

HIGHER EDUCATION EXCELLENCE

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WORLD BANK GROUP



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Opening remarks

This edition of the ACE I Newsletter focuses on the positive impact of the ACE project on the educational life of African students. Thoughts and experiences on the Project are shared by students and alumni. This edition also provides an update on the 5th ACE supervision mission and the University of Copenhagen's Training of Trainers course to the ACEs, among other stories.

The monthly ACE I Newsletter will continue to support activities of the Centres and create visibility for the project by capturing new developments, milestones and key undertakings of the ACEs.

ACE Alumni and Students share their experiences

In line with the ACE project's objective of promoting high quality training and applied research, deserving students were awarded scholarships following a highly competitive process, to read post graduate programmes at the various Centres of Excellence. Some Graduates and students of these programmes shared with us how the Project has impacted their education.



Essoham Ali,
Togolese, Africa Centre of Excellence in Mathematics,
Informatics and ICT at the University of Gaston Berger, Gabon.

I am a beneficiary of the World Bank funded ACE Project from the Africa Centre of Excellence in Mathematics, Informatics and ICT at the University of Gaston Berger Gabon.

I was admitted in 2014 to read a Masters in Probability and Statistics of which I graduated last year. The scholarship, funded by the ACE Project has positively impacted my knowledge in Research. The Masters Programme gave me the opportunity to further study and understand a course I was keen on studying. The Project also helped sharpen my skills as I had the opportunity to intern at a partner institution of the University, the Institute for Research Development (IRD) in Gabon. The insight has ignited my interest in furthering my studies to the PhD level. I wish to express my gratitude to the World Bank, the University of Gaston Berger and all stakeholder of the ACE Project. I am very happy to have been awarded this scholarship.

Nideou Dassidi,
Chadian, Regional Center of Excellence in Poultry Science
(CERSA), University of Lome, Togo.



I read a PhD in Effect of Parental Nutrition on Embryonic Development at the Regional Center of Excellence in Poultry Science (CERSA), University of Lome, Togo. I acquired great knowledge and developed new skills in poultry keeping through my programme. The Centre's well-equipped laboratory facilitated productive research and innovation. I am happy to be a beneficiary of the ACE Project.

ACE Alumni and Students share their experiences



Aly Conde, Guinean

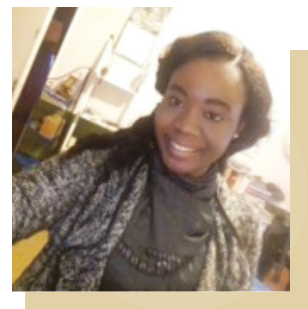
ACE in Climate change, Biodiversity and sustainable agriculture of University of Félix Houphouët-Boigny, Côte d'Ivoire.

I was admitted to read a Masters Degree in Biodiversity and Ecosystem's Valorization at the African Higher Education Center of Excellence in Climate change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Agriculture at the University of Félix Houphouët-Boigny, Côte d'Ivoire in April 2016 and graduated in February 2018.

The ACE project opened the door for a research career for me. The training will allow me to participate effectively in the development of my country Guinea.

**Stella Esenam Todzo (student),
Ghanaian, African Center of Excellence in Climate Change,
Biodiversity and Sustainable Agriculture, Félix Houphouët-Boigny
University, La Cote d'Ivoire.**

I am a Masters student in Climate Change and Interactions. Learning with people from different nationalities across the continent with different perspectives and background helped me to improve my inter-personal skills. Overall, this has been a positive experience for me. Under the Project, I am experiencing a world-class standard of education. After graduation, I intend to utilize my knowledge in Climate change to help boost agriculture in my country, Ghana.



**Camara Aboubacar, (student) Guinean,
African Centre of Excellence in Climate Change, Biodiversity
and Sustainable Agriculture, Felix Houphouët Boigny
University, La Cote d'Ivoire.**

Studying at the African Centre of Excellence in Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Agriculture has helped improve my research abilities. The course is well thought-out and unlimited internet access on campus makes research easier. I'm grateful to the ACE Project because it gave me the courage and desire to continue my studies.

Training of Trainers (ToT) Course in Active and Innovative University Teaching

The Department of Science Education, University of Copenhagen, Denmark has introduced a course for faculty in the Africa Higher Education Centres of Excellence (ACE) Project. The training is aimed at capacity building in Innovative Teaching and Learning, strengthening the internal core of university staff in modern pedagogy and equipping them with competences in organizing and running courses for other staff members. Participating ACEs includes the Regional Water and Environmental Sanitation Centre Kumasi (RWESCK), based at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Ghana.

The training equips participants to further be resource persons for their institutions to motivate and capacitate fellow faculty members to reform their approach to teaching and learning.

The course consists of three intensive training and two interim periods for revision. In the first phase of the training, participants would be trained in courses such as Introduction to University Pedagogy at the University of Copenhagen for a duration of ten (10) days.

The second phase, to be hosted at one of the ACEs will also run for ten days. Participants will be trained in high end university pedagogy and course management.

The final phase of the training is a 5-day experience at a local venue (preferably at each participating ACE). Here, course participants will finalize their training session by running courses for local staff (2-3 days) with support from the advisory team.

The specific details of each Training of Trainers course is designed and time tabled in collaboration with participating ACEs and the expert team from University of Copenhagen.

Also, the Course leaders are internationally recognized researchers in Science Education.



Supervision team with Management and Staff of Benue State University

Update on 5th Supervision Mission

As part of monitoring and evaluation of the Africa Higher Education Excellence (ACE) Project, a team consisting of representatives of the World Bank, AAU and subject matter experts in the fields of Agriculture, Health, Science Technology, Engineering and Mathematics visited the various Centres of Excellence in the West and Central African region.

The Supervision mission commenced on March 12, 2018. The Centres visited were the Africa Centre of Excellence for Phytomedicine Research and Development (ACEPRD), Centre in Reproductive Health and Innovation (CERHI), the Pan African Materials Institute (PAMI), Regional Water and Environmental Sanitation Centre, Kumasi (RWESCK), Center for Food technology and Research, Center for Dryland Agriculture, Africa Centre of Excellence for Avian Science (CERSA), CEA-MITIC ACE in Mathematics, Informatics and ICT.

The supervision team was warmly welcomed by Vice Chancellors and representatives of the host institutions. In each Centre, courtesy calls were paid on the



Supervision team with Management and Staff of Benue State University

Update on 5th Supervision Mission

University leadership and management followed by meetings with project management teams after which a tour of the Centres was given to the supervision team.

Some of the issues discussed in relation to students' welfare were; improvement of accommodation and internet connectivity on campuses and creating an enabling environment for teacher-student relationship. Updates were also given on the experts' recommendations in the previous supervision mission. For instance, based on initial recommendations, ACEPRD now has MSc/PhD student representative in its Management Committee. The leadership of the Centre also stated that, discussions toward international accreditation by the Royal Society of Biology are on - going and the Centre's laboratory has also been equipped with State- of- the-art resources.

Another Centre, CERHI, had demonstrated efforts towards regional and international partnerships and accreditation. The Centre had signed MoUs with the University of Malawi, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Esperanza Uni-

Update on 5th Supervision Mission

versity, Benin Republic and Kenya Technical University. Processes to be accredited by international organizations such as the Agency of Public Health Education Accreditation (APHEA), Belgium and the West African Health Organization were on-going at the time of the supervision mission.

Generally, the Centres also reported progress in enrollment. For instance, the Pan African Materials Institute (PAMI), outlined a steady progress in enrollment as the Centre had graduated over 30 PhD students in Materials Science, Mathematics, Computer Science, Physics and Petroleum Engineering.

In all, the Centres were commended for the good work and further encouraged to strengthen communication with students. They were also advised to create visibility for their achievements and output.

The Centres of Excellence were further tasked to explore other revenue generation avenues by writing fundable proposals and advertising their products and services to private sector stakeholders and the general public. This is to ensure continuity of the project beyond World Bank's funding.

In turn, the Centres expressed gratitude to the supervision team for assisting them identify their weaknesses and making suggestions for improvement.



Some participants of the CDA Agric Workshop

CDA Holds Workshop for Agriculture Based ACEs

The Africa Centre of Excellence for Dryland Agriculture (ACEDA), Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria hosted the third edition of the International Workshop/Meeting of the Agriculture based Africa Centres of Excellence from 10th to 12th April, 2018. This event was themed, "Developing the Next Generation of Agricultural Researchers and Professionals in Africa: Role of the ACEs."

In 2015 the Agric ACEs formed a consortium with the aim of providing a platform for sharing experiences and working together toward achieving common goals. The first meeting of the consortium was hosted by the West Africa Centre for Crop Improvement (WACCI) in August 2015, while the second meeting was hosted by the Centre for Food Technology and Research (CEFTER) in April 2017.

The objectives of the meeting were to provide a forum for networking and experience sharing among the Agriculture-based ACEs, link the Agric ACEs with some potential donor agencies and key stakeholders and revitalize the Agric-ACEs Consortium.

"The Workshop was organized to revitalize the Agric ACEs Consortium and agree on schemes for students exchange, joint advertisement and promotion of the ACEs, joint regional research proposal and documentation of the ACE teaching and learning experience through joint publications in education management journals," said the Centre Leader of ACEDA, Professor Jibrin M. Jibrin.



Members of Agric ACEs during a parallel session

CDA Holds Workshop for Agriculture Based ACEs

A total of seventy - two (72) participants from the six Agric-ACEs, development partners, private sectors and government agencies were in attendance.

Welcoming the participants during the opening session, the Vice Chancellor of Bayero University, Kano, Professor Muhammad Yahuza Bello said ACEs have great roles to play in the development of the region.

Prof Bello explained that Bayero University is proud of the tremendous achievements of the Centre for Dryland Agriculture within its short period of existence. "All the CDA supported MSc and PhD programmes have obtained full accreditation from the National Universities Commission (NUC) and the Centre is working towards getting the relevant international accreditation for the programmes," said the Vice Chancellor.

The six Agric ACEs in attendance were: West Africa Centre for Crop Improvement (WACCI), University of Ghana, Accra, Ghana; Africa Centre of Excellence in Poultry Science, University of Lome, Togo; Centre of Excellence in Agricultural Development and Sustainable Environment (CEADESE), Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Nigeria; Centre for Food Technology and Research (CEFTE), Benue State University, Nigeria; Africa Centre of Excellence in Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development, Felix Houphouet-Boigny University, Cocody, Cote d'Ivoire and Africa Centre of Excellence in Dryland Agriculture (CDA), Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria.

CDA Holds Workshop for Agriculture Based ACEs

The forum also provided the opportunity for development partners to make short presentations of their activities. Parallel sessions were held to discuss various ways of networking between the Agric ACEs and development partners.

The workshop also deliberated on developing joint regional grant proposals that target the right development partners to enable the ACEs get funds to derive joint activities and collaboration.

To drive this, a committee was set up to prepare a concept note and identify possible areas of joint proposals, potential donors and timelines. The members of the committee are:

1. Prof. Eric Danqaah (WACCI) Coordinator
2. Prof Francois Kouame (CEACCBAD) Interim Coordinator
3. Dr. Adebawale Lawal (CEADESE)
4. Prof. Tozo Koffi (CERSA)
5. Dr. Adejo Sylvester (CEFTEF)
6. Dr. Kabiru Mustapha Umar (CDA)

The committee is expected to present the concept note at the Ninth ACE workshop to be held from May 7-9, 2018 at 2iE, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

The Workshop also featured students' video and poster presentations.

Opportunities

- Call for abstracts- WACCBIP Research Conference 2018
<http://www.waccbip.org/waccbip-research-conference-2018/>
- Call for participation- 2nd International Conference on Water Infrastructure and Sustainable Energy Futures in a Changing Environment (WISE Futures), 12th -13th September, 2018, Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology (NM-AIST) Arusha, Tanzania
<http://ace2.iucea.org/2nd-Wise-Futures-Int-Conference-in-Sept-2018.pdf>
- Short course on Nuclear Technology for Water and Food Security, July 23 July–03 August 2018.NM-AIST, Arusha, Tanzania
<http://ace2.iucea.org/2018-nuclear-tech-workshop-July2018.pdf>