

RUFORUM MONTHLY

The Monthly Brief of the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture

AFRICA: COORDINATION AND CONNECTEDNESS OF UNIVERSITIES



Above: University of Eduardo Mondlane among the eight universities surveyed and also a RUFORUM member university

While African governments coordinate higher education at the national level, this is largely "symbolic" and most ministries do not have effective steering mechanisms, a three-year study of universities in eight African countries has found. This, along with lack of coordination of and connectedness to external groups, is undermining the potential of universities to contribute to economic development.

Tertiary education councils have been created partially to compensate for weak ministries, and they could become "key players" in monitoring the coordination and implementation of knowledge policies, according to the study by the Higher Education Research and Advocacy Network in Africa, HERANA.

Few universities have special funding or incentives for development-related research, and there is "virtually no evidence of university engagement in R&D with or for industry". But there are exemplary development projects and centres in African universities. The challenge is to expand these world-class activities.

HERANA is an expertise network aimed at developing higher education studies and research in Africa, driven by the Centre for Higher Education Transformation, [CHET](#), in Cape Town. University World News is a partner.

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- *RUFORUM Monthly* provides information on activities of the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture.
- This *Monthly Brief* is available on the last week of every month ■

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TEEL AND RESEARCH4LIFE Programmes Training of Trainers Workshop. Organised by ITOCA and Makerere University, 12- 14, April 2011, Makerere University Kampala

Board Subcommittee Meeting, Safari Club - Lillian Towers, 3-4 April, 2011

Technical Committee Meeting, Safari Club-Lillian Towers, 6-7 April, 2011

RUFORUM Board Meeting and Business Plan Launch, 28-29 April, 2011, Addis Ababa

More information on RUFORUM activities can be accessed on the RUFORUM BLOG at [http:// ruforum.wordpress.com](http://ruforum.wordpress.com)

JKUAT SELECTED TO HOST PAN AFRICAN UNIVERSITY'S SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY THEME



Above: President Mwai Kibaki admires a product of JKUAT at the Nyeri show, 2010

The Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology has won the right to host the East and Central Africa regional institute of the [Pan African University \(PAU\)](#).

The Institute on Basic Sciences, Technology and Innovation will be hosted at the Main Campus in Juja and the first batch of postgraduate students will be reporting later in September, 2011. Making the announcement at the 43rd Senate meeting held Tuesday February 22, 2011, an elated Vice Chancellor, Prof Mabel Im-

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For more information about the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), Contact: The **Newsletter Editor**, RUFORUM Secretariat, Plot 151 Garden Hill, Makerere University Main Campus, P.O. Box 7062, Kampala, Uganda. Fax: +256 414 534153; Tel: +256 414 535939; E-mail: secretariat@ruforum.org; or visit RUFORUM Website at www.ruforum.org.



JKUAT SELECTED TO HOST PAN AFRICAN UNIVERSITY'S SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY THEME

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buga, thanked the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology for having confidence in the University.

The privilege to host the institute was bestowed on JKUAT after it emerged the best suited for the program among Kenyan institutions offering postgraduate education and research. The Institute will focus mainly on the three thematic areas, namely; Basic Sciences (Chemistry, Mathematics and Statistics, Physics and Biology), Technology (Civil, Electrical, Electronic, Mechanical, Computer Engineering, Chemical and Industrial Engineering), and Innovation—generating technology and knowledge products and developing them for the marketplace.

The PAU is an initiative of the African Union aimed at spearheading the revitalization of higher education in the continent. It is composed of five regional institutes, one located in each of the five regions in Africa. Kenya's

nomination to host the region's institute was endorsed by the Heads of State Summit held in July, 2010 in Kampala, Uganda. The AU Summit Heads of State and Government in July 2010 took a decision allocating the hosting of the regional institutes of the PAU as follows:

- Earth Sciences—Nigeria ([University Ibadan](#)) for Western Africa
- Basic Sciences, Technology and Innovation—Kenya ([JKUAT](#)) for Eastern Africa
- Governance, Humanities and Social Sciences—Cameroon ([University of Yaoundé II](#)) where a
- Pan-African Institute of University Governance already exists for Central Africa.

The five nodes were originally supposed to be operating from September this year, but disputes in the Southern and Northern Africa nodes might delay the start of two thematic areas, one in

space science allotted to South Africa . The PAU is AU's chosen strategy to address the chronic deficit of high quality scientists and researchers that Africa is currently facing and optimize the use of scarce resources in African higher education.

JKUAT easily met the stringent requirements for hosting the Institute due to its strong science, technology and innovation track record. It has a well established Faculty of Science, a College of Engineering and Technology, a division in charge of Research, Production and Extension which address thematic areas of Basic Sciences, Technology and Innovations, respectively. To ensure quality of all programmes, the University has an established Directorate of Academic Quality Assurance, which is further augmented by other professional accreditation bodies and peer review mechanisms.

RUFORUM MEMBER UNIVERSITIES PARTICIPATE IN THE PAEPARD CALL FOR PROPOSALS

RUFORUM universities responded well to the PAEPARD call for proposals to link African and European R&D institutions. The call had a special emphasis on fostering engagement with non - research actors. Some of the successful teams included Dr. Charles Mutisi from University of Zimbabwe, Prof. Emmanuel Kaunda from Bunda College of Agriculture, Malawi and Dr. Suzan Balaba from Makerere University. Below are the successful applications.

African Applicant Country	Title of the proposal
Uganda	Enhancing capacity and developing networks between North-South Universities in Research Methods training at PhD level
Togo	l'Agribusiness au tour du soja
Togo	Caractérisation de deux variétés du piment rouge pour améliorer la mise en marché et transformation semi-industrielle
Senegal	Un partenariat Europe Afrique pour la création d'un outil de suivi de l'agriculture familiale
South Africa	Use of Geographic Information Systems, GMPBasic and existing related information systems to benchmark and plan the development of the emerging livestock sector of South Africa
Ghana	Improving food security and income for smallholder farmers through improved post harvest technology.
Kenya	Aflatoxin contamination management along the maize value chain in Kenya
Malawi	Partnership for Enhanced Aquaculture Innovation in Sub Saharan Africa (PEAISSA)
Kenya	Re-vamping pyrethrum sector through improved policy environment to address pest problems anticipated due to climate change and improve farmers livelihoods
Zimbabwe	Improving the incomes of smallholder farmers through increased access to livestock markets and through the engagement of the stakeholders in the livestock production to marketing value chain

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Its recently published synthesis report, [Universities and Economic Development in Africa: Pact, academic core and coordination](#) is authored by Professor Nico Cloete, Director of CHET, HERANA Project Manager and researcher Tracy Bailey, and Peter Maassen, a professor of higher education at the University of Oslo.



Above: The University of Botswana among the eight universities surveyed and also a RUFORUM member university

The research focused on universities and economic development in eight African countries. Higher education stakeholders were surveyed, and eight universities studied: Botswana, Ghana, Nairobi (Kenya), Mauritius, Eduardo Mondlane (Mozambique), Dar es Salaam (Tanzania), Makerere (Uganda) and Nelson Mandela Metropolitan (South Africa).

The study proposed that for universities to sustainably contribute to development, three inter-related factors are critical - a 'pact' among major actors about the role of universities in development; a strong 'academic core' in universities; and coordination of and connectedness between the policies and activities of governments, universities and external groups.

'Coordination' referred to structured forms of interaction, mainly between government and institutions. At the national level, the study looked at the role of the ministry responsible for higher education, steering and funding. At the university level, it explored

structures to implement strategic plans, incentives, teaching and research programmes that link to economic development, and funding support for research.

The concept of 'connectedness' was used to depict loose forms of interaction such as links and networking between universities and external groups including business, donors and communities. The study also explored the extent to which university development projects were connected to external groups in ways that promoted development and strengthened or weakened the 'academic core'.

National coordination

Mauritius rated the highest at both the national and institutional levels in coordination of knowledge policies and activities. "The two countries that scored highest on knowledge policies - Mauritius and Kenya - also have the highest rating for coordinating policies and building agreement at the national level. To this list is added South Africa," the authors write.

The research found that forums were the most common structure for promoting coordination and consensus-building. But interviews "suggested that these are seldom more than talk shops; follow-up to agreements is weak and there are few attempts at monitoring progress and the implementation of decisions.

"Even in countries such as South Africa, where there are stronger forms of coordination such as ministerial clusters, the same lack of follow-through occurs. In other cases, the efficacy of the structure is undermined by different departments sending officials of different ranks to meetings, leading to a gradual loss of confidence in the structure.

"The exception is Mauritius, where considerable effort is being made with multiple structures and networks to broaden agreement and buy-in," write Cloete, Bailey and Maassen.

There have been attempts at coordination through 'super-ministries', such as in Mauritius and Kenya. A "perpetual problem", which also occurs in many international systems, is lack of cooperation between departments of education and science and technology, "but merging them does not seem to guarantee positive policy coordination either," they write.

Five of the eight African countries - Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania and Kenya - had some form of platform for linking universities to government, but these did not necessarily result in effective coordination.

The research found strong connections between government and university leaders, but they were more political than productive. Indeed, they could be too close "because we encountered the constant refrain of policy instability, meaning that when there is a political leadership change in government, it affects both government departments and the university."

In response to weak ministries, and following international best practice, all the countries have established higher or tertiary education councils more distant from ministerial influence.

"These structures are better placed and resourced than traditional ministries to play a coordinating role," write Cloete, Bailey and Maassen. The relatively new institutions are all going through some form of 'role redefinition'. But while most were started as quality assurance or cer-

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tification bodies, "they are increasingly assuming a diversity of roles".

Implementation

The research found that South Africa was the only country with steering capacity, a stable funding regime and a sustainable ratio of sources of income. But it did not have a vision of the role of higher education in development, and so steering was "mainly based on dealing with issues internal to the higher education system". Uganda and Mozambique had the most serious national-level capacity problems.

"In a number of countries the government subsidy system is not only unstable, it also discourages enterprising behaviour through a system that 'penalises' institutions for raising third-stream income by subtracting the amounts raised from the next year's government subsidy," the authors write.

At the institutional level, only Mauritius had structures and appointments linking the institution's activities to economic development. It "also has a well-established focus on work-based learning, and a strong focus on economic development in its research and innovation clusters". South Africa's NMMU scored high on the implementation ratings.

In the other universities, evidence of structures, appointments or funding for activities linked to economic development was only found in "pockets". And while many universities had some form of incentive for academics to engage in research, "none incentivised academics to engage in (economic) development-related research or teaching per se".

University connectedness to external stakeholders

Most of the universities talked about the importance of engaging with external stakeholders in their plans or re-

search policies, and in all there was engagement through teaching, research, consultancy and other forms of 'service' activities from which a wide range of external stakeholders benefited.

There was evidence of links with business and industry in all eight universities, but it was usually at the unit not the institutional level. Aside from at NMMU and Mauritius, there was almost no university engagement in research and development for industry.

"To a large extent this is because the industrial sector in most of these countries is under-developed, and because there is very limited private sector R&D - where global companies do have operations in African countries, their R&D is usually undertaken elsewhere."

There were two types of interaction with the private sector. First, in education and training there were examples of using private sector people to help with curricula design and revision, work placements and customised training programmes. Second, and most prevalent, was business development and support for small and medium-sized enterprises.

"Only two of the universities - Nairobi and Mauritius - had units dedicated to coordinating the activities with external stakeholders," write Cloete, Bailey and Maassen.

Foreign donors

Development aid to higher education in Africa has swelled in the past decade. A CHET study estimated that some US\$1 billion was donated to higher education in Africa from 2000 to 2005. The issue is thus not only about more aid but how to spend it more effectively.

That study found "widely divergent approaches to development aid with no generally accepted 'development

model' linking a set of key drivers for development". This is probably owing to the particularity of the national interests of the participating countries. But there is also no agreement in Africa on the role of higher education in development aid.

"Some interviewees said not all donor agencies take government priorities into account, and others spoke about tensions between responding to the agendas of foreign donors in order to secure funding, and addressing local needs. Some commented on lack of clarity about and changes in what donors want to fund," the authors write.

"Coordination of agendas and projects was a major problem, along with the administrative effort required to account to multiple donors. There was little coordination between donors in terms of funding areas and activities."

Only two universities had strong donor coordination structures, Dar es Salaam and Eduardo Mondlane. The Mozambican university received the largest proportion of donor aid among the universities but, the authors point out, it had the weakest doctoral enrolments.

This was "partly because many doctoral candidates study overseas and, more importantly, because there was no coordinated triangle of government, university and donor support. Mozambique's government 'outsourced' research and PhD training to donors and was mainly funding undergraduate teaching."

Connecting development activities to the academic core

The study argues that a key issue for the relationship between higher education and economic development is to establish a productive

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relationship between knowledge and connectedness.

If there is overemphasis on the knowledge activities of teaching and research, the university becomes an 'ivory tower'. But "an overemphasis on connecting to development activities weakens the academic core and the university has little new or relevant knowledge to offer in the exchange relationship." The challenge is to balance this tension.



Above: University of Nairobi among the eight universities surveyed and also a RUFORUM member university

Leaders at the eight African universities each identified five to 10 projects or centres with an economic development or poverty reduction focus. Information was gathered on 44 initiatives ranging from long-term research to consultancies, training and small business support, and one from each university was analysed.

The projects fell into three groups, write Cloete, Bailey and Maassen.

The first included projects or centres that were strongly connected to national or local priorities, had more than one funding source, and in some cases had a connection to an implementation agency.

"At the same time, they were strengthening the academic core through training postgraduate students, being part of international academic networks, and publishing in peer-reviewed jour-

nals and books." These projects were world-class.

A second group of projects or centres was connected to external stakeholders in some respects and to some extent helped to strengthen the academic core, "but were not strong on either". The third group was often well-connected to external stakeholders via funding or implementation agencies, "but were largely disconnected from the academic core".

Conclusions

The study reached the following conclusions regarding the coordination of and connectedness between the policies and activities of governments, universities and external groups:

- There are considerable coordination activities at the national level in most African countries, ranging from forums to clusters and the reorganisation of ministries. But this is mostly weak or 'symbolic' coordination.
- One of the weakest aspects of linking higher education to economic development is implementation: most ministries do not have steering instruments or mechanisms. Some ministries even discourage universities from generating third-stream income.
- There are tight networks between government officials and university leaders, but they are orientated towards political connections.
- Tertiary or higher education councils have been established, partially to compensate for weak ministries. They could become key players in monitoring the coordination and implementation of knowledge policies.
- Every university has at least one development-related structure

and special programme. But these are often driven by individuals rather than being institutionalised, and implementation efforts need to be more connected.

- *Despite extolling the importance of research related to development, few institutions devote special funds to this or provide incentives beyond academic promotion.*
- While there is evidence of connectedness between the universities and the private sector, this generally involves units or centres rather than institutional-level partnerships.
- The coordination of agendas and projects with donors is a major problem, along with the administrative effort required for accounting to multiple donors. There was a perception of decreasing donor interest and lack of clarity about what donors want to fund.
- Many projects or centres strongly connected to development reflect national priorities, have more than one funding source and may have a connection to an implementation agency. But only some strengthen the 'academic core' of universities.
- At all universities there are exemplary development projects or centres, but some are too dependent on exceptional individuals. The challenge is to expand these world-class activities.

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INNOVATIONS PROJECT HOLDS ANNUAL REVIEW MEETING

In 2009, RUFORUM received a grant from the European Union's ACP Science and Technology (S&T) program to implement the project "Building the Capacity of African University Graduates to foster change through Agricultural Innovation" also known as Graduate Opportunities for Innovation and Transformation (GO4IT). The project is implemented jointly with the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) of the Netherlands, Egerton University – Kenya, Makerere University – Uganda and Bunda College of Agriculture of the University of Malawi. The last year of implementation of the project has seen the launch in various universities, institutional awareness creation and studies carried out to establish stakeholder demands for graduates who can foster innovation. The universities have also conducted curriculum audits to establish gaps in existing graduate and undergraduate programs. This has been followed by national validation processes involving various stakeholders.

On the 14th and 15th of March, 2011, RUFORUM hosted a meeting of the representatives of the implementing partner institutions to conduct an annual review of the progress of the project. The meeting, held in Kampala – Uganda, had the objectives of realigning project activities based on the 2010 annual reports and work plans



Above: the participants who attended the innovations annual Review Meeting

submitted to the ACP-S&T Secretariat; developing a harmonized work plan and budget for 2011, developing an agreed outline for the Mid-Career Professional Training Course on Innovation Facilitation and conducting self reflection on the progress of the project. The meeting was treated as one of the participatory monitoring and evaluation (M&E) sessions planned in the M&E strategy. During the meeting a highlight of the results of the 2010 activities were presented alongside the status of implementation at partner institutions.

The meeting took stock of the project lessons and issues for consideration and improvement in the next phase of the project. Some aspects of the project that were reviewed included project communication; timeliness of

implementation; externalities and risks; adherence to the log frame during implementation and in the progress narrative reports; organizational commitment; commitment of implementing teams; reporting and financial accountability; challenges of partnerships as well as project and donor visibility. The meeting resolved to address the short-comings of year 1 implementation phase and refined the basic design for the Mid-Career Course to be launched in June 2011. Prior to the mid-career course, a training of trainers (ToT) workshop will be held in May to reorient the resource persons on modern innovations systems thinking and mainstream a quality assurance mechanism.

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY RANKED EIGHTH IN AFRICA

MAKERERE University's global ranking has improved, according to recent rankings of top universities. The university is ranked eighth in Africa by the University Ranking by Academic Performance (URAP), a new system. The system observes universities' academic progress at global and national levels. The ranking is based on six academic indicators including the number of articles published, results from the search engine, Google Scholar, number of citations, cumulative impact of journals, quality of research and collaboration with other universities globally.

The survey, which covered the top 2,000 universities worldwide, was developed using information obtained about the universities between 2005 and 2009. According to the rankings, Makerere is the 736th best university in the world, behind the University of Cape Town (253rd), University of the Witwatersrand (401st), Stellenbosch University (416th), University of Pretoria (470th) and the University of KwaZulu Natal (510th). Out of over 20 universities in Uganda, Makerere is the only one that made it to the top 10 in Africa. The Vice-

Chancellor, Prof. Venancius Baryamureeba, said the rankings indicate that Makerere is the best in sub-Saharan Africa. Last december, Makerere was ranked 15th best institution of higher learning in Africa by Webometrics, an organisation that monitors university performance worldwide. Baryamureeba attributed the improvement to the ongoing reforms at the university.

Reproduced from the New Vision of 5th April, 2011. Story by Taddeo Bwambale and Ruth Nakayima

A STORY OF APPRECIATION

This is a powerful message in our modern society. We seemed to have lost our bearing and our sense of direction.

One young academically excellent person went to apply for a managerial position in a big company. He passed the first interview, the director did the last interview, made the last decision. The director discovered from the CV that the youth's academic achievements were excellent all the way, from the secondary school until the postgraduate research, never had a year when he did not score.

The director asked, "Did you obtain any scholarships in school?" the youth answered "none". The director asked, "Was it your father who paid for your school fees?" The youth answered, "My father passed away when I was one year old, it was my mother who paid for my school fees. The director asked, "Where did your mother work?" The youth answered, "My mother worked as clothes cleaner.

The director requested the youth to show his hands. The youth showed a pair of hands that were smooth and perfect. The director asked, "Have you ever helped your mother wash the clothes before?" The youth answered, "Never, my mother always wanted me to study and read more books. Furthermore, my mother can wash clothes faster than me. The director said, "I have a request. When you go back today, go and clean your mother's hands, and then see me tomorrow morning.

The youth felt that his chance of landing the job was high. When he went back, he happily requested his mother to let him clean her hands. His mother felt strange, happy but with mixed feelings, she showed her hands to the kid. The youth cleaned his mother's hands slowly. His tear fell as he did that. It was

the first time he noticed that his mother's hands were so wrinkled, and there were so many bruises in her hands. Some bruises were so painful that his mother shivered when they were cleaned with water.

This was the first time the youth realized that it was this pair of hands that washed the clothes everyday to enable him to pay the school fees. The bruises in the mother's hands were the price that the mother had to pay for his graduation, academic excellence and his future. After finishing the cleaning of his mother hands, the youth quietly washed all the remaining clothes for his mother.

That night, mother and son talked for a very long time. Next morning, the youth went to the director's office. The Director noticed the tears in the youth's eyes, asked: "Can you tell me what have you done and learned yesterday in your house?" The youth answered, "I cleaned my mother's hand, and also finished cleaning all the remaining clothes'.

The Director asked, "please tell me your feelings." The youth said;

1. I know now what is appreciation. Without my mother, there would not be the successful me today.
2. By working together and helping my mother, only I now realize how difficult and tough it is to get something done.
3. I have come to appreciate the importance and value of family relationship.

The director said, "This is what I am looking for to be my manager. I want to recruit a person who can appreciate the help of others, a person who knows the sufferings of others to get things done, and a person

who would not put money as his only goal in life. You are hired.

Later on, this young person worked very hard, and received the respect of his subordinates. Every employee worked diligently and as a team. The company's performance improved tremendously. A child, who has been protected and habitually given whatever he wanted, would develop "entitlement mentality" and would always put himself first. He would be ignorant of his parent's efforts. When he starts work, he assumes that every person must listen to him, and when he becomes a manager, he would never know the sufferings of his employees and would always blame others. For this kind of people, who may be good academically, may be successful for a while, but eventually would not feel sense of achievement. He will grumble and be full of hatred and fight for more. If we are this kind of protective parents, are we really showing love or are we destroying the kid instead?

You can let your kid live in a big house, eat a good meal, learn piano, watch a big screen TV. But when you are cutting grass, please let them experience it. After a meal, let them wash their plates and bowls together with their brothers and sisters. It is not because you do not have money to hire a maid, but it is because you want to love them in a right way. You want them to understand, no matter how rich their parents are, one day their hair will grow gray, same as the mother of that young person. The most important thing is your kid learns how to appreciate the effort and experience the difficulty and learns the ability to work with others to get things done.

RUFORUM ALUMNI—A REVIEW OF THE STATUS OF THE RUFORUM INVESTMENT

My name is Milly N. Kanobe. I am married to Charles Kanobe and we are blessed with a 3.5 years old boy – Ethan M. Kanobe. I have just completed my PhD program in Plant Breeding (Major) and Genetics (Minor) at Iowa State University (ISU), Ames, IA, USA. I joined ISU on a Rockefeller Foundation scholarship that came through my former academic adviser, Prof. Adipala Ekwamu and through a competitive race that was open to students from several African universities. I was so excited on hearing that I had won the scholarship. Obtaining this scholarship opened the door to my success because I have gained much more than I had anticipated. While I was anxious about training in a rather challenging discipline, I knew that I stood better chances of professional exposure in a field with a wide spectrum of opportunities. My enthusiasm was lost only four months into my program after losing my Dad. This was a trying moment for me, having lost a person to whom I always looked out to when life seemed desolate. However, this loss has also been my inspiration to wither through all the hardships I have encountered in my program as I promised myself to graduate with a PhD in honor of my late father.

The main focus of my PhD work was developing, through genetic engineering, and characterizing maize lines expressing an iron-rich protein (soybean ferritin) and a phytate-degrading enzyme (*E. coli* phytase) either singly or in combination and to study the effects of the soybean ferritin transgene on protein and transcript levels of se-



Above: Milly Kanobe just completed her PhD program at Iowa State University in the USA

lected native maize genes. Both transgenes were stably integrated into the maize genome and inherited meiotically through generations, with a corresponding increase in protein expression levels of the transgenes. In addition, iron levels increased tremendously in maize seeds expressing the transgenes. This result is critical in finding solutions to alleviate iron deficiency anemia by enhancing iron nutrition especially for developing populations that consume maize as a basal diet.

Having majored in plant breeding and genetics with additional hands-on experience in genetic engineering, I feel prepared enough to contribute strongly to finding solutions to the world's challenging agricultural problems, especially in developing countries, where people still survive on one meal a day that could in most instances be insufficient in supplying the required nutrients. My academic success at ISU has won me two honors, one from Gamma Sigma Delta honor Society of Agriculture (2009) and the other from

Golden Key International Honor Society (2009) as well as an award, Mrs. Glenn Murphy International Award (2010).

Prior to joining ISU, I did my bachelors and masters degrees in agriculture, specializing in Crop Science at Makerere University. I was under the supervision of Prof. Adipala Ekwamu, who did a terrific job in my academic upbringing. Having gone through this training and through the hands of a great mentor, my opportunities started earlier than I anticipated. I studied my masters program on four scholarships, of which Rockefeller Foundation contributed the most. I am so grateful for having been trained through Rockefeller Foundation scholarships at levels when I needed the most support! The training at both levels gave me the momentum and the required preparedness to handle the challenges associated with a US-based education system.

My long term dream is to advance my agricultural career in a way that would allow me to innovatively and responsibly make an outstanding record in solving agricultural problems. As part of my academic journey, I will be taking up a Post-doctoral position with my current adviser – Dr. Paul M. Scott at ISU and hope to continue with this as my husband finishes his doctoral studies too. My thanks go to all those who have played major roles in my academics. My God bless you abundantly!

COMMUNITY BASED EDUCATION PROGRAMS AT UNIVERSITY OF GEZIRA

During the early years of establishment of the University of Gezira (the University was established in 1975), the staff thought about a University curriculum different from those of other Universities present in Sudan. At that time the role of Universities in community development, in addition to teaching and research was growing all over the world. The University of Gezira chose to use interdisciplinary approaches and community training within research and educational programmes tailored to help community development. That is why such words like interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary in addition to rural residency is so common in the culture of the students. Courses of Interdisciplinary Field Training, Research and Rural Development (phase I, II and III) were initiated in all faculties since then group of five students from each faculty must stay at villages for a period of 2 to 5 weeks and every group must write a report (problem solving method). Students are graded for such courses. Also, in the faculty of Agricultural Science, a course on **participatory approaches** was introduced. In addition training programmes for farmers were initiated to discuss



Above: Students during a practical class. Majority of the students at the University of Gezira (80%) are female



Above: Prof. El Amin A. El Khalifa, the Vice Chancellor of University of Gezira

with them their problems and tailor research programmes to solve the problems.

The curriculum of Faculties of Medicine and Dentistry includes community oriented courses. Each student from these faculties is attached to one family for four semesters. In each semester, he/she has to report and present a seminar in group discussion by problem solving method and then grading for his/her work is obtained as a usual course. Courses of Field Research and Rural Development are conducted in semesters one, four and six. In semester two, the students visit villages, stay there for a couple of weeks, and collect data relevant to community health problems. Then the students under supervision of their tutors analyse the data collected, to identify priority problems in the villages and propose a project **targeting the identified problems, to be executed with the full participation of the community.** In semester four, the stu-

dents go back to the villages to implement their project, making use of all available resources: **local community resources, University participation and the State Government support.** In semester six outcomes of the project are evaluated. In each semester students are graded for such activities and courses and grades are part of the students permanent transcript.

The other model for the same faculties is the course of rural residency where students spend 4 weeks in rural hospitals with the main objective of strengthening clinical skills acquired by students earlier in clinical courses, as well as giving them the chance of being trained in community health settings where they are expected to work after graduation.

In the University Education Development Center and Medical Education and Research Development Center, the programmes for capacity building of the staff have included the following courses:

History: *The University was established in Wad Medani in accordance with a Republican Decree issued on November 1975.*

The educational philosophy of the university rests on: *“Community orientation and rural development” Teaching and research activities in various faculties, institutes and centers are mainly tailored to solve problems of rural areas and rural community using an integrated comprehensive approach.*

Population: *The majority of the students are (80%) female*

COMMUNITY BASED EDUCATION PROGRAMS AT UNIVERSITY OF GEZIRA

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- Development of innovation thinking of the students
- The role of University Staff in the community
- Student feedback on curriculum, method of teaching and staff performance

The above approaches have enhanced the quality of students' training at the University of Gezira. The University is today recognized as a leading center of learning and is establishing international partnerships to strengthen its capabilities. The University has research cooperation with around 30 universities all over the world. University of Gezira joined RUFORUM in 2009, and is an active member of the network.

For more information, visit the University website (www.uofg.edu.sd)

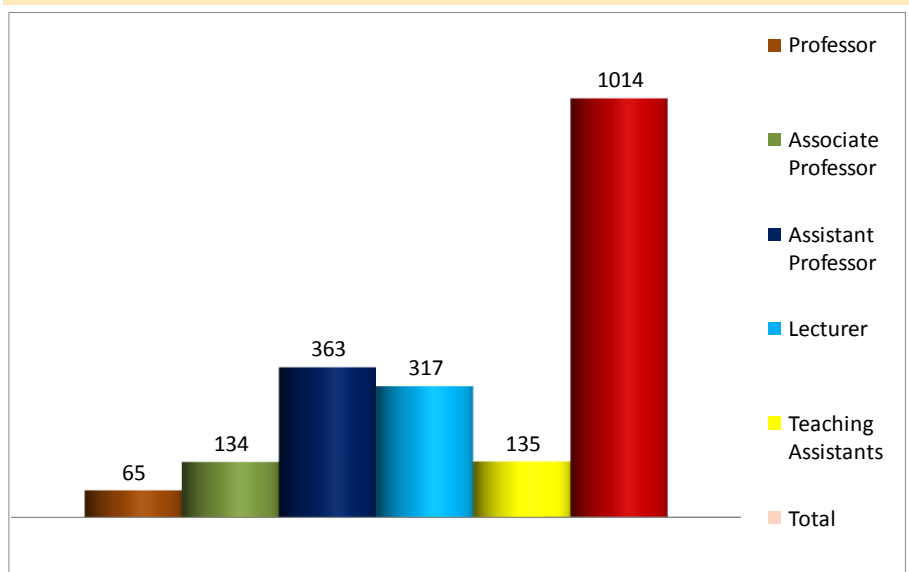
Table 1: The Total number of Graduates with a Bachelor Degree in different Faculties 1984-2010

No	Faculty	No of Graduates
1	Medicine	3254
2	Pharmacy	676
3	Applied Medical	802
4	Health & Environmental Sciences	411
5	Medical Laboratories Sciences	278
6	Dentistry	71
Total		5492

Table 2: The Number Faculties at the University of Gezira

No	Faculty	Location	Year of Establishment	No of departments
1	Medicine	Razi	1975	11
2	Economics and Rural Development	Nishaisheeba	1975	5
3	Agricultural Sciences	Nishaisheeba	1975	10
4	Engineering and Technology	Nishaisheeba	1975	7
5	Education	Hantoub	1985	8
6	Textiles	Nishaisheeba	1992	1
7	Mathematics and Computer Sciences	Razi	1993	2
8	Animal Production	Managil	1993	5
9	Pharmacy	Razi	1994	5
10	Communication Sciences	Fadasi	1994	2
11	Education	Hassaheisa	1994	6
12	Educational Sciences	El Kamlin	1994	6
13	Health and Environmental Sciences	Housh	1994	5
14	Applied Medical Sciences	Razi	1997	3
15	Medical Laboratory Sciences	Razi	1998	5
16	Dentistry	Razi	2001	7
17	Developmental Studies	El Hudaiba Abu El Hassan	2008	2

Table 3: Total Number of Academic Staff 2010



RUFORUM COMPETITIVE GRANTS SYSTEM – GRADUATE RESEARCH GRANT CALL ID RU/CGS/GRG/15/10/10 AWARDED

The RUFORUM Technical Committee which approves research grant awards has provisionally selected 24 proposals for funding. Final awards will be made subject to satisfactory corrections by applicants.

The RUFORUM Graduate Research Grants are designed to support training of at least two M.Sc. students at RUFORUM member universities. The GRGs remains the flagship program of the RUFORUM CGS. Since 2009, three calls for proposals have been issued with the support from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation. Through the two previous calls, 46 research grants have been awarded. The grants are at various stages of implementation. This report provides summary of progress on the 3rd Call for Proposals (CfP). The CfP was designed at the previous Technical Committee meeting in March, 2010 (Entebbe, Uganda) and announced in July, 2010. Further circulation was achieved by email (to Vice Chancellors, Deans and Staff lists), the RUFORUM Website, RUFORUM Monthly Newsletter and also announced at key RUFORUM meetings such as the RUFORUM Annual General Meeting (Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe), Second ASTI meeting of Deans and the RUFORUM Biennial Conference (Entebbe, Uganda). The call was also shared at specific meetings at RUFORUM member universities.

Proposals received and Compliance

In response to the third CfP, the Secretariat received 107 proposals from 17 of the 25 member universities. Haramaya University (Ethiopia), University of Gezira and Kordofan University (Sudan), Uganda Martyrs University and Gulu University (Uganda), University of Rwanda and University of Burundi did not submit proposals. Five proposals were received from non member institutions. Kenyatta University (17), University of Nairobi (16) and Makerere University (14) submitted more than 10 proposals. University of Malawi (8), University of Zimbabwe (8), Sokoine University (7), Egerton University (8), JKUAT (6) all submitted more than 5 proposals. The University of Swaziland and Catholic University of Bukavu submitted proposals for the first time. The submitted proposals were in fields of livestock production (17); crop production (30); aquaculture and fisheries (6); integrated soil and water management (9); food science and nutrition (4); post harvest management and value addition (3); Environment (3); Socio-economics (11) and cross cutting issues (11).

The proportion of female researchers submitting proposals was 22% which was not significantly different from the last two submissions (25% and 20% for the 1st and 2nd CfP respectively). In the last RFP, 24

proposals were submitted by women PIs compared to 21 in this round.

On submission, each proposal was assigned a reference number and an inventory of submissions prepared prior to a compliance audit by the Secretariat. Thirteen proposals were found to be non compliant (received after deadline date and/or from non member institutions). In the previous round, many proposals were rejected due to minor compliance issues, including request for funds beyond the ceiling for the GRG. The secretariat thanks the universities for improvement.

The outcome of the administrative check was communicated to each of the 94 compliant proposals as well as to the 13 non compliant applicants. Finally the 94 complaint proposals were sent to 3-4 external reviewers, and based on the review reports, the Technical Committee met 9-10 April, 2011 in Nairobi, Kenya and selected 24 for funding subject to satisfactory revision. Please see page 12 for the details.

The 4th round of CGS proposals are due for submission by 30 September, 2011. Please check <http://www.ruforum.org/content/ruforum-competitive-grants-programme> for more details

PROPOSALS SELECTED FOR FUNDING UNDER THE 2010/2011 COMPETITIVE GRANTS SCHEME
CALL ID: RU/CGS/GRG/15/10/10

PI Name	PI gender	PI institution	Principle Investigator (PI) Project title
Dr. Brighton Mvumi	Male	University of Zimbabwe	Safer options for smallholder management of cereal grain storage insect pests in Zimbabwe
Dr. Francis Kariuki	Male	Kenyatta University	Participatory development and validation of culture models of integrating fish polyculture-livestock into irrigated rice fields to enhance competitiveness of rice farming in Mwea, Kenya.
Dr. Hieromin A. Lamtane	Male	Sokoine University of Agriculture	Impact of climate change on mangrove crab (<i>Scylla serrata</i>) fattening and its implication on the livelihoods of coastal communities of Tanzania
Dr. John Bosco Lamoris Okullo	Male	Makerere University	Developing appropriate vegetative propagation techniques for enhancing productivity of the Shea tree (<i>Vitellaria Paradoxa</i> ssp. <i>Nilotica</i>) in Uganda
Prof. Bashwira Sanvura	Male	Université Catholique de Bukavu	Estimation of pollution loading into Lake Kivu basin
Dr. Monicah Mucheru-Muna	Female	Kenyatta University	Enhancing crop productivity through soil-water conservation and integrated drought prediction and preparedness techniques in the drier zones of Central Highlands of Kenya
Dr. Upenyu Mazarura	Male	University of Zimbabwe	Some aspects of the ecology of Softrot (<i>Erwinia carotovora</i>) development on infected potato tubers (<i>Solanum tuberosum</i>) and the impact of agronomic factors during growth
Prof. Solomon I. Shibairo	Male	University of Nairobi	Screening finger millet varieties for adaptability to drought prone ecological regions of eastern Kenya as a strategy to combat food insecurity and climate change
Dr. Joseph Dzanja	Male	University of Malawi	Microfinance and growth of small scale agribusinesses in Malawi
Dr. Timothy Gondwe	Male	University of Malawi	Development and adoption of technologies for improving dairy productivity and nutrition among smallholder dairy farmers in Malawi
Dr. Joseph W. Matofari	Male	Egerton University	Consumer and regulator concerns about pastoral indigenous knowledge food processing: participatory analysis for producers' and consumers' benefits
Dr. Arthur K. Tugume	Male	Makerere University	Unraveling the vector-transmission biology of the ipomovirus <i>Sweet potato mild mottle virus (Potyviridae)</i> in cultivated sweetpotato (<i>Ipomoea batatas</i> Lam.)
Dr. Ernest M.M. Marwa	Male	Sokoine University of Agriculture	Environmental effect of Uranium in Tanzanian agricultural soils and its transfer in food chains
Dr. Elizabeth Omami	Female	Moi University	The use of <i>Crotalaria species</i> in sustainable management of plant-parasitic nematodes of vegetable crops in western Kenya.
Dr. Banadda Noble	Male	Makerere University	Investigating contamination risks associated with wrapping indigenous foods in polyethylene bags during cooking
Dr. Rich M. Mulwa	Male	University of Nairobi	Soil conservation practices as climate change adaptation strategies in semi-arid districts of Kenya and Uganda
Dr. Joyce J. Lelei	Female	Egerton University	Enhancing phosphorus release from rock phosphate using white Lupin (<i>Lupinus albus</i> L. Cv. <i>Amiga</i>) and chickpea (<i>Cicer arietinum</i> L.)
Prof. JW Banda	Male	Bunda College of Agriculture	An assessment of economic and socio-demographic factors affecting production and demand of goats and goat meat in Malawi
Dr. Pinkie E. Zwane	Female	University of Swaziland	Enzymatic processing of plant fibres / plant fibre waste for diversified uses
Dr. Gaolebale Mpapho	Male	Botswana College of Agriculture	Poverty alleviation and increased food security through improving smallholder milk production of dairy goats and their crosses in Botswana
Dr. Gabriel Elepu	Male	Makerere University	Organizing smallholder farmers to access maize markets in Uganda through the warehouse receipt system
Dr. Solomon Habtu	Male	Mekelle University	Improving rainwater use efficiency in teff for enhancing adaptation to climate variability and climate change in the northern Ethiopia
Dr. Romana Rombe Bandeira	Female	Eduardo Mondlane University	Fire and deforestation interactions with climate change effects on forest ecosystems and impact on rural households in south Mozambique
Prof B. Kayombo	Male	Botswana College of Agriculture	Evaluation of rain water harvesting (RWH) for crop production in semi-arid Botswana