

Celebrating Fara 15 Johannesburg, South Africa November, 2014

Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) is the technical arm of African Union (AU) on agricultural research with a mandate to lead Africa's Science agenda. It celebrated 15 years of its operations in Africa as the Apex body coordinating Agricultural Research.

Ruforum exhibits at FARA 15 celebrations (23-24/11/2014)

Following consultative meetings of Faculty of Agriculture deans and directors of schools of Agriculture in RUFORUM member universities, Strategic and business plans for RUFORUM2016-2020 were launched. This was done as a side event during the FARA 15 celebrations at OR Tambo Conference centre Birchwood Hotel, Johannesburg, South Africa. At the same time, RUFORUM made a land mark move to incorporate West Africa in its operations following a memorandum of understanding between RUFORUM and African Union at Maputo in July, 2014. This memorandum of understanding made RUFORUM a continental organization. Moreover, a journal of Agriculture and Rural development was launched to be lead by Stellenbosch University, South Africa. This occasion was graced by her excellency Rhoda Tumesime of African union.

College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences, University of Nairobi Exhibits at Birchwood Hotel Johannesburg, South Africa

The University of Nairobi through College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences (CAVS) exhibited at Birchwood Hotel Johannesburg, South Africa during the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) 15 years celebrations held between 26th and 28th November, 2014. FARA is the technical arm of African Union (AU) on agricultural research with a mandate to lead Africa's Science agenda. It celebrated 15 years of its operations in Africa as the Apex body coordinating Agricultural Research.

The University of Nairobi through College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences (CAVS) was the only Kenya Public University with a stand fully manned by Dr. Kinama through the period of exhibition.

The stand was within RUFORUM secretariat stands where RUFORUM Universities were exhibiting. University of Nairobi was strategically placed with access to FARA 15 delegates who took their 10 o'clock and 4 O'clock tea directly opposite the UON stand.

In position ONE in East and Central Africa according to Webometric ranking, the UON attracted a lot of attention from both the research institutions and universities in attendance. This was an opportune moment for the university to showcase its diverse academic programs from its six colleges in general and CAVs programs in particular. The UON made the best decision to exhibit in South Africa which leads other countries in African universities Webometric ranking. This

was the best forum to showcase University of Nairobi academic programs, research breakthroughs and innovations.



FARA 15 celebration delegates converge and exchange talk on the diversity of academic programs and innovations exhibited at the CAVS/UON stand during tea break at Birchwood hotel, Johannesburg, South Africa



University of Nairobi ALUMINI
Prof. Onyango (middle right) with FARA delegates discusses SEMIs and role of Unibrain and incubating young professionals in agribusiness at the CAVS/University of Nairobi stand Birchwood Hotel, Johannesburg, South Africa

Makerere university, university of Luanar and University of Zambia were the only other universities exhibiting their innovations within RUFORUM secretariat stands.

CAVS represented the UON and had banners from the faculty of Agriculture and SEMIs. Additionally, posters from SEMIs were fully displayed and attracted big attention from the participants from East Africa, Central Africa, West Africa, South Africa the hosts and North Africa respectively. CAVS had brochures from the departments in Faculty of Veterinary medicine, Faculty of Agriculture and Wangari Mathai Institute of Peace and Environmental studies. It had also carried with it all other five college brochures of the University of Nairobi including college of Architecture and Engineering (CAE), College of Health Sciences (CHS), College of Education and External Studies (CEES), College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS), College of Biological and Physical Sciences(CBPS) as well as Board of Post graduate studies (BPS).



Professor Ekwum Adipala the Executive secretary of RUFORUM visits University of Nairobi and chats with a guest to the UON stand during FARA 15 celebrations at Birchwood Hotel, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Key among the visitors to UON stand were the CGIAR participants who had the largest number of stands in the entire exhibitions supported the efforts made by FARA in Agricultural research in Africa.



South African FARA 15 celebrations delegates take time to examine CAVS academic programs that interests their career sand seed business development birchwood hotel, Johannesburg, South Africa.



Dr. Kinama engages a FARA 15 celebrations delegate on the role of SEMIs and Uniseed on the development of seed industry in Kenya and the rest of Africa who visited UON stand on seed training at Birchwood Hotel Johannesburg, South Africa.



Fara delegate keenly study the UON academic programs on offer by many colleges of UON at the university stand at Johannesburg, South Africa



Development partners discuss the role of universities in agriculture and agribusiness in particular at UON exhibition stand during FARA 15 celebrations at Birchwood Hotel, Johannesburg, South Africa

A further advantage of UON stand was visits from a large number of ALUMNI of UON particularly from SADC countries and were impressed by the many courses currently offered by all colleges of UON and particularly CAVS. A large number of students took brochures and inquired about taking both post graduate and undergraduate courses at UON.



Prospective South African postgraduate candidates keenly going through courses at UON/CAVS stand with in mind Courses in Seed Science and Technology on the SEMI's poster at Birchwood Hote IJohannesburg, South Africa



Curiously many participants from the ministries of agriculture, fisheries, livestock made their way to the stand made inquiries of courses offered and wondered how they can benefit from the established UniSeed at CAVS/UON.

University of Nairobi tremendously increased its visibility in SADC but much more so in the South Africa where many universities including Pretoria, Capetown and Stelebosch who are ahead of UON in webmtric ranking are but were not exhibiting. In this case, UON benefited immensely from showcasing its programs and innovations to CGIAR and others. Because UON is iso certified and properly branded it was very possible to easily interact and sell its products to a wider audience.



Nigerian prospective post graduate student during FARA 15 celebrations at UON stand sampling academic programs



BUKINA FUSO scientist takes time to inspect post graduate programs and SEMIs projects CAVS/UON stand during the FARA 15 celebrations at Birchwood Hotel, Johannesburg, South Africa

The UON had an advantage of seeing great scientists from Africa's major research organizations including KARI, ASARECA, ENDA CCARDESA, IITA, ILRI, CORA/F, CIAT among many.

The Science Agenda during FARA 15 celebrations

FARA was celebrating 15 years of promoting research and innovations in Africa. The central theme of celebrating FARA event was renewal, repositioning and refocusing of FARA (3R platform). It took stock of its achievements and repositioned itself for enhanced agricultural research in Africa. Agricultural Research in Africa occurs in key blocks namely:- i) Association for coordinating Agricultural Research in East and Central Africa (ASARECA), ii) for western Africa is ENDA, iii) for Southern Africa is CCARDESA, while iv) for northern Africa is NASRO.

During the Galla night at Emperors Palace, many awards were given to current and past members of FARA staff for their achievements and dedication to work. FARA launched its new Logo, was branded and launched a website.

During the Science Agenda, FARA launched its strategic plan for the coming years in the presence of many development partners.



The executive director FARA Dr. Emi Akinbamijo addresses the delegates at the start of the science agenda during FARA 15 celebrations at Birchwood Hotel Johannesburg, South Africa.



To celebrate the FARA Celebrations, the South African traditional dancers who had come to entertain the guests pause for a photograph at the entrance to the exhibition stands at Birchwood Hotel, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Among the key note speakers invited for the SCIENCE Agenda included Prof C. Juma who noted that 50% of arable land in the world was in Africa. To exploit this land needed new approaches to ecosystems, sustainability food security and nutrition. A new transformation was needed to feed Africa and make Africa the grain basket of the world. Africa will produce and manufacture and add value to its products. In order to do this there is need to utilize ICT, infrastructure (irrigation), transportation and energy while engaging in entrepreneurship.



Prof C. Juma addressing the FARA 15th anniversary celebration delegates during his key note speech for the Science agenda at Birchwood Hotel, Johannesburg South Africa.

He further noted that In many parts of the world university research has been linked to agricultural production, entrepreneurship in Africa. Africa need to use genomics (gene sequencing and editing) to fasten research), remote sensing in mapping crops and moisture sensing.

He called for African presidents or heads of government to take advantage of utilizing Science advisors and tap on the advantages of scientific breakthroughs for enhanced development.

On GMOs he advocated for consideration on a case by case basis rather bracket recommendations.



FARA 15 celebrations delegates follow proceedings of the Science agenda at Birchwood Hotel, Johannesburg, South Africa.

The second speaker was Dr. Kanayo Mwanze president of IFAD and former director of WARDA.

He noted that foreign investment in Africa had more than tripled, while between 1981-2010 poverty in Africa had increased. There was need to eliminate hunger, increase incomes and reduce overall poverty in the continent. Need to involve the youth and women in all efforts geared to transforming agricultural productivity in Africa. He noted that there was a big yield gap (eg Africa 10kg versus 100kg Asia), the path to economic development is via agricultural development. He need to improve on irrigation, develop markets and add value to agricultural production. Universities need to be linked to national research centres in order to make a difference in agricultural productivity



Fara Staff (in west African attire) pause for a photo with key note speakers after the end of the FARA 15 celebrations Birch wood hotel Johannesburg South Africa delegates at the opening ceremony FARA 15



Key note speakers Prof Kanayo, Prof. Juma and other panelists take questions from the FARA 15 delegates during the proceedings of the Science Agenda, Birchwood Hotel, Johannesburg, South Africa



Commissioner her excellency Tumesime Rhoda addressing FARA delegates during the Science Agenda proceedings as Dr Adinamijo looks on at Birchwood Hotel, Johannesburg, South Africa.

During the FARA 15 celebrations, Climate smart Agriculture (CSA) had a side event that that looked at policies and practices in Africa that are likely to adapt and mitigate against climate



change effects. Dr Kinama participated at the CSA side event among other delegates during the FARA 15 celebrations at Birchwood Hotel

CSA side event that held discussions on the possible policies and practices that can be sustained with internally and externally generated funds which are African driven in sub-Saharan Africa.



University of Nairobi participates in group discussions on the wayforward to getting suitable CSA policies and sustainable funding both in the short term and long term basis.

Finally, FARA had hosted a Galla dinner for the participants at Emperors Palace Johannessburg. During this occasion, many awards were given to current and past members of FARA staff in recognition of their achievements and dedication to work. At the same time, FARA launched its new Logo, was branded and launched a new website.

Dr Josiah Mwivandi Kinama

CAVS representative to University Exhibitions