

# RUFORUM MONTHLY

## LAUNAR - A NEW HOPE FOR AGRICULTURAL CONTRIBUTION IN MALAWI



Above: George .Y. Kanyama Phiri, New Vice Chancellor at LUANAR

As you approach the university, you quickly notice the on-going infrastructure changes, a new hope awaits with leadership from Prof. Kanyama Phiri, the new Vice chancellor at Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR). Bunda College of Agriculture, formerly one of the constituent Colleges of University of Malawi, has been upgraded into a University effective July 01, 2012 and now known as LUANAR.

Various initiatives have contributed to strengthening of Bunda College that made it possible for the Government of Malawi to promote it to the University level. Some of these initiatives include the 10 year support by the Rockefeller Foundation under the Forum programme that really helped strengthen the research and training programme, and RUFORUM, in terms of Strengthening research and postgraduate training.

Based on the above, an independent consultancy recognised the potential

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- **RUFORUM Monthly** provides information on activities of the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture.
- This **Monthly Brief** is available on the last week of every month ■

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The International Food and Agribusiness Management Association 23rd Annual World Symposium. June 19 - 20, 2013, Atlanta, Georgia. [Read more](#)

Africa Agriculture Science Week 2013. 15-20 July 2013. Accra, Ghana. [Read more](#)

Building strategies for Africa: Adding-value through organic agriculture. Workshop on organic farming, Brussels, 11 -12 July, 2013

More information on RUFORUM activities can be accessed on the RUFORUM BLOG at <http://ruforum.org/a/ruforumblog/>

## LAUNCHING NEW JOURNAL: THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION

We are pleased to announce the launch of a new periodical entitled the International Journal of African Higher Education as a joint initiative between the International Network for Higher Education in Africa and the Association of African Universities. IJAHE will advance knowledge, promote research, as well as provide a forum for policy discussion and analysis on diverse higher education issues in the continent. IJAHE anticipates to play a vital role in shaping discourse, reporting new frontiers and creating a nexus for communication and networking among a wide array of researchers, students, academicians, policy makers and policy analysts interested in and concerned with higher education in Africa.

IJAHE, as a multidisciplinary journal, will publish research articles, essays, and reviews on a multitude of higher education issues in Africa. The Journal will also publish special issues that are comparative and theme-based in nature. The Journal will consider issues not only on the theory and practice of African higher education from scholars around the world but will also strongly encourage higher education practitioners in the continent to contribute and share their expertise and experience. The Journal will serve as an independent and unbiased forum that will accommodate a wide variety of perspectives and analysis, which are solid in their formulation and organization.

IJAHE will be a peer-reviewed, in-print and largely electronic-based journal. It will adhere to high academic and scientific standards that will be ensured and consolidated by a team of prominent Editorial Board and Advisory Board members drawn from the continent and internationally. The Editorial Team of IJAHE will be composed of prominent experts in higher education in Africa and around the world and will be headed by its Editor-in-Chief, Professor Damtew Teferra, leader of the Higher Education Training and Development at the University of Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa and the Founding Director of the International Network for Higher Education in Africa that will soon be posted at the University. IJAHE will appear bi-annually, but depending on need and/or volume of articles, it may appear more frequently, as special issue. [Click here](#) to read more.

For more information about the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), Contact: The **Newsletter Editor**, RUFORUM Secretariat, Plot 151 Garden Hill, Makerere University Main Campus, P.O. Box 7062, Kampala, Uganda. Fax: +256 414 534153; Tel: +256 414 535939; E-mail: [secretariat@ruforum.org](mailto:secretariat@ruforum.org); or visit the RUFORUM Website at [www.ruforum.org](http://www.ruforum.org).



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of Bunda becoming a regional training node for the region and hence the reason why RUFORUM set up two regional PhD Programmes, Agricultural and Rural Economics (ARE) and Aquaculture and Fisheries (AQF).

The first planning and draft concept for transforming Bunda to a University was during the 2005 RUFORUM Annual General Meeting and meeting of Ministers from Uganda, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe held in Kampala. The team consisted of the late Malawian Minister of Education Hon. Kate Kainja-Kaluluma, the late Prof James Banda, Dr Mary Shawa (current Board Member of RUFORUM), Prof Vincent Saka, Prof. Moses Kwapata and Prof George Kanyama Phiri who has been appointed the Vice Chancellor of the new university. As a Secretariat we are happy to have been associated with these endeavours and thank those who laid the seed for this great development.

Since 1987, the university has greatly matured into a focal Agricultural Higher Education reference point in Malawi. It will be noted that the university was the only reference point in Malawi over the years, coping with demand for more qualified agricultural scientists as there was limited capacity as a college to accommodate more intakes. It has been a process for this change to occur. Since 1995, there has been a need to turn the College into a university and this only materialized in 2011 when the act of Bunda College becoming a public university (LUANAR) was approved with the hope that it will ad-

dress some of the gaps in the agricultural sectors by focusing on higher education in agriculture.

Prof. Kanyama-Phiri, the new Vice Chancellor of LUANAR has been a long serving member of the College. He brings on board experiences of working as a principal under the former Bunda College of Agriculture.

LUANAR brings a new hope for young qualified students to access higher education with a capacity to admit up to 1000 students as showed in the first year of the university existence LUANAR. "I would rather have a qualification and look for a job then have a job with no qualification" Prof. Kanyama-Phiri said.

The university would like to contribute to the Malawi growth strategy on Higher Education. LUANAR hopes to better respond to the agricultural challenges of the country as it is better placed to contribute to capacity building in the area of agriculture through increasing the number of highly trained students for the nation which is largely focused on agriculture. Joining the RUFORUM network in a capacity as a university will give LUANAR a platform to contribute to the network and access resources that the network has to offer. According to Prof. Kanyama-Phiri, "Higher Education is the key to unlocking poverty in the World and in Sub-Saharan Africa in particular". [Click here](#) for more about LAUNAR.

## HIGH QUALITY RESEARCH AND ROBUST POSTGRADUATE TRAINING KEY IN IMPROVING UNIVERSITIES VISIBILITY



Above: Dr. John Phiri, Minister of Education, Science, Vocational training

Minister of Education, Science, Vocational training and Early Education Dr. John Phiri says the Government of Zambia is determined to see to it that University of Zambia (UNZA) regains its past glory and continues taking a lead in the provision of higher education. Dr. Phiri was speaking when he officiated at the opening of the corporate governance and retreat of the university of Zambia Council, management and stakeholders. He said government was determined to see that the huge debt that the institution carried was dismantled.

"While we have this determination to bring UNZA out of the doldrums, I want you to be aware that there are many other public universities that are being 'born'. The implication is that government resources will be stretched, particularly when the other 'babies' are up and running. It is in this regards that I wish to commend you and your team for taking initiatives to come for this retreat and think through how you want to reposition the University of Zambia in this new era," he said.

Dr. Phiri said reposition the university means wanting to continue being the leader in Higher Education. This means focusing, not only on undergraduate teaching as has been the case for many years, but enhancing post graduate training, high quality research relevant to industry, and community outreach. He challenged UNZA to put in place a robust postgraduate training that should attract the best students not only from within the country but internationally for it is at that level that UNZA can engage in the kind of research (both basic and applied) that will make the institution visible and occupy a respectable place, not only in Africa but at the global level.

"To this effect, I would like to challenge the academics, in particular, to rise to the occasion and contribute visibility of the University of Zambia by engaging in high quality research. I am aware that this is not an easy road because research requires a lot of resources. But at the same time, this is your calling and you accepted the calling. I therefore expect that you should develop the skill of writing proposals and compete for research money lying out there". He said.

**Story reproduced with minor modifications from the UNZA Newsletter September-December, 2012 issue, Page 4. [Click here](#) to know more about UNZA.**

## DR. OSIRU MOVES TO ICRISAT -MALI AS SENIOR SCIENTIST



After four years of service, Dr. Moses Osiru, RUFORUM's Deputy Executive Secretary will be leaving RUFORUM on January 30, 2012 to take up a position as Senior Scientist Legume/Cereal Pathologist (West and Central Africa) with the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi- Arid Tropics (ICRISAT). Dr.

Osiru will be based in ICRISAT's Bamako office in Mali and will work in cereals (sorghum and pearl millet) and legumes (groundnut) in the West and Central Africa Region.

Dr. Osiru joined RUFORUM Secretariat in 2009 as the Manager –Networking Advocacy and Grants. Over the period he served at the Secretariat, he was promoted to the Deputy Executive Secretary, a position he served for 1 year before joining ICRISAT. Dr. Osiru was instrumental in development of The Tertiary Education for Agriculture Mechanism (TEAM ) Africa, Linking RUFORUM with several International partners, Designing and launching the university community based action research where universities are linking with other actors to build entrepreneurship capacities of farming communities especially the fish communities. RUFORUM Secretariat wished Dr. Osiru all the best in this new task at ICRISAT.

## DR. ATINKUT MEZGEBU WUBNEH– NEW DEAN AT MEKELLE UNIVERSITY

Dr. Atinkut Mezgebu Wubneh, is an Ethiopian working for Mekelle University as Asst. Professor in Water Resources and Irrigation. He has been appointed as Dean of College of Dryland Agriculture and Natural Resources at Mekelle University as of November 21, 2012.

He holds a BSc in Agricultural Engineering from Haramaya University, Ethiopia, an MSc in Water Science and Engineering from UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education, Delft, The Netherlands and a PhD in Field Engineering for Environment (Laboratory of River and Watershed Engineering), Hokkaido University, Japan.

His Research interests are water resources management, watershed management, hydrology, irrigation and water resources design optimization, sediment transport, environmental fluid mechanics (stability analysis on channelization) and landscape evolution. He can be contacted at [atinkut@yahoo.com](mailto:atinkut@yahoo.com)



## AGRICULTURAL MINISTER CALLS FOR MORE RESEARCH FROM UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA



Deputy Minister of agriculture and livestock Rodgers Mwewa has challenged the University of Zambia (UNZA) through the school of Agricultural Sciences to embark on research that will boost agricultural yield in the country. Speaking when he officiated at the prize and awards presentation ceremony for the school, Honorable Mwewa said UNZA should roll out a programme to undertake research leading to higher yields.

He said agricultural education could help Zambia prepare itself for the emerging issues related to increased food prices, climate change and nutrition deficiencies.

"I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that with the emergency of other universities in the country, your school must position itself to compete with the new universities, while at the same time complement these new institutions. However you must continue to ensure that the graduates you produce at this school remain of high quality and of relevance to the developmental goals of the nation," he said.

The Vice chancellor of UNZA, Prof. Simukanga stressed that UNZA will adhere to its mandate to contribute to national development and to the development of the world, by producing men and women with the capacity to solve some of the problems besetting society. "We also have the responsibility of generating new technology and knowledge required by society to solve problems. We are further expected to be directly in providing solutions to some problems that plague our society. Our relevance to society as an institution can thus be measured by how well we are performing our roles. A university is an integral part of the society in which it exists. It cannot, therefore divorce itself from the society and expect to remain relevant. Similarly, it is my view that a responsible society cannot divorce itself from the challenges that may afflict its universities, and still expect to derive benefits from the very institutions it has neglected," said Prof. Simukanga.

**Source:** [UNZA website](#). Click [here](#) to know more about UNZA.



## KENYATTA UNIVERSITY - SAED GRADUATES PIONEER GROUP OF STUDENTS

There was a mood of jubilation and ecstasy among the graduands and members of staff in Kenyatta University, School of Agriculture and Enterprise Development (SAED), as the School graduated its pioneering group of students in a colorful graduation ceremony on December, 14<sup>th</sup> 2012. The ceremony which was presided over by the University Chancellor, Prof. Justice (Rtd) Onesmus Mutungi saw 15 BSc. and 2 MSc. Agronomy students conferred with their Bachelors and Masters degrees respectively.

The graduands had undergone four (4) and two (2) years training respectively to prepare them to effectively contribute to growth of the Agricultural sector in Africa and globally.

**Congratulations to our graduates:** While congratulating the



MSc graduate Ms. Njeri Njau (left) with the VC Prof. Olive Mugenda (middle) & Mr. Kwame Ogero during the graduation day.

pioneering students for their hard work and commitment, the Dean of the School exuded confidence that they will excel in their professions and future academic engagements.

"Being our pioneering students, we are jubilant and congratulate them for their resilience, dedication and hard

work in their training. We are confident that they have what it takes to fit into the market and compete strongly with peers," said Prof. Wanjohi. The Dean also thanked all staff in the school for their commitment and resolve to deliver the best to the students.

**What the Graduates say:** Our graduates have excelled locally and internationally. Mr. Kwame, an MSc. graduate is currently a program Assistant at the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA) Africa-center and the liaison to the Open Forum for Agricultural Biotechnology (OFAB) in Kenya. He says, "I had a wonderful experience in Kenyatta University. The training I got has helped me a lot in terms of professional growth. The course sufficiently covered the skills I needed in the field. My research enabled me acquire skills in plant tissue culture and

effective design and implementation of projects geared towards solving crop production constraints."

The high quality of research done by Kwame received recognition both locally and internationally. A paper from the project entitled '*In vitro Micropagation of cassava through low cost tissue culture*' was awarded the first prize in the International Graduate Student Research Paper Competition by Essential Electronic Agricultural Library (TEEAL), Cornell University.

Mr. Howard O. Mugera, a BSc. Agribusiness Management and Trade graduate and currently a Marketing officer at Western Seeds Company hailed the training he had as very helpful. "The training I received in the School was very helpful as it focused on what I wanted to do in life. The training exposed us on how to creatively and profitably manage Agribusinesses. I believe the emphasis to be creative in Kenyatta University made me more competitive when applying for my current position," said Mr. Howard.

**Support from RUFORUM:** Ms. Njeri Njau who is the first student under the sponsorship of RUFORUM in the School to graduate, is currently working as a Research Assistant at Masinde Murilo University. She had this to say, "The funding from RUFORUM has enabled me carry out a MSc. Agronomy degree successfully. The training I received equipped me with solid course work and research skills especially in disease and pest management. I carried out a participatory research which has had positive impact to banana farmers in East and Central regions of Kenya."

"My visibility as a young scientist has greatly increased from the opportunities provided by RUFORUM. I have been able to attend several conferences including the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> RUFORUM biennial conferences where I presented my results," Added Ms. Njau.

Ms. Njau was awarded the 1<sup>st</sup> prize for the best Oral presentation during the 11<sup>th</sup> workshop on sustainable horticultural production in the tropics. "I was also selected as a Semi-finalist in the 3<sup>rd</sup> CTA/FARA/IFS/ANAFE/RUFORUM/NEPAD/AGRA Africa-wide Women & Young Professionals in Science Competition and I hope to make it to the finals," She said before adding. "From the workshops and conferences I have been able to connect with seasoned scientists from whose insights I have gained much. I have also been able to publish my results in journals. I look forward to doing a PhD and developing my career further. This will contribute to my goal of reducing the impact of diseases in major crops in Africa." [Read more on this story by clicking here.](#) **Source: School of Agriculture and Enterprise Development, Kenyatta University**

## OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE NETWORK

**DAAD-RUFORUM in-region scholarships 2013: PhD in Food Science and Nutrition**

Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) in Kenya invites applications for the above scholarships tenable for the 2012/13 academic year. The scholarships have been provided under the DAAD in-region programme. DAAD promotes international academic exchange as well as educational cooperation with developing countries through various funding and scholarship programmes. The aim of the in-region programme is to support RUFORUM's regional training programmes. This support will offer scholarships on a competitive basis, to the regional PhD programme in Food Science and Nutrition hosted by JKUAT. Interested candidates should apply by submitting their applications to the address below:

The Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology,  
P. O. Box 62000-00200, Nairobi, Kenya.  
Tel: +254-67-52193 Email: [dean@agr.jkuat.ac.ke](mailto:dean@agr.jkuat.ac.ke)

Please click on items below to access the accompanying documents from DAAD

- [Application for In-Region-Scholarships for Postgraduate Studies](#)
- [In-Region-Scholarships 2013/2014 provided through RUFORUM: Information sheet](#)
- [Call for Application for PhD in Food Science and Nutrition at JKUAT](#)

[Click here to read more>>](#)

**Top 20 finalists of the 3rd Africa-wide women and young professionals in science Competition****Promoting excellence in science, technology and innovation for agricultural and rural development in Africa Top 20 finalists of the 3rd Africa-wide women and young professionals in science competitions**

CTA and its partners, FARA, IFS, ANAFE, RUFORUM, NPCA, AGRA are pleased to announce the top 20 finalists of the 3rd Africa-wide women and young professionals science competitions 'Feeding 1 billion in Africa in a changing world' which was launched in 2012.

The twenty finalists will vie for the top five places and awards (including trophies, cash and other prizes, book donations) in each category; women and young professionals, at a side event which is planned for 15 – 16 July 2013, during the 6th FARA General Assembly and Science Week in Ghana. Each finalist will make a 15 minute scientific presentation on their research and outreach work to a multi-disciplinary high-level panel of judges drawn from Africa. The chief judge will be Professor Ameenah Gurib-Fakim who is a past winner and role model and also now a member of the expert panel for the science competitions.

CTA and partners are very pleased with the high quality of the final papers which were submitted by the 45 semi-finalists who had benefitted from a scientific writing, communication and policy advocacy training course which was organised by the consortium partners in September 2012 in Uganda. The scientific contributions of all semi-finalists will be published by CTA, FARA and partners.

All semi-finalists will also be fully supported to attend the 6th Africa Science Week and FARA General Assembly from 15-20 July 2013 in Accra, Ghana. The Award ceremony to recognise the winners as well as all the semi-finalists for their contribution to science and development on the continent will be held during the FARA General Assembly.

[Please click here to access the list of the Africa wide women finalists](#)

and

[here to access the list of the young professions finalists.](#)

[Click here to read more>>](#)

## OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE NETWORK

**Open Call For Proposal: Field Attachment Program Award (FAPA)**

The Field Attachment Program Award (FAPA) is a competitive grants program designed as graduate student internship to link thesis research findings and recommendations to application and use at community level. The FAPA grants are intended to provide opportunity for dissemination of research outputs with a view to inform policy development and hone students skills in participatory (with communities) problem identification and articulation of complex research. The FAPA is exclusively targeting RUFORUM supported MSc students who are in the process of finalizing (completed M.Sc thesis and submitted for examination) their MSc level training.

For more information about the FAPA: Please refer to the Competitive Grants System (CGS) Grants Manual General Information and Guidelines which are available at [www.ruforum.org](http://www.ruforum.org). All prospective applicants are advised to contact RUFORUM Secretariat via email [cgs@ruforum.org](mailto:cgs@ruforum.org) for the Application Form.

Please [click here](#) to download the Application for Field attachment Awards (FAPA)

[Click here to read more>>](#)

University of Hohenheim's Food Security Center seeks a Visiting Professor for Food Sciences and/or Food Technologies with an emphasis in the Tropics and Subtropics Applications from the fields of nutrition, nutrition quality and food security, malnutrition assessment and treatment, population-based nutrition education, post-harvest technology, food processing as well as food fortification are equally welcome.

**Expected start date: October 1, 2013**

The Food Security Center (FSC) is a 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 research and education organizations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and national and international development and research organizations. Thematically, FSC's activities deal with issues of sustainable food availability, food access, food use, and food utilization. More information is available at [www.foodsecurity.de](http://www.foodsecurity.de).

**Required qualifications**

- PhD degree in Food Sciences and/or Food Technologies or related fields with a research topic related to the Tropics and Subtropics;
- Demonstrated experience in teaching and research in Food Sciences and/or Food Technologies related to food security issues;
- Excellent publication record (at least three publications in international peer-reviewed journals relevant to the subject field of food security related science);
- Experience in post-harvest technology, food processing or nutrition field research;
- Excellence in oral and written English language;
- Excellent interpersonal skills and team spirit;
- Ability to work well in an interdisciplinary, multicultural environment and with individuals from different scientific, societal, and cultural backgrounds and organizations from the public, private, and civil society sector.

Applicants have to be citizens of a developing country according to DAC list. [Read more.](#)

**Application:** To apply, candidates have to complete FSC's application form, which can be down-loaded from [www.foodsecurity.de](http://www.foodsecurity.de) (go to "Jobs"). The documents indicated in the application form have to be submitted together with the completed application form. Please email the application documents to [fsc-scholarships@uni-hohenheim.de](mailto:fsc-scholarships@uni-hohenheim.de)