered by agriculture. The winners will be transported to Jinja for the prize-giving ceremony at the show on 11 July. Prizes will include the latest Japanese

technology consisting of solar panel kits for charging mobile telephones.

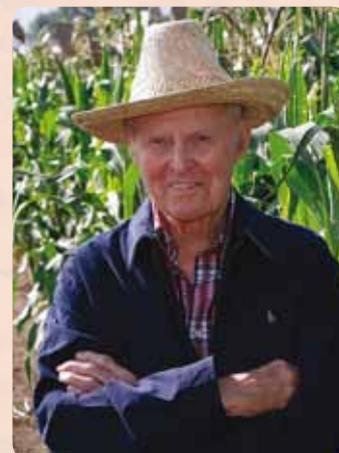
Schools in the Jinja area will be asked to perform drama and dance – also in competition – in honour of the life of Dr Borlaug and engage in debates on the importance of agriculture. These events, too, will take place during the show.

Commemorative programme

A main event of the commemorative programme will be a two day symposium in Jinja, with senior Ugandan Government officials, on the enduring results of the Borlaug legacy for Uganda and Africa. Overseas delegates will include Yohei Sasakawa, Chairman of The Nippon Foundation, which has funded SAA projects since their inception, Tumusiime Rhoda Peace, the African Union's Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, and members of Dr Borlaug's family.

Before leaving Kampala for Jinja, the delegates will participate in a symposium at Makerere University with the Sasakawa Africa Fund for Extension Education (SAFE), which recently celebrated 20

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Dr Norman E Borlaug
25.03.1914 - 12.06.2009

Dr Norman Borlaug

Dr Norman Borlaug was one of a small select group who won the Nobel Peace Prize, as well as America's highest civilian honours, the Presidential Medal of Freedom and the Congressional Gold Medal. In a tribute to him, former US President Jimmy Carter wrote: "Throughout his life, Dr Borlaug was committed to alleviating hunger and improving food production technologies that have saved millions of lives. His compassion and humanity will continue to inspire generations to come. Dr Borlaug is a hero, and his contributions to the field of science and the cause of peace were immeasurable".



Johann Peter Bauza (centre), head of the "Growth for Uganda" project, K+S KALI GmbH, hands over the mobile training truck to SAA Uganda Country Director Roselline Nyamutale in the presence of Hon. Tress Bucyanayandi (Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries). See 'Growth for Uganda', page three.



Newsletter of the
Sasakawa Africa Association

SAA Founders:
Mr. Ryoichi Sasakawa,
Dr. Norman E. Borlaug,
President Jimmy Carter

SAA Uganda – transforming the Borlaug model



SAFE in Uganda

The Sasakawa Africa Fund for Extension Education (SAFE) was established in 1993 at the University of Cape Coast, in Ghana, to enhance the professional skills of mid-career agricultural extension staff. It works with institutions of higher education, across Africa, to provide extensionists with relevant educational opportunities and qualifications.

SAFE today operates in 17 universities and two colleges in nine African countries – including Makerere University. In July, Makerere will host a special symposium on 'the relevance of universities in national food security and agricultural transformation in Uganda', as part of the Norman Borlaug centenary celebrations.

Makerere has graduated 188 students from the SAFE programme; 73 of whom were female.

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years of extension education in Africa at ceremonies in Ghana. The symposium will cover 'the relevance of universities in national food security and agricultural transformation in Uganda'.

A special national organising committee has been established in Kampala to plan these events, led by former agriculture minister Victoria Sekitoleko and including representatives of the MAAIF, Makerere University, the UNFFE, SAA and SAFE.

While SAA operations in Uganda started with the basic objective of increasing yields, thereby improving rural livelihoods, there is a realisation today that productivity-enhancing technology alone will not be adopted by smallholder farmers unless farmers capture more of the value addition that exists higher up the value chain.

This means the establishment of viable farmer-based organisations that can address postharvest and marketing issues while engaging a broader range of service providers and organisations, often from the private sector.

However the value chain model will only succeed if it is supported by greatly improved and increased government extension services. Because of the weakness in government extension, very poor farmers – often women farmers – have been marginalised in mainstream extension programmes across all SAA focus countries

Strategic plan

These fundamental issues were being addressed by Norman Borlaug before he died – and they led to the development of the SAA Strategic Plan 2012-2016. A very different SAA emerged, driven by a new system of matrix management, providing for better technical quality assurance and the sharing of best practices.

Today, SAA in Uganda implements its projects by following the value chain of selected crops, working with and through local government structures and – in particular – the Directorate of Production, Extension

and Marketing, the National Agriculture Extension Service, including farmers' organisations, input dealers, traders/buyers, fabricators, processors, research organisations and financial institutions.

Filling in for extension

Community-based facilitators (CBFs) fill in for extension workers where, in Uganda, the ratio of farmer to extension worker is around 1,500 to one. The CBFs, who are farmers selected from their own farming communities, are therefore able to sustain the system after project roll out. The capacity building of farmers is done through adult learning participatory approaches by learning and doing through Farmer Learning Platforms (FLPs). The main objective is to improve smallholders' food security and production for the market – to provide income generation.

Of the FLPs established, 16 were hosted by the churches, 17 by secondary schools, seven by primary schools, for the coming generation to take up farming as a business, and eight by the Uganda prisons service, managed by prisoners – to give prisoners life skills so that, after remand, they can become productive citizens.

On target

"We are involved in a total of 20 districts", says SAA Country Director for Uganda, Roselline Nyamutale, "with 16 funded by The Nippon Foundation: the others by partners such as the Agribusiness Initiative Trust and Uganda Breweries with funding by the European Cooperative for Rural Development (EUCORD). Then we have the new agreement with K+S" (See page 3). Currently SAA is on target to reach 100,000 Ugandan farmers by the end of the Strategic Plan – of whom 35 percent would be women. A total of 60,847 farmers have been reached to date through the FLP approach with Technology Option Plots (TOPs), Women Assisted Demonstrations (WADs), Community Variety Plots (CVPs) and Production Test Plots.

"Demonstrations with newly released varieties of maize, beans, soya bean, rice and groundnuts are an integral part of our programme", says Roselline Nyamutale. "For these we broadly rely on the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) – with additional support from the Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) and the NASECO, FICA and Victoria seed companies."



A grassroots input shop serving communities in SAA project areas.

NEW GROWTH FOR NORTHERN UGANDA

Farmers in Northern Uganda, recovering from 20 years of instability due to the ravages of the Lord's Resistance Army, are beginning to see the benefits of a partnership established between SAA and K+S Kali GmbH, a German company mining potash, magnesium and sulphur from which quality products are produced for the agricultural, industrial, healthcare and food sectors.

"The disruption caused by the Lord's Resistance Army has left the local population chronically food insecure," says SAA Country Director, Roselline Nyamutale. "Now, however, they will have the opportunity of maintaining and increasing soil fertility and improve the productivity of their land for crops such as maize, sorghum, rice, cassava, beans and groundnuts. Some 50,000 farming households in the districts of Dokolo and Apac are expected to benefit over the next three to five years".

Training truck

The most obvious manifestation of this new partnership – entitled 'Growth for Uganda' – is a mobile training unit in the form of an off-road five tonne truck, which is able to reach villages and communities often inaccessible by road. With a mobile laboratory on board, soil analyses can be made under field conditions in remote areas. The truck – which includes a film unit – will also provide training for communities in such subjects as plant nutrition postharvest handling, and marketing.

The truck, which can accommodate three people, recently reached Kampala from the Kenya port of Mombasa – and the keys were ceremonially handed over to SAA with Hon Tress Bucyanayandi, Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) present.

'Growth for Uganda' was officially launched by the State Minister of MAAIF, Hon Rwamirama Bright, in Dokolo District in July 2013 when 1,000 local people attended. Since that time agronomist Daniel Olo,



The partnership agreement between SAA and K+S Kali GmbH was signed in Kassel, Germany, last year. From left, Masaaki Miyamoto, SAA's Executive Director, Ruth Oniang'o, SAA's Chairperson, and K+S Chief Executive Officer, Norbert Steiner.

programme officer for SAA's Theme 1 (Crop Productivity Enhancement) – spent two months at the Institute of Applied Plant Nutrition, at the University of Göttingen, as well as at the K+S Research Institute, in Germany before returning to pass on his knowledge to project colleagues – and join the mobile training unit.

Needs assessment

Action was apparent, too, even before the arrival of the truck. A needs assessment study looked at farmers' crop preferences in the two Northern Districts. Beans, for example, are much more popular with women than men, as women focus on food and home consumption. Among the youth and men, maize is more popular as it can generate income.

An important finding from the survey was that harvesting in the project area was largely done by hand, storage of grain consisted mainly of heaping it on the floor of farmers' houses and shelling was done by beating, using sticks. The majority of farmers sold their produce individually due to low production levels, weak groups and lack of storage facilities and lucrative markets.

Value chain

The project has responded through the value chain approach and community association traders have been recruited to buy farmers' produce with cash and supply inputs in collaboration with village agents. Currently, the project works directly with 550 producer

groups - a total of some 13,750 farmers. One hundred community-based facilitators (CBFs) and 11 extension agents have been trained as trainers.

K+S KALI GmbH has supplied 20mt of Korn-Kali potash fertiliser which was used in the Farmer Learning Platform demonstrations on maize, rice, groundnuts, soya beans and beans. But Northern Uganda has been heavily hit by drought, which has proved a setback.

The setback will be temporary. The arrival of the truck, which will be on display at the National Agricultural and Trade Show at Jinja in July, heralds a period of renewed development in the north of the country.

Crop	Category of area (% responses)		Gender (% responses)			
	Intervention	Non-intervention	Male	Female	Youth	Total
Maize	46.6	29.4	43.4	43.1	53.5	44.3
Cassava	12	8.8	14.5	7.8	11.6	11.6
Beans	10.9	10.3	5.3	18	11.6	10.7
Sesame	10	10	10.5	9.6	11.6	10.3
Millet	5.7	11.8	7.0	7.2	0.0	6.4
Groundnut	6.6	1.5	7.0	4.2	4.7	5.7
Soya bean	0.6	11.8	2.2	3.0	0.0	2.3

Source: Baseline Survey, 2013

Growth for Uganda





In Sasakawa's Postharvest Handling and Agroprocessing Programme (PHAP) in Uganda, four types of technology have been identified and adopted – maize shellers, cassava chippers, groundnut shellers and multigrain threshers.

Demonstrations have improved farmers' awareness of the appropriate technologies required for value addition at various levels of the value chain. In 2012, demonstrations in the field and at agricultural shows led to 67 PHAP machines being acquired by farmers in ten districts through collaboration with fabricating partners.

Here, the introduction of a cassava chipping machine to a processors' group in Buikwe District, enabled the processors to dry cassava chips in less than one day – producing whitish sweet-smelling chips which can be stored without discolouration.

The group now supply dry cassava chips to traders and flour millers in the district.

Professor Ruth Oniang'o appointed to African Union advisory group

Professor Ruth Oniang'o, Chairperson of SAA and SAFE, has been invited by Tumusiime Rhoda Peace, the African Union's Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, to join a high level policy advisory group in support of the decision of the heads of state and government to declare 2014 as the "Year of Agriculture and Food Security". This year will also be the 10th anniversary of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the policy advisory group has been formed "to sustain the CAADP momentum".

Professor Oniang'o has had a distinguished career as a teacher, parliamentarian and development leader, serving on various international boards, such as the International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC), the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR).

She is founder and editor of the African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development and leader of the Rural Outreach Programme, a Kenya-based NGO that supports resource-poor farmers in production and agroprocessing at community level.

Monica Adong's experience

Monica Adong of Atwere Women's Group in Agwata subcounty, Dokolo District, hosted a rice Woman Assisted Demonstration.

She shares her experience:

“ I had challenges of weeding the rice fields. With SG 2000 training I planted in rows of 30cm x 30cm which made weeding easier. I believe that even the harvest will be easy. With good management practices, using improved seed and fertiliser, I expect to harvest 3,000kg of the NERICA 4 variety of rice from this field of 1000m². I will give 500kg of the harvest to the group members. I have trained over 20 women farmers in my parish on improved rice cultivation methods. I hope to expand my rice field to two acres in the next planting season.

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Uganda

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Ernest Andres, former K+S KALI GmbH Managing Director, hands over bicycles to Community Based Facilitators (CBFs) for Apac and Dokolo Districts.