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PROMOTING KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT CULTURE

Partnerships as Catalysts for Agricultural Transformation

- ☛ *The strategic role of partnerships in advancing agricultural research*
- ☛ *Positioning NARO at the forefront of agricultural innovation*

October 1st, 2025

11:00 am - 12:00 pm



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Partnerships as Catalysts for Agricultural Transformation

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Outline

-
- Agriculture in Uganda Today
 - The Power of Partnerships
 - Strategic vs. Transactional Partnerships
 - Future Opportunities
 - Call to Action

What Does Partnership Mean to You?

- When you hear the word partnership, what comes to mind?



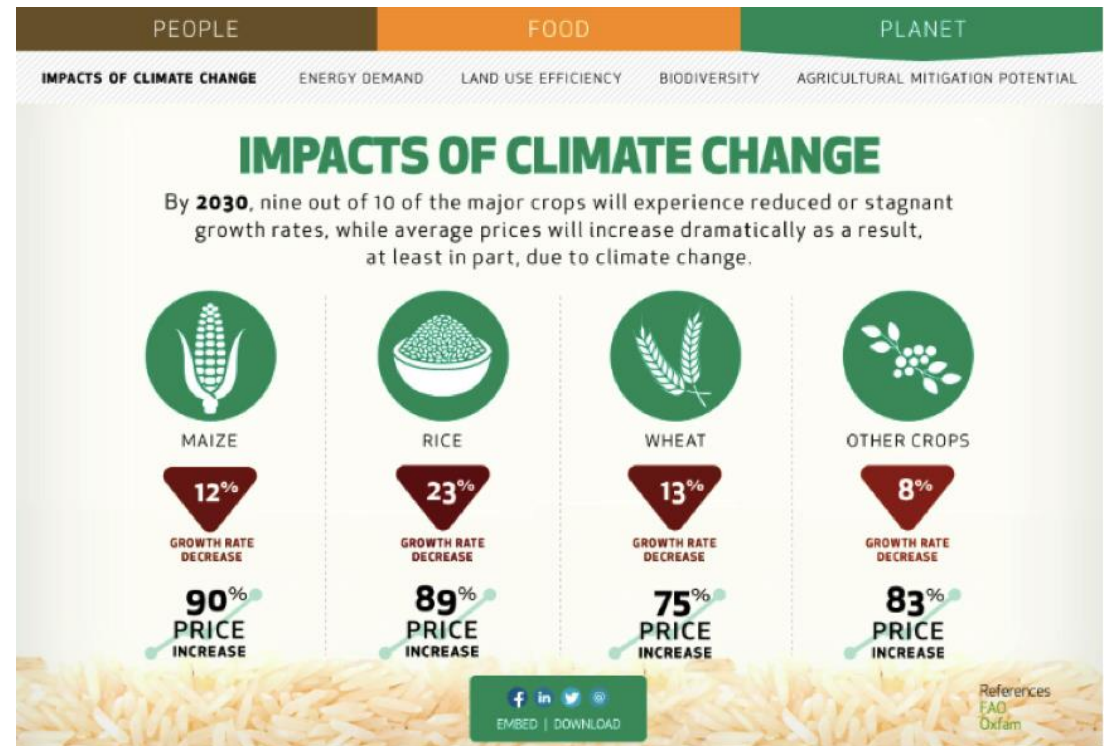


What Makes Agriculture Transformative? If Partnerships Lead the Way

- Agriculture's growth in Uganda hit 5.1% in FY 2023/24, powered by private investment (FAO).
- But productivity gains lag due to:
 - weak markets, inputs, and climate resilience (World Bank).
- Partnerships are the missing multiplier

Big Challenges: No one can address them alone!

- Climate change threatens yields (30% decline maize/beans by 2050 – FAO)
- Agriculture = 60% + employment, 24% GDP
- 75% of Ugandans under 30 – urgent need for innovation & jobs



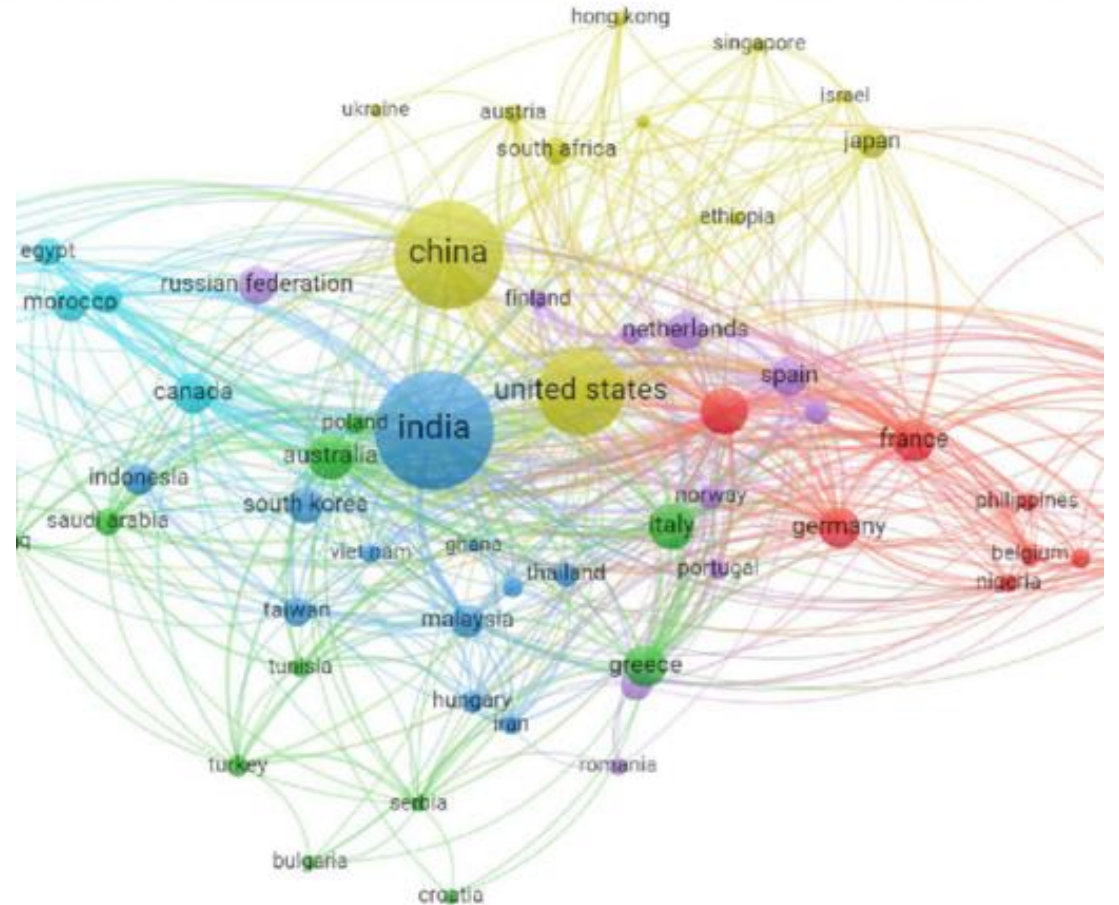
Regional & Global Fora: From Presence to Influence

- Africa Food Systems Summit
- AGRF, World Food Prize, One CGIAR forums
- Goal: move from attendance → agenda setting



Lessons from Global Partnerships

- CGIAR–NARS: Accelerated rice & wheat adoption
- AGRA: Strengthened African seed systems
- ASARECA: Improved regional technology sharing





Partnerships: Central to NARO's Strategy

- Cassava seed systems & breeding: NextGen Cassava (Cornell/IITA–CGIAR) with NARO/NaCRRI — accelerated breeding & data-driven selection
- Beans (PABRA 'Bean Corridor'): demand-led breeding + private seed companies and processors scaling preferred market classes across East Africa
- Maize quality & safety: Aflasafe commercialization with IITA— reducing aflatoxin risk in maize value chains
- NARO variety licensing: plant variety licenses with private seed companies to speed delivery of improved maize/bean varieties

Scaling Innovations Through Partnerships

- Gates Foundation Cassava Seed Systems Project
- Opportunities: biotech crops, digital platforms
- Private sector: breweries, processors, seed companies



Catalysts that Make Partnerships Deliver Transformation

- Demand-led R&D & market pull (product profiles from processors/consumers; e.g., PABRA bean classes)
- Clear governance, IP & licensing (transparent roles; variety licensing to private seed firms)
- Risk-sharing finance & incentives (blended finance; results-based milestones; e.g., aBi aflatoxin window)
- Data-driven breeding & learning loops (NextGen analytics; rigorous M&E for adaptive scaling).





Investing in Partnership Capacity

- Dedicated partnership office
- Staff committed to outreach and stakeholder engagement
- Knowledge systems to track partnerships

Not All Partnerships Are Equal

- Transactional = short-term, project-bound
- Strategic = long-term, systemic, aligned with national vision



From Transactional → Strategic

- Transactional: project ends with funds
- Strategic: NEXTGEN Cassava improved breeding capacity across Africa including Uganda
- Partnerships should leave lasting capacity



What Makes NARO the Partner of Choice?

- Scientific credibility (20+ years research)
- 16 PARIs, nationwide farmer networks
- Track record in key value chains: cassava, maize, beans, coffee, livestock

NARO, FAO commit collaboration in agriculture research

The Independent July 27, 2025 NEWS Leave a comment



Dr. Baguma and Dr. Qu on field inspection at the NARO research center in Namulonge.

Kampala, Uganda | THE INDEPENDENT | Uganda and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) have reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening collaboration in agricultural research,

The Future: AI, Youth, and Innovation Partnerships

- AI in breeding & pest detection
- Innovation hubs
- Youth startups in agri-fintech & digital extension





What to Remember After Today

- Partnerships are multipliers. They convert research into transformation at scale.
- Strategic long-term aligned alliances deliver sustained impact.
- NARO's edge: credibility, national footprint, and alignment with national, regional, and global agendas.
- Your role matters — every actor can catalyze transformation.



Your Thoughts

- Which partner excites you most in agriculture?
- Which partner should NARO engage more deeply with?



Thank You

