



Remarks from Dr. Alice Mutiti Mweetwa, RUFORUM Deputy Executive Secretary, Programme Development and Implementation during Webinar 5 – *Building a Regional Response to Invasive Pests and Trans-boundary Crop-livestock Diseases.*
29th July, 2020

Excellencies, distinguished Webinar panelists, participants, dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen. It is a great pleasure and honour for me to welcome you to the fifth in a Series of fourteen RUFORUM Webinars that we launched on 10th June 2020. Briefly, the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) is a Network of 128 universities across 38 African Countries, formed in 2004. It's current Vision 2020: *vibrant, transformative universities catalyzing sustainable, inclusive agricultural development to feed and create prosperity for Africa*, responds to the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2024) and to the broad aspirations of Agenda 2063.

The Webinar on “***Building a Regional Response to Invasive Pests and Trans-boundary Crop-livestock Diseases***” has been motivated by the need for a high level conversation on how to deal with plant and crop-livestock pests and diseases of invasive and trans-boundary nature that are ravaging many countries in Africa. Such pests and diseases are devastating livestock and crop production worsening the dire food situation in most of African countries.

Because of trans-boundary nature, it is not possible or let alone prudent, for any one individual country to expend human and financial resources to deal with this category of pests and diseases alone. This Webinar, therefore, seeks a dialogue and a mapping out of possible regionally coordinated and collaborated actions by experts and policy makers. Together, the impacts of these elements so far, the regional policy interventions, institutional support mechanisms, collective financing and capacity building in response to these elements will be deliberated.

Join me to thank our Moderator and Panelists for today's Webinar. And to all of you participants, we at RUFORUM greatly appreciate your participation this afternoon. I implore you to join in the discussion and pay keen attention to the propositions the Panelists make.

Allow me this opportunity to invite you to join us on the 31th July 2020, for yet another very exciting webinar on: ***Leaving No One Behind: The importance of Family Farmers' Wellbeing to Africa's Realization of Sustainable Development Goals and the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).***

Thank you.