

**ADDRESS BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR MAKERERE  
UNIVERSITY AT THE LAUNCH OF THE CONSORTIUM FOR  
ENHANCING UNIVERSITY REPONSIVENESS TO AGRIBUSINESS  
DEVELOPMENT (CURAD) ON FRIDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2014 AT  
KABANYORO**

The Executive Director of FARA  
The Ambassador – Royal Danish Embassy  
Directors of National Agricultural Research Institutions  
Commissioners from Government Ministries  
Heads of Government Departments  
Principal CAES  
Professor  
The Board Chairman of CURAD  
Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me honour and pleasure to address all of you on this occasion of launching the Consortium for enhancing University Responsiveness to Agribusiness Development limited (CURAD).

In the first place, please allow me to welcome you to Makerere University and to Uganda, for those from outside. Accept our deepest gratitude to you for having accepted our invitation to this function.

This launching of CURAD is a great milestone in fulfilling the strategic goals and objectives of Makerere University. In our strategic framework 2007-2018, we promise, amongst others, “To increase the entrepreneurship ability of staff and students by incubating ideas in all areas” with the main goal of promoting generation of sciences and technology innovations and their accessibility to the Ugandan society.

It is well reorganized that Universities play a key role in scientific discoveries that drive national economies forward. Makerere University is one of the few Universities in the country that is uniquely positioned to advance basic and applied research in both humanities and science and technology.

Indeed Makerere University and National Agricultural Research Organization are generating a number of technologies, which unfortunately few have been commercialized for the benefit of society. I have been made

to understand, however, that CURAD we are launching today is offering an opportunity to staff to commercialise their technologies and innovation. Similarly CURAD offers an opportunity to the youth whether as students or graduates or others outside of university to pick from these technologies and commercialize them.

Besides the challenge of commercialising scientific innovation, the University is also grappling with the challenge of producing graduates with entrepreneurship skills and are job creators than seekers. I am, therefore, very happy that CURAD is supporting our students to become entrepreneurs by incubating their ideas and facilitating the revision of teaching curriculum in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES).

The University recognised, long time ago, that promoting entrepreneurship among its graduates and undergraduates has a vital role in improving, food security, commercialisation and job creation. Therefore in 2009 the University established its first incubator in the School of Food Science Nutrition and Bio Engineering. I am happy to note that this initiative has resulted in value addition of many of our agricultural products; new food products placed in supper markets and some of the graduates are employing themselves. We thank The President of Uganda for supporting this innovative under the presidential initiative.

It is becoming clear every day that SMEs will constitute the backbone of our economy and therefore supporting them will go along way to reducing poverty in our country. I therefore wish to thank the Executive Director FARA and its partner institutions for coming up with the Universities, Business and Research in Agricultural Innovations (UniBRAIN) Program through which CURAD is supported. In fact I must thank FARA for answering a request of my predecessor who, in his address during the 3rd General Assembly of the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) in 2005, strongly requested and I quote **“I plead to NEPAD/FARA to specifically target Agricultural Universities and related institutions for investment since agriculture is the main source of livelihood for our people, and is considered by many, as the engine to drive economic transformation in Africa”**.

I thank DANIDA for giving the financial support to FARA, which has enabled us to undertake this initiative. As I have already indicated we are committed to transforming Makerere University into a research led

institution, in which science innovations are commercialised for benefit of both the University and society. We are therefore very open to support that helps us achieve our strategic objectives while serving the community.

Of course I could not fail to mention the team led by Professor Kyamanywa that wrote and submitted a winning proposal to FARA. This team is drawn from the three institutions (Mak, NARO, and NUCAFE) that are promoting CURAD. We acknowledge the contribution of the Board of CURAD chaired by Hon. Ssendaula for steering CURAD to what we are seeing now.

I therefore wish to take this opportunity to call upon all my academic members of staff to always look out for, and respond, to request for proposals. This is an important way for the university to get resources necessary for addressing some of its strategic objectives.

I have been made to understand that CURAD is operating on a self-sustainable basis. This is indeed a great idea-supported by the University. In this direction I am pleased that we are also launching an Agribusiness Innovation competition today aimed at getting the youth and university staff develop business ideas. Students with best ideas will be supported to commercialize their ideas. I wish to thank the new partners that are coming on board to support the competition.

I wish to conclude by assuring the consortium that Makerere University as the host and promoter of CURAD will provide an enabling environment for CURAD to grow and expand. As indicated we are looking at CURAD as one way of commercializing technologies from the University and hence contributing to University resources through royalties.

I thank, NARO and Executive Director of NUCAFE, Mr. Joseph Nkandu for supporting this initiative.

“For God and my Country” as “We build for the future”.

I thank you.