



WORLD BANK GROUP



AAU

**JULY NEWSLETTER**  
**2019**



# Editors' Remarks

The sixth edition of the ACE Newsletter covers major events and milestones achieved by the various Centres of Excellence from January 2019 till date. Also featured are upcoming events and reports on events undertaken by the ACEs.

The Association of African Universities which is the Regional Facilitation Unit for the ACE I and ACE Impact Projects initiated the Newsletter as a platform to create visibility for the Centres, facilitate information flow and bring to light their enormous impact.

Besides this quarterly Newsletter, there are social media platforms (Facebook (ACE I) and Twitter (@theACE\_Project)) where success stories and events of the ACEs are shared. We are grateful to the Centres for their support in putting together this newsletter and encourage them to continuously furnish us with information on latest happenings in their various institutions.





Participants contribute to discussions

## CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE CONVENE TO DISCUSS WAY FORWARD

The World Bank and the Association of African Universities in collaboration with the Ministry of Higher Education in Djibouti and the University of Djibouti hosted the first ACE Impact bootcamp and 10th ACE I workshop from February 19-26, 2019. There were about 450 Higher Education Stakeholders representing over 30 nationalities from the African continent.

Preceding the workshops was the Project Steering Committee meetings held on February 18 at the Kempinski Palace Djibouti hotel. The meetings discussed among others, the progress of ACE I and the way forward for the ACE Impact Project.

### Event Objectives and Key Issues

The objective of the ACE I workshop and ACE Impact bootcamp was to provide a peer learning platform for the Centers to

obtain guidance on project preparation, exchange information on their respective programs, build networks and forge partnerships to ensure the successful implementation of the project. The workshop and bootcamp also created the opportunity for the new ACEs to interact and learn from the existing centers. Moreover, the ACE I Centers had the opportunity to discuss ongoing activities and progress, as well as share experiences and their impact on the continent's developmental challenges.

The Centres were encouraged to build strong regional networks among themselves to kick start groupings and formulations of thematic network activities and expectations. Participants were also guided on the objectives, expected results, outcomes and activities to be implemented during the duration of the ACE Impact Project.

# **CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE CONVENE TO DISCUSS WAY FORWARD**

In her address, Mrs. Himdat Bayusuf, ACE I Task Team Leader with the World Bank commended the existing ACEs for the amazing results they had achieved to date. She highlighted that, the implementation of this Project was a collective effort between the World Bank, the French Development Agency (AFD) and governments of participating African countries.

Dr. Ekua Bentil, the ACE Impact Task Team Leader indicated that the ACE Impact Project was a scale-up of ACE I and seeks to improve the quality, quantity and development impact of postgraduate education in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), Health, Agriculture and applied Social Sciences.

The ACEs were also encouraged to strive towards increasing the number of women scientists and women in positions of leadership, as well as strengthen Inter-ACE Partnerships for Research and Training. ACEs in sustainable energy were advised to take advantage of the ECOWAS Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Policies which provides opportunities for researchers to engage and solve real problems faced by the ECOWAS countries.







Participants from across Africa and other continents

## OPENING CEREMONY

The Opening Ceremony, held on February 20 at the Kempinski hotel was graced by the President of the Republic of Djibouti H.E. Mr Ismail Omar Guelleh, the First Lady of the Republic of Djibouti, The Honorable Minister of Higher Education and Research in Djibouti, H.E. Dr Nabil Mohamed Ahmed, the Secretary General of the Association of African Universities, Prof Etienne Ehouan Ehile, the Djibouti World Bank Country Representative, Mr Atou Seck, and the French Development Agency Deputy Manager for Education, Vocational Training and Employment Sector, Ms Valerie Tehio . Other dignitaries from Djibouti and beyond were also in attendance. The media was well represented by both international and local media agencies.

In his remarks, the President of Djibouti, His Excellency Mr Ismail Omar Guelleh voiced his delight that Djibouti was part of a commendable initiative aimed at improving African Higher Education. He added that, it was important for Djibouti to exploit its strategic location through its

Centre of Excellence in Transport and Logistics. He also emphasized his belief in the capacities of African countries, the youth and African researchers. The World Bank, Association of African Universities and other stakeholders of the ACE Project expressed their sincere gratitude to the Djibouti government, Ministry of Higher Education and the University of Djibouti for their tireless efforts towards the success of the event.

### Experience Sharing by ACE I Teams

During the Plenary sessions, some Vice Chancellors, Centre leaders and experts from ACE I were engaged to share their experiences in nurturing the relationship between the ACEs and the university Community. This session was chaired by Professor Mohammed Salifu, the Executive Secretary of the Ghana National Council for Tertiary Education. Some key recommendations made included the following : (1) Centres should not operate in isolation from their host institutions; (2)



Xavier Michel sharing ideas with participants

Universities are to provide the needed institutional support to the ACEs to ensure implementation of the Project's objectives; (3) ACEs need to build a strong team with a shared vision and values; (4) ACEs should be able to identify bottlenecks and bureaucracies and work around them and finally (5) Universities should learn to include the ACEs in their governance structures.

The expert on this panel discussion, Xavier Michel, former Director-General of the École Polytechnique, France recommended that, invitations to collaborate with industries must come from the Vice Chancellors not Centre leaders. He mentioned that ACEs are to contribute to the overall success of the universities, and thus, a seamless integration of the ACE into the university is essential. He urged the ACEs and universities to work in an efficient and effective manner to meet the project's objectives within the stipulated time.

## Project Background

The ACE Project is a World Bank initiative aimed at supporting post-graduate training in the following areas: genomics and infectious diseases; water, energy and environment; agricultural development and environmental sustainability; plant medicine and development; reproductive health and innovation; mathematics, statistics and applications; oilfield chemicals and sanitation; Poultry science; information and communication technology; maternal and child health; food technology and climate change; mining; and materials science and engineering.

New areas included in the ACE Impact Project are: sustainable cities; sustainable power and energy; social sciences and education; transport; population health and policy; herbal medicine development and regulatory sciences; public health; applied informatics and communication; and pastoral production.





CEO of the World Bank, Kristalina Georgieva(right) and Prof. Daouda Kone(left) commissions CEA-CCBAD Secretariat, Mrs. Himdat Bayusuf, ACE I TTL (behind)

## CEA- CCBAD INAUGURATES ITS ULTRA- MODERN BUILDING

The Africa Center of Excellence on Climate Change, Biodiversity and Agriculture (CEA-CCBAD) hosted by the Felix Houphoët -Boigny University, Cote d'Ivoire commissioned its ultra- modern administrative and research edifice.

Present at the inauguration ceremony was the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Dr Abdalla Albert Toikeusee Mabri; the World Bank Country Director Pierre Laporte and Program Coordinator, Paola Ridolfi and the ACE I Task Team Leader, Himdat Bayusuf. Also, in attendance was the CEA-CCBAD team led by the Centre Director, Professor Daouda Kone as well as faculty and students. The building was officially commissioned by the CEO of the World Bank, Kristalina Georgieva.

The inauguration created a platform for the Project stakeholders to interact with students supported under the ACE Proj-

ect. Two PhD students made presentations on their research areas. Balakissa Fofana, an Ivorian focused on Biopesticides - specifically, the implementation of sustainable control strategies against fungal pests of cocoa trees. Madina Doumbia, stated that her research focus was on the impact of urban air pollution at local and regional scales.

Her research was inspired by the desire to contribute meaningfully towards a positive impact on health and the environment in the sub region.

The approximately US\$1.2 million building funded under the ACE Project includes well- equipped laboratories, an amphitheater, fully furnished conference rooms and classrooms.

The newly commissioned  
CEA-CCBAD building



The Africa Centre of Excellence (ACE) project is the first results-based regional project and the first World Bank results-based funding of universities. 112 PhD and 119 MSc CEA-CCBAD students have been supported through the Project.





## CERHI AND PARTNERS COLLABORATE TOWARDS STRENGTHENING INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS IN AFRICA

The Centre of Excellence in Reproductive Health Innovation (CERHI), University of Benin, Nigeria organized a two-day workshop, under the theme “Strengthening Innovation Ecosystems in Universities in West and Central Africa” from April

International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE) in Nairobi, Kenya and in partnership with the Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund (RSIF). The Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund (RSIF) is the flagship initiative of the Partnership for skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (PASET) which aims to support doctoral training and post-doctoral research and innovation in about 10 priority economic sectors for growth and development across Sub-Saharan Africa.



29-30, 2019. This event was hosted in collaboration with BioInnovate Africa and

the interest of researchers in building viable markets for their research outputs.

## **CERHI AND PARTNERS COLLABORATE TOWARDS STRENGTHENING INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS IN AFRICA**

Researchers and scientists from various universities (including ACEs in West, Central and East African regions) and research institutions participated in the workshop. Postgraduate students and policy makers in the fields of health, science, agriculture, engineering, technology, and social sciences from Ghana, Cameroon, Guinea and Nigeria were also in attendance.

This workshop was organized in line with CERHI's mandate to enhance capacity building in the health and environment sectors to engender research excellence and foster innovation and entrepreneurial development among researchers.





Centre Director Prof. Jibrin (left) showing showing Dr. Carberry (right) around CDA labs

## ICRISAT EXPLORES WAYS TO STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIP WITH CDA

The Director-General of the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), Dr Peter Carberry has promised to explore more opportunities for collaboration with the Centre for Dryland Agriculture (CDA). He said this during a visit to CDA and its host university, Bayero University, Kano, on Thursday, 25th April, 2019.

ICRISAT is an international organization focused on agricultural research for rural development. Its headquarters is located at Patancheru (Hyderabad, India) with several regional centres across the globe. Dr Carberry commended the Institute's fruitful partnership with Bayero University and vowed to explore other avenues to further strengthen the collaboration. He observed that, the collaboration with the Centre for Dryland Agriculture was yielding fruitful results, especially in the areas of agricultural research and capacity building. He mentioned this when he paid a courtesy call on the Vice Chancellor who was represented by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academics) Professor Adamu Idris Tanko.

Professor Tanko expressed his gratitude to ICRISAT for being a supportive partner

to the CDA. He noted that the University allocated a 15-hectare research field to ICRISAT as a gesture to appreciate the partnership. He called on Dr Carberry to explore additional collaborative opportunities that would be beneficial to both CDA and ICRISAT.

While at the CDA, Dr. Carberry visited the Centre's farm and laboratories and interacted with faculty members. He also inspected the ICRISAT's research field. He commended the University Management for their support.

Dr. Carberry assured the Centre of ICRISAT's willingness to support research and teaching activities around GIS and Remote Sensing, Agricultural and Environmental Systems modelling to help the Centre towards achieving its goal. Dr. Carberry also reiterated the commitment of ICRISAT towards training and capacity development of CDA staff and students. In his remarks, the Director of CDA, Professor Jibrin M. Jibrin expressed optimism that the Centre would live up to expectations and continue to strengthen the partnership between the two institutions.

## WACCI'S WEBSITE EMERGES AS ONE OF THE BEST AMONG THE ACES

Websites are essential communication platforms for organizations to showcase their achievements and products. For Higher Education Institutions particularly Centres of Excellence, it enhances the learning experience and facilitates enrollment. It is therefore important that ACEs are visible to enable them attract more regional students and useful partners to support their missions. The websites of ACEs also provide a good medium for the communication of their research findings to a broad audience.

The ACE websites are therefore the first point of contact for aspiring post-graduate students, interested partners and other stakeholders that are being targeted by the ACE in terms of communication.

Consequently, the Association of African Universities, which is the Regional Facilitation Unit of the ACE Project conducted a review of the websites of 25 Africa Higher Education Centres of Excellence - 22 under ACE I and 3 under ACE II - for the purpose of supporting the improvement of these websites in line with the communication strategy for the overall ACE Project. The review was inspired by a capacity needs assessment that was conducted by AAU through an online survey

that targeted Communications Officers from the 22 ACEs under ACE I and those from the general higher education community.

The parameters on which the websites were reviewed are as follows; its responsiveness on small devices (e.g phones and tablets), appearance in top searches on google and other search engines, its activeness in sharing news from the ACE and its level of security through having a SSL/TLS certificate. Other parameters such as easy access of their social media pages through the websites, easy access to general information, frequency in updating the website with latest information on the Centre were also evaluated.

Following this review, the West African Centre for Crop Improvement (WACCI) hosted by the University of Ghana emerged top in the abovementioned criteria. Although the website is not secured, it is frequently updated with latest information on the Centre, all social media pages are properly linked to the website and it is easy to see programmes offered by the Centre as well as other relevant information. The website also features success stories from its training programmes.



## WACCI'S WEBSITE EMERGES AS ONE OF THE BEST AMONG THE ACES

In order to have well managed websites, ACEs are advised to train their Communication Officers to manage the content of the ACE websites. In addition, the structure of the websites must follow a standard layout. It emerged through the evaluation, that menus on the ACE websites are diverse and in certain cases lack important information. It is recommended that, ACEs revise their websites to include the following menus as a basic quality standard - ***ABOUT (Why Study at the ACE?); OUR PROGRAMS; HOW TO APPLY; NEWS & MEDIA; THE ACE TEAM; THE ACE PROJECT; FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS.***

In addition, Centres are encouraged to conduct frequent audits of their websites to ensure that all the menus and hyperlinks work and also dedicate time towards keeping the content on their websites up to date. It would also be useful for the ACEs to link their social media platforms to the websites.



**Workshop Phase I - Prof Umoh in one of the Lab Sessions**

## **ACENTDFB ORGANIZES WORKSHOP ON RABIES CONTROL AND PREVENTION**

The African Centre for Neglected Tropical Diseases and Forensic Biotechnology (ACENTDFB), Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria hosted a workshop on Rabies Surveillance and Control from April 1-12, 2019. The primary objective of the workshop was to build strong human capacity at all levels, to ensure efficient and reliable human resource for Rabies surveillance, prevention and control in Nigeria. It also intended to increase participants' general knowledge and skills on rabies pre- and post-exposure management and enhance partnerships and coordination in rabies surveillance and control activities in Nigeria. Present were Veterinarians, Medical health workers, scientists, health policy makers and researchers. Dr. Laurent Dacheux (Deputy Director, National Reference Centre for Rabies, Lyssavirus Epidemiology and Neuropathology Unit, Institute Pasteur, France) and the Centre's management were also in attendance. The workshop was held in two phases and together had over 60 participants in attendance.

The first phase was held from April 1-5, 2019. Participants agreed that, there is a need for the elimination of human dog-mediated rabies in Nigeria by 2030. It is also essential to provide hands-on vaccination training and public sensitization on Rabies. It was agreed that a report on action plans and recommendations would be shared with the Federal Ministry of National Centre for Disease Control in Nigeria for implementation.

The second phase which was a hands-on training held from April 8-12, 2019 witnessed community health workers, hunters from Sabon Gari Local Government Area (LGA) and the Centre's Rabies postgraduate students participating. The Director of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital ABU Zaria (B.M. Jahun), the Zaria Branch Club President of Rotary International, Dr. Nkiru Charity Eberemu and her Deputy, Dr. Adrian Oshioname were also present.



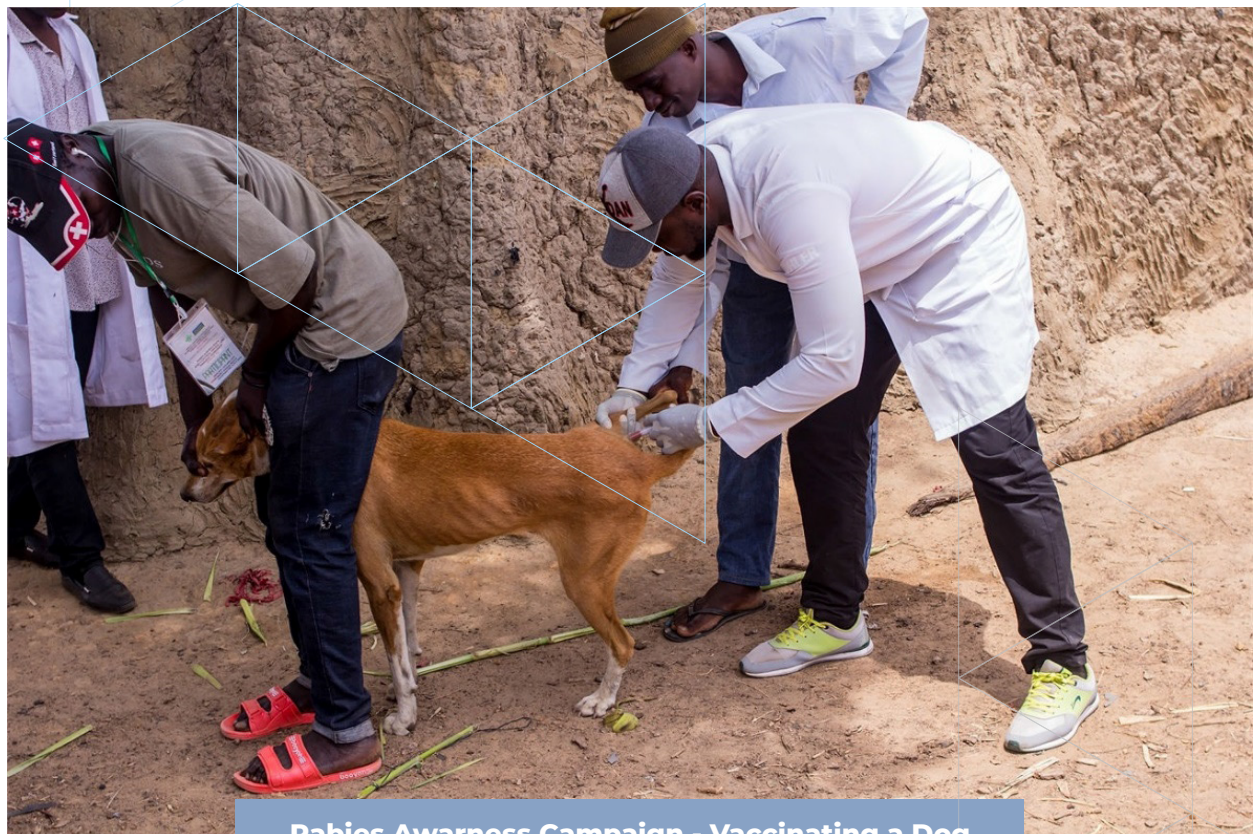
At the end of the workshops, it was noted that there was increased awareness and education on rabies prevention and control among trainees. The training helped to strengthen the partnership between ACENTDFB, the district and village heads.

### **Vaccination exercise undertaken by ACENTDFB**

Additionally, from 23rd April to 2nd of May, 2019, the Centre organized a vaccination exercise at the Ahmadu Bello

Veterinary Teaching Hospital and Sabon Gari Vet Clinics. The exercise was conducted by seventeen health practitioners. A total of 2,591 dogs and 503 cats were vaccinated bringing the total to 3094. Inhabitants were also educated on the prevention and control of Rabies.

The African Centre of Neglected Tropical Diseases and Forensic Biotechnology (ACENTDFB) is one of the health ACEs. Its research focus is on neglected tropical diseases, principally, Trypanosomiasis, Lymphatic Filariasis and Rabies.



**Rabies Awareness Campaign - Vaccinating a Dog**



# PAMI ORGANIZES FINITE ELEMENT MODELLING (FEM) TRAINING

The Pan African Materials Institute (PAMI) hosted by the African University of Science and Technology (AUST), Abuja, organized a training on Finite Element Modelling for its PhD students at the Materials Engineering Department as well as other participants from various universities and research institutions from the sub Saharan African region.

Dr. Joseph Chukwuemeka Ani of the Department of Electrical Engineering at the Nile University, Abuja, was the facilitator for the training.

According to Dr. Ani, the Finite Element Modelling is a numerical method for solving problems of engineering and mathematical physics. Typical problem



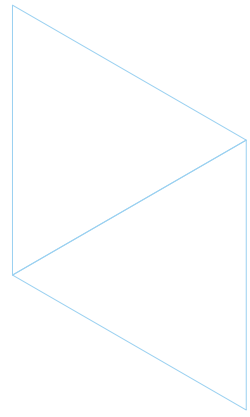
Some participants at the FEM training

The training, carried out from the 30th of April to 14th of May 2019, was organized to prepare the institute's PhD students and other participants in the analysis of their research work and serve as one of the Institute's outreach courses.

areas of interest stressed by him included structural analysis, heat transfer, fluid flow, mass transport and electromagnetic potential.

He inferred that the analytical solution of these problems generally requires the





## PAMI ORGANIZES FINITE ELEMENT MODELLING (FEM) TRAINING

solution to boundary value problems for partial differential equations. This approximates the unknown function over the domain to solve the problem by subdividing a large system into smaller, simpler parts that are called finite elements. The simple equations that model these finite elements are then assembled into a larger system of equations that models the entire problem.

A participant and PhD student of PAMI, Mrs Gina Chukwu while sharing her experience at the training said that Finite Element Modelling is becoming increasingly popular. This she said is partially due to the increased freedom one has in terms of reinforcement geometry and distribution, interface and mechanical properties, and in part due to advances in computational power and user-friendly codes.

"With modern computers elastic models containing many hundreds of thousands of elements can be constructed and

solved quickly. The basic tenet underlying this approach is that one can describe the behavior of the composite through the performance of a representative unit cell. This simplified representation is necessary because except for a few idealized cases, the distribution of the phases is ill-defined and chaotic" she said.

PAMI is the only regional Centre of Excellence in Materials Science and Engineering in West Africa, which intends to train a critical mass of materials scientists and engineers to add value to the minerals and materials resources of West and Central Africa. This is achieved by engaging teams of mathematicians, physicists, chemists, biologists, materials scientists, engineers and relevant industry in inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary research, education and industrial application of results





## ENSEA GRADUATES ITS FIRST COHORT OF MASTER'S STUDENTS IN ACTUARIAL SCIENCES

The National School of Statistics and Applied Economics (ENSEA), one of the Centres of Excellence in the STEM field, in partnership with the Institute of Financial Sciences and Insurance (ISFA) in France and Houphouët-Boigny National Polytechnic Institute (INPHB), Cote d'Ivoire launched a Masters' Degree programme in Actuarial Science in 2017. The programme seeks to train specialists in statistics and finance and more generally professionals from insurance, pension funds and provident institutions, banking and asset management sectors, in risk assessment and management.

The Centre graduated its first cohort on April 05, 2019. Eighteen (18) students (11 national students and 6 regional students from Burkina Faso, Benin, Togo, Cameroon and Madagascar) were awarded their Master's degree in actuarial science. Present at the ceremony was the French Ambassador to Côte d'Ivoire, Mr Gilles Huberson, who commended the institute

for its enormous impact in the STEM field and congratulated the students for such great achievement.

The programme is designed to enhance mathematical and statistical applications in solving developmental challenges. To ensure continuity and maximization of its impact, the programme is managed by a Steering Committee which includes partner institutions and representatives of various financial institutions and insurance companies. Notable members of the Steering Committee include: President of the Association of Insurers of Côte d'Ivoire, Mr Saliou Bakayoko and President of the Institute of Actuaries of Cote d'Ivoire Mr Armand Kple.

This unique initiative aims to meet the continuing training needs of executives in financial industries in the fields of finance, actuarial and risk management. ENSEA is the first institution to launch a Masters' degree Programme in Actuarial Science.





Participants at the Conference

## POULTRY SCIENCE STAKEHOLDERS PROFFER SOLUTIONS TO THE INDUSTRY'S CHALLENGES

The Centre of Excellence for Poultry Sciences (CERSA) in collaboration with the Togolese branch of the World Association of Poultry Science (WPSA) organized the Pan African Poultry Conference from 14 to 16 May, 2019 in Lome, Togo.

Over three hundred researchers, experts, poultry breeders and players in the poultry industry from about fifteen countries including Australia, Belgium, Benin, Ivory Coast, Ghana, France, Kenya, Nigeria, the Netherlands, Senegal, Togo and Turkey were present.

The primary objective of this meeting was to bring together different actors in the poultry sector to discuss and explore innovative ways of improving the sector. In attendance was the Minister of Higher

Education and Research, Professor Akpagana Koffi, Minister for Agriculture, Animal and Fish production, Noël Koutera Bataka, the Resident Representative of the World Bank in Togo, Hawa Cissé Wagué, the Secretary General of the World Association of Poultry Science (WPSA), Research Professors, representatives of professional associations of the poultry industry and students.

About sixty scientific papers, half of which were oral and the other half in posters, were presented. The papers were focused on Environment and Poultry Production Systems; Food, Nutrition and Metabolism; Reproduction and Incubation; Product Quality, Processing and Sanitary Safety and Economics of Production.

The conference reviewed the opportunities offered by the poultry industry in terms of scientific potential, research, and job creation. It was noted that, the industry's dynamism makes room for innovations in different areas including manufacturing and processing.

In his opening remarks, the Minister of Higher Education, Professor Koffi Akpa-

importation of chicken meat in West Africa at the expense of local production ". He said, "Chicken meat consumption in sub-Saharan Africa was 99 percent while domestic production was only 56 percent."

The resident representative of the World Bank in Togo also highlighted the importance of stakeholders coming together



gana commended CERSA's efforts in bringing together academicians around the globe to volunteer solutions to challenges faced by the poultry industry. He said, "I am glad to see academics from many countries share their concerns, to combine their thoughts and experiences in the prospects for exploring new paradigms essential to the development of poultry production in our subregion. "

The Minister of Agriculture, Noël Koutera Bataka also lamented the "increased

through meetings like this, to strategize on innovative and creative ways to improve the poultry industry. She added, "We are convinced that the scientific research conducted by CERSA and consequently the new discoveries would improve the competitiveness of the African industry and poultry farmers".

The Centre offers Masters' and PhD programmes in poultry production. It also offers short courses for professionals in the poultry industry.





## CEA-SAMEF PARTNERS IN SCALING UP DIGITIZATION OF HEALTHCARE IN SENEGAL

Today's evolving world has necessitated innovative solutions to challenges facing various sectors including education and health. It is in this quest that the Telemedicine initiative was launched.

As with many countries, Senegal suffers from an inadequate supply and poor distribution of physicians. Most of its specialist physicians work in Dakar, the national capital.

Telemedicine is an effective strategy to facilitate the recruitment and retention of physicians in deprived areas and, in doing so, improve access to healthcare.

Over the past decade, several researchers have been studying telemedicine and consider it to be a potential solution to improving the recruitment and retention of physicians in rural and historically underserved regions. The technology can reduce their professional isolation, allow them to get experts' opinions

from a distance, and reduce their workload. Telemedicine can also improve equitable access to healthcare through its mobile teleconsultation service.

This technology was launched by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (MESRI), Ministry of Health and Social Action (MSAS) and the local authority of Guédiawaye and its partners in Strasbourg.

Subsequently, the African Centre of Excellence in Maternal Health (CEA-SAMEF) hosted by Cheikh Anta Diop University (UCAD), Senegal in partnership with the Directorate General for Research and Innovation of the MESRI organized a training workshop from 16-18 April 2019. Hopi Medical in Senegal was part of this collaboration to sharpen the skills of users of mobile teleconsultation services to enable efficient and effective use of the technology.

## ACES ENCOURAGED TO MEET PROJECT TARGETS

As part of monitoring and evaluation of the ACE Project, regular supervision missions are conducted to the various Centres to review progress made toward the implementation of the Project.

Subject matter experts, World Bank and AAU representatives visited the following ACEs as part of the seventh ACE I and first ACE Impact supervision missions: Cameroun; Centre for Agricultural Development & Sustainable Environment (CEADESE), Nigeria; Pan African Materials Institute (PAMI), Nigeria; ACE in Maternal and Child Health (CEA-SAMEF), Senegal; Centre for Excellence in Reproductive Health and Innovation (CERHI), Nigeria; ACE for Phytomedicine Research and Development (ACEPRD), Nigeria Centre of Excellence in Avian Sciences (CERSA),Togo; CEA-MEM, Cote d'Ivoire. The mission was carried out from April 15- May 10, 2019.

In Nigeria, the ACEs visited had made progress regarding recommendations made by experts during the last missions held in 2018 and early January 2019 for some Centres. For instance, PAMI has made significant progress in acquiring high quality and advanced instruments and analytical tools to improve the overall quality of its education and research programs. The experts recommended that, PAMI and the host University AUST needs to develop and implement a laboratory management system to ensure adequate safety training for all users of AUST laboratories, explore revenue generation options. The World Bank, AAU and the NUC were advised to closely monitor and supervise the implementation of PAMI's revised work plan as the project moves towards

closure in March 2020. CERHI had also has expanded its recruitment efforts with an increased number of foreign students joining the program and developed its partnerships to conduct joint short courses and workshops. The Centre was advised to maintain centre equity in support of faculty and students through transparent policies and align its work plan towards ACE Impact readiness. ACEPRD was also advised to reconcile its finances against activities and develop a realistic work plan for 2019.

Other Centres visited in Cote d'Ivoire, Togo and Senegal shared their progress with the experts who made various recommendations for meeting the Project's objectives.

New Centres visited under the ACE Impact were: ACE for Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases, Université Gamal Abdel Nasser de Conakry, Guinea; ACE in Training, Research and Expertise in Drug Sciences, Université de Ouaga I; ACE in Bio-technological Innovation for the Elimination of Vector- Borne Diseases; Université Nazi Boni, Burkina Faso; Regional Centre for Energy and Environmental Sustainability (RCEES)University of Energy & Natural Resources; Africa Centre of Excellence in Coastal Resilience(ACECoR),University of Cape Coast, Ghana; AGRISAN Agriculture pour la Sécurité Alimentaire et Nutritionnelle, Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Senegal, Université Abdou Moumouni, Niger. These Centres were given the necessary guidelines in developing a practical Implementation Plan and further advised to hasten their approach towards its readiness for the Project.



# STUDENT-CENTEREDNESS

## - THE BACKBONE FOR THE ACE PROJECT

One of the key messages emphasized at the 10th ACE I workshop and inaugural ACE Impact bootcamp was the need for the ACEs to be primarily focused on their students. ACEs were encouraged to employ diverse strategies to successfully recruit and retain students, particularly regional and female students.

Two sessions were held to focus on student-centeredness. The first session was chaired by Prof. Mamadou S. Diallo, the Project Steering Committee member for Guinea and facilitated by Prof. Michelle Niescierenko, a health expert on the ACE Project. Key lessons were drawn from experiences shared by Prof Y. Ibrahim from ACENTDFB (African Centre of Excellence for Neglected Tropical Diseases and Forensic Biotechnology at Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria) and Prof. Daouda Kone of CEA-CCBAD (African Center of Excellence on Climate Change, Biodiversity and Agriculture, Université de Felix Houphoët -Boigny -Cote d'Ivoire), who served as panel members for the session.

In his presentation, Prof. Ibrahim advised the ACEs to integrate their websites to the university websites so that visibility of the ACEs is enhanced through the universities' websites. Using the student enrollment process of ACENTDFB as an example, he mentioned that calls for applications are widely advertised after which prospective candidates undergo oral interviews and language assessments for foreigners. Subsequently, successful applicants are guided by Supervisory Teams and Course Advisors. In the quest

to increase regional and international applications, ACENTDFB links to the Nigerian embassies across the world to support student recruitment. The Centre has designed and printed pamphlets that explain the incentives for students enrolling in ACENTDFB programs - with special emphasis on foreign students.

Regarding their retention mechanisms, he mentioned that students are sponsored by the Centre to attend conferences and workshops. Additionally, students' fieldwork and internships are supported by the Centre. Post-graduate students are also given support for grant writing as well as given unlimited access to research materials. Students are included in the Center's management - via scheduled interactions, program evaluation workshops, formal and informal feedback. Additionally, ACENTDFB has established a variety of communication platforms to interact with their students. e.g. Student WhatsApp Groups and provision of sim cards to facilitate easy contacting of students. Prof. Ibrahim indicated that ACENTDFB provides free hostel accommodation and language training support for foreign students.

For his part, Prof Daouda Kone shared similar processes that CEA-CCBAD employs in enrolling and retaining students. He stated that, besides teaching aids, unlimited internet access and conducive study spaces, the Centre also provides accommodation and transport services to convey students from the hostel to campus.

## STUDENT-CENTEREDNESS - THE BACKBONE FOR THE ACE PROJECT

Prof Michelle Niescierenko emphasized that ACEs must engage with their students at a personal level in order to support them to succeed. She said Centres must strengthen their students' evaluation of the centres, faculty, programs and universities - possibly through an online facility that will enable students to openly give the feedback.

This feedback must be analyzed and used to improve the services of the centres. Concerning incentivizing students - ACEs were also encouraged to have clear, transparent and merit-based processes to select students who get sponsored to conferences.

In all, the meeting agreed that being student oriented is very vital to the success of the ACE Project as students are the main focus of the project. Most Disbursement Linked Indicators are in one way or another geared towards delivery of quality education, of which students are the key focus.

# SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY FOR THE ACES

Sexual Harassment is unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors. Both women and men are targets of such behavior, but evidence has shown that sexual harassment is primarily aimed at women and can cause serious psychological imbalance.

Under the ACE Impact Project, having a Sexual Harassment Policy forms part of institutional preparedness (Disbursement Linked Indicator 1). As a result, a session was dedicated, during the ACE events in Djibouti to provide information to ACEs on the project's stance on sexual harassment and how ACEs can develop their own policies. Discussions were held on how ACEs can create awareness and enforcement of their sexual harassment policies.

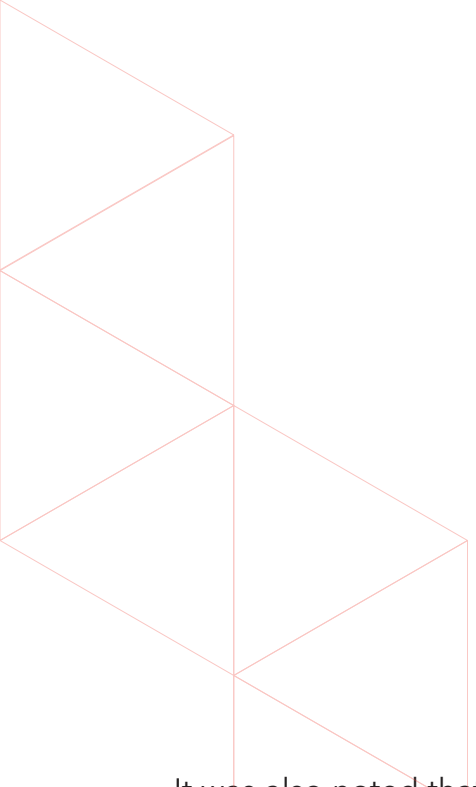
The session was facilitated by Dr. Graham Harrison, a World Bank consultant on the ACE Project and chaired by Professor Jonathan Mba, ACE I Project Coordinator at the Association of African Universities. Dr. Harrison explained that, a Sexual Harassment policy was necessary and ACEs whose universities do not have one were urged to develop and implement strong policies and codes of conduct, complaints mechanisms as well as educate and raise awareness on this issue to create an appropriate environment at all levels. He also stated that, having a policy in place was necessary but insufficient – the policy must explain the steps for reporting and how to seek help. Com-

plaints mechanisms must be clearly detailed, and students and staff should be offered multiple ways to make a formal report of sexual assault or sexual harassment.

As ACEs are encouraged to recruit female students, it is imperative that an environment suitable for female students to succeed is created. The ACEs were advised to appoint a counsellor; make available the counsellor's TORs- including contact information of the counsellor; facilitate ease of reporting, mediation and monitoring; and generally follow a survivor-centered approach. There must be a formal commitment to privacy of complaints. Trainings must be run on sexual harassment and a record on complaints should be kept and submitted to AAU.

Examples of unacceptable behavior were given as: Touching inappropriately without consent; Inappropriately showing sexual organs to another person; Repeatedly following another person without good reason; Making unwanted remarks of a sexual nature; Engaging in sexual intercourse or engaging in sexual act without consent; Attempting to engage in sexual intercourse or sexual act without consent; Sharing private sexual materials of another person without consent; Kissing without consent.





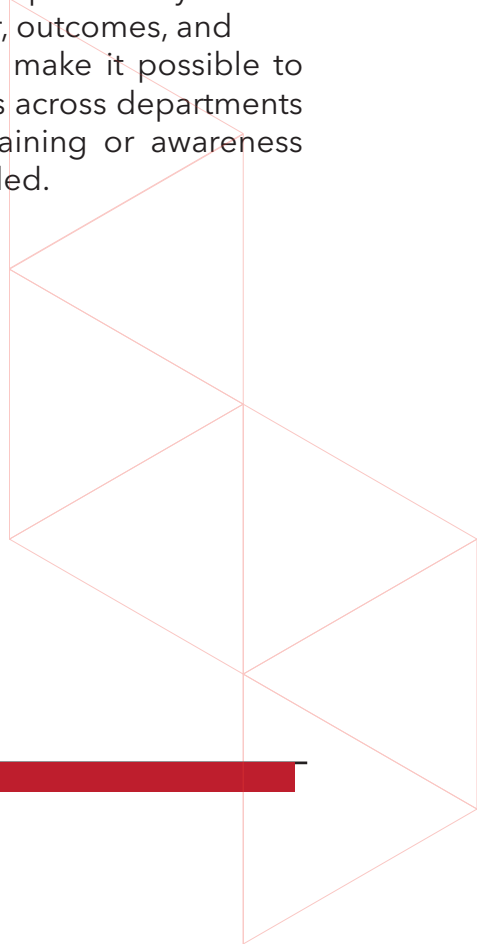
It was also noted that, safety applications and online reporting were some of the methods by which students and staff should be able to make formal reports. However, there should always be an option for people to make a formal report in person.

In remediation, consequences and measures should be tailored to the nature of the case. Measures could range from disciplinary counseling and official warnings to disciplinary actions (transfer, suspension, probation or dismissal).

ACEs were also advised that, once the policy, complaints procedure, remediation measures, and trainings had been developed and implemented,

institutions should regularly monitor them to enhance effectiveness. Some recommendations included the fact that Centres should maintain detailed and confidential records of all reports including those that do not go through the full complaints process. This is to monitor their anti-sexual harassment efforts and to act in cases of repeated offences in spite of a reprimand, warning or other measure.

In conclusion, ACEs were urged to record the number of complaints by department, gender, outcomes, and remedies. This is to make it possible to analyze any patterns across departments where additional training or awareness raising may be needed.



# RESULTS ACHIEVED PER ACE

	ACE		SDR EARNED PER DLR											TOTAL AMOUNT EARNED / TOTAL AMOUNT ALLOCATED
			1 Institutional Readiness	2.1 Short-term Students	2.2 Master Students	2.3 PhD Students	2.4 Internship	2.5 Accreditation	2.6 Research Publications	2.7 External Revenue	2.8 Teaching & Learning Environment	3.1 - 3.4 Fiduciary Management	4 Procurement	
1	2iE	5,200,000	100%	94%	100%	100%	75%	100%	100%	100%	100%	56%	25%	91%
2	ACEGID	5,600,000	100%	100%	32%	100%	67%	100%	100%	100%	75%	66%	75%	90%
3	ACENTDFB	3,100,000	100%	51%	46%	71%	17%	100%	100%	0%	100%	63%	75%	68%
4	ACEPRD	5,100,000	100%	59%	86%	100%	67%	100%	100%	2%	100%	50%	75%	72%
5	CEADESE	3,400,000	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	59%	75%	96%
6	CEA-MITIC	6,500,000	100%	23%	96%	100%	27%	100%	100%	28%	75%	44%	50%	66%
7	CEFTER	4,500,000	100%	98%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	51%	88%	75%	77%
8	CERHI	3,600,000	100%	100%	100%	100%	81%	100%	100%	100%	100%	72%	75%	96%
9	CERSA	5,200,000	100%	80%	63%	100%	73%	100%	100%	99%	75%	75%	25%	79%
10	CETIC	3,775,750	100%	28%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	46%	25%	63%
11	DRYLAND AGRIC	5,260,000	100%	100%	88%	100%	61%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	75%	93%
12	KNUST	5,200,000	100%	24%	97%	100%	50%	100%	100%	100%	75%	72%	75%	82%
13	OAU-OAK PARK	4,500,000	100%	100%	95%	100%	32%	52%	100%	100%	100%	34%	75%	81%
14	PAMI	5,100,000	100%	100%	78%	100%	5%	38%	100%	100%	75%	47%	75%	75%
15	WACCBIP	5,200,000	100%	29%	73%	100%	4%	100%	100%	100%	100%	63%	50%	81%
16	WACCI	5,200,000	100%	96%	23%	100%	9%	100%	100%	100%	100%	63%	50%	78%
17	CEA-SAMEF	3,900,000	100%	68%	51%	100%	45%	100%	100%	0%	50%	50%	50%	62%
18	CEA-SMA	5,300,000	100%	46%	100%	100%	14%	100%	100%	100%	50%	63%	25%	73%
19	CEFOR	3,660,000	100%	91%	100%	100%	40%	65%	100%	100%	100%	94%	75%	89%
20	CCBAD	4,500,000	100%	100%	100%	90%	14%	100%	90%	90%	54%	17%	45%	61%
21	CEA-MEM	4,500,000	100%	3%	90%	100%	50%	0%	49%	12%	54%	28%	45%	44%
22	ENSEA	2,700,000	100%	100%	90%	56%	100%	22%	100%	90%	60%	22%	45%	48%
	AVERAGE		100%	72%	82%	96%	51%	85%	97%	74%	77%	58%	57%	76%



**ACE 1**  
NEWSLETTER

## HIGHER EDUCATION EXCELLENCE

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