

18th RUFORUM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2022

Increasing collaboration between post-graduate university training of plant breeders, crop technologists and the food security and nutrition value chain in Zimbabwe

Date: 14th December 2022

Time: 8:00 am - 1:15pm CAT

Venue: Lecture Room F2, University of Zimbabwe

Contact: ZPBA Secretariat

zimplantbreedersassociation@gmail.com

Introduction

Zimbabwe's agricultural development, food security and nutrition rests on the development of a critical mass of expertise in plant breeding, agronomy, food processing and nutrition in both the public and private sectors. Accordingly, Zimbabwean universities offer a wide range of post-graduate agricultural programmes at masters and doctorate in various disciplines including crop improvement, sustainable crop production, food and nutrition security as well as agri-business. These programmes were historically delivered in collaboration with smallholder/large scale farmers, the private sector, government research institutions, and International Agricultural Research Centres (IARCs) based in Zimbabwe such as CIMMYT, CIAT and ICRISAT. Funding of post-graduate education in agriculture, food and nutrition (AFN) ensures quality research and retention of skilled personnel in Universities and across the National Agricultural Research and Extension System (NARES) including in food and nutrition clusters. Zimbabwe's agricultural research and training has been unable to attract funding from major international donors from 2002 due to government foreign policy-related constraints. Limited access to finance has negatively impacted on AFN research and training across all public universities.

The lack of adequate funding of the current programmes has not only limited the scope of the post-graduate research but has also restricted the inclusion of important stakeholders in the development of various innovations by universities. Challenges faced by Universities include access to modern equipment, software, foreign currency to secure databases, transport and poor networking between stakeholders. Nonetheless, great innovations have also happened during the same period. These

CO-ORGANISERS:



innovations include crop varietal improvements and integrated crop management strategies to contribute towards climate-smart agriculture, and eradication of undernutrition and hidden hunger through biofortification. Equally important, gains have been made in value chain management, ICT, post-harvest technologies and pathways in the water-food-nutrition nexus. At times these gains are often compartmentalized and limited in reach, yet higher impact could be achieved with coordinated collaboration. Sustainable dissemination of these innovations and further adaptive research requires strong multi-stakeholder approaches. At the moment there is no platform for engagement of all the various stakeholders in agricultural research.

1

Against the backdrop, a one day side event will be held on the 14th of December 2022 at the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) and is being proposed by the Zimbabwe Plant Breeders Association (ZPBA) in collaboration with Ruforum Member Universities in Zimbabwe seeks to bring together the following stakeholders:

- a. The Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development (MH&TE STD) and its sister Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development (MLAFWRD), the National Biotechnology Authority of Zimbabwe (NBA Zimbabwe),
- b. University system in Zimbabwe who include Deans of Agricultural Faculties in Zimbabwe,
- c. Chairpersons and Post-Graduate Degree Coordinators,
- d. Heads of Institutions in the National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems ie the Department of Agricultural Research and Innovation Development (DARID), the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Advisory Services (DARDAS),
- e. Farmer associations ZFU/ZCFU/CFU etc,
- f. Councils responsible for food and nutrition professionals,
- g. Government Departments involved in food and nutrition security including health plus industrial fortification,
- h. Private and public research organisations based in Zimbabwe eg Zimbabwe Sugar Association Experiment Station (ZSAES), the Tobacco Research Board (TRB) etc,
- i. The Zimbabwe Seed Association (ZSA),
- j. International Agricultural Research Centres (IARCs) based in Zimbabwe eg CIMMYT, CIAT, ICRISAT etc,
- k. Heads of Donor Agencies who finance research and development in agriculture,
- l. United Nations (UN) Agencies based in Zimbabwe,

CO-ORGANISERS:



- m. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs),
- n. Private companies involved in the food value chain and marketing in Zimbabwe.

The side event will touch on Thematic Area 6 on Enhancing Post-Harvest Management, Value-Addition and Nutrition and Thematic Area 7 on Upscaling impact of university and community connectedness. The aim of the side event is to establish a framework for enhanced cooperation between the university system and various research partners, extension, NGOs and donors. It is premised that universities involved in research and training in Zimbabwe cannot work alone in solving problems facing the agricultural sector and improvement of food security and nutrition in Zimbabwe in pursuit of Education 5.0. Similarly, stakeholders can benefit from the pool of scholars for basic research and the science and business of technology delivery. A platform can therefore create an opportunity for user-led and demand-driven teaching, research and training at public universities, making research products more useful to the community at large.

The side event should be able to contribute to the following outcomes:

- i. Improved joint priority setting and networking between Universities, NARES, food security and nutrition players, private and public research organisations, IARCs and donors involved in crop improvement, seed supply and marketing of crops.
- ii. Better opportunities for financial support to crop improvement, agronomy, food security and nutrition and market value chain post-graduate students in Zimbabwean Universities.
- iii. Enhanced cooperation between different stakeholders involved in crop improvement, agronomy, food security and nutrition; and off-takers in the marketing value chain in Zimbabwe. This should lead to co-identification of key areas of collaboration, including joint fund-raising in actors involved in capacity building, research, food processing, nutrition and food marketing.
- iv. Presentation of current research and extension tools among scientists in the university system and other partners.
- v. Contributions by stakeholders on different curricula offered by Zimbabwean universities involved in post-graduate research in the crop-improvement and market development value chain.
- vi. Increased participation by Zimbabwean universities between RUFORUM and other fellow member institutions evidenced through improved communication and student enrolments.

CO-ORGANISERS:



Side Event Programme

The RUFORUM 18th Annual General Meeting (AGM) offers an opportunity to Zimbabwean Ruforum member universities to show case their graduate programmes to other stakeholders in research, extension, development and the donor community. This will give a platform for contributions to curricula, potential collaboration, joint priority setting while interrogating current challenges faced by stakeholders in training and research. This one day event will involve university officials, heads of NARS, extension, food and nutrition players and value chain players in the seed and food sectors in Zimbabwe sharing their current activities while setting a pathway or a shared future growth trajectory. This will offer opportunities to explore potential collaboration and funding opportunities to add value between stakeholders.

Discussions on strategies to improve cooperation and open up funding opportunities in agricultural training, research and extension in Zimbabwe with other stakeholders in the seed supply and food and nutrition security value chain will be explored. The side event offers an opportunity to open up wider participation by universities in Zimbabwe to be at par with their peers in the continent in terms of funding and collaborations. This should improve the quality of graduates and research output while helping the seed supply and food and nutrition value chain with innovations/technologies that will reduce hunger in Zimbabwe and beyond as espoused in Education 5.0. The side-event will be presented in oral and poster format.

REGISTRATION

Please confirm your participation by email to either ZPBA Secretariat - zimplantbreedersassociation@gmail.com, Mr Tendai Madanzi - madanzit@staff.msu.ac.zw, Dr Casper N Kamutando - kamutandocn@gmail.com, Dr Benhilda Masuka – benhildah.masuka@seedcogroup.com, Dr Pepukai Manjeru – manjerup@staff.msu.ac.zw or Mr Enock Maereka – maerekae@gmail.com by Monday 12 December 2022.

CO-ORGANISERS:



PROGRAMME OF THE DAY

Time **Agenda**

Director of Ceremony: **Mr Tawanda Nixon Mangisi (Synergy)**

Time	Activity	Presenter/Chair (s)
08:00 – 08:30	Arrivals and Registration	
08:30-08:35	Welcome remarks President Zimbabwe Plant Breeders Association	Dr F Magama
08:35 – 08:45	Setting the goals of event on behalf of Zimbabwean Ruforum Member Universities Vice-Chancellors	Prof VN Muzvidziwa (MSU)
08:45 – 09:00	Remarks and official opening - Permanent Secretary Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development	Dr J Basera (MLAFWRD)
09:05 – 09:20	Combined presentation from Chairpersons/Programme Coordinators of post graduate crop improvement programmes of Zimbabwe RUFORUM member universities on their curricula, challenges and opportunities	Prof E Gasura (UZ)
09:20 – 09:35	Donors and UN agencies' perspective on funding for collaborative agricultural research for development in Zimbabwe	Abang Mathew/Ronia Tanyongana (FAO, Zimbabwe)
09:35-10:30	Presentations on limitations and opportunities to collaborations with universities: Chief Director DARID Chief Director DARDAS CGIAR representative (CIMMYT) TRB Seed Co	Dr D Kutwayo Prof O Jiri Dr M Siambi Dr S Dimbi L Mwadzingeni
10:30 -10:45	Tea/Coffee/Health and Wellness Break	
10:45 – 11:30	Break-out Sessions: Strengthening Collaboration x 4	Team Leaders Ms BO Mavankeni (CBI) Dr LT Mpofu (ZSAES) Mr F Munyanyi (DEKALB) Mr AT Mushita (CTDC)
11:30 – 12:10	Report back	Mr Nyasha Rushwaya
12:10 -12:40	General discussion	All – (Director of Ceremonies)
12:40 – 12:55	Words of advice and remarks – Ruforum Secretariat	Prof E Adipala/Ruforum Rep
12:55 -13:00	Closing Remarks	Dr G Madamombe (MUAST)
13:00	Lunch and Departure	

FUNDING AND REGISTRATION FEES

Kindly email: zimplantbreedersassociation@gmail.com Cell: 0784618719; 0719281597

CO-ORGANISERS:

