

RUFORUM MONTHLY

Special Edition

Addressing Food and Nutrition Insecurity through Partnerships: The University of Hohenheim Food Security Center Initiative

Background: In 2000, more than 170 heads of States and Governments gathered at the United Nation's headquarters in New York and committed to a new global partnership to address poverty and other impediments to economic and social development in the developing world. They identified eight key goals, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be realized in order to meet basic needs of the poor. Highest priority was given to MDG1, i.e. eradicate extreme poverty and hunger by 2015. In the developing world, one in every four people are affected by extreme poverty. In 2007, the number of undernourished people living in developing countries reached 923 million. An even larger number suffers from food insecurity, characterized by inadequate access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food.

In Sub-Sahara Africa, progress towards realizing MDG1, in particular hunger, has been slow despite the evident efforts. More needs to be done, encompassing integrated approaches and focused knowledge-based actions. It is acknowledged that higher education and science have the potential to contribute to hunger eradication by generating capacity and knowledge for effective and sustainable policy, institutional and technological measures. For Universities, this implies strong partnerships for mobilizing expertise from natural, economic, social and political sciences.

The Food Security Center: In response to the food and nutrition insecurity challenge, the University of Hohenheim, Germany (UHOH) in partnership with other institutions and universities in Europe, Africa, Latin America and Asia has established a Food Security Center



Above: A farmer transports his banana produce to the market



Representatives from African, Asian and Latin American higher education institutions at Hohenheim University in Germany in 2009

- *RUFORUM Monthly* provides information on activities of the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM).

- This *Special Edition* has been supported by the Food Security Center

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nominations/ applications are now open for the **African Agricultural Science Awards**. For information on how to submit an entry see Page 9

The Food Security Center announces **25 research scholarships** for PhD and postdoctoral research. For more details on Page 4

RUFORUM announces the **Community Action Research Call**. For details please visit www.ruforum.org

More information on RUFORUM activities can be accessed at the **RUFORUM Website** www.ruforum.org and the **RUFORUM BLOG** at www.RUFORUMsecretariat.blogspot.com

RUFORUM Moodle site is online at <http://ruforum.moodlehub.com>

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The University of Hohenheim Food Security Center Initiative (Cont)

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(FSC). The FSC concept was developed by a working group made of Professors from faculties of UHOH including the center for Agriculture in the Tropics and Subtropics (TROZ), the competence center for Gender and Nutrition (KGE) and Life Sciences Center (LSC). In March 2009, a fact finding mission/workshop with representatives from African, Asian and Latin American higher education institutions and other partners was held in Hohenheim (photo above). During the workshop, educational needs, common interests and capacities for teaching and research cooperation, as well as possible joint initiatives were identified. The FSC focuses on hunger and food security, addressing the food problem in a multi-dimensional context.

In recognition of the role of women in food security, the FSC will give emphasis to gender issues, linking aspects of MDG 3 (promoting gender equality and empowering women) and MDG 1. The center will adopt a futuristic approach regarding the security of future generations through comprehensive investigations of the ecological sustainability of agricultural production in the developing world, thus linking its actions with MDG 7 (ensuring environmental sustainability). The center will draw expertise from agricultural, natural, economic, social, and political sciences.



Women harvesting Cassava, a crop grown in semi-arid and arid areas of Africa

Partners from the developing world: In Sub-Saharan Africa, the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) will have the coordinating

role at the regional level. Sokoine University of Agriculture (in Tanzania), as a member of RUFORUM and a partner in an already existing DAAD –funded University collaboration in postgraduate agricultural economics will perform teaching and research functions. Other RUFORUM member Universities include Haramaya University (in Ethiopia) and University of Malawi (in Malawi). In Latin America, the University of Costa Rica and *Centro Agronomo Tropical de Investigacion y Ensenanza* (CATIE) will have major roles in postgraduate



Livestock are an important component of food and nutrition security for many developing countries

teaching and research, as well as food agriculture and nutrition policy making. In Asia, FSC will focus on Kasetsart University (in Thailand) with which UHOH has long standing collaboration and other planned initiatives. The university is also a member university of the regional network of SEAMEO-SEARCA, which has agreed to perform additional services as a strategic partner of FSC by taking its comparative advantage as a network with outreach to universities in all Southeast Asian countries.

Strategic Research Themes: Strategic research themes of the FSC have been identified in consultation with partners in the developing and developed world (See Box 1). Research by FSC and its partners seeks to identify technological, institutional, and policy measures that can contribute to the reduction of hunger and malnutrition by the dissemination of enhanced knowledge to decision makers at global, national, regional, and local level.

The University of Hohenheim Food Security Center Initiative (Cont)

Box 1: FSI Strategic Research Themes

1. Undernourishment, malnutrition and vulnerability of individuals and households and the role of gender, ethnicity, minorities, voice and indigenous knowledge in the formulation and implementation of food, agricultural, and safety net policies;
2. Food quality and safety along the food chain (social responsibility, social, and environmental food standards);
3. Climate change and increasing water scarcity and impacts on local and global food security and sustainable agricultural production and ecosystem resilience in the tropics and subtropics;
4. Synergies and conflicts between food security and the production of renewable resources and bio-energy;
5. Utilization of biotechnology and genomic diversity for achieving future food needs in terms of quantity and quality;
6. Food security in the context of global and local markets and consumer policy; and,
7. Monitoring and impact analysis of food and agricultural policies and projects.

Activity profile: The planned FSC activities target on improving food security, and thus contributing to the achievement of MDG 1. The center will engage in five activity fields:

1. Interdisciplinary teaching and training of post-graduate students (mainly from developing countries) in relevant sciences, and strengthening selected MSc. and PhD programmes in the field of food security
2. Innovative, demand-driven and impact oriented research
3. Capacity building through award of study and research scholarships to PhD and MSc. Students
4. Structural and personnel capacity strengthening of higher education institutions in developing countries
5. Knowledge transfer to the project target groups as well as assuming knowledge brokerage and advisory functions.

Funding: The FSC is funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) over a five year phase.

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UNIVERSITÄT HOHENHEIM



Food Security Center offers up to 25 research scholarships in 2010

The Food Security Center (FSC) is a newly established university center of excellence in development collaboration at the University of Hohenheim, Stuttgart, Germany. FSC is one of five excellence centers of the program "exceed – Higher Education Excellence in Development Cooperation", which is supported by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) with funds of the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) of Germany.

FSC's mission is to make effective and innovative scientific contributions in research, teaching, and policy advice to eradicate hunger and achieve food security in collaboration with partner Higher Education Institutions in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and national and international development and research organizations. Thematically, the FSC activities deal with issues of sustainable food availability, food access, food use, and food utilization. More information is available from www.foodsecurity.de.

FSC awards up to 25 scholarships for PhD students and postdoctoral researchers for a period of 4 to 36 months, starting April 15, 2010. The Center wishes to attract outstanding PhD students and postdoctoral fellows pursuing a career in academia or development collaboration. The scholarships aim at increasing their previously gained scientific knowledge and skills relevant to food security related issues. Furthermore, FSC aims at establishing an active, long-lasting collaboration with the supported researchers and their home institutions. FSC offers three categories of scholarships:

1. Sandwich scholarships for PhD students (6 months);
2. Research scholarships for visiting postdoctoral researchers (4 months); and,

3. Excellence scholarships for FSC-supported PhD program "Young Excellence School" (36months)

In category 1 and 2, FSC scholarships will support researchers from developing countries to conduct their research either at the University of Hohenheim (South – North) or at a national or international research institute in a developing country, for instance one of the centers of the CGIAR (South– South). There are few scholarships for students and postdoctoral researchers of the University of Hohenheim to visit a research institute in a developing country (North – South).

The application deadline for all scholarships in category 1 and 2 is January 30, 2010. Selection is carried out on a competitive basis and the decisions will be communicated up to March 15, 2010. Regarding the details of the different scholarships, the application process and the requirements, please consult FSC's webpage (www.foodsecurity.de – go to "Scholarships"). The information will be uploaded during the week of December 14, 2009. Please read the information carefully before you apply. Only complete applications will be considered.

In category 3, FSC is supporting excellent PhD students to participate in the FSC-supported PhD program at the University of Hohenheim, mainly students from developing countries, but few scholarships are as well provided to students from Germany. The detailed application information for the scholarships of this category will be posted on FSC's webpage end of January 2010; the PhD program will start in August 2010.

Farmers cure and export own coffee edging out exploiters – the agri-business success story from Kigoma, Tanzania

From a humble society struggling to beat conspiracy by multinationals to exploit coffee farmers in Kigoma, Rumako CCooperative Society now boasts assets worth billions of Tanzania shillings including, a 2-tonnes per hour coffee curing plant, 20 tonne lorry and production capacity of over 1,000 tonnes per season. From a harvest of 300kg in 2002, John Kibabi the 36 year old father of six, harvested over two tonnes of coffee in 2007 half of which was sold as premium coffee by Sustainable Harvests to Green Mountain coffee roasters at Tshs 4,500 (US\$4.5) per kg in North America.

From a meagre income of only ten's of thousands in Tanzania shillings, Mr. Kibabi now fetches Tshs 5 million (US\$ 5000) per season from coffee farming. "It has been a slow journey but one that has paid handsome returns", he says. It started in the mid 80s when Tanzania Coffee board stopped supporting cooperatives to buy coffee from farmers directly to sell at the auction. "Private companies conspired to lower the price every time they bought our coffee", Mr. Mahwisa says. Frustrated by this exploitation, three village cooperatives of Matyazo, Mukabogo and Rusyaba, came together and formed Rumako Cooperative Society in 1995.

Determined farmers in eastern Tanzania are now milling and selling thousands of tonnes of their own coffee through the local auction and exporting other hundreds of tonnes to the American and European markets, edging out exploiters

They contributed money and transported coffee to the auction through the 2000 kilometres tortuous terrain to Moshi. "We got twice the price the middlemen were offering farmers after removing all costs," Mwahima who led the group says. The group grew and in 1996, a German missionary in the area loaned them Tshs 6million to transport two 40 feet containers of coffee to Moshi and sold a kilogram for Tshs 1,080 up from Tshs 800. The volume of coffee sold through the society began to increase when people realised the society was paying more than what the middlemen were offering.

As more people showed interest, the society began to charge Tshs 50 and later Tshs 100 per kg to raise their operating capital. Encouraged by the farmers' determination, a technical manager with Tanzania coffee board advised the group to consider curing their coffee before transporting it to increase its value. The missionary had promised to help farmers procure a coffee curing machine from Germany if they could pay for it. Primary Coopera-

tives in Kalinzi and Manyovu districts joined Rumako society to form Kanyovu Coffee Cooperative joint enterprise in 2002.

When the German missionary Thomas Meyer went home, he took a loan and bought the US\$ 154,000 curing plant together with a 75 kilovolt generator and sent it to Dar es Salaam in 2003. Kanyovu members had raised some US\$ 20,000 which they sent as commitment fee. Despite increase in numbers of people selling their coffee through the society, not many people were willing to join the cooperative because of their bad past experiences with cooperatives.

ActionAid supported the society to reach farmers in all the village cooperatives to understand the constitution of the society. "The organisation also helped farmers to understand the benefits of being a member resulting in the number of farmer members increasing from 2,000 to 4,700", Mr Mahwisa says. Four months after the missionary installed and tested the machine the society cured its first 136 tonnes of parchment coffee in August 2004.

"Within six months, the farmers paid off the US \$ 204,000 costs for the coffee dry milling machine which included transport costs and interest," Mr. Grave Kavishe the General Manager of Kanyovu Coffee Curing cooperative Joint Enterprise says. "Farmers were paid Tshs 1800 per kilogram after the first season and later the value went up to Tshs 2,300", he says.

Mr Kavishe, a mechanical engineer, was recruited by the local communities with support from Tanzania Coffee Board to manage the plant after it was installed in April 2004 by Thomas Meyer. Efforts to enhance the value of coffee went on at the same time with the efforts to improve the quality of production. Farmers learnt that their counterparts in Rwanda were producing coffee that was selling twice as much as theirs at the Africa coffee meeting in Dar es Salaam in 2005.

In 2006 ActionAid and Tanzania Coffee Research Institute supported farmers to visit coffee farmers in Rwanda. "Coffee farming is taken more seriously in Rwanda," Juma Kibabi who also visited Rwanda says. "Farmers are monitored at the field level to ensure

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Farmers cure and export own coffee edging out exploiters – the agri-business success story from Kigoma, Tanzania

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quality”, he says. “The installation of the dry mill coffee curing plant right at the village has helped to reduce losses incurred by farmers while transporting coffee and increased the income paid to farmers” Mr. Kavishe says.

More than 11,000 farmers now sell their coffee to Kanyovu coffee curing plant. About 5,000 of these are members of the society who benefit from loans secured by the society to enable its members get inputs such as fertilisers. “As the quality of coffee increased, coffee buyers began to show interest to buy our coffee,” Kanyovu’s General Manager Mr. Kavishe says. Of the 1,127 tonnes of clean coffee produced by farmers in 2007, 173 tonnes was sold to Green Mountains coffee roasters in North America through Sustainable Harvests as premium coffee.

Sustainable Harvest is a coffee importer and broker with customers in North America and Europe. The company is part of the fair trade movement and pays a fair price for its special coffee beans to ensure a fair return for

coffee growers.

With prospects for both higher quantity and quality of coffee from Kigoma, Sustainable Harvests is supporting farmers with washing pans in each village cooperative to clean their coffee before transporting it. The company also supports agronomists to provide training support to Kanyovu farmers. Our focus right now is to improve the quality of coffee right from the production stage”, the manager, Mr. Kavishe says.

Kigoma’s Arabica coffee is marketed and sold by the Green Mountain as a world class special reserve coffee in cooperation with Jane Goodall Institute. Although some farmers still sell their coffee to individual buyers to raise money for immediate needs and fertilizers, the average income paid per kilogram has increased substantially following intense competition by determined coffee farmers to cure and sell their own coffee.

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Knowledge gap and power imbalance in the livelihoods security equation of Africa’s drylands

Historical records show recurrent episodes of famine in Africa. Millions of people, particularly dryland inhabitants are left poor and hungry as a result of livestock losses, plummeting prices of livestock and rising grain prices. Crop failures are often over 80%. In 2005/2006 for example, millions of Africans from several countries in Eastern and Southern Africa were in need of humanitarian aid (e.g. Ethiopia – 1.5 million; Malawi – 4.2 million; Kenya – 2.5 million). In most countries food insecurity is more widespread, but owing to limited access, reporting by the media hardly captures the magnitude of the challenge.

Africa’s drylands are home to diverse forms of pastoralism, a livelihood system highly suited to the highly variable, erratic and unpredictable nature of the environment. Attempting to address food insecurity in drylands without understanding and creating an enabling environment for the livelihoods therein is a futile exercise. From past experiences in Eastern Africa, the emphasis while attempting to address food security of the drylands people has often been on externally driven ap-

proaches that are imported into the drylands and are technical (fix it). Those are important (e.g. abattoirs close to livestock keepers, veterinary health, markets, etc), but only if the foundation of the peoples’ economy is secure. The challenge is to build capacity within the system to harness the opportunities in traditional systems, institutions and approaches while integrating these into the modern, state and development partner-driven ones.

The greatest paradox in drylands and dryland management today is that over the last 40 years, an enormous amount of research has been carried out which provides sound scientific evidence that dryland livelihood systems which revolved around livestock keeping, are a viable form of land use, well adapted to the unstable environmental conditions of dryland Africa. Despite these findings however, many policy makers, government staff, development workers and the broader public still have a poor understanding of drylands and the livelihoods therein (knowledge gap). Further, the dry-

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Knowledge gap and power imbalance in the livelihoods security equation of Africa's drylands

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land inhabitants mostly have limited political muscle to leverage and ensure that policies are designed in their favour (imbalance of power). The result has been lack of an enabling institutional environment for development in the drylands.

The knowledge gap on dryland management and livelihoods has two key components: First, most of the research so far conducted hardly filters down to those who need the knowledge most. Findings remain in books, journals, and other forms that are not easily available or accessible. These findings need a clear information unpacking, dissemination and utilization strategy. Further, future policy makers and development workers do not have full access to the information even in the current format.



The second component is that dryland inhabitants themselves often have limited knowledge, capacity and resources with which to define and drive their own agenda. They are mostly unaware of or have limited knowledge of the stakes at play at the policy arena and are unable to challenge the perceptions that the "outside world" holds about them and their livelihood system. This is partly because they lack the skills to articulate the rationale underpinning their livelihood system.

Research information alone cannot induce policy makers to change their policies. Policy design is a state driven political process aimed at reconciling the diversity of needs of multiple stakeholders. Theoretically, policies are supposed to respond to the common needs of the nation as a whole; however, in practice, they

tend to favour politically dominant elites. Dryland inhabitants mostly have weak political muscle, such that they are mostly unable to significantly influence policy decisions. If they are to improve their livelihoods, dryland inhabitants have to master the policy process, putting themselves at the center of local and national debates designed to address their priorities and needs. This situation calls for intensive and coordinated capacity building among dryland inhabitants in terms of supporting them to drive an internal process of self-awareness and self-development. This support to dryland inhabitants is however difficult because the tools and approaches are not easily available. Most participatory tools are designed and used by external agents to solicit greater local participation. They are not specifically designed for the inhabitants to analyse their own situations outside of a pre-designed project context. A key challenge thus remains, that of developing tools that will enable dryland inhabitants better understand their own situation and identify potential solutions, in contexts that are defined by themselves rather than by others.

We think of capacity building in this area as meaning the training of policy analysts and other policy actors. This is no doubt important, and I imagine within a university context it has to be the starting point. However, in so far as policy for the management of natural resources is concerned, I think that the emphasis has to be on getting the people whose livelihoods depend on natural resources, and who are most directly affected by policies (or the absence thereof) in this regard, to be the primary targets (and drivers) of capacity building. The key explanation for past failures has to do with the focus on the elite, the idea that people external to the drylands could think out and design policies and strategies that would help pastoralists out of poverty. Apart from being patronising, it is disempowering, assumes that the problems are technical and can be fixed, and ignores the indigenous knowledge and social capital that comes into play when dryland inhabitants themselves define the development agenda and path.

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(This article is based on the RECONCILE-IIED project on building capacity of dryland communities). The author was a consultant (Photo by Gritty.org)

RUFORUM launches Masters course in Research Methods at JKUAT

The niche: RUFORUM identified limited capacity in research methods as a constraint to quality research for development in the region, and hence initiated investment into building capacity in this area. One component of that is a new MSc in Research Methods. The MSc in Research Methods aims to train professionals who will support agricultural and related researchers throughout the region. The course provides a strong foundation in research design, data collection, data management and statistical analysis. Whilst built on the traditions of statistics and biometrics, it extends these by placing them in the context of research for development. The programme aims to produce research meth-



Hands on session for the students during orientation



Opening ceremony at JKUAT

ods specialists who will be able to work across the social, economic and biophysical sciences and who will be able to make solid contributions to enhancing the effectiveness of modern, integrative research. The course is highly practical, built around research being carried out in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa. It provides a professional training, aiming to prepare graduates for work in research programmes in the region. All these has been articulated through an elaborate stakeholder engagement process in the region and beyond.

What's new? Business unusual: With support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the EU ACP EDULINK Project. Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) opened doors to the first batch of 29 students from 9 countries in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa on 19th October 2009. Present at the opening ceremony was the JKUAT Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs) representing the Vice Chancellor, RUFORUM was represented by Program Manager, Training & Quality Assurance. Key partners from the University of Reading, students, and course

facilitators and lecturers from Eastern, Central and Southern Africa were present. The first week of the course was dedicated to orientation of students about the method of course delivery and staff retooling in preparation for delivery in a manner that maintains the innovative aspects in the design of this course. The aims of the student orientation week were: to introduce the purpose and background to the course, prepare students for the style and content of the course and the project work, explain the logic and process from the teaching side, and meet teaching staff, University of Reading and RUFORUM teams and understand their roles. Running parallel with student orientation was the staff retooling workshop.

The aims of this exercise were:

1. Understand the course aims and principles and incorporate them in their modules, including:
 - Integrate research conception and design, data handling, data analysis, interpretation and use of results
 - Introduce methods used in current R for D
 - Integrate methods for social and biophysical research
 - Build understanding principles and being able to apply them, rather than on rules and mathematical theory
 - Develop professionalism among the students and lecturers
 - Thinking critically, questioning and self-learning
 - Doing all this in the context of R for D in the region
2. Understand and be confident to use some new teaching methods resources

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RUFORUM launches Masters Course in Research Methods at JKUAT

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What type of graduate? This first intake is made up a diversity of academic backgrounds e.g. agriculture, range management, dentistry, sociology and economics. The class has 39% women, which represents an increase in the proportion of women joining RUFORUM supported regional programmes (24%).

Considering the requirements of the job the graduates of the course will be expected to fill, the following are key competences and skills:

Evidence of ability and experience in :

- Synthesis of scientific information
- Problem formulation
- Application of research design principles to real problems
- Quality control and organization of data
- Application of statistical analysis principles to real data sets
- Summary and interpretation of research results
- Critical review of proposals and reports
- Presentation and communication of research results methods
- Use of current tools and learning of new tools and approaches

Ability to work independently with minimum supervision

Ability to work with multidisciplinary teams

Some reactions from students after three weeks of the course:

The course is problem based and one thing I like about it is that it broadens the thinking capacity...

I am slowly adapting to the new approach of learning. It is a wonderful experience as it has encouraged me to read more and apply the concepts to the research....

The concept of discovery is very exciting. With this I mean that I discover new ways of not only learning but finding information. The element of teamwork or group work works very well and the facilities are close to excellent....

For more information and next intake in 2010, please contact:

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Deadline extension to 20 Jan 2010 Call for abstracts and nominations!

Categories

- **Young Professionals in Science Award (25-40 years old)** for the most promising and innovative young scientists as future African leaders and innovators
- **Women in Science Award** for outstanding women engaged in innovative research and communication to end-users
- **IMPRESSA Award for Scientists** contributing to impact research and science in African agriculture including human & institutional development

2010
African Agriculture Science Competitions and Awards:
Recognizing Excellence in African Science and Innovation

for the Young Professionals and Women in Science Award

Submit abstracts to aqsci_award@fara-africa.org with copy to sciencecom@cta.int by **20 January 2010**. More information at: www.fara-africa.org.

for IMPRESSA Award

Submit nominations to secretariat@ruforum.org with copies to ekaya@africaonline.co.ke by **31 March 2010**. More information at www.ruforum.org



Opening new frontiers for Research and Education Networking in Africa

UbuntuNet Alliance in Association with RENU, the NREN of Uganda, organised the UbuntuNet-Connect 2009 conference which was held from the 12th to the 13th November 2009 at Hotel Africana in Kampala, Uganda.



Participants at UbuntuNet-Connect 2009 at Africana Hotel, Kampala, Uganda. (Center Hon. Aggrey Awori, Minister for Information Communication and Technology-Uganda)

The theme of the Conference was "Opening new frontiers for Research and Education Networking in Africa." Dr Washington Ochola and Ms Nodumo Dhlamini from RUFORUM Secretariat attended and made a presentation on "Application and Content Development in Agriculture: RUFORUM Initiatives".

The conference was officially opened by the Ugandan Minister of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), Hon Mr Aggrey Awori. The annual conference brought together over 100 practitioners and stakeholders from different parts of Africa to address current challenges, share lessons, and plan for the continuing growth of research and education networks in Africa. UbuntuNet-Connect 2009 also provided opportunities for special interest groups (such as the one on Grid Computing) to share their experiences and plans in the light of improving connectivity across the continent.

IFS supports Scientific Data Management course for Women Scientists

Twenty three young women scientist attended a training course on scientific data management under the auspices of RUFORUM and International Foundation for Science (IFS) held at Imperial Botanical Beach Hotel, Entebbe, Uganda. The 23 participants were drawn from the University of Nairobi, Egerton University, Kenyatta University all from Kenya, Makerere University and Fisheries Research Institute in Uganda, Sokoine Univer-

sity of Agriculture in Tanzania and University of Douala in Cameroon.

The training process was managed by Dr. Peter Njuho from South Africa and Dr. Margaret Nabasiye from Makerere University as the course instructors. Daily organization and supervision of the trainees were done by Petronella Nyakundi and Dr. Linley Chiwona-Karlton both from IFS. The training programme took ten days concentrating on GENSTAT. The course content delved on scientific data collection techniques, data management, data analysis, data presentation sample survey, questionnaire design report and scientific report writing.

The training would not have been successful without the support of Makerere University for providing transport for field excursion. Special thanks also goes to Dr. Specioza Kazibwe, former Vice President of Uganda who hosted the trainees for one full day at her farm and for her inspiration and mentorship; and to all other resource persons, confirming the old adage that, knowledge is like a candle, even as it lights another one, the flames of the original candle are not diminished by it.

Report by Oyugi Millicent Akiny MSc. Student at Egerton University.
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Participants who attended the training at Entebbe, Uganda

News and Events

The 9th African Crop Science Society conference took place in Cape Town, South Africa from Sept 28 to Oct 01, 2009. The conference was attended by about 350 participants from across Africa and other countries. During the conference poster and oral presentations were evaluated and winners offered cash prizes. Below is the list of the winners. A great congratulations to all of them.

AWARD	NAME (Presenting author)	TITLE
Best Paper	Mr Silvano Assanga	Combining ability of early quality protein maize (QPM) inbred lines adapted to the mid-altitude ecology of East Africa .
2 nd Best Paper	Mrs Annette Collett	The protection of agricultural land through the use of supporting information systems.
Best Poster	Mrs Jeannie van Biljon	The effect of rotational crops on different nematode species in an organic cotton farming system.
2 nd Best Poster	Ms Rhoda Nungo	Promoting finger millet by partners along the value chain in Western Kenya .
Cassava Research (Nassar Prize)	Ms Teddy Amuge	Genotyping Ugandan Cassava breeding populations using SSR markers associated with resistance to Cassava Mosaic Disease.
Resource Poor	Ms C M Onyango	Feasibility of commercial production of Amaranth (<i>Amaranthus hypochondriacus</i>) leaf vegetable by small-scale farmers in Kenya . small-scale farmers in Kenya .

The conference ended with a special Award ceremony for two scientists that have made outstanding contribution to crop production in Africa. The awards went to Prof. Agnes Wakesho Mwang'ombe, from University of

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Alexander Bombom a Ugandan and currently pursuing a doctorate degree in Plant breeding and Biotechnology at Makerere University. He is funded under a grant from the World Bank and implemented through the Uganda Millennium Science Initiative (UMSI). Alex completed his Master of Science in Crop Science degree at Makerere University in 2007 with support from a grant by the East African Regional Programme and Research Network for Biotechnology, Biosafety and Biotechnology Policy Development (BIO-EARN). Subsequently, Alex worked with the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) as a research assistant with the Technology Uptake and Upscaling Support Initiative (TUUSI), beginning September 2007 to June 2008 and thereafter enrolled for his PhD study. Alex's interests in the academia are in plant breeding and genetics though with keen interest in other agricultural fields including agribusiness. His social life is characterised by travel and active sport, in particular, athletics, football and martial arts.

He can be contact at Email: derjr2000@yahoo.co.uk

RUFORUM CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Call ID: RU/CGS/CARP/15/02/2010
CONCEPT NOTE DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 15, 2010

For selection in March 2010

RUFORUM announces the **RUFORUM Community Action Research Programme (CARP) First Call for Proposals**. The purpose of the Programme is to demonstrate innovative approaches towards strengthened University engagement with development practice in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa. Initially, priority will be given to projects that focus on scaling-up and out research outputs from the most successful RUFORUM CGS projects. Projects to be funded should also show linkage of participating university researchers with on-going pilots developed by Universities, CGIAR centers, international NGO's, or National extension experiments. Please consult guidelines for writing the call and CARP proposals. Concepts that do not follow guidelines closely may be disqualified. For more information on RUFORUM and the CARP call, please visit www.ruforum.org

TIME FRAME for Call ID RU/CGS/CARP/15/02/2010

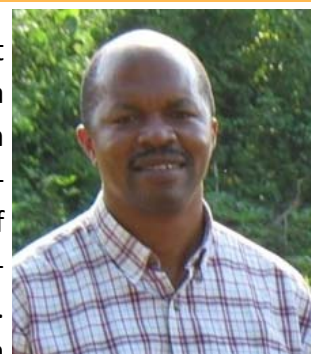
1. Deadline for Concept Note submission to RUFORUM Secretariat is **15 February 2010**.
2. Compliance Review by RUFORUM Secretariat by **1 March 2010**.
3. Technical Committee to select potential proposals by **15 March 2010**.
4. Full Proposal Writing Workshop to be held by **30 April 2010**.
5. Secretariat to compile proposals for final selection and approval by Technical Committee by **15 May 2010**.
6. Results from the selection will be communicated to PIs by **end of May, 2010**.
7. Projects to commence implementation by **end of June, 2010**

Global Partnership Initiative for Plant Breeding Capacity Building Award Competition



Mr. Maphosa Mcebisi

Mr. Mcebisi Maphosa, a RUFORUM PhD Student at Makerere University and Dr Phinehas Tukamuhabwa, a lecturer and plant breeder at the same University won the Global Partnership Initiative for Plant Breeding Capacity Building (GIPB) grant award under the auspices of Food and Agriculture Organisation. The Award, amounting to US \$ 4,000, is to support a study on soybean rust. The competition which was open to individuals from government, private institutions and civil society re-



Dr. Tukamuhabwa Phinehas

quired applicants to design a study to analyse the state of knowledge on breeding for durable resistance to rust which is threatening soybean production globally. RUFORUM congratulates Mr. Mcebisi Maphosa and Dr. Phinehas Tukamuhabwa upon winning the grant award and wishes them success in their endeavours.