

SUMMARY REPORT OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE 10TH RCE AFRICAN CONFERENCE HELD ON 15TH SEPTEMBER, 2020 – ZOOM MEETING

THEME: Community-Based Resilience during Pandemic Disruption: The Role of African RCEs.

STREAM TWO: Presentation by African RCEs.

A. THE MAJOR SUB – THEMES INCLUDE:

- i. Environmental and Climate Change perspectives of Covid-19 Lessons for ESD.
- ii. Preparing for the next pandemic, need for effective early warning systems.
- iii. The value of Traditional knowledge in pandemic management.

B. KEY PERSONALITIES/PARTICIPANTS

1. Dr. Abdul Hussain, Coordinator, RCE Minna
2. Prof. Abdullahi Bala, Vice Chancellor, FUT Minna – Keynote Presenter (Represented by Professor M.B.Nuhu, Director, CHSUD)
3. Prof. Rose Wade from RCE London
4. Dr. Moayad Alrachid from Zuma Resort
5. Prof. Ahmed Adamu, Coordinator, RCE Zaria
6. Fomiko Noguchi and Sihero from the Coordinating Unit, United Nations University (UNU), Japan.
7. Prof. G. Nsofor, Chairman, Board of Research, LOC Chairman)
8. Prof. Akpezi Ogbuigwe, RCE Regional Adviser for Africa.
9. Prof. M. T. Usman, RCE Minna
10. Marlene Chukuni from RCE Zomba, Malawi
11. Representatives of RCE Greater Nairobi, Kenya
12. Representatives of RCE Ogun
13. Representatives of RCE Minna
14. Prof. Abdullahi Mann, Federal University of Technology, Minna
15. Prof. Muhammad Bashar Nuhu, Federal University of Technology, Minna (Chairman, Rapporteur)
16. Muhammad Abubakar Dakpanchi, Federal University of Technology, Minna
17. Esv. Ibrahim Musa Jemaku, Niger State Georgraphic Information System (NIGIS), Minna
18. Amrah Aliyu (The Poet), RCE Minna
19. Andrew Lucky O., Federal University of Technology, Minna
20. Mohammed Salihu, RCE Minna
21. Mohammed Babagana, RCE Minna
22. Mohammed Tukur Kele, Rapporteur
23. Hamza Abdullahi Nauzo, RCE Minna
24. Suleiman Isah, RCE Minna
25. Ogah Martha, RCE Minna
26. MD Abubakar, Rapporteur

C. KEY POINTS FROM THE UNU PRESENTATION

- The RCE Global Network at UNU-IAS coordinates 175 RCEs – Regional Centers of Expertise on education for Sustainable Development through the provision of a collaborative platform for RCEs to Network, learn from each other to create impact in their communities:

- Since its inception, the Global RCEs have mobilized multiple stakeholders including educational institutions, local authorities, NGOs, businesses and other players at local levels;
- Globally, both individuals and organizations as well as our partners have demonstrated their commitment to using education as a tool for building sustainable future;
- The RCEs played a central role in the transfer of knowledge and expertise to local communities, aiding its adoption through grassroots efforts;
- The planet faces a number of sustainability challenge – climate change, the rapid extension of spaces and the pressing need to modify consumption patterns;
- The Global RCEs have enacted 479 projects across 46 countries to address sustainable development challenges through teaching and learning;
- Interventions including 40 percent focus on higher education and 36 percent youth empowerment through informal education;
- 53 percent of RCE projects focused on urban environment and the significant proportion took place in agricultural, freshwater and forest environment;
- RCEs in Europe focused on driving teacher training;
- 56 percent of the RCE projects in Europe had a higher education component, a proportion higher than other regions;
- Commitment efforts in aid of specific region emphasized the treatment and management of wastes in RCE projects;
- For RCEs in Africa and the Middle East, over half of its natural resources shortage and deforestation emerged as a key causes and outcomes of poverty as well as climate change;
- The projects were to mitigate problems on sustainability and humanitarian challenge;
- In Americas, RCEs initiated projects related to human health and wellbeing, with a focus on Goals 3, 11 and 12;
- RCE efforts have been instrumental in translating innovation into momentum, empowering individuals to make sustainable choices for themselves and their communities;
- Each local success is brought to scale through the Global RCE networks creating a virtual circle of collaboration and positive action across the world;

D. KEY POINTS:BY THE RCE MINNA HOST INSTITUTION – F.U.T. MINNA

- The community bond and knowledge is what makes us unique and foster partnership that promote genuine sustainability in all ramifications;
- FUT, Minna being the Host Institution of RCE Minna is working closely towards planting over 10,000 trees by the end of tenure of the current Vice Chancellor, Professor Abdullahi Bala’s tenure in FUT’s concept of “Adopt a tree for a better future.”
- The University acknowledges and appreciates the impact of RCE on its student’s that benefitted from series of youth related activities;
- The institution is looking forward to more collaboration with the United Nations University (UNU) in all ramifications, especially on any student-oriented activities in both character and learning;
- He said, “I am more than convinced that the outcome of this discussion will be highly impactful in the current realities and would lead to building networks within the RCE family and beyond;
- He then declared the conference open to the glory of humanity and to the generality of the benefit of the entire world;

E. CASE STUDY PRESENTATIONS BY RCE OGUN: Multi-Stakeholders Collaborations in Building Community Resilience towards Pandemic Management. KEY POINTS;

- Taking emergency responses by viewing the pandemic as a battle against humanity’s common enemy in the entire world;
- Took strategic actions to fight the COVID-19 together;
- Provided foot-controlled hand-wash, sanitizers, facemasks and food palliatives;
- Provided timely interventions via English – mathematics SMART clinics that bridges learning gap among secondary school students through refresher courses for future societal gap;
- Holding discussions and hosting of events;
- Partnering with organizations with similar vision – Covenant University, Zenith Bank and Ogun State Ministry of Forestry, Agriculture, Schools and other stakeholders;
- Research endeavors – special issues in contemporary social science and international conference of innovation and sustainable development – Fourth Industrial Revolution, Innovation and Sustainable Development in post COVID-19 era;

F. RCE MINNA: Impacts of Community Awareness on Risk Factors and Prevention in Improving Community Based Resilience to Covid-19 Pandemic – The Role of RCE Minna. KEY POINTS:

- Spread of corona virus was the most devastating global health security threat in decades.
- Over stretching of health sector personnel and security issues that has to do with banditry etc.
- Decline governments’ revenue from Aviation, Hospitality and Tourism.
- RCE Minna liaised with members of the community to enlightened them on how to prevent and contain the spread of covid-19.
- Organized Sensitization programmes on the pandemic calling on people to dispel rumors/myths e.g only those who travel abroad are likely to get the disease or drinking alcohol gives immunity to the disease.
- Providing Personal Protective Equipment’s to the people.
- RCE Minna showed commitment to champion the course to bring an end to the dreaded covid-19
- Visited Homes, Schools, Youth Groups, Hospitals etc.
- RCE Minna will continue to collaborate with relevant stake holders to prevent the spread.
- Shared locally made sanitizers, soaps, face masks etc.
- Knowledge shared in this conference will be put together and made available to stakeholders and government to serve as additional guide toward providing sustainable habitable environment for all.

G. THE FOLLOWING ARE THE KEY POINTS AND POLICY ISSUES RAISED IN ALL PRESENTATIONS, FROM PRESENT EXPERIENCES FOR THE FUTURE;

- i. Building Knowledge communities of different sizes, shapes and context;
- ii. We need to have a “Green Recovery” that takes into consideration problems of environment and livelihoods of people;
- iii. Alleviating excessive wealth accumulation;
- iv. Education gap has widened during this period as millions of children are out of school. Only few, mostly from the private schools, were somewhat ready for online teaching while the majority left underserved or completely unserved;
- v. Changing cultures on diet which is making an impact on our health. The question is – what should we be eating?

- vi. 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;
- vii. Deforestation and extinction of species, leading to disappearance of biodiversity linked to new diseases in humans;
- viii. Increased contact between humans, wildlife and livestock, as people move into undeveloped areas which allows easy jump of pathogens from animals to humans. The conference identified the way forward through collaboration between state and non-state actors, formal and informal forms of knowledge and institutions;
- ix. 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.
- x. 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.
- xi. Success of any idea or strategy lies in its implementation, so, the need to sustain it becomes very necessary;
- xii. 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
- xiii. 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.
- xiv. Solving housing problems and addressing them by assisting people to own houses and clearing the slumps for better living.
- xv. Emphasized on the importance of transparency to earn the people's trust;
- xvi. Focusing on ESD for 2030 to deliver the type of development we need;
- xvii. Promoting of Human Rights and the Rule of Law.
- xviii. Education for Sustainable Development can accelerate the transition to green technologies through equipping people with the required green knowledge and skills;
- xix. Transformative action through knowledge acquisition;
- xx. Using online platforms for research;
- xxi. Universities should be well equipped to deal with similar issues in future.
- xxii. Climate change and its dynamics require collaborations of all sectors of societies at national and local levels;
- xxiii. 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;
- xxiv. 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;
- xxv. 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;

- xxvi. 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;
- xxvii. The conference called on all the Vice Chancellors of universities present to work hard and grow the RCE network in every African country;
- xxviii. Look at our respective communities and create things in our local languages on how to develop our society;
- xxix. Let us team up with Shelter Afrique so that there can be affordable housing and clear the slums;
- xxx. The conference resolved and emphasized that we should not allow this to be a talk show. Let it be a story that ends well.
- xxxi. Communities, States, Nations that shows effective leadership at the beginning of the pandemic with articulated preventive defensive policies (lockdown, testing, contact tracing, treating) promptly put into effect suffered less.
- xxxii. 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.
- xxxiii. The whole world must work together, cooperatively to rid ourselves of Covid-19 otherwise none is safe.
- xxxiv. Communities may have to brace up for a new normal that may entrench some of the Covid-19 survival guidelines as part of daily routine in the future including:
 - International/local conferences may now be online.
 - All educational teaching may now be online. No more dormitories or university campuses and hostels.
- xxxv. It is obvious that 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.