We are proud to present to you our impact report for 2020.

Looking back at my first year leading the Center for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods (CSRL) I am reminded that we are an organization with many moving parts. We have an amazing Uganda-based team who dedicate themselves every day to making a difference in the many communities where we work. We have a truly dedicated Iowa State University (ISU) team who provide technical and logistical support to our team in Uganda. We have ISU and Makerere University students who invest their time and talents in helping in Uganda while learning about cutting edge approaches to sustainable development and rural empowerment. Moreover, we have a network of generous donors who give selflessly to enable this vital work to continue. I am grateful to everyone for the part they play in helping to improve the livelihoods of some of the most vulnerable people on the planet.

During the past year, those vulnerabilities were underscored in multiple ways. First, COVID-19 caused an economic crisis as incomes dropped and supply chains were disrupted, especially for rural Ugandans. Second, many farmers experienced a crisis when the seeds they planted didn’t germinate due to erratic weather patterns, and left them without enough seed to replant. Third, rising river and lake levels caused flooding that displaced thousands of families.

Times like these test all of us. Fortunately, all of our moving parts pulled together and responded swiftly to address these significant new needs resulting from this perfect storm. Our team in Uganda stepped up to not only continue many of the development activities that have been ongoing for years but were also able to stretch to provide critical relief aid to homeless and hungry people who could not afford to wait long for help. Our donors made this all possible. There has been an outpouring of appreciation from the many Ugandan families who have received your help. Allow me to thank you on their behalf.

It is in the spirit of land grant universities like Iowa State University to test themselves by tackling complex problems that make a difference in people’s lives. The faculty in our college address these problems across Iowa, the nation and the world. We are honored to have the opportunity to apply our efforts toward leaving the place a little better than we found it.

David Acker, Director
Spending spring break in Uganda changed Aly Stadtlander’s world.

In the spring of 2019, she traveled to Uganda with the Iowa State University Center for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods program and worked with the school garden and lunch, nutrition education centers and livestock integration programs.

During the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences study abroad program she learned the only nutritious meal the children received every day was at school. She also noticed that students were saving food to take home to share with siblings and their families. That’s when she knew she had to help.

She decided to run a marathon to raise funds for the schools within the district of Kamuli in Uganda and collected sponsorships to run the IMT Des Moines Marathon in October of 2019. Her goal was $500 a mile. She surpassed her goal with the help of 115 sponsors and raised more than $10,000.

“When I couldn’t have done this without the generosity of the Iowa community that I grew up in, Manning,” Stadtlander said. “They are so supportive and always giving.”

When asked why it was important to her she said, “I grew up in a household and community that emphasized service before self. I truly just have a passion to help others.”

From FFA to community service at her high school, Stadtlander remembers the importance of caring and taking action. In high school, students were encouraged to help clean up yards, work at the food pantry and help with fundraisers.

“That’s how I was raised and that’s what you do. When you see someone in need, you just act,” Stadtlander said.

In addition to Stadtlander’s contribution to the school, she participated in a crowdfunding campaign in December of 2019 to support the work of Iowa State University’s Center for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods to end hunger and improve children’s education in Uganda’s Kamuli District. Her support and others will provide learning opportunities and nutritious meals to almost 3,000 children a day.

Stadtlander is currently a first year student at Iowa State’s College of Veterinary Medicine. She hopes to pursue a career in production animal medicine when she graduates with her doctorate of veterinary medicine in four years.
When the first nine words of your vision statement are “To develop responsible global citizens and thriving local communities,” staying flexible to meet the demands of an ever-changing and ever-challenging world is imperative. Meeting needs and maximizing resources are in the DNA of the Center for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods (CSRL), and its goals and strategies are constantly measured against that mark.

Two years ago, CSRL began a comprehensive evaluation process including an external team of experts, community stakeholders, review of all monitoring and evaluation data, and a Kamuli-based think tank to challenge CSRL and ISU-UP with innovative ideas from other organizations operating in Uganda. This culminated with a workshop in Kamuli attended by 25 CSRL and ISU-UP program leaders along with local community leaders. The workshop involved an assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and intensive planning discussions aimed at selecting the six most important goals for the next five years.

The six goals are:
1. Improve household nutrition
2. Improve access to quality education
3. Increase household income
4. Improve water and sanitation
5. Develop climate-smart innovations
6. Improve facilities

Leveraging the strength and resilience that comes through their interconnected projects, each program developed plans to contribute to meeting these goals.
1. **Improve Household Nutrition**
   - Improve the nutritional and health status of vulnerable groups
   - Increase access to adequate and diverse diets
   - Enhance capacity to provide technical services through partnerships

2. **Improve Access to Quality Education**
   - Improve learning and education of primary and secondary school students
   - Use school gardens to motivate and empower students for knowledge transfer and life skills
   - Promote consumption of nutrient dense mid-day meals for primary school children
   - Enhance university student and faculty learning and participation in ISU-UP programs

3. **Increase Household Income**
   - Organize small- and medium-scale farmers and young entrepreneurs to participate in commercially viable livestock and crop value chains that link inputs, production and markets
   - Increase the number of mothers and youth entrepreneurs enrolled in community income generating innovation projects
   - Build self-governance capacity of community income generating innovation groups

4. **Improve Water and Sanitation**
   - Reduce diseases caused by improper hygiene and sanitation practices through improved education and through facilities at household, school and community levels
   - Provide access to adequate and safe community managed water for domestic and agricultural use

5. **Develop Climate-Smart Innovations**
   - Help livestock farmers increase their sustainable production of livestock and consumption of animal source foods
   - Increase sustainable production of staple and high value crops
   - Ensure proper storage and handling methods to provide high quality and safe food for humans and feed for livestock
   - Develop capacity for climate change resilience at schools, with youth entrepreneurs and with other community groups

6. **Improve Facilities**
   - Provide access to a wide range of educational programs at the Mpirigiti Rural Training Centre (MRTC)
   - Add conference facilities, washrooms at the livestock demonstration area/ Khurshid Pavilion and at the sports fields, a small research laboratory, office space, double the capacity of the elevated water storage tank, and add a flour processing building
   - Expand classrooms, latrines, kitchens, water, and teacher housing at schools
As an early response to the growing COVID-19 pandemic, the Ugandan government issued a country wide lockdown. Lockdowns keep infection rates down but can have devastating inadvertent consequences, as commerce is suspended, food supply chains are disrupted, access to health support is impacted, and education programs are interrupted.

Rural Uganda deals with constant food-security issues, and a pandemic like COVID-19 can magnify daily system stressors. The ISU-UP team directed by Gideon Nadiope, National Director, assessed the situation, and in conjunction with the district COVID-19 task force, created an appropriate plan. Through the flexibility of CSRL donor support, ISU-UP relief efforts began almost immediately with delivery of maize flour, rice, soap, and seeds to rural areas and frontline health workers in areas where food supplies were becoming tight (see sidebar).

“Uganda has strong leadership that has empowered its public health experts to manage the pandemic,” said David Acker, Associate Dean for Global Engagement and Director, Center for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods, in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. “To control infection rates, key sectors of the Uganda economy were locked down, and a number of supply chains were disrupted. Rural areas continue to be quite vulnerable.”

“Staff of our ISU-Uganda Program team have worked closely with the COVID-19 Task Force in Kamuli to ensure that vulnerable populations are protected,” Acker added.

This work is made possible by the steady and consistent support from private donations to CSRL. In addition, several donors have offered further help to relief efforts in Uganda in response to the emerging needs during the pandemic.

“We would prefer to be focusing all of our energies on development, which has always been the aim of our programs in Uganda,” Acker said. “However, current circumstances require us to pivot toward including some relief services as well.”

“We are very proud of our ISU-Uganda Program in-country staff,” said Daniel J. Robison, holder of the Endowed Dean’s Chair in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. “They are a great example of an effective land-grant university effort, supported by trusted relationships that the program’s leaders have forged during years of working with and alongside local partners.”

“Hard times don’t create heroes. It is during the hard times when the ‘hero’ within us is revealed.”

BOB RILEY
THE WORK CONTINUES, WITH YOUR HELP

To control the spread of COVID-19 the Uganda Government made the decision in March to severely restrict movement of people and goods nationwide. As a result, supply chains for things like seed and fertilizer were interrupted at a critical point just before planting season. Opportunities to earn a daily wage were eliminated for those rural citizens who work part-time as seasonal laborers. The impact on food security and poverty was immediate and devastating.

ISU-UP responded by purchasing, transporting, and distributing food for hungry families, fortified flour for pregnant and nursing mothers and infants, seeds for farmers, and educational materials for students who were confined to their homes when their schools closed. ISU-UP drilled three new deep wells to assist with improved sanitation critical to controlling the spread of COVID-19. ISU-UP field specialists also taught school-aged girls and mothers how to design and construct approved fabric face coverings, which are currently required nationwide.

CSRL is raising money to support these emergency relief initiatives and for the rehabilitation of individuals and communities when Uganda emerges from this very difficult period. We are especially grateful to anonymous donors who, seeing the emergency nature of the situation, immediately committed the first $150,000 in challenge grants. Now, we need your help to meet that challenge and raise an additional $150,000. Our hope is that by the time you’re reading this report, we will have raised $25,000 of these funds through the FundISU campaign, CSRL COVID Relief and Rehabilitation in Uganda, leaving $125,000 to go. These funds will be used to cover the costs of purchasing, transporting, distributing and monitoring relief supplies of food, seeds, soap, fabric for face coverings, and educational materials to ensure they reach vulnerable people who need them the most.

In addition, an anonymous donor has agreed to match every dollar donated to help us pay the final $250,000 construction bill on the Mpirigiti Rural Training Centre. We need your help, as you are able, to continue to help sustain families and communities in need.
In March, the Ugandan government ordered a COVID-19-related shutdown that closed schools, capped meetings at five people, and limited transportation. As a result, ISU-UP staff doubled down on the effort in the field. Staff connected directly with families, farmers, teachers, and students at their individual homes, bringing materials and support. As markets and resources contracted, ensuring the stability of the area farmers and their families became critical. Fortunately, thanks to the vision and support of donors who recognize the importance of CSRL, the work has continued.

**ISU-UP RECOGNIZED AS A RELIABLE PARTNER**

This spring, widespread flooding displaced over 2,500 families in Buyende District and interrupted the planting season. Facing an emergency and needing reliable partners, the Kingdom of Busoga contacted Gideon Nadiope (below), the national director of ISU-UP.

“The floods had submerged and collapsed a number of houses; gardens and grazing grounds were washed away and flooded; latrines were under water and contamination had occurred,” said Nadiope. “Urgent action was required to alleviate the stress and shock these communities were going through.”

Even though this was outside of the geographic boundaries of ISU-UP programs, the Ugandan staff knew they needed to respond, and respond quickly. According to CSRL Director Dr. David Acker, they got right to work. “They didn’t wait around for permission to act,” he said. “The initiative shown by the ISU-UP team showed a new level of leadership.”

As a result — and with support from ISU-UP donors — the ISU-UP team was able to buy and distribute 44 tons of maize flour, 19.5 tons each of beans and rice, and 2,500 blankets. CSLR funded and oversaw the installation of a new borehole in the affected area to provide clean water for drinking and sanitation. In addition, ISU-UP helped farmers to replace destroyed crops by providing 2,160 Kg of maize seed, 542 bags of cassava cuttings, and 150 bags of sweet potato. As this report is going to print, ISU-UP is working with Buyende District engineers to build communal toilet facilities, and are working toward an exit plan that ensures that people impacted by the floods can once again support themselves.
COMMUNITY
INCOME
GENERATING
INNOVATIONS
Community income generating innovations ensure a sustainable income source for mothers and youth, creating resiliency and sustainability in rural communities. The shutdown effectively ended the weekly work sessions that produce these products, and access to markets was curtailed.

Like other savvy businesspeople, the women shifted their efforts to meet local demand. The Tusubila crafts group, for example, began sewing face masks in response to the government mandate requiring face masks for everyone 6 years and older. Other groups identified a shortage of children’s second-hand clothes, and the women made shirts, skirts, and dresses that were sold locally. Soap, a critical weapon in the fight against a virus, was produced in larger quantities, thanks to the ability to purchase materials in bulk, cutting down on transportation costs and logistical complications.

AGRONOMY
As the planting season began in March, pandemic restrictions closed markets and upended distribution channels. Farmers turned to each other for seeds from past harvests to continue operations. As soon as they were allowed by the government, ISU-UP staff traveled farm to farm, supporting farmers, helping establish home vegetable gardens, and distributing improved seeds and other planting materials for grain amaranth, millet, maize, soybean, and orange flesh sweet potatoes. In addition, farmers were given quality cassava cuttings, cocoa, and coffee seedlings, to enhance food security and income sustainability. Farmers with limited access to land re-focused on urban farming practices, where they established small vegetable gardens and intercropping practices, maximizing resources and increasing crop production and diversity.

NUTRITION
The COVID-19 pandemic has more than spread illness — it has exacerbated weaknesses in Uganda’s food chain. ISU-UP’s Nutrition Education Centers (NECs) combat malnutrition in mothers and their children, and once the lockdown was imposed, NEC staff created ways to continue bringing that support to the communities.

“We are concerned that our NEC clients may be subject to health setbacks,” said Gideon Nadiope, the National Director of ISU-Uganda Programs. To minimize that, NEC staff received permission from the Kamuli District to deliver composite flour to families via trucks going door-to-door. Thanks to their efforts, 186 severely malnourished children each received about nine pounds of composite flour that their mothers use to make fortified porridge.

LIVESTOCK
In March, bi-weekly trainings at the Mpirigiti Rural Training Centre (MRTC) and in the communities were suspended. Transportation and supply chain issue meant that farmers often didn’t have access to what they needed. MRTC staff worked to ensure the sustainability of local farm economies with in-person consultations at the homes of farmers. The staff focused on supporting the new farmers who enrolled in the program just before COVID-19 hit; these new farmers are also being supported by more experienced farmers in their communities. As markets tightened and supplies were delayed, farmers balanced management costs with expected income, and adjusted their operations accordingly.

EDUCATION
As in-person classes were canceled, and primary and secondary schools were closed, opportunities were limited for ISU and Makerere University students who count on internships within those programs. The spring 2020 ISU Semester along the Nile program was terminated early, and Uganda spring break courses were canceled, as were the summer service learning and fall term programs. For Ugandan primary and secondary students, education shifted from school-based to home-based (see story on page 10). The school gardens and livestock projects, normally maintained by students as part of their education, shifted to minimal maintenance by local external labor and teachers who live at the schools.
A show of support

There’s no doubt that the effects from the COVID-19 pandemic have impacted communities in Uganda. However, thanks to the CSRL Uganda Program’s commitment to increasing the sustainability of communities it serves, those communities have managed to fight back.

Nutrition Education Centers (NECs) — a component of ISU-UP — work with pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers and their babies, and children at risk for malnutrition. Concentrating on the child's first 1,000 days, these programs ensure adequate nutrition by giving clients access to nutritious porridge made from locally available ingredients. Mothers are trained and given seeds to grow ingredients used for making composite flour so they can continue to provide porridge for their families after completing the program.

Support groups are created at NECs as a way of encouraging mothers to network with each other after they graduate from the program. Known as Food and Nutrition Security Support Groups, their focus is to keep former NEC clients connected to information and resources designed to aid their progress. ISU-UP staff and NEC coordinators work with the groups to ensure that progress begun at the NECs continues after clients finish the program.
Members of the self-driven support groups often help each other in their gardens, visit and encourage each other, monitor the health of everyone’s children, and combine resources. For example, Nakyaka support group members were able to buy goats using their group savings. Often, grains from group members are combined to mill large batches of composite flour, which everyone then uses to make porridge. According to Nambi Zewulensi, a Kiwungu NEC graduate, these support groups help ensure a supply of composite flour, because millers often are reluctant to mill flour in small quantities.

Additionally, these support groups have become key connections from the NECs to the communities they support. That became critical as the COVID-19 pandemic swept the globe earlier this year. Although the meeting places were shut down, the nutritional and health needs of the communities remained. NEC staff worked with local community leaders to enroll new clients in what was essentially a door-to-door campaign. On days when they were not traveling to homes, NEC trainers worked at Naluwoli Hall where they helped prepare ingredients to meet the need for increased home delivery of composite flour. Thanks to these efforts, there are now approximately 1,130 clients who are ready to graduate from the program, in the midst of the pandemic.

Future plans include the creation of new centers in Balawoli Sub County where the need for physical and economic health remain high.
The Ugandan lockdown in March impacted more than the spread of COVID-19; it also forced an abrupt change to the way education was delivered in many schools served by ISU-UP. Realizing that any interruption of educational activities and opportunities could have far-reaching consequences for rural Ugandan communities, ISU-UP field specialists collaborated with local school administrators and teachers, quickly creating plans to keep students engaged.

Guided by the Kamuli District Education office and collaborating with 11 local leaders in Namasagali sub-county and 10 in Butansi sub-county, ISU-UP staff worked with parents to encourage students to continue their schoolwork in small groups in their communities. As word of the program spread, students from neighboring schools joined in. ISU-UP staff also worked with headteachers of each school to enlist teachers who could help in evaluating the students’ work.
Teachers have played a big part in ensuring that their students’ education continues, despite all the challenges. Wanenge Grace, a teacher from Namasagali primary school, said two of the students in his school had moved to Balawoli sub-county after the lockdown began, but as he distributed home reading materials, he was able to contact the parents, and the students returned and are doing their homework under his guidance.

In addition to continuing students’ education, this new approach has strengthened the relationship between teachers and their students. Mwanga David, Namasagali’s headteacher, said that before the lockdown was imposed, students were afraid to approach their teachers with questions. Now, with the teachers approaching the students in their villages, students feel more comfortable asking questions. The students say that home reading materials have helped them continue their learning, and they have started connecting with older students when they need help in any subject. In addition, students are finding it easier to balance school and their housework and home gardening activities.

Because school gardens were closed when schools were locked down, a number of home demonstration gardens were started to help students continue to learn. These gardens have provided more opportunities for hands-on, self-directed learning for students, parents, and other community members.

Many parents fear that their children who take on community jobs during the lockdown will not continue their education once the schools reopen. Enabling students to stay focused on their education has likely increased the odds that most will return to the schools once the pandemic subsides.

YEP IMPACTED BY LOCKDOWN COUPLED WITH FLOODING

One of the challenges participant in the Youth Entrepreneurship Program (YEP) faced during this period was access to markets, especially youth farmers that were able to harvest tomatoes, egg plants and cabbages. Prices of crops like tomatoes declined to a seasonal low during the COVID-19 lockdown, with some commodities seeing drops of 75% or more. Wholesale traders — YEP farmers’ main buyers — faced closed borders and shrinking local markets. Afternoon curfews further curtailed farmers’ abilities to get produce to markets, which were closing because of social distancing requirements.

And then spring brought devastating floods.

ISU-UP filed specialists stepped in and helped support affected farmers. For Tusitukiremu Youth Group for instance, when floods claimed nearly half of the youth farmers’ tomato crops, they were given grain amaranth seed and access to land that wasn’t flooded. The group has harvested 240 kg of grain amaranth, and the program has purchased their product, providing market support.

That income, combined with the income from what farmers were able to salvage from their tomato harvests, has repaid part of the loan secured through the program, and has been able to contribute to a pig project. The youth groups are now diversifying by working with the ISU-UP livestock development program to secure good quality animal breeds.
Increasing resilience by diversifying through livestock
According to Curtis Youngs, CSRL associate director for livestock development, livestock are a “walking bank.”

Farmers diversifying their operations to include livestock find that animals are a way to deal with the shocks and stressors that come their way, such as drought and floods, challenging market conditions, and supply-chain disruptions caused by global pandemics. Max Rothschild, retired CSRL associate director for livestock development, agrees. “Livestock contribute significantly to economic and food security,” he said. “Farmers with multiple agriculture enterprises have more resilience and are more likely to succeed.”

According to Youngs and Rothschild, lack of experiential knowledge is a big barrier to continually improving livestock operations for Kamuli farmers. “Sustainability depends a great deal on access to water and markets, farmer skill level, and access to trainings,” says Rothschild.

That’s where CSRL comes in. The ISU-UP partners with local farmers to help fill in the gaps and “share in the risk.”

For example, many farmers grow mangos that go uneaten. Those mangos could be used to feed pigs, but because there’s no tradition of that practice, farmers are reluctant to adopt that behavior. CSRL can support Kamuli farmers with existing research and education and by helping mitigate risks for farmers who are willing to try new methods.

And that’s where Youngs sees the future of CSRL and the Kamuli partnership: in research and support designed to make the Uganda farmers connected to ISU-UP more resilient. Youngs says the ISU-UP model gives both partners a huge advantage. Ugandan farmers learn from ISU about modern farming techniques, and ISU learns about indigenous methods and the Ugandan culture from staff, students, and farmers.

Youngs is currently working on a project to introduce improved genetics for increased milk production into the current bovine population in Uganda. He reasons that if a farmer can get more milk from two improved cows than she can from five existing cows, the farmer will be more productive and profitable. Youngs also has plans for goats that are bred to produce more meat.

That kind of forward thinking will help keep communities served by ISU-UP resilient in the face of challenges like global pandemics, which can not only affect farmers’ access to seed, animal feed, processing, and storage, but also shut down markets for their products. Youngs sees all aspects of farming as important for Uganda’s rural communities, but is especially “bullish” on diversification that includes livestock.

“If you own a cow,” he says, “you have it made from a Ugandan cultural perspective.”
When Ismael Mayanja was a Makerere University service learner, he cleaned maize at Naluwoli Primary School by winnowing and using a grain sieve. Finding the process “tedious, time-consuming, and inefficient,” he realized that it could be improved.

“The best way to understand the gravity of the problem is by experiencing it,” Mayanja said. “It was clear to me that cleaning maize grain was a problem that needed to be solved.”

Mayanja reasoned that mechanizing the cleaning process would greatly increase the efficiency of grain cleaning, and, with support from ISU-UP and Makerere University Department of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering, he created his first pedal-operated maize cleaner. The cleaner is run by a single operator pedaling a bike-like mechanism that turns a double-screened barrel, which traps impurities like leaves and cobs, and lets the cleaned grain fall to the tarp below. Mayanja’s initial design was powered by an engine, but Tom Brumm, CSRL associate director and Mayanja’s supervisor, encouraged him to consider using a powering mechanism that is less expensive and more feasible for farmers in Kamuli.

According to Rebecca Babirye, the coordinator of postharvest and school feeding program activities at St. Joseph’s Primary School in Naluwoli, previous hand-cleaning methods produced about 200 kg/hr/person, with an efficiency rate of only 50%. Thanks to Mayanja’s invention, one person is now able to clean 900 kg/hr, at over 85% efficiency.

Mayanja continues to refine his original maize cleaner, developing a pedal-operated seed cleaner that can be adjusted to clean groundnuts and beans. He received a Makerere University Research and Innovations Grant, and he and several authors, including Brumm, published an article about his invention in the *Journal of Advances in Food Science and Technology*. Mayanja also received one of five 2019 Maize Youth Innovators Awards – Africa awarded by the CGIAR Research Program on Maize. Perhaps the greatest reward, though, is knowing how his invention has made a difference in the lives of people in the community.

“My greatest measure of success and happiness is the adoption of the cleaner at ISU-UP partner schools of operation because this is where the problem was first noticed,” Mayanja said. “Time that was used to clean seeds is now allotted to other productive ventures such as class, farming or even playing time.”
WHAT YOUR SUPPORT MADE POSSIBLE THIS YEAR:

- As a result of receiving silos and tarpaulins in 2019, 20 farmers were able to increase their returns in 2020.

- A micro-finance program was started in 2019 to provide loans to farmers to purchase a plastic grain storage silo to reduce postharvest losses due to insects and rodents and a tarpaulin for sun drying and to keep the grain clean. ISU-UP loans were paid back after the two growing seasons.

- As part of the Water, Sanitation, Hygiene and Health (WASH) program, two model homes have been established as training centers for overall health and sanitation practices such as hand washing, drying stands for dishes, garbage disposal and improved latrines.

WHAT YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT MAKES POSSIBLE GOING FORWARD:

- Additional silos will be distributed to the community using the micro-finance program.

- Installation of new boreholes within communities of highest need as determined by ISU-UP in conjunction with local leaders.

- WASH, grain handling and storage training programs will be expanded.

“The best way to understand the gravity of the problem is by experiencing it.”

ISMAEL MAYANJA, INVENTOR OF THE PEDAL-OPERATED MAIZE CLEANER
## CSRL welcomes:

### DAVID ACKER

David Acker is the associate dean for Global Engagement, Raymond and Mary Baker Chair in Global Agriculture, professor of agricultural education, and, as of January 2020, CSRL director. Acker began working with CSRL during the country selection process in 2004 and has been a member of the management team since then. He has over 30 years of experience in agriculture and education and has served on the faculty for 25 years. He has spent eight years working at agricultural education institutions in Greece and Tanzania and has directed agricultural and natural resource programs in Tanzania, Malawi and Senegal. In addition, Acker has assisted the UN Food and Agriculture Organization with efforts to promote education as a key to rural prosperity.

“For 16 years I served as the dean’s liaison to CSRL. I had a front-row seat to observe the impactful work of the ISU faculty and the ISU-UP team in Uganda,” Acker said. “My vision for the CSRL is to build on the successful model developed through years of field work in Uganda and to scale it up to enable as many people as possible to move themselves out of poverty.”

### CURTIS YOUNGS

In April, Curtis Youngs took over as the CSRL associate director for livestock development. Youngs is a professor of animal science at ISU and earned his undergraduate and graduate degrees in animal science at the University of Minnesota. Throughout his career, Youngs has collaborated internationally in research, teaching, and extension/outreach programs. Youngs has used his expertise to train scientists, veterinarians, students, and farmers in developing countries in the technologies of artificial insemination and embryo transfer. He brought the unique courses he created in embryo transfer and in global food security to countries that greatly needed enhanced production of animal-source foods. His long-term goal is to empower agriculturalists in developing nations with the knowledge and skills needed to increase production of safe and nutritious animal-source foods as a means to alleviate hunger and poverty, as well as to reduce food insecurity.

“Particularly for children, it is important for them to have an adequate and balanced supply of safe and nutritious foods,” Youngs said. “The excellent multi-disciplinary CSRL team has outstanding local partners in the ISU-Uganda Program who work together harmoniously to greatly improve the lives of local Ugandan farmers.”

### LEE BURRAS

Lee Burras, Morrill Professor at Iowa State University Department of Agronomy has joined CSRL as the associate director of agronomy and land use. His work will be focused on increasing crop yields through soil mapping, testing, and management. Burras holds a BS in Agronomy and an MS in Soil Science from ISU (1981 & 1984, respectively). He earned his PhD in Agronomy & Soil Science from The Ohio State University in 1992.

Since 2018, Burras has taught a tropical soils course in the field in Uganda, making full use of the resources at the MRTC. “[The center] is an incredible place staffed by incredible people,” said Burras. “That is due to history, vision and practices of the people with CSRL over the past 15 years.”

One of Burras’ goals is to map the soils of the Kamuli District and offer recommendations on how to improve yields and soil health. Another is to “be a useful contributor to any ongoing project or activity that needs soils and agronomic expertise.

“CSRL is a top-quality program made up of outstanding people who developed an incredible community and training center,” Burras said.
CSRL thanks:

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<th>DENISE BJELLAND</th>
<th>MAX ROTHSCILD</th>
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<td>After 47 years working at Iowa State University — five at the helm of CSRL — Denise Bjelland retired in January 2020. Bjelland was named director of the Center for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods in 2015. “This program has had such an incredible impact on improving the lives of women, children, and farming communities in Kamuli,” she said. As CSRL director, Bjelland was involved with impacting the lives of more than 60,000 people. “Her legacy with CSRL will be a high-functioning organization that has developed a model for efficiently helping people move out of poverty,” said David Acker, CSRL director. Bjelland says she will miss her colleagues in the Global Programs and CSRL offices. “They each have contributed to a harmonious and productive workplace. They are an amazingly talented team of professionals who are devoted to the CALS global mission.”</td>
<td>Max Rothschild, who spent the last 15 years as CSRL’s associate director for livestock development, retired in June. “Max launched and then led a truly outstanding livestock program in Uganda,” said, David Acker, CSRL director. Recent data suggest that the ISU-Uganda livestock program has directly impacted more than 5,000 farmers and indirectly impacted nearly 17,000 through training, livestock distribution, and improved food security. Through Rothchild’s leadership, new opportunities have also been created for children and youth to learn animal husbandry skills and develop personal enterprises to help support the food security and income for their families. Additionally, eggs from the school poultry programs have added valuable protein to school lunch ingredients. Rothschild designed, developed and raised the funds for a farmer-centered livestock demonstration and training facility in Kamuli. “Just like many students tell us after their trip to Uganda, working in CSRL and ISU-UP has been life transforming for me as well,” Rothschild said. “In many ways, it is the most significantly worthwhile activity of my career.”</td>
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Our program relies on the generosity of donors. We believe strongly that in exchange for their commitment to helping us to tackle hunger and poverty in Africa that we owe them complete transparency in how we use their gifts. The pie charts illustrate the breadth of our programs as well as our commitment to maintaining an administratively lean program that frees up almost every dollar for investment in high priority needs in Africa.

2019 At a Glance: $1.6 million invested

How our work is funded:
- 69% Donor funding
- 27% In-kind support
- 4% Crowd funding/other

Where your giving goes:
- 31% Community/school nutrition
- 24% Education
- 23% Demo/training facilities
- 12% Clean water/sanitation
- 4% Livestock
- 2% Microfinance/YEP
- 2% Post-harvest
- 2% Student scholarships
The Center for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods uses the power of education to develop responsible global citizens and thriving local communities that benefit from food and financial security, quality education and healthcare, civic participation, social inclusion, environmental stewardship, and overall sustainable livelihoods.

Thank you for helping this vision become reality.