NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION (NARO)

TRAINING POLICY

November 2011
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION

TRAINING POLICY

PREAMBLE

The National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO) recognizes training as a major intervention for organizational, team and individual staff performance and development. Through training, staffs are equipped with skills, knowledge and attitude necessary for executing the organizational strategies and mandates. By investing in training, the full potential of employees is harnessed for the benefits the individual staff and the organization and as a whole. This policy is intended to help the organization achieve this goal.
### Acronyms and Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTF</td>
<td>Agricultural Research Trust Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG</td>
<td>Director General</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immune Virus</td>
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<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>Human Resource</td>
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<tr>
<td>NARO</td>
<td>National Agricultural Research Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAROSEC</td>
<td>NARO Secretariat</td>
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<td>NARS</td>
<td>National Agricultural Research Systems</td>
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<td>PARIs</td>
<td>Public Agricultural Research Institutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>TNA</td>
<td>Training Needs Assessment</td>
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1.0 BACKGROUND

The National Agricultural Research organization was established in 1993 by the National Agricultural Research Statute of 1992 with the object to undertake, promote, and streamline research in agriculture, livestock, fisheries and Forestry. During the period 2001 to 2005, the National Agricultural Research systems underwent a structural reform giving birth to a new agricultural research policy (2003) and resulted in the enactment of the National Agricultural Research Act 2005, which repealed the NARO statute of 1992.

The National Agricultural Research Act 2005 establishes the National Agricultural Research Organization with the object of coordinating and providing oversight over agricultural research in Uganda. To achieve the above objective, the organization has to put in place policies and strategies for attracting, developing and retaining the right number and quality of highly skilled and trained scientists, technicians and multidisciplinary support staff.

This training policy has therefore been designed to provide a framework for managing the training function in the organization in order to improve productivity and performance.

2.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE POLICY

The overall objective of the Training Policy is to provide guidelines for implementing training and development programmes for employees of the National Agricultural Research Organisation. It replaces the Training Policy of February 2000 and aims to conform with the current NARO Terms and Conditions of Service which came into force on July 1, 2009. The specific objectives of purpose include to:-

a) Provide a framework for the management of the Training Function at NAROSEC and PARIs

b) Specify roles and responsibilities of different actors in the training function.

c) Provide access to equal training opportunity to all staff.

d) Supporting the achievement of NARO’s Strategic Plan through:-
   i) Providing all staff with training and development that is relevant, appropriate, and meets the needs of NARO’s current and future objectives and key tasks.
   ii) Providing opportunity to all staff to improve their job performance, raise opportunity, quality in pursuit of continuous improvement.
   iii) Developing staff potential to meet their personal aspirations for career development and job satisfaction.
   iv) Promoting equity of access to training and development for all staff.
v) Building a team which is responsive, motivated and capable of implementing the National Agricultural Research program with loyalty and dedication.

vi) Ensuring that there is adequate and balanced supply of skilled, competent and high quality human resource to initiate, sustain and provide research services.

vii) Providing a systematic method of staff development at all levels based on identified current or projected training needs.

3.0 PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE POLICY

Through this policy, NARO shall support training and development of staff to address institutional competency and individual career development needs in line with equity and quality principles. Specifically this policy shall be guided by the following principles:

a) Professionalism: Training shall be planned, monitored and evaluated.

b) Transparency: Training opportunities shall be made known to all stakeholders and fairness shall be reflected in all decisions concerning training.

c) Equal opportunity: There shall be no discrimination in award of training opportunities as specified in the Uganda laws.

d) Affirmative action: Special considerations shall be accorded to disadvantaged staff where appropriate.

e) Demand driven approach: Training shall be undertaken only when it addresses an identifiable training need.

f) Value for Money: Training funds shall be utilized in the most cost effective manner.

4.0 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND MANAGEMENT OF THE TRAINING FUNCTION

The Training Function will be managed through the following structures.

4.1 Training Committee

A Training Committee shall be established at NAROSEC and each PARIs composed of at least five persons selected by DG/ PARI Director from different programs/units/ directorates. The representation shall be drawn from the three staff categories namely, scientists, technicians and support staff taking into consideration gender and capability. Members of the Training Committee shall serve for a period of two years with a possibility of renewal for one more term subject to performance. The Human Resource Officer shall serve as a secretary.

The functions of the Committees shall include the following:-
a) Planning and prioritising training needs to ensure that training is appropriate and cost-effective.
b) Reviewing training budgets and plans developed by the Human Resource Unit.
c) Recommending staff for short-term and long-term training to the Director General/PARI Director as appropriate.
d) Overseeing the implementation of the training plan at the respective institute.
e) Reviewing training and evaluation reports.

4.2 Human Resource Unit at NAROSEC and PARIs

The Human Resource Unit at NAROSEC and PARIs shall be responsible for coordinating and implementing the Training Function through:

a) Providing advisory services on training and staff development to staff and management.
b) Consolidating the training needs into a training plan.
c) Coordinating with the Training Committee the identification of training needs.
d) Preparing the training budgets.
e) Recommending to the approving authority the most appropriate and cost effective method of training.
f) Monitoring and evaluating training programmes.
g) Preparing training reports.
h) Developing and up-dating a staff training register.
i) Serving as a secretariat to the Training Committee.

4.3 Director General/PARI Director

The Director General and PARI Directors will be responsible for:

a) Presenting training plans and budget to NARO Council and Management Committees for approval.
b) Approving short-term and long-term training programmers as recommended by the Training Committee.
c) Approving of study leave in accordance to section 12.2(b).
d) Receive and review training progress reports in accordance to Section 12.2(i).
e) Mobilizing resources for training.

4.4 NARO Training Committee

An adhoc training committee shall be established to coordinate the organizational training function. The Committee shall be composed of seven members including two representing NARIs and two representing ZARDIs
selected by the Directors Forum and three from NAROSEC nominated by the 
Director General with the Head, Human Resource Officer as Secretary. 
The Committee shall serve a fixed period of one year. The role of the NARO 
Training committee shall include the following:

a) Coordinating and providing oversight to the training function.
b) Allocating the training budget to PARIs and NAROSEC

c) Selecting candidates for training for available scholarships.

4.5 PARI Management Committee

Management Committees shall be responsible for approving training plans 
for the respective PARI.

4.6 NARO Council

The NARO Council shall be responsible for approving NAROSEC and the 
consolidated NARO Training Plan.

5.0 CATEGORIES OF TRAINING:

Training programmes shall be categorized as follows:

5.1 Induction/Orientation Training

Induction training shall be provided to all newly recruited staff into the 
organisation. The induction programmes shall be organised through 
attachment, workshops and seminars for various cadres of staff to help them 
adjust as quickly as possible to the new environment under which they will 
be required to work and to acquaint them with procedures and work methods 
required of them.

5.2 On-job Training Programmes

On-job training shall be through work experience to enhance organizational 
and individual performance. These kinds of trainings shall be approved on 
the principle of on-job up-grading of technical, administrative and personal 
skills for improved work performance. The training programmes shall be 
undertaken locally and under exceptionally circumstances abroad subject to 
availability of resources.

5.3 Seminars/Workshops/Conferences/Symposia

Seminars, workshops and conferences will be organized to enhance 
professional and technical development of staff to be held both in-country 
and abroad.

5.4 Staff Exchange

NARO shall encourage staff exchange and collaboration between NARO
institutes and other institutions/universities within and abroad.

5.5 **Management Development programs**
Management Development programs shall be conducted to equip Directors and Managers with leadership and managerial skills necessary to perform their roles.

5.6 **Refresher Courses**
NARO shall encourage and support staff to attend refresher courses aimed at upgrading and updating staff knowledge, skills and competences.

5.7 **Degree Training**
Degree training shall normally be limited to a degree higher than the Bachelors and shall be aimed at specific qualifications considered essential to the mandate of NARO. In experience circumstances, the NARO Training Committee may approve training at first degree level.

5.8 **Sandwich/Split programmes:**
NARO shall support and encourage sandwich courses between PARIs and other local/foreign training institutions aimed at building technical capacity of both the institute and individual staff.

6.0 **DURATION OF TRAINING**
Training in NARO shall be classified by duration as Long-term, Short-term and Part-time training courses.

6.1 **Long-term Courses**
Long-term courses are courses lasting not less than six month leading to an award of diploma or higher qualification. Staff proceeding for this kind of training shall require approval of the Director General. Long-term courses are categorized as follows:-

a) Local long-term training: These are courses done in-country for a period ranging between 6 months and five years leading to an award of a degree or diploma.

b) Foreign long-term training: These are courses offered by institutions abroad for a period of more than 6 months to five years leading to an award of a degree or diploma.

6.2 **Short-term Training**
Short-term courses are courses lasting less than six months resulting in an award of diplomas or certificates. These courses are offered by training
institutions within and outside Uganda.

6.3 **Part-time courses/Correspondence**
NARO shall encourage and may support part-time training for its staff as long as the courses are relevant and do not interfere with fulfillment of official duties. Employees who register for correspondence/part-time courses will continue to work normally while studying.

7.0 **METHODS OF TRAINING**
Conventional and non-conventional methods of training shall be applied to equip staff with knowledge, skills and competencies for job performance.

7.1 **Conventional methods:**
These include but not limited to classroom and lectures training materials.

7.2 **Non-conventional Methods:**
These will include but shall not be limited to coaching, delegation, mentoring, taskforce assignments, attachments, counter parting, study visits, exchange visits, e-learning, distance learning, twinning programmes, staff rotation and transfer.

8.0 **IDENTIFICATION OF TRAINING NEEDS**
All training shall be preceded by a participatory, consultative, and observational staff training needs assessment exercise.

While identifying the training needs/skills gaps, great care shall be taken on the following:-

a) Identify training needs, skills and competencies at organisational, institutional and individual level.
b) Individuals/supervisors may identify training needs through the staff performance appraisal exercise.
c) All training programmes shall be assessed by the Training Committee to ensure that the training provided is not wasteful of money and other resources.
d) The supervisor shall recommend to the Training Committee training of staff with identified skills gaps.
e) The Training Committee will evaluate and prioritize the training needs of the institute and make recommendation to Director General/PARI Director.
f) Cross cutting issues such as climatic change, gender, HIV/AIDS, sustainability and other emerging issues that may be of a national importance which may not be identified in TNA may be considered.
9.0 DEVELOPMENT OF TRAINING PLAN
a) NAROSEC/PARIs shall be required to develop an annual training plan using data obtained from the training needs assessment exercise.
b) The Training Plan shall have clearly spelt out objectives.
c) Training Plans developed at NAROSEC/PARIs shall be consolidated into one organisational training plan. Each PARI and NAROSEC shall implement its plan.
d) NARO Council and PARI Management Committees shall approve the training plans.
e) NAROSEC/PARI Training Committees shall oversee, monitor and evaluate the training programmes.

10.0 NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES
a) Candidates for short-term and long-term training shall be subject to nominations.
b) The power to nominate candidates for short-term and long-term shall be vested in the Training Committee.
c) The Director General/PARI Director shall nominate candidates to attend workshops, seminars, conferences and symposia beneficial to the organisation and the individual.
d) While nominating candidates for training, the committee shall ensure that the principles enumerated in sec 3.0 are taken into account.

11.0 CRITERIA FOR SELECTING CANDIDATES FOR TRAINING:
In exercising the powers to nominate candidates for training, the Training Committee shall apply any of the following criteria.

(a) Priority of institute training needs:
(b) Availability of funds,
(c) Academic qualifications and competence to undertake the training,
(d) Seniority in service,
(e) Staff performance and potential to work at a higher level,
(f) Availability of position on completion of course,
(g) The staffing level of the Organisation,
(h) Economy,
12.0 AUTHORISATION TO UNDERTAKE TRAINING

12.1 Before nominating a candidate for training, the training committee shall ensure that the knowledge, skills and competencies to be gained from the training are necessary and meet identified current and future needs.

12.2 Training shall be undertaken subject to prior authorization under the following circumstances:

a) Study leave with pay shall be granted to employees who are fully or partially sponsored to attend training programmes either locally or internationally, before employees proceed to the course.

b) The Director General shall approve all long-term trainings study leave.

c) Approval of short term training at PARIs shall be granted by the Director while the Director General approve short term training for NAROSEC staff.

d) Only staff who have served for a continuous period of two years shall be granted study leave with pay.

e) Staff who obtain scholarships or are admitted for long-term training before serving two years may be granted study leave without pay.

f) Staff who proceed for training without permission under 12(c) and (d) shall have their salaries stopped and disciplinary action shall be instituted against them.

g) Staff who participate in full time training programmes lasting up to 12 months or more will not be eligible for further long-term training on completion for a period of at least 2 years unless authorized by NARO Council.

h) Staff pursuing part-time training referred to in 6.3 shall notify the PARI Director/Head of Unit.

i) Staff undertaking approved long-term training shall continue to receive full salary pay throughout the training period.

j) Staff on long-term training shall be required to submit periodic/annual progress reports to the Director General and their respective PARI Director.

k) Staff on training shall apply for contract renewals prior to expiry of their running contracts. The progress reports referred to in section
12.2(i) shall form a basis for renewal of their contracts.

13.0 **BONDING**

13.1 Employees proceeding on approved long-term training exceeding six months shall be required to sign a bonding agreement provided in Annex I prior to starting the training programme.

13.2 Bonding is intended to serve the following purposes:

a) To ensure that trainees commit themselves to serve the organization after the training.

b) To ensure that the knowledge acquired is applied/transferred to the workplace.

c) To ensure job security for the employee on completion of the training programme.

13.3 The period of service after training shall be applied as follows:

<table>
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<th>Duration of Course</th>
<th>Bonding Period</th>
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<tr>
<td>Above Two Years</td>
<td>Three Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above one to two Years</td>
<td>Two Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 months to one year</td>
<td>One year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than six months</td>
<td>No bonding</td>
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13.4 A person who breaches the bonding agreement shall be legally bound to reimburse NARO salary and any other training related costs incurred towards the training.

13.5 Staff shall not seek extension of the approved training period.

13.6 Where facts on the ground require an extension of the approved training, approval shall only be granted by the Council.

13.7 Staff not granted extension may be allowed to continue with the training without pay and facilitation from NARO.

14.0 **SELECTION OF TRAINING SERVICE PROVIDERS**

Government Procurement Regulations shall be followed in procuring training services provided by private training providers/consultancy firms. Extreme care shall be exercised in selecting training providers to ensure quality training and value for money. Where specialized knowledge is required, there shall be conscious attempt to draw from the expertise and insight of serving
and retired staff whenever appropriate.

15.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF TRAINING

Monitoring and Evaluation of training shall be conducted to ensure the training delivery meets the set training objectives. Monitoring and Evaluation will be before, during and after the programmes. The Training Committee shall monitor the training programs to determine whether the training is contributing effectively to NAROs mission and strategic objectives. The Training Committee shall be required to submit quarterly and annual training reports.

16.0 TRAINING RESOURCES

16.1 Allocation of Training Resources

a) NARO shall allocate resources to meet training and development needs through the annual budgetary process.

b) NARO shall devote a sum equal to 20% of its total annual employee costs to training and development activities. Registration, tuition, training/research allowance, study materials, travel costs and per-diem expenses and stipend incurred for a specific purpose of training shall count towards the training budget.

c) The total sum of 80% accruing from the 20% above shall be allocated to finance the training budgets of PARIs and NARO Secretariat staff.

e) 20% of the total training budget shall be retained at NAROSEC to finance training needs of strategic nature for the entire organization and any other emerging training invitations from national, regional and international collaborators, partners and training institutions.

16.2 Funding and Training Expenses

Staff under NARO’s sponsorship may be entitled to the following expenditure:

a) Fees and charges directly related to the course: including subsistence costs, registration, tuition, examination charges, book allowances, thesis production costs, publications and academic gowns.

b) Approved pre-departure costs including medical examination fees, insurance cover, visa fees and allowances to cover warm clothing where and when applicable.

c) Transport expenses incurred by the employee in connection with the course including freight expenditure to and from the place of study up
to the completion of the course.

d) Staff proceeding on long-term training shall be paid a stipend determined by the NARO Training Committee and approved by the Council.

17.0 END OF TRAINING REPORT

a) All employees who participate in any training programmes, whether short-term or long-term, shall be required upon completion to submit a training report to the DG/PARI Director.

b) PARI Directors shall submit copies of training reports on all staff who complete training to the Director General.

c) The reports shall highlight the course content, benefits achieved, course evaluation and possible modalities for the transfer of skills to other staff on the station or the organisation.

d) Staff shall also make available, copies of relevant training materials, training report, dissertation and other publications obtained from the training.

18.0 FAILURE TO COMPLETE A SPONSORED TRAINING PROGRAM

a) Failure to successfully complete a long-term training programme out of negligence or flouting of regulations shall lead to termination of an employment contract. Staff who fail examinations during the training programme shall only be permitted to repeat once or change to a different course where:

i) Repetition or change of course is permitted and is strongly recommended by the Training Institution concerned.

ii) Change of course is recommended by NAROSEC/PARI Training Committee and approved by the Director General.

iii) Sponsorship funds are availed to allow for repetition

b) Repetition or change of course shall be permitted only once after the first year of study.

c) Staff who don’t complete courses/trainings shall, be reviewed in order to assess whether they are still suitable to continue employment by NARO.

19.0 RULES AND REGULATIONS OF TRAINING

Training is not a privilege, it shall be granted or withheld from employees but should be undertaken after critical appraisal of training needs in relation to
NAROs objectives. All staff selected to attend training programmes shall be required to comply with the following rules and rules of any other specified sponsoring agency.

a) To proceed and report to the training venue within the specified period.

b) To diligently devote time to studies until the completion of the training programme unless prevented from doing so by sickness or other circumstances beyond their control.

c) To follow all directives and instructions given by the authorities of the training institution.

d) To abide with NARO training regulations as approved from time to time.

e) Fifty years of age will be the limit for permission to join a training programme leading to a PhD degree overseas.

f) All training requirements from PARIs which require approval by the Director General shall be channeled through the Director.

g) A notice of not less than 3 weeks prior to the commencement of a training course/programmes must be communicated to the PARI Director/Director General.

h) Yearly training requirements at various institutes or units should be submitted to the Training Committee for prioritization in November of each year to enable drawing up the annual Training Plan for the following Year.

i) End of training and evaluation reports including copies of certificates/documents awarded shall be forwarded to the Human Resource Unit within 30 days and 3 months after completion of a short-term and long-term training respectively.

j) Any NARO employee, who proceeds for training without explicit permission from the PARI Director/Director General as required, shall have his/her salary stopped and disciplinary action taken against him/her.

k) Equipment purchased as training material from NARO sponsorship shall remain a property of NARO and shall be surrendered immediately after the course to the parent institutes’ stores.

l) Copies of the thesis/dissertation where applicable shall be availed to the
parent institute’s Library and NARO Secretariat for future reference.

m) Failure to submit an end of training report within one month for a short-term course and three months for a long-term course shall subject the employee to disciplinary action.

n) Any person who is aggrieved by any part of this policy, may appeal through the grievances procedures provided in the NARO terms and conditions of service.

o) Disciplinary measures shall be instituted against staff who fail to abide by these rules.

20.0 EFFECTIVENESS DATE

This policy became effective on November 1, 2011.
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION

CONDITIONS OF TRAINING

AND

BONDING AGREEMENT

I. Mr./Miss./Dr./Mrs.:.......................................................... currently working for..............
.....................................................herein called “Agency”) as a
...........................................................having secured a scholarship leading to
award of ………………………………………. at …………………………………
(training institution) from ………………… (start date) to ……………………..(end
date) do undertake that if I am accepted to receive long-term degree training under
the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) or any other sponsored
training programme. I shall adhere to the programme arranged as requested by my
employers, devote my time and attention to my studies, and conform to NARO
regulations and procedures for the duration of the training programme. I shall not
seek extension of the period of my programme unless under circumstances beyond
my control, but will resume work without delay upon completion of my training and
will endeavour to utilize for the benefit of my country the training acquired under
this programme. I shall without fail return to the employment of NARO that
requested for my participation in my training programme and will work for the
Agency for no less than one/two/three year(s) after receiving my training. If I fail to
return to my employing agency for the specified bonding period, then I shall be
legally bound to reimburse NARO all its expenditures associated with my training
programme including the salary received during the training period.

II. Termination of Training Programmes before normal duration, NARO and the
employing Agency reserves the right to terminate the training programme of those
Applicant who:
   a) Fail in the academic studies.
   b) Fail to carry out class room work that the training institute believes is
      commensurate with the training objectives.
   c) Fail to show sufficient interest in or to pursue effectively the practical
      training phases of their programmes.
   d) Have severe health problems which according to medical reports can
      adversely affect the performance of their employment duties.
   e) Failure to adhere to NARO rules and regulation of Training programmes.
   f) Conduct themselves in a manner prejudicial to the programme or to the law
      of the country of training.

Signed:…………………………………….. Witnessed by:…………………………..
(Signature & Date of Applicant) (Institute/HR/A Officer)

Signed/Date ……………………………... Signed/Date…………………………...
(Institute Director) (Director General)