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OFFICE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE

July 04, 2011

To: Members of Staff

THE 19TH VICE-CHANCELLOR'S MONTHLY PRESS BRIEFING, HELD ON MONDAY 4TH JULY 2011

Introduction

The Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor Venansius Baryamureeba presented on behalf of the University Management. The participating units included: The College of Health Sciences (CHS) and the Department of Computer Science, College of Computing and Information Sciences (CIS).

In attendance were:

- (i) Prof. Venansius Baryamureeba – Ag. Vice Chancellor
- (ii) Prof. Nelson Sewankambo – Principal, College of Health Sciences
- (iii) Dr. William Bazeyo – Dean, School of Public Health, CHS
- (iv) Dr. Moses Joloba – Head, Department of Medical Microbiology, CHS
- (v) Dr. Florence Tushabe – Head, Department of Computer Science, CIS
- (vi) Ms. Ritah Namisango – Ag. Senior PRO, Public Relations Unit, Vice Chancellor's Office
- (vii) Ms. Milly Nattimba – Communication Officer, College of Health Sciences
- (viii) Mr. Elias Tuhereze – Web Administrator, Public Relations Unit, Vice Chancellor's Office
- (ix) Mr. Mark Wamai – Web Manager, Public Relations Unit, Vice Chancellor's Office
- (x) Mrs. Maureen Mayanja – Administrative Assistant, Public Relations Unit, Vice Chancellor's Office
- (xi) Mr. Paul Toko – Student Intern, Public Relations Unit, Vice Chancellor's Office
- (xii) Ms. Grace Magare – Student Intern, Public Relations Unit, Vice Chancellor's Office

PRESENTATIONS

1.0 Presentation from the Vice Chancellor

1.1 The President of Duke University, USA to Visit Makerere University

On 11th July 2011, Prof. Dr. Richard H. Brodhead will visit Uganda to learn more about Duke University's partnership with medical facilities and other health organizations around Kampala. This will be his first chance to see firsthand Duke's involvement in Uganda, spanning research, education and service learning. The visit will provide an opportunity for the President and his team to meet with other educators in Uganda especially the Makerere University College of Health Sciences and Mulago Hospital to explore opportunities for potential collaboration. President of Duke University, Prof. Dr. Richard H. Brodhead will be accompanied by:

- Cynthia Brodhead
- Michael Merson, Director of the Duke Global Health Institute (DGHI)
- Kathy Sikkema, Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience
- David Toole, Sr. Director of Research Duke Divinity School
- Michael Haglund, MD, PhD, Professor of Neurosurgery and Neurobiology
- Caroline Griffith, Associate in Research DGHI
- Josh Bond, Director of Development DGHI
- Alyssa Zamora, Assistant Director of Communications DGHI

1.2 Makerere University hosts the Vice-President of Rockefeller Foundation

The Rockefeller Foundation Vice President, Heather Grady will be visiting Kampala Uganda between 3rd and 5th July 2011. The objective of this visit is to consult with the Government officials, Foundation's grantee and other recipients of the Foundation's support. The visit is intended to help her gain a better understanding of their support to our country and opportunities and challenges ahead. In particular, the Vice President is interested in reviewing the Foundation's support to Climate Change and adaptation to African Agriculture; Food Security and Health.

The Foundation's support to Uganda dates back to the 1930s when they supported groundbreaking research for Yellow Fever. The Foundation has since contributed to building human resources capacity in Uganda by providing scholarships at the Masters and PhD levels. The Foundation has also supported the University's Information Technology Laboratory among other areas. The Foundation also founded and continues to support the Regional University Forum for Capacity

Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), to oversee graduate training and networks of specialization in the Common Market for Eastern and Southern African Countries. In the recent years, they founded the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) a food security initiative in the region with an objective of driving the Green Revolution in Africa.

Ms. Heather Grady the Vice-President of Rockefeller Foundation Initiatives is visiting Makerere University today. Today, 4th July 2011, from 9:00am to 12:00noon, Ms. Heather Grady will visit the College of Health Sciences, the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and the College of Computing and Information Sciences to explore areas for further collaboration. At 2.30pm today, Ms. Heather Grady will give a talk on “*Bringing Resilience Agenda to Climate Change and Food Security*” in the School of Food Technology, Nutrition and Bio-Engineering Conference Hall, Makerere University. The Rockefeller Foundation is looking forward to continued collaboration with Makerere University.

1.3 Makerere University partners with University of Hertfordshire in offering degree programmes for UK awards

On Tuesday 21st June 2011, the Vice-Chancellor of Makerere University, Professor Venansius Baryamureeba on behalf of Makerere University and the Vice-Chancellor of University of Hertfordshire, Prof. Q. McKellar on behalf of the University of Hertfordshire signed a 5 year academic support agreement. Under this programme, the students of Makerere University who will have completed the 2nd year of Bachelor of Science in Computer Science can enroll online for 3rd year at University of Hertfordshire and get awarded the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science of University of Hertfordshire. Similarly, the students of Makerere University who will have finished the 2nd year of on the Bachelor of Information Technology can enroll online for 3rd year at University of Hertfordshire and get awarded the Bachelor of Information Technology of University of Hertfordshire (UH).

Makerere University staff will provide online tutoring. For a one year study online with UH, the students shall be required to pay 2,000 Pounds to UH. They will also pay not more than 500 pounds for online support to Makerere University.

The students interested in getting double degree can also enroll concurrently at both Makerere University and University of Hertfordshire and get a double degree.

In addition, Makerere University staff will be exposed to the online platform at UH. In future, the agreement will be extended to cover more undergraduate degrees and postgraduate degrees.

NOTE: During the media briefing, Dr. Florence Tushabe, Head, Department of Computer Science, provided the expert opinion on the joint degree courses with the University of Hertfordshire.

1.4 The Peoples' Republic of China to fund projects in the Education sector under the bilateral agreement with the Republic of Uganda

The Ministry of Education and Sports recruited a consultant who is undertaking the needs assessment of programmes and facilities at the nine (9) public institutions including Makerere University. The African Development Bank (ADB) team and the Consultant visited all the institutions and the needs assessment report is being compiled.

About US\$ 200 Million has already been secured from African Development Bank under ADB V and more funds will be solicited from other development partners after the feasibility study report is in place.

The Government of the Republic of Uganda and the Government of the Peoples Republic of China have signed an agreement of cooperation and under this agreement, China National Machinery Industry Complete Engineering Corporation, a Chinese government corporation, is undertaking an identification of key projects in education and health that they will undertake with funds from the Peoples Republic of China

The Chinese delegation from this corporation will visit Makerere University tomorrow, 5th July 2011 to have an onsite assessment of the projects they would like to recommend to the Chinese Government for funding. Among other projects, they specifically consider putting up infrastructure at Makerere University Agricultural Research Institute - Kabanyolo to house Makerere University College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences; Establishment of Makerere University Teaching Hospital for Makerere University College of Health Sciences; infrastructure for off campus constituent colleges of Makerere University and other general infrastructure at Makerere University main campus.

1.5 Makerere University to Hold a Special Graduation Ceremony on 22nd July 2011

Makerere University will hold a special graduation ceremony for about 968 students including 7 PhD students who had fulfilled the requirements for Makerere University diploma and degree awards as of 1st June 2011. This graduation has been organized to fulfill the promise made to about 100 students who were not able to graduate in January 2011 as a result of missing on the graduation list due to several reasons.

2.0 Presentation from the College of Health Sciences

2.1 Makerere University contributes to improved health service utilisation in Uganda

The Makerere University College of Health Sciences' Community Based Education and Services (COBES) has immensely contributed to addressing health inequities between rural and urban communities in Uganda. COBES is an initiative where Makerere medical students are placed to work in rural communities for a period of time.

With simple innovative strategies, students have been able to solve some of the most common health problems in these communities.

In academic year 2010/2011, the cattle keepers in Bwizibwera, Mbarara district, experienced a water availability problem; students came up with a cheap water harvesting system. It was made out of mud, sticks (wood) and iron sheets to make the underground water tank. In Jinja at Rippon landing site, the major problem was prevalent Bilharzia due to the continued deposition of waste into the lake and lack of basic knowledge about the disease. Students did a sensitisation campaign, and assessment done before and after the sensitisation showed an increase in the knowledge about Bilharzia.

Through this approach to education, the College of Health Sciences has built partnerships with communities and built their capacity to identify and address community health problems. The COBES programme is also one way the College is addressing the acute problem of health workers' shortages in the country especially in the rural areas.

With placement of students at rural health centres under COBES, the human resource gaps are addressed; the workload reduces, giving health workers time to read and study; interaction with the patients improves, as well as the image of the health facility.

According to assessments done, utilisation of health centres by the community members improves by 20%-30% during the time when students are doing their COBES activities at the health centres. Professor Nelson Sewankambo further said the attitude of the students to rural health sites has also changed positively with many of them eventually getting employed by the districts. “COBES is an opportunity for the students to get exposed to experiential and practical learning, as well as to employment opportunities by the districts where they are placed”, Professor Sewankambo added.

However, all these achievements have been registered on a limited budget. With added support from the government, students, communities, health facilities, districts as well as the University, could reap more from COBES.

2.2 Makerere to host the Africa Tobacco Control Resource Centre

The School of Public Health under Makerere University College of Health Sciences has been selected by the World Health Organisation (WHO) to host the Africa Tobacco Control Resource Centre. This follows the launch of the Africa Tobacco Control Project by WHO, with the financial support of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The project will work with countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to build capacity for tobacco control.

African countries are faced with a double burden of disease as the Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) are increasingly becoming common. Tobacco is one of the major contributors to Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs).

Under this project, WHO will initially provide technical assistance to five (5) countries, namely Uganda, Kenya, South Africa, Angola and Mauritania to implement rapid policy change strategies for tobacco control. A WHO team of national and international experts were in Kampala from 19th – 24th June 2011 carrying out a capacity assessment of the country to advance tobacco control interventions. These interventions are the key demand and supply reduction measures enshrined under the Framework Convention on Tobacco control (FCTC) – the first global health treaty negotiated under the WHO.

The major thrust of the centre will be to build regional capacity to sustain tobacco control interventions. The Resource Centre will develop tools and programs to assist Sub-Saharan Africa countries in their efforts to arrest the tobacco epidemic.

The process of selecting the School of Public Health followed competitive bidding involving 20 countries in Sub Saharan Africa. The award was announced on June 24th 2011 by the WHO Representative to Uganda Dr. Joachim Saweka at their Kampala offices in Kololo.

“The College of Health Sciences has consistently shown commitment to being at the forefront of innovations and bringing on board grants. I hope that the centre will be used effectively in terms of controlling the impact of tobacco”, Makerere University Deputy Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, Dr. Sandy Steven Tickodri Togboa applauded, at an earlier meeting with WHO officials at Makerere University.

The WHO Tobacco Free Initiative Senior Advisor, Dr. Vinayak Prasad said the developed world has agreed to ban the exorbitant advertising and promotions that the tobacco firms engage in. “The whole region needs to get capacity to do this; the centre should be able to develop this capacity by training legislators, health workers, media practitioners and other stakeholders”, he said.

The Dean School of Public Health, Dr. William Bazeyo said “the initial phase of establishment of the centre will be funded to the tune of USD 3.4 million. It will provide very concrete support to countries for sustainable capacity for tobacco control to protect populations from the effects of tobacco and smoking”.

The consumption of various forms of tobacco products (cigarettes, pipes, sheeshah, smokeless/chewing tobacco such as pan masala, gutkha, etc) is fast increasing in many countries in Africa. The tobacco industry is effectively targeting this part of the world due to laxity in regulation.

2.3 Makerere University stems TB Drug-Resistance trend through quality research

Working with Ministry of Health, the Department of Medical Microbiology in the School of Biomedical Sciences, Makerere University College of Health Sciences has secured US \$10 million from World Bank to establish Centre of Excellence Laboratories in Mbale, Gulu, Mbarara and Arua.

Already a state-of-the-art laboratory has been built in Mulago to carry out rapid drug resistance detection; detection that used to take 3 to 6 months can now take one day.

WHO estimates that by 2015 there will be two million cases of multidrug-resistant Tuberculosis (TB) globally. In Uganda, research shows that about 500 new cases of multidrug-resistant TB occur every year, 50 percent of which are co-infected with HIV.

Earlier, Makerere University College of Health Sciences, working with the Wellcome Trust, a UK Charity, pioneered the treatment of Drug Resistant TB which is very difficult to cure. Twenty people were treated and cured and the project was handed over to the National TB Programme.

The Medical Microbiology Department and the Ministry of Health have also secured funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief) – CDC (PEPFAR) and have renovated and upgraded the National TB Reference Laboratory (NTRL) to a world class laboratory. As a result the NTRL has been recognised as a Supra-National Reference Laboratory receiving samples from other countries as well as conducting training for them.

In addition, a specimen referral system has been established where samples of difficult cases are referred to the NTRL from upcountry. A quality assurance system has also been established for all TB laboratories in the country.

A Kampala Drug Survey was conducted as well as a national survey, which showed the level of drug resistance in the country. This helps in guiding control measures.

Working with SIDA/Sarec, the College has made another contribution in this area through evaluation of various tests to detect resistant TB, some of which have been approved by WHO for use in Uganda and other countries in the world.

Another important breakthrough is that the Department of Medical Microbiology working with Sida SAREC found out that 70% of TB in Uganda is caused by one type of organism which the research team named Uganda Geno-type. “This is a very important achievement for us because it might give clues on the control of TB in Uganda”, said Associate Professor Moses Joloba, Head of the Medical Microbiology Department and also a member of the research team.

Under the Aeras Global TB Vaccine Foundation, The European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP), The Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI), and the College of Health Sciences through the Department of Microbiology have started work to evaluate various TB vaccines. “We have a big population in Iganga and Kampala which we are studying “, Associate Professor Joloba added.

The College of Health Sciences working together with its global partners is contributing to national and regional efforts aimed at stemming this trend.

.....We Build For the Future.....

**Sincerely: Ms. Ritah Namisango, Ag. Senior Public Relations Officer, Makerere University, and
Communication Officer, College of Humanities and Social Sciences**