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Egerton University gets Sh15m from China

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Egerton University's Department of Horticulture has benefited to tune of Sh15 million from the Chinese government in the past four years.

Accordingly, a master's degree in horticulture has started, and a diploma which was phased out in 1990, reintroduced.

The assistance follows the establishment of collaborative ties between Egerton University and Nanjing Agricultural University of the People's Republic of China in 1995.

Nanjing University is one of the leading learning institutions specialising in agriculture in China.

The first phase of the aid was for the period between July, 1995, and last year. It was extended for another two years.

Over the past four years, three Chinese professors from Nanjing have been attached to the department where to assist in teaching and research.

Currently, two professors — Quinsheng Wu, a specialist in tissue culture, and Dr Gaoqiong Liw (vegetable production), are still attached to the university.

The two professors have constructed a green house tunnel for the production of vegetable crops with special emphasis on tomatoes and *sukuma wiki*.

They have also assisted in the teaching of drip irrigation within the green house and in the open field for the growing of onions.

The Department's chairman, Dr Geoffrey Tunya, told *Blackboard* that the assistance had enabled the department to strengthen its teaching capacity and introduce new courses.

He said when the drip irrigation system is completed, the department will have the capacity to irrigate vegetable crops during the dry periods.

The drip irrigation system, Dr Tunya, said uses very little water compared to sprinkling irrigation.

He explained that the department had since 1989 been unable to admit students for a Master of Science (Msc) degree in horticulture due to a shortage of teaching equipment and personnel.

He said seven students have already registered for the masters programme which started last month, and that the number of applicants was high but most of them could not get sponsors.

The department, he said, has received a tractor, refrigerators and equipment for mushroom production from the Chinese government.

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Change and Development of Higher Education are:

- The establishment of a legislative, political and financial framework for the reform and further development of higher education.
- Re-enforcement of the links between higher education and research.
- Definition and implementation of policies to eliminate gender stereotyping.
- Recognition of the students' right to organise themselves, promote and facilitate national and international mobility of teaching staff.
- Establishment of the link between technical and professional secondary education.
- Reduction of the widening gap between North and South, as well as increased cooperation in higher education and research.