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National

State of African resilience report launched

Publish Date: May 19, 2015



Hon.-Dr.-Chris-Baryomunsi-(left)-hands-over-the-first-State-of-African-Resilience-Report-to-Prof.-William-Bazeyo,-Dean-MakSPH-&-RAN-CoP



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Resilient Africa Network (RAN) has launched the first State of African Resilience report titled: "Understanding Dimensions of Vulnerability and Adaptation." State minister for health Dr. Chris Baryomunsi represented the Prime Minister at a function held at Makerere University on Friday.

"Can we do things differently to improve people's lives?"

The midafternoon of Friday May 8, 2015 saw the big event of the launch of the first annual "State of African Resilience" Report in Makerere University, Kampala Uganda.

The event brought together about 500 participants including; multi-disciplinary faculty, students, innovators, the community, policy makers, development partners, Government officials, USAID officials, researchers, Ambassadors, Members of Parliament, Honorable Ministers, Chancellors, faculty and students from other institutions of higher learning, other developmental partners, the media, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Duke University (both based in the United States of America) among others.



Hon. Chris Baryomunsi, State Minister for Health in-charge of General Duties represented the Prime Minister of the Republic of Uganda, Rt. Hon. Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda as Chief Guest. He launched the "State of African Resilience" Report which highlights community consultation findings from the ResilientAfrica Network (RAN), www.ranlab.org a partnership targeting 20 sub-Saharan African universities supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and proudly led by Makerere University in Uganda, together with Tulane University's Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy (DRLA), Stanford University, and the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in the United States.



RAN is one of the eight development labs under the Higher Education Solutions Network (HESN) in the US Global Development lab (<http://www.usaid.gov/hesn>). In his remarks, Hon. Baryomunsi noted that the Government of Uganda would continue working with all development partners including Makerere University and USAID to deliver services to all, carry out research and innovation. "Let us leverage from the existing good and strong partnership for the benefit of the vulnerable communities" he added.



The Prime Minister's remarks highlighted among others the need to build our new Africa on the roots of the old; or we grow new roots without abandoning the old; then can Africa have an integrated, holistic and sustainable development. He also appealed to all that innovation should be the premise to our intellectual pride and ownership of our innovations.

The key question however was whether the Universities would be involved in technology "transfer" or "translation", the latter would demand re-thinking University's roles in national development and in the discourse of African dignity, pride and intellectual properties.

The State Minister for Health was flanked by Hon. Sundy Stevens Ticodri Tagboa, Minister for Higher Education Science and Technology who also committed Uganda Government's support to strengthening resilience in African communities. He added that this cause was directed under his ministry and he was privileged to have been among the first to learn about, support the initialization and establishment of the Makerere University-RAN Innovation Lab on Plot 30, Upper Kololo Terrace, Kampala Uganda. "Can we take innovation beyond innovation?" he challenged all the participants.

"The State of African Resilience: Understanding Dimensions of Vulnerability and Adaptation"

This report, which can be accessed at <http://www.ranlab.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/State-of-African-Resilience-Report.pdf> further identifies major dimensions of resilience from the perspective of more than a dozen vulnerable communities across sub-Saharan Africa. Additionally, the report is based on the research and analysis of the RAN, a partnership that includes fifteen African universities that are engaging with local communities to understand how best to prevent, mitigate, and overcome the recurrent shocks and stresses to which they are most vulnerable.

The report is an opportunity for the ResilientAfrica Network (RAN) to unveil findings on how communities in Uganda were contending with the effects of climate variability and post-conflict recovery, how communities in South Africa were addressing the link between HIV/AIDS and poverty and how urban populations in Ghana were addressing the economic and public health challenges associated with rapid urbanization and its attendant food security implications in the context of climate variability (climate change).

RAN brings together faculty, students, and the target community members to develop interventions designed to increase resilience capacity at the community level and, more broadly, making its data publicly available to allow for development practitioners in the future to more easily identify the vulnerabilities and existing capacities of communities. "Let us all join to further encourage the young innovators, students, faculty and the community to translate knowledge into innovative solutions to address communities' most pressing challenges" Prof. William Bazeyo, Dean Makerere University School of Public Health/ RAN Chief of Party and Lab Director.

The "State of African Resilience" Report was launched in the Makerere University Main Hall. Makerere University is the only Higher Education Solutions (HESN) Lab based in Africa. The Vice Chancellor, Prof. John Ddumba-Ssentamu hosted the event together with key speakers including; the Chancellor Makerere University, Prof. George Mondo Kagonyera, Director, Center for Development Innovation, U.S. Global Development Lab, USAID, Mr. David Ferguson, Dean Makerere University School of Public Health and Chief of Party RAN/Lab Director, Prof. William Bazeyo, Executive Director, Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy, Tulane University and Co-Chief of Party RAN, Prof. Ky Luu, and Professor of Communication and Political Science and Director, Center for Deliberative Democracy, Stanford University, Prof. James Fishkin. The four RAN Resilience Innovation Lab Directors with the RAN Deputy Chief of Party, Dr. Roy William Mayega comprised the panel that shared and discussed the community findings from the different

communities consulted.

Additionally, the Report provides a great opportunity for Stakeholders, Experts, Researchers, Scholars, Innovators, the community among others to gain insights that will guide the process of developing interventions designed to strengthen resilience at the community level. "It is my plea that in all that we do, we aim at translating knowledge into innovative solutions directed towards addressing communities' most pressing challenges through Research and Innovation. The vulnerabilities are clearly highlighted in this State of African Resilience Report" remarked Prof. George Mondo Kagonyera, Chancellor Makerere University.

The Resilience Innovation Challenge 4 Adverse Climate Effects (RIC4ACE) Grant Awards

It was also during this event that 7 winning teams who applied for support through the Resilience Innovation Challenge 4 Adverse Climate Effects (RIC4ACE) Request for Applications, working on different innovative projects were recognized and awarded. The teams included; the Electronic Dollar a Day-Saving Box who received \$100,000, Mushrooming Livelihoods-\$44,993.76, B2K! Back to Traditional Starch-\$44,450, Better Farming, Better Me!-\$43,729, Kungula!Thresh It-\$42,305, Village Egg Bank in Egg Currency-\$36,750 and Rapid Agricultural Produce Indirect Dryer-\$30,000.

"Thank you USAID Washington D.C for the continuous support to Makerere University. It is through such support that we are able to implement several projects directed towards improving livelihood" added Prof. George Mondo Kagonyera. In his remarks as he interacted with the University Management a few hours before the event, Mr. David Ferguson, Director, Center for Development Innovation, U.S. Global Development Lab, USAID emphasized that "Partnership is critical in all that we do, resilience is at the center of USAID's work and USAID is committed to supporting development in Africa and beyond".

He hailed Prof. William Bazeyo for the able leadership manifested in the "State of African Resilience" Report among others. He added that such leadership was necessary for success and urged all to always remain open to learning from what works. The aim to increase evidence was important and evidence driven decision making is critical in all that we engage in.

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