



18th RUFORUM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Theme: Strengthening Africa's Agri-food Systems in the Post COVID-19 Era – Opportunities and Challenges

Building Resilient Crop Systems in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges

Venue: Diamond Lecture Theatre, University of Zimbabwe

Date: Tuesday 13th December 2022

Time: 08:30 – 16:00 CAT

Registration Link: <https://bit.ly/3JsbyHE>

Concept Note

**Convener: Dr. Richard Edema, Director, Makerere University
Regional Centre for Crop Improvement (MaRCCI)**

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**RUFORUM Focal Person: Ms. Nada Siddig Abdalla Musa
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Background

Africa's agriculture continues to face daunting challenges making the task of stabilizing her agri-system a very difficult one, the latest of which are overcoming the effects of COVID and ravages of climate seen across the continent. Africa urgently needs to innovate to build resilience and robustness in her food systems to not only feed her hungry population but also secure and sustain socio-economic development. The food system is described as "all the elements (environment, people, inputs processes, infrastructures, institutions, etc.) and activities that relate to the production, processing, distribution, preparation and consumption of food, and the outputs of these activities, including socio-economic and environmental outcomes.

An agenda for innovation for Africa to meet the Sustainable Development Goal 2: "End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture" is urgently required. This agenda should address the aspirations of the African Union, "the Africa We Want" by 2063 as described in the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).

Several previous event have focused on issues of resilience in African agriculture (ReSAKSS, 2021; APBA, 2021). This event provides yet another platform to assess progress made. The

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event will be part of the RUFORUM and African Crop Science Society Scientific Conference that will be held 12-14 December 2022 as part of the RUFORUM Annual General Meeting Conference in Harare Zimbabwe from 12-16 December 2022. This convening will be hosted both virtually and in-person at this conference.

Addressing Agri-food systems requires a multidisciplinary approach to address bottlenecks and harness emerging opportunities. It is proposed that leading scientists and students from a wide range of disciplines from across the globe will participate in this event to discuss current research thrusts to strengthen Agri-food systems resilience in Africa, with particular emphasis on crop improvement.

Event overview

The convening will be a one day event and will consist of keynote addresses, technical presentations, exhibitions and poster sessions that will provide an excellent opportunity to network and exchange ideas on issues that directly influence agriculture and socio-economic development in Africa. The broad thematic areas to be covered will include:

- Seed technology and seed delivery systems
- Harnessing biotechnology tools for crop improvement
- Developing climate change resilient varieties and breeds
- Building Africa's work force for resilience to emerging environment challenges

Draft Programme

Time	Activity
Session 1: Official Opening and Setting the Stage	
Session Chair: Dr. Mick Mwala, University of Zambia	
08:00-08:30	Arrival and Registration
08:30-08:35	Welcome Remarks by Dr. Mick Mwala , Session Chair
08:35-08:45	Remarks by Dr. Richard Edema , Director of Makerere University Regional Centre for Crop Improvement (MaRCCI)
08:45-08:55	Remarks by Mr. Hambani Masheleni , Ag. Head of Science and Technology of HRST Department, African Union Commission
08:55-09:05	Official Opening Address by Hon. Gabriel Changson Chang , Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, South Sudan
09:05-09:25	Key Note Address: Modernizing Africa's Crop Improvement Programmes to meet current and future development needs by Prof. Patrick Okori , Deputy Director of ICRISAT's Global Research Programme on Accelerated Crop Improvement and RUFORUM Incoming Executive Secretary
09:25-10:00	Open Discussion
10:00-10:30	Health Break
Session 2: Building Resilient Crop Improvement Systems in Africa	
Session Chair: Dr. Sokona Dagnoko, Former Country Director of Sasakawa Africa Association (SAA), Mali	

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10:30-10:45	Paper 1: Modernizing Breeding Programmes: Experiences from the Public and Private Sector: Prof. John Derera , Senior Director Plant Breeding and Prebreeding, One-CGIAR
10:45-11:00	Paper 2: Human Resources Requirement: Opportunities and Lessons Learnt: Prof. Pangirayi Tongoona , WACCI, University of Ghana Legon
11:00-11:20	Discussion
11:20-12:30	Panel Discussion: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Prof. Eric Danquah, Generating Improved Crop Technologies: Progress and Lessons from West African Centre for Crop Improvement, University of Ghana Legon Seed Company – Dr. Gordon Maduyaye, Global Head of Research and Development, SeedCo Limited, Zimbabwe National Programme Perspective, Dr. Kassim Sadik, National Agricultural Research Organization, Uganda Policy Perspective –Dr. John Mutuku, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Lusaka-Zambia
12:30:13:00	Discussion
13:00-14:00	Lunch
Session 3: Improved Crop Technologies and Allied Innovations	
Session Chair: Prof. Julius Ochuodho, University of Eldoret, Kenya	
14:00-14:15	Lead Paper: Building Partnership for Delivery: Dr. Madakadza Rufaro , Senior Programme Officer, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)
14:15-14:30	Respondent 1: Dr. Waithaka Michael , Adoption of Improved Seed Technologies, African Seed Access Index, Kenya
14:30-14:45	Respondent 2: Dr. Stephen Muchiri , CEO, East African Farmers Federation, Kenya
14:45-15:00	Respondent 3: Perspective from a Farmer: Ms. Nora Asio Ebukalin , Popular Women Knowledge Initiative (P'KWI), Uganda
15:00-15:20	Discussion
15:20-15:40	Open Discussion
15:40-15:50	Summary of emerging issues and the way forward: Dr. Mcebisi Maphosa , Senior Lecturer, Lupane State University, Zimbabwe
15:50-16:00	Closing Remarks by Prof. Ismail Simbwa Gyagenda , Rector, Islamic University In Uganda (IUIU)

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