

Opening remarks

CSDES Seminar on “Delivering Technologies to Communities and Counties through University/Research/Extension Partnership Model”

Pride Inn Hotel, Westlands, Nairobi

1st August 2013

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Protocol

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my pleasure to be here with you to preside over the opening of this half-day seminar whose theme is *Delivering Technologies to Communities and Counties through University-Research-Extension Partnership Model*.

I am informed that the objectives of this seminar are;

- 1. To share the experiences from University/Research Institutes/National Government Extension Delivery Models in Kenya*
- 2. To learn from the US Land Grant University led Extension Model, in particular the example of Colorado State University*
- 3. To explore opportunities for University/Research/ Extension partnerships for engagement with County Governments and communities.*

Traditionally, it has been a general understanding that extension only refers to agricultural extension. However it has now been recognised that extension may be applied in various disciplines especially with reference to research, generation of new knowledge and utilisation or uptake of the generated knowledge, geared towards national development.

As such, the need for a research and extension division was evident, which led to the establishment of the Division of Research Production and Extension at the University of Nairobi Division in March 2011.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The mandate of the Division of Research, Production and Extension includes promoting the discovery, application and dissemination of knowledge through quality research and innovation and spearheading the utilisation and uptake of knowledge by the end users which we could also refer to as extension.

While the realignment to the concept of extension or uptake of new knowledge may be slow, the University is committed to making positive impact on the livelihoods to communities in Kenya and globally through an effective and streamlined extension structure. To this end we have embarked on developing policy framework and relevant structure to achieve this by running relevant programs that include undergraduate and postgraduate courses that are aligned to the national development agenda.

Specifically within the College of Agriculture and Vet. Sciences (CAVS) we run courses in Agricultural Education and Extension and we have

several field research stations, in particular the Kibwezi Field Station that serve the students, researchers and the community, all geared towards better livelihoods. Let me take this opportunity (at this point) to thank USAID for supporting the rehabilitation of the Kibwezi Field Station which is now a hub of research and field course teaching activities.

Ladies and gentlemen, as we know it, agricultural extension has been with us for a long time. Therefore I consider this seminar timely and appropriate, as the concept of extension spreads to other disciplines. I sincerely hope that we can learn to adapt the agricultural extension models that you are all so familiar with to other disciplines to enhance uptake and utilisation of knowledge in all fields.

This forum will also respond to the new national policy for sustainable development of Northern Kenya and other arid areas (Sessional Paper No. 8 of 2012) that underscores the need to among other things, strengthen research and extension systems which are relevant to the livelihoods of communities in Arid and Semi Arid Lands. It is therefore critical that the interactions between research, extension and education are strengthened in order to fast track the impact of innovations in improving livelihoods.

I wish to sincerely thank the sponsors of this seminar, the USAID-HED Drylands Development Program and our partners Colorado State University, for their passion in promoting collaborative approaches in addressing dryland development challenges in Kenya.

I also want to acknowledge the long standing collaboration and partnership with Kenya Agricultural Research Institute in research activities. I also want to thank representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries for participating in this seminar. I wish to recognise the participation of a few County and Community representatives attending the seminar. Their ideas and experiences will greatly enrich our discussion. Working together in thinking through an effective strategy for delivering innovations and new technologies to communities and County Governments in line with Kenya Vision 2030.

I wish to recognize the effort of the Center for Sustainable Drylands who together with our CSU partners have put together this seminar, which I have confidence will greatly contribute to the University of Nairobi's Research , Production and Extension agenda.

It is my sincere hope that this seminar will provide a fertile ground for fresh ideas to enhance our agricultural extension and outreach programs. We hope to learn from the Colorado State University experience with the US-Land Grant University Extension Community Engagement Model .

With these few remarks, it now my humble duty to declare this seminar officially open.