

20 YEARS OF INTER-RELIGIOUS

Inter-Religious Council of Uganda, an inter-faith organisation that brings together Roman Catholic, Anglican, Orthodox, Born-Again/Pentecostal, Adventist and Muslim religious leaders, is marking 20 years since its inception. However, what exactly is the relevance of this organisation? Does it have any substantial achievements? **Mathias Mazinga** interviewed the organisation's secretary general, Joshua Kitakule over a wide range of issues. Below are the excerpts.

Q THIS YEAR MARKS TWO DECADES OF THE INTER-RELIGIOUS COUNCIL OF UGANDA. WHO WERE THE BRAINS BEHIND IT AND WHY DID THEY THINK IT WAS NECESSARY TO CREATE IT?

A The Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU) was founded on March 1, 2001. Its pioneers include Emmanuel Cardinal Wamala of the Roman Catholic Church, the late Metropolitan Jonah Lwanga of the Uganda Orthodox Church, the Mufti of Uganda (Uganda Muslim Supreme Council), His Eminence Sheikh Shaban Ramathan Mubajje, and the late Archbishop Livingstone Mpalanyi Nkoyoyo of the Church of Uganda.

These highly respected founders of IRCU were conscious of the terrible religious wars that bedevilled our country, particularly in 1888, and the resultant cold tension, mistrust, divisions and mutual discrimination that prevailed for so many years after. The local politicians took advantage of the situation and started mobilising political support along religious divisions. No wonder, the first political parties had strong religious inclinations; the Democratic Party was strongly aligned to the Catholic Church. Uganda People's Congress was also sharply inclined to the Protestant Church.

In 1963, the late Archbishop Joseph Kiwanuka of the Roman Catholic Church, Archbishop Leslie Brown of the Protestant Church and Metropolitan Theodoros Nankyama of the Orthodox Church started the Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) as a strategy to overcome the religious misunderstandings and



Religious and traditional leaders meet in Addis Ababa to expound and strengthen their role in ending violence against women and girls

also to foster national development and unity. Nonetheless, UJCC had a limited mandate. It embraced Catholics, Anglicans and Orthodox Christians. It nonetheless left out other faiths, such as the Adventist Church, the Born-Again Faith and the Muslim faith.

So, the IRCU was basically formed to address this gap; to bring all the faiths on board; to create space for them. The enormous challenge of HIV/AIDS that emerged during the late 1980s and 90s also influenced the formation of IRCU. You know the pandemic was so swift, complicated and disastrous that no single religious body could deal with it single handedly. Yes, each of the mainstream Churches responded to the pandemic by putting in place programmes to deal with its effects, but the programmes were fragmented. I mean, they had no impact. They were not being felt. You see, HIV/AIDS was not a faith problem. It was a national,



Joshua Kitakule

WHAT HAVE BEEN SOME OF YOUR MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS?

We have secured a building where we are going to establish our permanent home. We bought the building at sh600m.

We have also leased 144 acres of land at Kawoomya, Ssi Sub-County, Buikwe district, on which we are also establishing a demonstration farm, where we will be building the capacity of the religious leaders and their followers, particularly the youth and women, and consequently improve house-hold incomes.

We have established a Peace and Leadership Institute for capacity building of the religious leaders and followers of our member faith-organizations.

We have established a women's organization, the Inter-faith Women of Uganda, which has provided an opportunity for women to come together and talk about their issues. We have also established an influential youth organisation, Youth Inter-faith Network. These organizations have enabled us to ably address issues of women, youth and inter-generational challenges. We are also the brains behind the Elders' Forum, which brings together senior citizens of the country and gives them a platform to continue influencing society for the better, even during their retirement. We have put in place critical frame-works for building consensus on critical issues.

global pandemic whose defeat called for a joint approach, nationally and internationally.

So, the formation of the IRCU was basically intended to bring together all the religious faiths so that they can work together to address the common issues that affect all Ugandans. You know, unity is strength. By working in unity in their diversity, the architects of IRCU managed to pull their resources together and dealt with the HIV/AIDS pandemic very decisively, on a united front. They availed their health facilities and places of worship for the treatment, counselling and sensitisation of people about the pandemic. They also addressed together the enormous challenge of orphans and vulnerable groups. The formation of IRCU also helped to build international networks. More international funders came on board. You know the international donors/development partners find it easy to work with people, or organisations that are united under a unified

association or body.

The war in northern Uganda was also another factor for the formation of IRCU. Although it somehow looked like a regional problem, it seriously affected the entire country. So, the formation of IRCU was also intended to facilitate a peaceful end to the war in northern Uganda. Fortunately, the religious leaders from the north had already formed a joint organisation, the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative, to deal with the same problem. So, the IRCU leaders just joined efforts with them to facilitate dialogue, mobilise humanitarian support, look after displaced people, particularly the children and their mothers.

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS YOUR BIG ACHIEVEMENTS?

We have established a strong platform for inter-religious dialogue and action in Uganda. Prior to the establishment of IRCU, there was no place where the religious leaders of different faiths would come and talk about their issues, or the common issues that affect Ugandans. It is the IRCU that provided religious leaders with a common platform for dialogue. The unprecedented formation of IRCU also inspired

UNITY, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

other diverse groupings to form similar dialogue platforms. To me, this is a big milestone.

IRCU has strengthened the prophetic voice of religious leaders. They can now speak in unity about the common issues that affect people. Today you will not find leaders of the faith groups speaking in isolation of others. Catholic, Anglican, Muslim, Orthodox, Born-Again and Seventh Day Adventist Church leaders speak with one voice on the fundamental issues of national concern.

We have pooled together the spiritual and social assets of all religious faiths for the benefit of all Ugandans. Our structures are now put together for public benefit. Our health facilities for instance, which number about 500, are all available for the community.

Today there are also bold marks of interfaith unity and tolerance. For example, schools no longer admit students on account of their religious affiliation, but on account of their competence and grades. For example, a Roman Catholic can study from King's College Budo, or Kibuli SS. A Muslim, Anglican, Born-Again, Adventist or Seventh Day Adventist student can also study from Trinity College Nabbingo, St. Mary's College Kisubi, or Mount St. Mary's College Namugunga.

The greatest achievement of IRCU is probably the strong and dependable partnership it has established with the Government. We are working harmoniously with government in areas such as health, democracy, and voter education. It is easy for us to engage with government.

We have established strong partnerships with international development partners/donors. We have won the confidence of these donors. International development partners prefer, or find it easier to work with IRCU than with individual religious establishments. You see, it becomes tricky when a donor funds the programme of one religion and not that of another religion. The religion which has not been given funding may see it as a deliberate discrimination. IRCU has thus provided the best opportunity and convenience for the development partners to



The IRCU council of Presidents visited the Orthodox church to commiserate with the faithful following the death of Metropolitan Jonah Lwanga in September

support the pro-people programmes of the faith bodies.

IRCU has further strengthened professionalism in the work of the faith-based institutions. Previously, a cleric would just write a simple letter to a donor requesting for funding. Today, we write formal proposals with proper concept notes, social impact assessment, etc. We are also aligning our programmes to the national and international development agenda. That is why we talk about things like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in our programmes.

WHO ARE YOUR DEPENDABLE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS?

The major ones include UNDP, UNFPA, USAID, the Royal Danish Embassy, Trocaire, Religions for Peace International, African Council for Religious Leaders and Dan Church Aid.

WHAT ARE THE EXACT PROGRAMMES THAT YOU HAVE IMPLEMENTED?

The main ones include Peace, Justice and Good Governance, Social Accountability (through Peace and Leadership Institute), Domestic Violence Prevention, Enhancing Household Incomes, Environmental

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Justice and Climate Change and National Dialogue, which is actually our flagship programme.

Other programmes include Public Health, HIV/AIDS Prevention, Care and Treatment, Reproductive Health, Anti-Corruption. We have also developed a centre for research, strategic information, monitoring, evaluation and learning.

CAN YOU SHARE WITH US SOME OF YOUR PLANS?

We shall continue strengthening the

programme for dialogue. We intend to work even more closely with government to uplift the living standards of our people. Our interfaith committees will work with local government leaders at sub-county and district level. We shall speak and engage with the local leaders to support them build ethical standards for effective and corrupt-free service delivery.

We intend to expand and strengthen the empowerment programmes at our demonstration farm. We shall support the different groups with skills and consequently build their capacities to fight poverty. We intend to establish and strengthen regional centres. We shall put in place a self-regulation framework, to be able to regulate ourselves. Religious leaders have a prophetic role to play in society. So, there are certain standards that people expect of them. By virtue of their prophetic calling, there are certain things that they must not do. We shall, therefore, strengthen the mutual accountability mechanism, in order to be more accountable to our principles, values and regulations.

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS YOUR GREATEST CHALLENGES?

One of them is attrition. If you are to build the capacity of people, you need to be

with them for some good time. This, nonetheless, is not the case. We have a big turnover of our staff. Our religious leaders also change from time to time. For example, we have lost two of our Council Presidents in just one year; the late Archbishop Cyprian Kizito Lwanga of the Roman Catholic Church and Metropolitan Jonah Lwanga of the Orthodox Church.

Another challenge is related to the clash of values. We have had cases where our spiritual and moral values have clashed directly with those of some of our potential donors. For example, we have met some donors who were willing to sponsor some of our programmes, but on condition that we cater for the interests of homosexuals and lesbians! We have always turned down the promised funding of such donors.

The political polarisation of our country has also affected our work. You know as a matter of principle, we are obliged to be impartial. This means, we have to speak out against the socio-economic injustices in the country without fear or favour. Likewise, we have to appreciate the good things done by government. But when we speak against vices in government, such as corruption, nepotism, etc, some government leaders

think we anti-government, siding with the opposition. On the other hand, politicians in the Opposition also accuse us of being opportunistic supporters of the government when we appreciate the good things that government has done, or when we partner with it to promote community development.

The poverty-stricken character of our population has also impacted negatively on our work. Ideally, our work should be supported by our local people, but this cannot happen because they are poor. Instead, they look for support from us. That is actually why we are working hard to give our people economic empowerment so that they can in turn support us.

I also cannot leave out the critical challenge of COVID-19. The pandemic has seriously affected the way we do our things. The places of worship have been under lock-down for a very long time. So, delivery of services has been very difficult. We need to orient ourselves and our people to using the modern social communication technologies of our time. For example, our people must be in position to use the social media. Each religious faith should also have a radio and TV station.

WHAT IS YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE?

Through our structures, we have provided space for peace. We have worked with the Teso leaders to restore peace in Teso. We have also contributed to the restoration of peace and harmonious living in Kasese. We have also facilitated humanitarian services to the refugees in West Nile. Remember, it was also IRCU that mooted the idea of national dialogue, which brings all sectors of our society to come together and discuss national issues amicably.

BUT DOES THE IRCU STILL MAKE SENSE TO UGANDANS?

Our communities are inter-religious in character. Everywhere you go, you find inter-faith marriages. So, Inter-faith is the way to go. We must have an inter-religious approach in everything we do. So, IRCU is even more relevant than ever. Its future is also as bright as the morning sun.



NAADS, IRCU TO IMPROVE HOUSEHOLD INCOME

By Denis Nsubuga

Grace Wanyenze is an active member of the Orthodox Church community in her home area of Bukasakya Parish in Mbale district.

Fortunately for her, when an agricultural training programme was introduced in her district, she was selected by her church council to represent the Orthodox.

The three-day training took place in May this year. It was organised by the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU) and the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS), to equip aspiring and small-scale farmers with modern practices of livestock farming. NAADS, through IRCU, later provided agricultural inputs.

Wanyenze was an aspiring piggery farmer. After the training on piggery, on June 16, she received three pigs –

two sows and one boar.

Prepared with the basic principles of pig production, she set up a small-scale farm at her home. Today, she considers herself self-employed.

"I have looked after the three pigs well. My farm has made me and my children busy. They have learnt rearing the pigs and the farm engages them," Wanyenze says. Today she has 10 animals. She says with the little capital she has invested, she hopes that in the future, she will sell and get a decent income for her household.

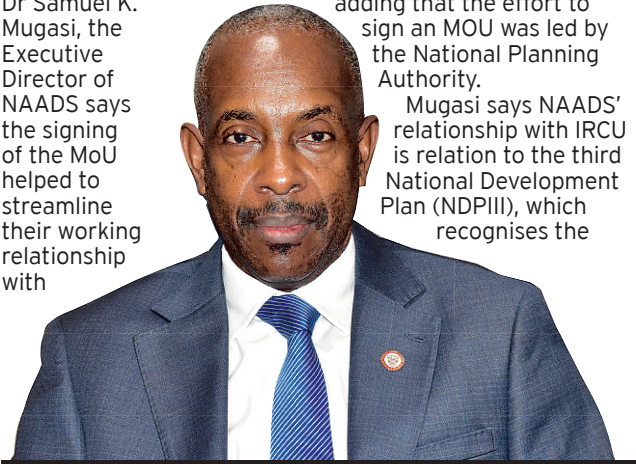
Wanyenze worked upon the knowledge she acquired from the training, including practices to grow a healthy pig and measures to keep the farm clean. The farm has attracted visits from other farmers in the village.

The objective of this MOU, signed on

November 19, 2020, is to contribute to Household Economic Empowerment through promotion of Agro-Industrialisation, Community mobilization, mindset change, value chain development and food security.

REACHING EVERYONE

Dr Samuel K. Mugasi, the Executive Director of NAADS says the signing of the MoU helped to streamline their working relationship with



Dr Samuel K. Mugasi

faith-based institutions.

"Previously, they would approach us individually for support for agricultural inputs. We were also advised by our leaders who were approached by the same to work with an institution that brings together all the faith-based institutions," he says, adding that the effort to sign an MOU was led by the National Planning Authority.

Mugasi says NAADS' relationship with IRCU is relation to the third National Development Plan (NDPIII), which recognises the

importance of working with stakeholders such as faith-based institutions and civil society organisations, especially in the area of mindset change and community mobilisation.

Jessica Nalwoga, the manager for Livelihood and Environmental Stewardship of IRCU, says holistic human development has been part of the agenda of various religious faith groups.

She, however, said since the bulk of work at IRCU previously was on HIV, governance and peace building, they thought of tackling people's challenges in areas of health, education and income.

"The gospel that sits on an empty stomach doesn't make sense. The cooperation was to amplify the efforts of human development and livelihood. To aggregate the efforts from the different religious groups to reach a wider

community," she said.

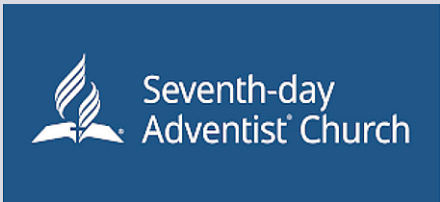
POVERTY ALLEVIATION

In March 2017, Nalwoga said, IRCU met President Yoweri Museveni, who discussed the sluggish state of various poverty alleviating programmes. The governing body of IRCU suggested that they could reach more people with their structure.

Nalwoga said the council designed a programme on agriculture because majority of Ugandans survive on the sector.

"80% or more of Ugandans survive on agriculture. We thought if we handled agriculture better, with more effort, it could become more profitable for the common person. An average Ugandan has less than an acre of land, so we thought of the best way to utilise it," she says.

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Inter-Religious Council of Uganda
Religions for Peace
CELEBRATING 20 YEARS
OF MULTI RELIGIOUS COLLABORATION

On the occasion of celebrating the 20th Anniversary of IRCU service in Uganda, a service which promotes peace, health, good governance, environmental protection and prosperity for all Ugandans:

The Seventh day Adventist Church in Uganda wishes the IRCU fraternity namely: The Council of Presidents, IRCU Board, IRCU Secretariate, IRCU Inter Faith teams and all the faithfuls who subscribe to the IRCU member religious bodies peace, prosperity and the blessing of God. We extend the same peace, prosperity and the blessing of God to all Ugandans. We appeal to all Ugandans to embrace and promote peaceful co existence, rule of law,, democeray and prosperity.

We ask Ugandas to protect the traditional family unit, desist from acts of violence and corruption and work to build a safe and

prosperous Uganda which is rooted in the fear of God.

The Seventh day Adventist Church promotes a transformed lifestyle which is attainable through the grace of God which He freely gives to Mankind through Jesus Christ. We promote a worship experience which puts God at the center of every human agenda because we know that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. We teach Biblical truth as the true source of spirituality, useful knowledge and ethical behavior to guide human beings in their private, and public pursuits. We promote accountability, Integrity

and loyalty as important values which support progress and development.

We are appreciative of our cooperation with IRCU; a cooperation which promotes goodwill and synergy which results into common action against common challenges, promotion of peaceful co-existence and prosperity for all. It is our wish that Inter Religious Cooperation grows and remains focused to respond to issues of common concern as we join hands with all stakeholders in working for a peaceful and prosperous Uganda.

..... **For God and my Country**



Inter-Religious Council of Uganda
Religions for Peace
CELEBRATING 20 YEARS
OF MULTI RELIGIOUS COLLABORATION

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY SERVICES

The Management and staff of the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) join other stakeholders in congratulating the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU) as they celebrate 20 years of multi-religious collaboration.

Since 2019, NAADS has been working closely with IRCU to fight food insecurity and poverty among the faithful and the general farming population in the different parts of the country. Our collaboration was cemented by a Memorandum of Understanding that was signed between NAADS and IRCU in November 2020.

Our partnership is aimed at promoting household economic empowerment through community mobilization, mind-set change and sustainable Agro-industrialization. A lot has been achieved in this partnership.

On behalf of the entire organization, we extend our heartiest congratulations to you for your wonderful journey of 20 years of selfless service to the people of Uganda. We commit ourselves to continue working with you in future.



IRCU Secretary General Joshua Kitakule and NAADS Executive Director Dr. Samuel K. Mugasi after signing the MOU



The Mufti of Uganda Sheikh Shaban Ramathan Mubajje signing on the MOU as Mr Joshua Kitakule and Dr. Samuel K. Mugasi look on



The IRCU leadership pose for a photo with Dr. Samuel K. Mugasi after signing the MOU



Faithfuls during a training workshop on improved farming techniques organized by NAADS in partnership with IRCU



Since 2019, NAADS through IRCU has supported farmers with 1351 improved breeds of pigs



NAADS has distributed over 230 incalf heifers and over 100 bulls to the faithfuls through its partnership with IRCU



WE USE RELIGION AS A TOOL TO HELP DRIVE THE NEED FOR PEACE

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF IRCU

The Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU) is celebrating 20 years of collaboration and service in the country. Bishop Joshua Lwere the general overseer of the National Fellowship and Born Again Pentecostal Churches (NFBPC) and Bishop Mark Wamala the general secretary of the National Fellowship and Born Again Pentecostal Churches (NFBPC) who are both leaders of National Fellowship which is a member of IRCU shared with **Dalton Kigozi** their thoughts on this great achievement.

WHAT IS IRCU AND WHAT DOES IT STAND FOR?

IRCU is made up of seven entities including Muslims, Pentecostals, Seventh day Adventists, Catholics, Anglicans, Born Again Christians, and the Orthodox.

Our slogan is 'Religion for Peace meaning', we are using religion as a tool to help drive the need for peace. In situations, where there are conflicts for example between Moslems and Catholics or groups of different denominations, as IRCU, we always come in to seek peace and political differences are not spared either. Relatively, we also stand for social transformation and development in terms of poverty eradication, gender based violence, politics, agriculture, environment in addition to evangelism because every religious denomination under IRCU evangelises according to their respective scriptures.

ENLIGHTEN ON HOW YOU HAVE IMPACTED ON THE FOLLOWING OVER THE YEARS.

Health and social transformation

Over the years we have enjoyed the unity of purpose whereby every time there is a demanding need in the society, we always rise up. A case in point is the continuous floods in Buduuda and Kasese. Times have been there when we have come together as a council and devised means on how we can help the people or what resources we can extend to the victims so we have been helpful in that regard.

Of late, during the Covid19 pandemic we also streamlined in extending support to Ugandans in one way or the other. As IRCU, on top of support rendering, some of our members were also called on board to help government in the distribution of donations to Ugandans.

Also part of our support we were also able to donate some medical equipment worth about sh1bn to support in tackling the pandemic through National Fellowship.

Our impact on the political environment has not been direct because we are not a politicking council but we have been able to influence politics in different ways including praying for peace in the country. Often times we also advocate for dialogue between political parties were need be.

Over the years, we have been excelling in education and this is evident because many of the private schools belong to religious councils and if you combine all schools and institutions without being selective on a particular denomination, you will notice that there are more religious

schools and institutions than those owned by government.

So in the area of education I think based on statistics we are scoring very well because we have a strong belief that education is key in transforming lives.

ARE WE ON THE RIGHT TRACK IN UNDERTAKING THE GOALS YOU STAND FOR?

There is hope because back then, believers of different religions could find it hard to always agree on one thing or the other but now we can confess the situation has slightly improved. People sit on round tables and agree or disagree on something peacefully. In addition, many people's lives have been transformed thanks to IRCU.

DO THE SEVEN ENTITIES BELIEVE IN THE WORK IRCU IS DOING?

Of course, they do because we are working together as one unit. They are not there as affiliate members but they themselves also make up the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda so by calling it an inter- council, it is evident that we are working together.

SO WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE FOR CHOOSING THE COUNCIL LEADERS?

Every head of religion in a particular denomination is automatically chosen to become part of the council as president and then there is also a board of IRCU which comprises all the secretary generals

from all denominations and every decision taken is first agreed upon by all these people.

TALK ABOUT THE CHALLENGES YOU FACE OR HAVE FACED IN IMPLEMENTING YOUR GOALS

One of the main challenges we have faced and still face is the issue of funding because we as NFBPC joined IRCU in 2013 and at the time, there were a lot of debts although these have overtime been resolved. But basing on the goals IRCU stands for, it is evident that many of them require money to be implemented.

HOW HAVE YOU COPED AMIDST THESE CHALLENGES?

Of course government has been instrumental in supporting our work throughout the years for example during the Covid19 pandemic, we worked hand in hand with them in moments of food distribution.

Sometimes, we partner with other groups and also there are people who have funded IRCU work in the past but all in all we have also independently from our local churches taken on these roles ourselves.

ANY HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

We want to see a more peaceful Uganda. A country were every single individual is able to live in harmony. We want to see a Uganda where there is rule of law, where human rights are observed. We want to live in a corruption free nation.

We are looking to have a strong prophetic voice because we believe religion is the consensus for the nation.

In addition, we are looking to oversee mindset change because this is also vital in work implementation.

HOW DO YOU HOPE TO DO THIS?

We as Christians believe in the principal of peace so sincerely, however much money one has, peace cannot be guaranteed but we believe if we can enforce peace and mindset change then all the above can be achieved.



BISHOP JOSHUA LWERE

WHAT ACHIEVEMENTS PARTICULARLY STAND OUT FOR YOU?

We have also been instrumental in the drive to fight HIV/AIDS. Of late, we have been using our various networks to mobilize support for those in need bearing in mind that the IRCU covers over 90% of the country's population because every Ugandan is attached to a religion. So we use our various platforms to push the drive to fight HIV/AIDS and in so doing we sensitize on these prevention measures. Relatively, a big number of our institutions have their health centers and these usually call on masses for blood checkups in addition to organizing health campaigns and trainings on how to live an HIV/AIDS free life. The other thing is wealth creation. We usually participate in programs that deal with mindset change for example Women of Faith which brings together all women of various denominations. There are also others that are done by individual churches including Mother's Union among others. These usually bring together people to discuss among others issues how they can transform their lives. On issues of national importance, we also usually spearhead national dialogues to discuss issues affecting Ugandans in the areas of politics, social transformation and the economy as well

WHAT IS YOUR MESSAGE TO UGANDANS AS YOU CELEBRATE THIS SUCCESS?

We call upon Ugandans most importantly to continue supporting our efforts in the fight against corruption in the country because if we eliminate this then most operations will work smoothly. Secondly we urge them to come together and work as one group because this is the best thing in smoothening work more so when it comes to issues of social transformation.



Bishop Mark Wamala

NAADS, IRU COMMITTED TO SUPPORT FARMERS

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She added that although people survive on agriculture, they are not focused on it. Nalwoga notes that while the Government, through NAADS, has programmes of giving inputs to farmers, IRCU has the structures to reach mobilise everybody in the country.

"We decided to use these structures to change the people's mindset and way of thinking on how they use resources to improve the livelihood of the household and how to reach the young people," Nalwoga who is also the focal person of Women and Youth of Faith, says.

IRCU mobilises the people, trains them, and influences their mindsets towards Agri-business.

Dr Robert Kiyini Lule, the Assistant Livestock



Between April and June, NAADS provided 225 pigs to each of the five districts the IRCU leadership selected

Development Officer, said when IRCU's intervention prioritised livestock, such as pig farming, dairy and beef farming and poultry, NAADS allocated resources to procure the animals.

He says IRCU distributes the animals through two centres, including a model

farm in Buikwe, where NAADS provided 100 pigs and 35 in-calf heifers and four bulls.

Between April and June this year, NAADS provided 225 pigs to each of five districts that the leadership of IRCU, Butebo, Tororo, Mbale and Luuka selected.

He says they gave boars of three to four months and sows of five to six months.

He said they distributed 50 heifers to each of the five districts. Lule said NAADS has also provided 100 heifers to five more districts in Teso region, with Soroti, Kabarole, Katakwi, Amuria

and Kumi each receiving 20 animals.

"We hope that if the farmers manage this stock well, they will earn and increase their household income. If they follow the guidelines we give them, the pigs will benefit 450 farmers in those households.

For the heifers. The heifers should benefit 235 households," Lule said.

AGRO-INDUSTRIALISATION
Khadija Nakakande, the Head of Communication and Public Relations of NAADS, emphasises NAADS commitment to work with IRCU and farmers to improve people's livelihoods. She says the programme will help to secure food security, improve incomes and promote value addition.

Beginning next financial year, Nakakande says, the

focus will be value addition, since the programme is part of efforts to ensure actualisation of the agro-industrialisation programme of NDP III in line with Vision 2040.

Nalwoga says besides ensuring that NAADS reaches the right people, when the farmers receive the inputs, the council monitors the progress.

She notes that the programme also links the religious fraternity and the local government, through district officials such as production and veterinary officers, to motivate, train and deliver the inputs to farmers.

Nalwoga says the five-year partnership programme is intended to go nationwide, but they started piloting it in the two regions of eastern and Northern Uganda because they have the highest poverty levels.



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION

The Chairperson, Members of the Commission, Management and Staff of the Electoral Commission take this opportunity to congratulate the Council of Presidents and the entire family of the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU) on the occasion of twenty years of dedicated service to the people of Uganda.

The Commission appreciates the dedicated effort of the IRCU to provide platforms for engagement with various stakeholders towards building unity despite of religious, cultural and political differences.

During the conduct of the 2021 elections, IRCU played a key role in building peaceful and harmonious co-existence before, during and after the electoral process.

The Commission values IRCU as a key partner in promoting peaceful elections and hence achieving sustainable democratic governance in Uganda.

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Inter-Religious Council of Uganda
Religions for Peace
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The Chairperson Electoral Commission Justice Simon Byabakama Mugenyi listens to a presentation on peaceful elections by Archbishop Stephen Kazimba Mugalu during preparations for the 2021 General Elections.

"For Regular Free and Fair Elections"