

By Frederick Kiwanuka

Ndejje and Soroti universities have won euro 400,000 (about sh1.6b) grant from the European Union (EU) to strengthen their teaching and research capabilities in climate change resilience and green energy solutions.

The three-year project, which is already underway, will involve building the research and teaching capacities for both institutions and supporting them to, more effectively, contribute to climate-resilient agriculture and green energy solutions for farming communities.

The EU instituted the grant with the aim of helping recently-established universities to strengthen their teaching and research capacities so as to deliver climate resilience and green energy solutions to the farming communities.

Ndejje University will be the lead implementer, working in partnership with Soroti University.

The project is also supported by

Ndejje, Soroti varsities win sh1.6b EU grant

two European partner institutions — University of Pavia (Italy) and the Polytechnic of Porto (Portugal), together with the Research and Education Agency (REA), a non-governmental organisation dedicated to expanding access to education for the minority and vulnerable groups, and advancing agricultural transformation in Africa.

During the inception meeting held at Ndejje University last Thursday, the co-ordinator of the project, Dr David Talengera, said the two universities were selected out of a total of 120 institutions that submitted proposals.

Talengera, who is a lecturer at Ndejje University, said the passmark was 50%, but Ndejje managed to score 72%, ranking among the 20 universities that qualified for the grant in the region.

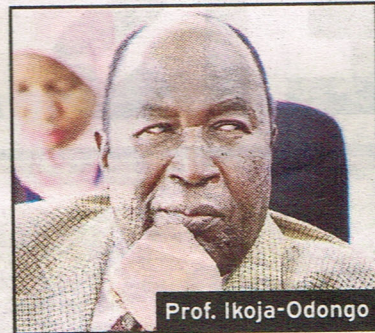


Rev. Can. Prof. Nassaka

The meeting, which took place at Ndejje University's main campus in Luwero, was physically attended by officials from Ndejje and Soroti universities, as well as REA.

The EU and the European partner institutions participated virtually.

All the partners reaffirmed their



Prof. Ikoja-Odongo

commitment to the successful implementation of the project.

Ndejje University's vice-chancellor, the Rev. Can. Prof. Olivia Nassaka Banja, pledged full adherence to the accountability procedures outlined in the grant and partnership agreement. Banja asked the accounts office and

the project co-ordination unit to ensure strict compliance with all the operational requirements and alignment with the university's core values.

Soroti University vice-chancellor Prof. Robert Ikoja-Odongo said the project was timely.

He said there was a need for higher education institutions to evolve from being centres of learning to powerhouses of climate solutions and green innovation.

"We, in universities, should not wait for solutions to be delivered but should create them. With partnerships from Europe, our institutions must establish themselves as leaders in climate-resilient agriculture, renewable energy and water management," Ikoja-Odongo said.

Dr Damalie Akwango, RAE's deputy board chairperson and National Agricultural Research Organisation's principal research officer, encouraged universities like Ndejje to foster greater intra-African collaboration to attract more competitive grants.