



BecA@15

3 February 2016
NAIROBI KENYA



ILRI
INTERNATIONAL
LIVESTOCK RESEARCH
INSTITUTE

15th
Anniversary

biosciences
eastern and central africa



NEPAD
TRANSFORMING AFRICA

mobilizing biosciences in and for Africa's agricultural development

The BecA-ILRI Hub's vision is to contribute towards improving the livelihoods of millions of resource-poor people in Africa using biosciences-based technologies that improve agricultural productivity, increase incomes and improve food and nutritional security.

The BecA-ILRI Hub's mission is mobilizing bioscience for Africa's development by providing a centre of excellence in agricultural biosciences, which enables research, capacity building and product incubation, conducted by scientists in Africa and for Africa, and empowers African institutions to harness innovations for regional impact.

<http://hub.africabiosciences.org>



Celebrating 15 years of the BecA-ILRI Hub

Mobilizing biosciences in and for Africa's agricultural development

Today the **Biosciences eastern and central Africa-International Livestock Research Institute (BecA-ILRI Hub)** in partnership with its donors, investors and stakeholders celebrates 15 years of its existence as a centre for excellence in agricultural biosciences research. The event brings together global, regional and local actors in agricultural biosciences research for development. It is being held to celebrate the role played by the BecA-ILRI Hub in supporting African national agricultural research systems and to identify opportunities to scale-up the Hub's impacts to promote sustainable agriculture for improved food and nutritional security in Africa.

Invited speakers and participants will deliberate on ways to scale the BecA-ILRI Hub's programs and impacts, particularly by empowering African science leaders and institutions. The BecA-ILRI Hub's technology platforms offering vastly improved precision and efficiency in crop and livestock research will be on display.

Celebrating BecA@15 will answer four questions:

- Do the BecA-ILRI Hub's platforms and services offer the region comparative advantages in agricultural science? What are they?
- Has the BecA-ILRI Hub's support through co-funding of national researchers helped Africa meet its agricultural priorities? How?
- Are there unexplored opportunities for the BecA-ILRI Hub to support African governments actually implement their agricultural policies? What are they?
- What has enabled the BecA-ILRI Hub's technology platforms, research projects and capacity building initiatives to thrive? What will do so in future?

The Event

The event will be officially opened by the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Fisheries (Kenya) Hon Willy Bett, and will feature speakers and panelists from organizations such as: African Union Commission (Ethiopia); African Union/ New Partnership for Africa's Development (South Africa); Australian High Commission (Kenya); Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (USA); Canadian High Commission (Kenya); International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (Kenya); and John Innes Centre (UK).

During this event, distinguished alumni of the BecA-ILRI Hub's **Africa Biosciences Challenge Fund (ABCF)** will describe the impacts the BecA-ILRI Hub has had on their research work, careers and institutions. There will be two engaging panel discussions addressing the BecA-ILRI Hub's establishment and evolution and its potential contribution to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. An interactive display area with exhibition stands will showcase the BecA-ILRI Hub's past, current and future contribution to the transformation of the agricultural landscape across Africa. Guests will also have the opportunity to tour the BecA-ILRI Hub's state of the art laboratories, including the genomics, bioinformatics, mycotoxin and nutritional analysis, tissue culture and plant transformation, and molecular breeding platforms.

Background

The BecA-ILRI Hub is a joint initiative of ILRI and the AU/ NEPAD. In 2016, the BecA-ILRI Hub marks 15 years of existence as an African centre of excellence for agricultural biosciences.

Research conducted at the BecA-ILRI Hub is organized around five priority themes that respond to a demand led research agenda for African agriculture:

- Crop improvement (with a focus on staple crops of Africa);
- Food safety and improved nutrition;
- Livestock productivity;
- Climate change mitigation and sustainable environmental management;
- Underutilized species of crops and livestock.

The Celebrating BecA@15 event will recognize and appreciate the dedicated efforts of the Hub together with its international, regional and national partners in strengthening African agricultural research capacities, knowledge and innovation systems to achieve sustainable food security and, above all, in developing African science leaders.

Program

07:45 – 08:15	Arrival and registration <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Signing visitors' book• Booking for afternoon lab tours Master of Ceremonies/Moderator: Bruce Scott, Columbia Global Centers, Africa
08:15 – 08:30	Welcoming remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jimmy Smith, Director General, ILRI• David Angell, Canadian High Commissioner to Kenya• John Feakes, Australian High Commissioner to Kenya
08:30 – 08:45	Official opening <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Willy Bett, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Fisheries, Kenya
08:45 – 09:15	Keynote address: "The role of biosciences in African agricultural development" <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ibrahim Mayaki, CEO, NEPAD
09:15 – 10:15	Celebrating BecA@15 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vision and mission of the BecA-ILRI Hub: Romano Kiome Program manager, Accelerated Value Chain Development Program; Gabrielle Persley, Research Director for the Crawford Fund Australia• BecA-ILRI Hub partnerships: Eugene Terry, Senior Technical Adviser of New Markets Lab• BecA-ILRI Hub science and capacity building: Segenet Kelemu, Director General <i>icipe</i>• Q&A from the floor
10:15 – 10:45	TEA BREAK <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Photo session• BecA-ILRI Hub Marketplace ongoing in the tent
10:45 – 11:20	Screening of the BecA-ILRI Hub video Impacts of the BecA-ILRI Hub: Charles Masembe ; Ruth Wanyera , Principal Research Scientist KALRO; Alex Bombom , Lead scientist for the maize sorghum hybrid project BecA-ILRI Hub; Mercy Kitavi , post doctoral scientist CIP
11:20 – 12:30	Panel discussion: "Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals through African agricultural development and the role of the BecA-ILRI Hub" <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Robert Pukose, Member of Parliament, Endebess constituency in Trans Nzoia County, Kenya• Ayo Ajayi, Director of the Africa team, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, USA• Dale Sanders, Director, John Innes Centre, UK• Margaret Karembu, Director, ISAAA, Kenya
12:30 – 12:45	Vote of thanks <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appolinaire Djikeng, Director, BecA-ILRI Hub
12:45 – 14:00	LUNCH BREAK
14:00 – 16:00	Tours of the BecA-ILRI Hub laboratories
16:00	End of program <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guests depart at their leisure

Your visit to the laboratories

The BecA-ILRI Hub world class facilities for biotechnology research are located at ILRI Headquarters in Nairobi. The platform is used by scientists from ILRI, national partners, and other international centres. The platform provides access to world class laboratories for African and international scientists conducting research on African agricultural challenges. The platform also hosts institutions including the International Potato Centre (CIP), the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT).

During your tour of the laboratory you will have the opportunity to learn more about some of the research activities as well as the technology platforms used for research. You will interact with visiting scientists from African national agricultural research systems (NARS) who are part of the African Bioscience Challenge fund (ABCF) program that builds capacity in national agricultural research systems and learn more about one of the BecA-ILRI Hub partnerships, the BecA-John Innes Centre Alliance, through which national agricultural research systems are supported by building capacities and transfer of technologies relevant to African agriculture.

Speaker profiles



Jimmy Smith is the Director General of the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI). Before joining ILRI, he led the World Bank's Global Livestock Portfolio. Prior to that, he held senior positions with the Canadian International Development Agency, with ILRI and its predecessor, the International Livestock Centre for Africa, and with the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute. He is a graduate of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he completed a PhD in animal sciences.



David Angell (BA [Political Science], Yale University, 1986; MA [International Relations], University of Toronto, 1987; MPhil [International Relations], University of Cambridge [Commonwealth Scholar], 1988) joined External Affairs and International Trade Canada in 1989 and served abroad in Washington, D.C. (1991 to 1993); in Northern Ireland as adviser to Gen. John de Chastelain in the peace process (1995 to 1996); at the Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York (1996 to 2001), including as Alternate Representative on the UN Security Council (1999 to 2000); and as High Commissioner in Nigeria and Ambassador to the Economic Community of West African States (2004 to 2007). In Ottawa, he served as Director General of the Africa Bureau (2007 to 2008), the International Organizations Bureau (2008 to 2009) and the integrated International Organizations, Human Rights and Democracy Bureau (2009 to 2012). He served as the G-8 Deputy Africa Personal Representative from 2001 to 2004 and, from 2007 to 2012, as the G-8 Africa Personal Representative and, as such, was closely involved in the organization of the 2002 and 2010 G-8 Summits in Canada, at Kananaskis and Muskoka. He is married to Kate, and they have two children, Alexandra and Jonathan.



John Feakes is Australia's High Commissioner to Kenya. Feakes is a senior career officer in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and was most recently Chargé d'Affaires in Jordan then Lebanon. He has served as Special Representative in Tarin Kowt, Deputy High Commissioner in Port Moresby and Minister-Counsellor in Washington. In Canberra, Feakes has led the Policy Planning and Strategic Assessments Branches. John Feakes holds a Bachelor of Arts degree with Honours from the University of New South Wales and is married with three children.



Willy Bett is the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Fisheries, Kenya. Prior to his appointment to the cabinet, he was the Chief Executive Officer/Managing Director of the Kenya Seed Company (KSC) for 8 years. Bett has also had a stint in the private sector and has also worked as a Director in the Post Bank. He has a wealth of experience in commercial seed production, having led the production of quality seed at the KSC in the last decade. While at the helm of the KSC, he was instrumental in the expansion of the activities of the company to the East and Central African region. Bett has served as a member on several Boards for various key organizations, public and private including the Agricultural Development Corporation. His illustrious career in the agricultural sector has contributed immensely to the adoption of new varieties of crops in Kenya and the region.



Ibrahim Assane Mayaki is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Planning and Coordinating Agency, head-quartered in Midrand, South Africa. Mayaki holds a Masters degree from the National School of Public Administration (ENAP), Quebec, Canada and a PhD in Administrative Sciences from the University of Paris I, France. Between 1996 and 1997 he was successively appointed Minister in charge of African Integration and Cooperation and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Niger. In November 1997, he was appointed Prime Minister, a function he held until January 2000. In August 2000, he set up the Analysis Centre for Public Policy. In 2004, Mayaki was appointed as the Executive Director of the Platform in support of Rural Development in West and Central Africa, the Rural Hub, based in Dakar, Senegal, from where he was recruited as CEO of the NEPAD Agency.



Romano Kiome is currently, the program manager of a USAID funded, *Accelerated Value Chain Development Program*, implemented by three CGIAR Centres including ILRI. He served as the Permanent Secretary Ministry of Agriculture from 2005 to 2013. Previously he was Director of Kenya Agricultural Research Institute. Kiome has represented Africa in international agricultural research fora, including, the CGIAR Executive Council (ExCo) and the Fund Council, and has served as board member of the World Agroforestry Centre, ILRI, the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CYMMIT) and the World Vegetable Centre (AVDRC). He is a graduate of Nairobi University (1980), Wageningen University – the Netherlands for Masters (1985) and University of East Anglia – Britain for PhD in (1992) in agriculture and natural resources management. Kiome was one of the initiators of the concept of BecA-ILRI Hub and served as the chairman of its steering committee from inception in 2001 to 2009.



Gabrielle Persley is Research Director for the Crawford Fund Australia and Professor at the Global Change Institute University of Queensland. Persley's engagement with the BecA-ILRI Hub began in 2002 in her capacity as Chair of the Doyle Foundation, a Glasgow-based charity that advocates the role of science in international development. Persley was senior advisor to the ILRI Director General during the design and establishment of the BecA-ILRI Hub. Currently Persley is advising ILRI on its new strategies for animal genetics (LiveGene) and animal health. Persley has worked previously with the Australian Government's overseas aid agencies and as biotechnology advisor with the World Bank.



Eugene Terry is the Senior Technical Adviser of New Markets Lab. The chairman of the BecA-ILRI Hub advisory panel, Eugene has held leadership positions in international institutions including that of first Director General of the West Africa Rice Development Association; Plant Pathologist, International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA, Ibadan); Land and Crops Advisor in the Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD) Department, The World Bank; and Founding Director, African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF). Eugene holds a BSc in agriculture, an MSc in plant pathology from McGill University, Montreal, Canada, and a PhD in plant pathology from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, USA, and serves as a Trustee on the boards of several agricultural research-for-development organizations.



Segenet Kelemu is the director general of the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (*icipe*). She is the fourth chief executive officer, and the first woman to lead *icipe*. A molecular plant pathologist, Kelemu has received numerous awards and recognition for her leadership in science including laureate of the 2014 L'Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science Awards; elected Fellow of the African Academy of Sciences in 2013; recognized among the top 100 most influential African women of 2014 by Forbes Africa; granted the prestigious Friendship Award by the People's Republic of China; and jointly awarded The Academy of Sciences for the Developing World (TWAS) Prize for Agricultural Sciences in 2011. Following her post-doctoral work at Cornell University, USA, Kelemu joined the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) as a senior

scientist in 1992 and was later appointed Leader of Crop and Agroecosystem Health Management until 2007. In 2007, she became the director of the BecA-ILRI Hub, transforming it into a driving force that is changing the face of African biosciences. Prior to becoming Director General of *icipe*, she was the Vice President for programs at the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) for about a year.



Charles Masembe is a veterinarian, molecular geneticist and associate professor, with teaching and research experience in molecular genetics, diagnostics, evolution and epidemiology of important diseases of domestic animals, mainly Foot-and-Mouth disease, African swine fever, and pathogen discovery. He has an MSc (Makerere University), a PhD in Molecular Population Genetics (Makerere and Copenhagen University), and Post-Doctoral training (Makerere, Copenhagen, and the Technical University of Denmark). Masembe has been an outstanding ABCF scientist at BecA-ILRI Hub with an emphasis on African swine fever molecular epidemiology and metagenomics. Through the opportunities and platform provided by BecA-ILRI Hub and other collaborators, he

has excelled in capacity and research-network building. Masembe is now a Wellcome Trust fellow focusing on transmission dynamics of African swine fever.



Ruth Wanyera is a Principal Research Scientist at the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization, Njoro. She is head of Plant Pathology and National Wheat Coordinator and an MSc graduate from the Ukrainian Agricultural Academy, Russia. Wanyera has extensive research experience in wheat rust diseases, including phenotyping, monitoring, surveillance and race identification. An outstanding ABCF alumnus and African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD) fellow, Wanyera is in charge of global germplasm acquisition for wheat rust screening, focal person on surveys and surveillance of wheat rusts. She has contributed to the release of wheat varieties resistant to race Ug99. Ruth Wanyera has also conducted

research on seed mycology at the Danish Seed Health Centre and fungal diseases of soybean seeds in Kenya. She has coordinated research projects funded by international and regional bodies and won a number of awards, including the 2015 Borlaug Global Rust Initiative Gene Stewardship Award.



Alexander Bombom has been lead scientist for the maize x sorghum hybrid project at the BecA-ILRI Hub. The maize x sorghum project was created to provide proof of concept for the technology and contribute to increased genetic diversity for either crop species for important traits; biotic and abiotic. Bombom is currently working to develop products from the wide crosses project beneficial to the farming community. He is a graduate of Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda where he completed a PhD in Plant Breeding and Genetics.



Mercy Kitavi is a postdoctoral research scientist of the International Potato Centre (CIP). Before joining CIP, she was pursuing a PhD in plant genetics at the National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG) in a research project that was affiliated to the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and conducted at the BecA-ILRI Hub. Prior to that, she held a key position in training and capacity building in crop related research at the BecA-ILRI Hub, a position that she gladly accepted after attaining experience while working with the International Crop Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) as a research technician and MSc biotechnology student.



Robert Pukose is the Member of Parliament for Endebess constituency in Trans Nzoia County, one of the bread baskets in Kenya. He is the Vice Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Health. Dr. Pukose is a general surgeon by profession and holds a Masters of Medicine degree (M.MED) in General Surgery from the University of Nairobi, Kenya.



Ayo Ajayi is Director of the Africa Team, leading the Bell & Melinda Gates Foundation's work on policy, advocacy, and government relations across the continent, as well as the foundation's offices in Ethiopia, South Africa, and Nigeria. Ajayi joined the foundation in 2014 from PATH, where he served as Vice President for International Development. He led strategy development and implementation for PATH country programs in Africa, as well as in Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean. Before joining PATH, Ajayi served as regional director for sub-Saharan Africa for the Population Council for 16 years, leading the establishment of the organization's presence and programmatic work in reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, social science and operations research, and institutional capacity building in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria, and South Africa. Before that, he served as regional director for Africa for Pathfinder International leading its work in family planning and reproductive health in several African countries. Ayo Ajayi earned his MD from the University of Ibadan Medical School in Nigeria and his MPhil with a concentration in health systems from Boston University School of Public Health.



Dale Sanders is the Director of the John Innes Centre, an internationally leading centre in plant sciences and microbiology. Dale graduated with a BA degree from the University of York and went on to obtain a PhD in Plant Biophysics at Cambridge University in 1979. He spent five years at Yale University School of Medicine using fungi as model systems for understanding how plants absorb mineral ions after which he returned to York as a lecturer in 1983. Prior to his appointment as director at the John Innes Centre in 2010, he was head of the institution's Biology Department at York for six years during which discoveries in his lab led to his receiving awards including the Koerber European Science Prize and election as a Fellow of the Royal Society.



Margaret Karembu is the director of the Africa office of International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA Africenter). Karembu is a senior environmental science management specialist with considerable experience in technology transfer and biotechnology applications in Africa. A science communication educator, Karembu has been actively involved in strengthening capacity for biosafety communication and policy outreach for informed choices on modern agricultural biotechnology in Africa. She coordinates ISAAA's Biotechnology Information Centres (BICs) in Africa. Karembu previously served (on Presidential appointment) as Council chair and vice chair of the Cooperative University College of Kenya and Meru University of Science and Technology respectively. Margaret Karembu holds a PhD degree in Environmental Science Education from Kenyatta University, Kenya.



Bruce Scott is a consultant for Columbia Global Centers, Africa which he first joined as Deputy Director in 2012. He started his career in 1978 as the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Regional Director for eastern and southern Africa, establishing the regional IDRC office and developing it into one of IDRC's principle regional offices. He was also IDRC's Regional Director for west and central Africa and spent 12 years with the World Agroforestry Centre as Director of the Collaborative Research Program and subsequently Deputy Director General. Bruce Scott worked with ILRI for 13 years initially as Director of Corporate Services and later as ILRI Director for Partnerships and Communications.



Appolinaire Djikeng is the director of the BecA-ILRI Hub. Djikeng joined the BecA-ILRI Hub as technology manager in 2009 and was appointed director in 2013. His tenure as director started with the development of a new Business Plan (2013-2018) to guide management and leadership to support the evolution of the BecA-ILRI Hub into the Innovation Phase. Prior to joining the BecA-ILRI Hub, Djikeng spent over 10 years at Yale University and at the J Craig Venter Institute (JCVI) leading genomics, metagenomics projects, and sequencing technologies development programs. At the BecA-ILRI Hub, Djikeng has been instrumental in the establishment and strengthening of technology platforms as well as leading key agricultural research for development programs. Djikeng currently serves in scientific advisory boards, and advisory panels including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD). Djikeng completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Yaoundé I and PhD in Molecular Biology at Brunel University, UK. He has received prestigious awards in recognition of outstanding leadership and scientific achievements including the Illumina Agricultural Greater Good Initiative Award, and the Award of the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene for Scientific Excellence.

Useful contacts during the event

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