

SUMMARY REPORT OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE 10TH AFRICAN RCE CONFERENCE HELD ON 1ST SEPTEMBER, 2020 FROM 9:00AM TO 12:00NOON (West African Time, GMT +1) ZOOM MEETING.

**THEME: COMMUNITY-BASED RESILIENCE DURING PANDEMIC: THE ROLE OF AFRICAN RCE'S**

The First stream of the 10<sup>th</sup> African RCE Conference took place on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September, 2020 with 74 participants and panelist. The major takeaway from the presentations emphasized the followings:

- i. Covid-19 caught the whole world unprepared. Therefore, there was disorganized policy in fighting the pandemic such as in the disorganized struggle to develop Covid-19 vaccine. No clear world leadership. Now is the time to begin a coordinated plan for possible future pandemics.
- ii. Covid-19 showed us that with patience, concern, desire and determination, environmental sustainability can be pursued vis a vis economic development. Environment had a great relief during the period of world economic lockdown. It can be done.
- iii. The whole world community must work together, cooperatively to rid ourselves of Covid-19 otherwise none is safe.
- iv. Communities may have to brace up for a new normal that may entrench some of the Covid-19 survived guidelines as part of life in the future including that:
  - International/local conferences may now be online.
  - All educational teaching may now be online. No more dormitories or university campuses and hostels.
- v. Communities, States, Nations that have their leaders, at the beginning, who showed leadership with articulated preventive defensive policies (lockdown, testing, contact tracing, treating) promptly put into effect suffered less.
- vi. Education gap has widened during this period as millions of children are out of school. Only few are attending lessons via radio and television or online;
- vii. Changing cultures on diet which is making an impact on our health. The question is – what should we be eating?
- viii. We have relegated the role of the elderly. We must factor them into our plans and use a strategy and give them a voice to help in developing our society;
- ix. Deforestation and extinction of species, leading to disappearance of biodiversity linked to new diseases in humans;
- x. Increased contact between humans, wildlife and livestock, as people move into undeveloped areas which allows easy jump of pathogens from animals to humans.

- She identified the way forward as necessity for state and non-state actors, formal and informal forms of knowledge and institutions to be utilized;
- xi. A call for multifaceted approach that align efforts of government and international agencies to focus on public health, animal health, the environment and sustainable development.
  - xii. The need to increase the tree stocks in schools, parks and houses, so that the environment would be protected from more resilient future disruptions. The fruit trees in addition provided shades, comfort as well as nutrition for the students.
  - xiii. Success of any idea or strategy lies in its implementation, so, the need to sustain it becomes very necessary;
  - xiv. The need to encourage policy makers to listen to and utilize scientific and expert opinions for the future survival of the continent; particularly at times like this
  - xv. United Nations University, Institute for the Advance (UNU-IAS) was urged to give more support to African RCEs in pushing the agenda for a resilient Africa through sound and sustainable use of resources.
  - xvi. Building Knowledge communities of different sizes, shapes and context is critical towards resilience;
  - xvii. We need to have a "Green Recovery" that takes into consideration problems of environment and livelihoods of people;
  - xviii. There is the need for a rethink on excessive wealth accumulation;
  - xix. Solving housing problems and addressing them by assisting people to own houses and clearing the slumps for better living.
  - xx. The conference emphasized the importance of transparency to earn the people's trust;
  - xxi. Focusing on ESD for 2030 to deliver the type of development we need;
  - xxii. Promoting of Human Rights and the Rule of Law.
  - xxiii. Education for Sustainable Development can accelerate the transition to green technologies through equipping people with the required green knowledge and skills;
  - xxiv. Transformative action through knowledge acquisition;
  - xxv. Using online platforms for research;
  - xxvi. Universities should be upgraded to deal with similar issues in future.
  - xxvii. Climate change and the dynamics require collaborations of all sectors of societies at national and local levels;

- xxviii. This is time for action. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change must be brought to the front burner;
- xxix. The lessons learnt from devastating effects of COVID-19 pandemic should make leaders to be more prepared for this challenge and other regional problems such as climate change;
- xxx. Universities and all higher institutions must find ways to model the multi-sectoral intervention solidarity to face the escalating complexity of the 21st Century global health;
- xxxi. COVID-19 teaches us a moment of time to overhaul the educational system and perhaps on how to better prepare to live in the midst of this and other future pandemics;
- xxxii. Vice Chancellors of universities urged to work hard and grow the RCE network in every African country;
- xxxiii. Look at our respective communities and create things in our local languages on how to develop our society;
- xxxiv. Support the initiative of Shelter Afrique so that there can be affordable housing and clear the slumps;
- xxxv. It was emphasized that we should not allow this to be a talk show rather it shall be a story that ends well.