

# Press Release



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## Universities recognised as important stakeholders in enhancing the impact of Agricultural research for Development - RUFORUM at the GCARD3 Conference

11<sup>th</sup> April, 2016  
Johannesburg, South Africa



Above: Seedlings grown from tissue samples in a laboratory being showcased during the exhibition at the ARC, South Africa.  
Photo Credit: [Photo by IISD/Kiara Worth](#)

The third Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD3), jointly organised by the Global Forum on Agriculture Research (GFAR) and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) under the theme ***“No One Left Behind: Agri-food Innovation and Research for a Sustainable World”*** was attended by over 400 participants representing academia, government, civil society, research and the private sector. The four day Conference was held 5-8 April, 2016 in Johannesburg, South Africa. RUFORUM Secretariat, representing its network of 55 universities attended the Conference.

During the Opening Ceremony, Dr Lindiwe Majele Sibanda, Chief Executive Officer at Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) applauded the Conference Organisers for bringing together key stakeholders to promote effective, targeted investment that will build partnerships, capacities and mutual accountabilities at all levels of the agricultural system. This action she hoped would ensure that today’s agricultural research will impact on the rural poor. She also emphasised the need to work together differently, develop collaborative strategies that are realistic to emerging challenges, enforce higher stakeholder commitment towards engaging, debating and formulating real policies that are

holistic and not linear in approach. She applauded all the female participants and thanked them for their contribution to Agricultural development sector.

The Conference noted the need for capacity building across the research for development sector and for universities to be included into the global consultations under GFAR. Universities were challenged to transform themselves towards academic enterprises and knowledge entrepreneurship whilst staying grounded as student –centric institutions that are preparing students to be "master thinkers", able to grasp a wide array of skills and contribute to the desired workforce, a gap that still needs to be addressed.

RUFORUM also participated in the exhibition, together with other 13 exhibitors. The event included a one day field trip to ARC-VOPI Rooderplaat and the Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute campus.



#### Notes to Editors:

**The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)** is a network of 55 African Universities with mission to ‘strengthen the capacities of Universities to foster innovations responsive to demands of small-holder farmers through the training of high quality researchers, the output of impact oriented research and the maintenance of collaborative working relations among researchers, farmers, national agricultural research institutions’. RUFORUM was established in 2004, with Secretariat hosted by Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. RUFORUM signed MoU with the African Union and has mandate to support capacity building for science, research and technology development in Africa. RUFORUM has supported the training of over 1500 postgraduate students, the generation of over 300 agricultural technologies and mobilized over US\$70 million for strengthening postgraduate education in Africa. Please visit [www.ruforum.org](http://www.ruforum.org) for more information.

**The GCARD3:** The third Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development was organized by the Global Forum and CGIAR as part of a continuing, iterative reform process, and builds on what has gone before in, and around, the previous two GCARDs. The conference held from 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2016 at the Birchwood Conference Centre in Johannesburg, South Africa attracted over 500 participants and 14 exhibitors. Over 30 side event discussion aligned to the conference theme “No One Left Behind” were held during the 4 days conference. Please visit <http://www.gfar.net/gcard/about-gcard3> for more information.

For additional information, photos and interviews with key delegates, contact Miss. Joan Apio, below.



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