![Makerere University logo](MAKERERE UNIVERSITY)

REMARKS BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR, PROF. BARNABAS NAWANGWE AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE ANNOUNCING AICAD'S APPOINTMENT AS AFRICA OPEN SCIENCE PLATFORM NODE FOR THE EAST AFRICAN REGION
ON 12TH JULY 2023 AT 9:00AM, COUNCIL ROOM

Dear Journalists,

I welcome you all to this press conference, which provides a golden opportunity for Makerere University and the African Institute for Capacity Development (AICAD) to share with you a key milestone in the promotion of research and science in the East African region.

AICAD is a regional organization charged with linking university generated technologies to the communities to fight poverty with headquarters at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology. AICAD has country offices located at Makerere University in Uganda, Sokoine University of Agriculture in Tanzania and Egerton University in Kenya.

Makerere University is a pioneer member and one of the regional hosts of AICAD. I am pleased to notify the media, stakeholders and the public at large that after a very rigorous and competitive process, the National Research Foundation (NRF) of South Africa has selected the African

Institute for Capacity Development (AICAD) as a regional node for the African Open Science Platform (AOSP) taking charge of the East African region node.

I therefore congratulate AICAD's continental and national leadership upon being successfully appointed as a regional node for the African Open Science Platform (AOSP) by the National Research Foundation (NRF) of South Africa.

Ladies and gentlemen, no country can develop without research. We are now living in the era of knowledge-based economies. Those in the know are the ones who develop. Those not in the know will not develop. Knowledge comes from research.

With this appointment, Makerere University is ready to work with AICAD to coordinate all member universities and other research data generating agencies to pursue the ideas of open science. The idea of open science and data sharing is key in the innovation process. When data is shared, solutions are quickly realized. I understand this is how the COVID-19 vaccine was quickly produced. Different research groups were able to share their data for a common cause.

Universities world over, particularly in the more developed nations, play an important role in research and development. Research leads to innovations and it is these innovations that change the world.

For an institution to undertake research, you need well-groomed researchers and scientists, and most of these are found at universities. Makerere University has over the first 100 years of its existence excellently produced human resources for the country and the region.

Our University Strategic Plan 2020-2030 is aimed at transforming Makerere into a more research-led institution with a multi-faceted research agenda as well as enhanced engagement with industry and business sector.

It is equally gratifying to note that AICAD's Plan is aiming at strategic re-engineering over the 2019 to 2024 period, in order to meet the changing economic, political, legal, regulatory, social and environmental outlook in the partner countries.

As institutions in the global South and sub-Saharan Africa in particular, it is important that we forge South-South linkages in order to address challenges that are unique to our settings. Unless we find solutions to our exploding populations, growing youth unemployment, rapid rural to urban migration, which is leading to growth of slums and increased public health challenges, we will not be able to harness our full potential.

AICAD's hosting of the regional node for the African Open Science Platform (AOSP) therefore presents Makerere University, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology and Egerton University both from Kenya, as well as Sokoine University of Agriculture in Tanzania with yet another opportunity to bring our expertise together, to not only properly understand but also find appropriate solutions to research problems unique to our region.

We Build for the Future.