

The Makerere University Herbarium was established in 1945 under the management of the then Department of Botany in the College of Natural Sciences. It is one of the most important sections used in botanical research, training in taxonomy and reference for many local and international researchers and research institutions. [Click to Download Details](#).

The herbarium houses about 38,000 collections (including ca. 120 type specimens) of plants from Uganda and other countries. The herbarium has been entrusted with collections from the National Forestry Authority for incorporation into the main collection. The herbarium serves the students' community, staff and researchers from all over the world in botanical and related research, determination of plant species and training.

The Makerere University Herbarium was set-up to:

1. Preserve plant biodiversity collections and make them available for research nationally and internationally.
2. Pursue scientific research using our collections and expertise.
3. Provide public service to the community.
4. Provide learning resources in the University and community.

Within Makerere University, the Herbarium serves both staff and students in the following units: College of Natural Sciences (i.e. Botany, Zoology & Biochemistry); College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences; College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology; and The College of Health Sciences.

At the national level, the herbarium is consulted and works closely with several government institutions including Uganda Wildlife Authority, Uganda National Council for Science and Technology, National Forestry Authority, Wetlands Inspection Division at National Environment Management Authority, National Chemotherapeutics Research Laboratory (Ministry of Health), THETA, NARO, Ministry of Lands and Environment. Other institutions that are always consulting the herbarium include Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Ndejje University and Kyambogo University.

The herbarium has had a close working relationship with the East African Herbarium (Kenya), Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (England) and the Missouri Botanic Gardens (USA) in the form of training and exchange of plant taxonomic expertise.

Therefore, the Makerere University herbarium serves as a national herbarium in terms of botanical research, training, housing of collections and provision of reference material for taxonomic research and use. It is actually the largest functioning herbarium in the country. With support from NORAD (2001 – 2005), the physical infrastructure was rehabilitated. The Andrew Mellon Foundation and the BGCJ-JRS project have also supported the digitization of type specimens, economically useful plants and endemic species, and have provided some equipment.

However, there is need for digitization and databasing of the rest of the collections in order for this information to be available to the various stakeholders more easily than it is today, especially within the university. It will also help to safeguard the collections in the herbarium against overuse, and serves as a backup in case of destruction and accidents including fire. Botanical databases are being used all over the world to share information.

### **Contact Persons**

Dr. Esezah Kakudidi, Coordinator (Botany), Dept of Biological Sciences, Makerere University  
Email: [botany@botany.mak.ac.ug](mailto:botany@botany.mak.ac.ug)

Dr. Paul Ssegawa, Curator, Makerere University Herbarium Email:  
[pssegawa@botany.mak.ac.ug](mailto:pssegawa@botany.mak.ac.ug)

Dr. Mary Namaganda Principal Assistant Curator, Makerere University Herbarium Email:  
[mnamaganda@botany.mak.ac.ug](mailto:mnamaganda@botany.mak.ac.ug)