



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**2nd July 2007**

### **BIOSAFETRAIN ORGANISES COURSE ON DATA ANALYSIS FOR BIOSAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DAR- ES-SALAAM.**

BiosafeTrain – a biosafety and ecological risk assessment project held a course on Data Analysis for Biosafety Risk Assessment at the Continuing Centre for Education at the University of Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania, from 2 to 5 July 2007.

The course is designed to teach participants basic skills on how to treat scientific data to draw balanced conclusions regarding the biosafety and ecological risk assessment of Living Modified Organisms (LMOs). This is done through lectures, demonstrations, group work on case studies, and discussions. Participants also shared their experiences on biosafety risk assessment.

The Cartagena Protocol on LMOs requires transparent, scientific, case-by-case biosafety (risk) assessment with special consideration for the receiving environment. Consequently, African countries need the capacity to do all elements of researching, generating and testing LMOs.

BiosafeTrain aims to build capacity in Eastern Africa providing the countries with the ability to make autonomous decisions regarding the use of biotechnology through capacity building in biosafety.

BiosafeTrain is a collaboration with scientists from University of Nairobi and Kenya Agricultural Research Institute in Kenya, Makerere University in Uganda, University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, and the universities of Aarhus and Copenhagen in Denmark.

The programme is an Enhancement of Research Capacity (ENRECA), funded by DANIDA, and started in December 2004. Phase 2 begins in December 2007.

During this period, BiosafeTrain aims to improve existing infrastructural capacity by upgrading existing biosafety or biotechnology facilities. Currently, construction facilities are underway in Uganda and Kenya. An additional block is being built to the existing biosafety-level 2 glasshouse at the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute in Nairobi, Kenya. This new block is specifically designed to be insect-proof to allow biosafety work using arthropods. While an Arthropod Quarantine and Biosafety Laboratory was built and is being equipped at Kabanyolo Campus, Makerere University, Uganda. This will be the second such facility in East Africa. BiosafeTrain offers MSc and PhD fellowships on agricultural and environmental impacts of GM plants, through joint African- Danish supervision at local universities. In Phase 1, 10 students were offered MSc and PhD fellowships in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The project will also develop a training program where students and other relevant persons from East African countries can receive practical training on GM plant biosafety.

For more information, please contact

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