PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

AN INSIGHT INTO THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS TO NaFIRRI LIBRARY FOR THE PAST SIXTY YEARS

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Abstract:
National Fisheries Resources Research Institute (NaFIRRI) is one of the Public Agricultural Research InstituteS under the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) of Uganda. NaFIRRI Information and Data Centre has been in existence for over 50 years. Since its establishment, the Centre has been creating collaborations and partnerships at national, regional and international levels that have supported its growth. The library has benefited from these collaboration and from linkages with local and international institutions, individuals and many more. Networking with sister institutions also helps in keeping up to date with new findings in fisheries research, and enables the institution to be recognized internationally. This paper discusses and assesses the contributions made by collaborations and partnerships to the Library for the past 60 years, which have enabled it to continue to exist, grow and develop.

Keywords: partnerships, collaboration, information sharing, fisheries, libraries.

Introduction
National Fisheries Resources Research Institute (NaFIRRI) is one of the Public Agricultural Research Institute under the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO). The NaFIRRI Information and Data Centre has been in existence for over 60 years. It was established in 1948 to provide information to research scientists in East Africa. The Centre has evolved from a small library to a modern Information center.

The Library/Information and Data Centre is referred to as the heart of the institute because it contains all the institute’s reports from the time of its establishment to the present day. It also contains reports of the first surveys done in the 1920’s on Lakes Victoria, Albert and Kyoga. It also contains research information other lakes such as Edward, George, Kyoga, Nabugabo, Tanganyika, Chad, Malawi, River Nile, River Zambezi and many other satellite lakes in Uganda.

Given the limited budget it receives, the library has relied on support from collaborators and partnerships ever since its establishment. The library’s objectives include processing, documenting, re-packaging and disseminating research information to stakeholders while ensuring that all fisheries and aquaculture related research in Uganda is preserved and conserved for further use. These goals cannot be reached without partnerships and collaborations, and they are what have made the library what it is today. It has benefited from collaborations and linkages with local and international institutions, individuals and many more. According to FAO (2009), sustainable fisheries information systems benefit from formal and informal partnership agreements.
I define partnership as an agreement between individuals, institutions or organizations to work together to share resources, given the fact that any single institution will not have all the resources that it needs. According to Carnwell and Carson (2009), current models of partnership are organized around professional identities, and will give way in the long-term to “problem specific” professions.

According to Carnwell et al. (2009), collaboration means the process by which people and organizations work together to accomplish a common mission. The benefits of partnerships and collaborations include:

- Information and knowledge sharing;
- Collaboration and partnerships provide access to Journals through the document delivery system;
- Networking and socialization;
- Improvement of service delivery.

Partners of NaFIRRI Library include national partners:

- Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF);
- Training Institute;
- National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA);
- National Library of Uganda;
- Makerere University Library;
- Consortium of Uganda University Libraries.

International Partners include:

- Freshwater Biological Association (FBA);
- FAO Fisheries Branch Library;
- IMF (International Monetary Fund);
- International Association of Aquatic and Marine Information Centers (IAMSLIC);
- Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO).

**Contributions made by Partners**

According to the Annual Report of 1958, the library continued to receive regularly from the Soviet Academy of Sciences their Abstracts of World Literature on Biology and Biochemistry, a contribution the library gratefully acknowledged. These journals, according to the Annual Report, were valuable for purposes of reference to the titles of the papers published.

The work in the library by Mr. Elder and Mrs. Kemp in 1960 and 1961 resulted in the establishment of first-class working and reference facilities, which according to the annual report 1961 was then the only comprehensive hydrobiological library south of the Sahara still in working condition. Their contributions are greatly appreciated.

In 1960 the library was maintained by part-time staff but continued to expand to an International level. Accessions during the year totaled 12 reference works and several hundred reprints, and about 20 regular periodicals. The contribution of the part-time staff greatly contributed to raising the library to meet international standards.
The decimal classification was introduced in 1963 (Annual Report 1964) and the index of EAFFRO’s collection formed the basis of the bibliography of African freshwater hydrobiology that was being prepared.

On October 26th 1964, M. Michel Culas, representing the French Ambassador to Uganda, visited the Laboratory bearing with him a most generous gift from the people of France, three volumes Agnathes et Poissons of the French zoological work the Traite de Zoologie (Annual Report 1964). In the same year 115 feet of additional shelving was provided in the Library in order to accommodate the increasing number of Journals and reprints received each year.

During 1965 the library suffered from two difficulties: first, a growing backlog of the routine classification of reprints due to the limited senior and secretarial assistance available; and secondly, an increasing limitation on the purchases of essential books and reprints as a result of financial stringency. The rising costs of journal subscriptions, bookbinding and the printing of EAFFRO publications placed an increased burden upon the limited funds allocated.

In 1966, the Rockefeller Foundation financed the photocopying of journals, which the Library could not afford. This was an arrangement with the East African Freshwater Fisheries Research Organization, and improved the journal collection in the Library.

In 1970 the African Journal of Tropical Hydrobiology and Fisheries published its first issue and this was added to the Library. Contributions were also received from several scientists (EAFFRO Annual Report 1970).

Since 1960’s, the Library has received contributions from FAO. Including FAO Circulars, books, Fisheries Codes of Conduct and Technical Reports. There have been about 222 documents received from FAO to date.

![Figure 1. A Section Of FAO Collections In the Library.](image)
Other FAO contributions include the linking of the FAO Document Delivery program to the JLB Smith Library of South Africa and the South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity (SAIAB).

In 2010 through a partnership with the World Fish Centre Malaysia (Librarian Mr. William Ko), the Library received a donation of 230 books.

The Freshwater Biological Association (FBA) was responsible for sending early scientists to the East African Freshwater Fisheries Research Organization (EAFFRO). Through a partnership and collaboration with FBA, the library received copies of reprints, occasional papers written by the early scientists, the Freshwater Forum Journal and the Fresh Water Annual Reports. Through collaboration with CTA (Technical Centre for Agriculture), the Library has continued to receive copies of Spore magazine since 1970's to date. Since 1975 the Library has received copies of the journal Contributions in Science though a partnership with Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. The library has also benefited from the International Association of Aquatic and Marine Information Centres (IAMSLIC) since 2009 when the library became a member of the association. NaFIRRI has been able to access journal articles through holding libraries in the IAMSLIC network; to date we have received 35 copies of documents.

**National ASFA Partner**
The library is a National ASFA Partner; as such it is involved in preparing inputs and participates in ASFA activities. The library received a scanner from the ASFA Secretariat, which it uses for digitization. The ASFA Secretariat also pays the library's IAMSLIC membership fee.

**The Processing Unit For Digitization**

![Image](image_url)

*Figure 2. In 2012, through partnership and collaboration with International Monetary Fund (IMF) the Library has continued to receive copies of the monthly Finance and Development magazines.*
**National Partners and Collaborators**

Through collaboration and partnership with Makerere University Library and INASP (International Network for Availability of Scientific Publication), the library has been able to receive document deliveries, hands-on training on how to access online journals, project planning and proposal writing skills.

In 2010 through collaboration and partnership with the National Library of Uganda, 50 copies of colonial maps and 5 historical books were digitized. The digitized copies are for internal use because of copyright issues. The librarian was also trained in digitization and description of cultural heritage materials in a workshop held between 4th-6th, October 2010.

Between 2002 and 2005, the library building was expanded and rehabilitated with support from the Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project phase one (LVEMP 1). It furnished the library with new furniture and books and supported project staff attached to the library to enable it to continue operating.

In the same period, 2002, through a partnership Sida Canada sent a Canadian intern, Mr. Palamar, to assist the library with the following activities:

- Kick-starting a scanning activity to create an electronic archive of materials relating to Lake Victoria.
- Providing electronic versions of all annual reports available from the Fisheries Resources Department/EAFFRO/UFFRRO/FIRI/FIRRI.
- Creating electronic materials from fisheries research Information to be used by Management Information system.
- Introducing the use of reference manager used at FIRRI to FRD and LVEMP website.
- Establishing electronic exchange of scanned information between FIRRI, FRD, LVEMP and KMFRI/TaFIRI.
- Completing negotiations with electronic journal database vendors to allow for access through 2002/2003.
- Organizing one to one workshops for scientists in the use of online databases for literature searching (IDEAL, Blackwell-synergy, EBSCO and other databases).
- Teaching scientists routine automated operations of the Internet.
- Overseeing the installation of database applications on the expected database and GIS equipment.
- Exploring possibilities for database linkages with KEMFRI and TaFIRI and recommend feasible mechanisms for Information and data exchange.
- Mr. Palamar was also assigned to follow up with a FAO Document delivery program linked to the J. L. B. Smith Library of South Africa, and ensuring that the FIRRI Library staff and internal were trained to take over library processes at the end of his stay. We are grateful for Mr. Palamar’s contribution to the development of the library.

In 2005, in partnership with Makerere University Library, NaFIRRI Library joined the Consortium of University Libraries (CUUL) as an affiliate. This was done to enable it to access electronic resources and also get access to information within the universities to which it may not have had access previously.
To date NaFIRRI Library is still a member of CUUL, and through the consortium the library staff have received training on accessing online Journals, project planning and management and training on writing winning proposals for Information management. The library staff have also benefited from short seminars in library management organized by the consortium.

NaFIRRI Library has also benefited as an institution of the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation (LVFO). Through its project IFMP the Library was able to receive books bought by the project to boost the number of books in the library in 2009. Through the collaboration with the LVFO, NaFIRRI Library has received donations of 154 books, for which we are grateful.

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The library also collaborates with the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), through which it has continued to receive copies of the State of the Environment Report since 1990. We have also benefited from the collaboration with Department of Fisheries Resources Uganda, from which we
were able to get copies of policy books like Uganda Fisheries Policy, Department of Fisheries Annual Reports, and publications on standard operating procedures.

**Contribution of individuals**

Individuals who have undertaken further studies have contributed and donated copies of their theses to enrich the collections in the Library/Information and Data Centre. The theses and dissertations cover research in fisheries, aquaculture, water environment, socioeconomics and marketing.

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*Table 1. Contributions made by individuals*

The Uganda Bureau of Statistics in September 2013 donated 10 copies of the Uganda Demographic Health Survey Report of 2011 to the library to help increase demographic information available within the library. The Economic Policy Research Centre at Makerere University Library has contributed books on policy research findings from within the University.

**Partnerships with Local NGO’s**

Since 2006 the Library has continued to receive copies of publications from the Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment.

**Conclusion**

Given the limited budget, the library cannot afford subscriptions to journals and e-books. Partnerships and collaboration have made us what we are today. We greatly appreciate and thank all those who have contributed to its growth and development.

**References**


