

SEMIS PARTICIPATES IN THIRD GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH FOR DEVELOPMENT (GCARD3) HELD IN JOHANNESBURG SOUTH AFRICA; 5 -8TH APRIL, 2016



SEMIS Delegates at GCARD3

The Third Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD3), jointly organised by the Global Forum on Agriculture Research (GFAR) and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) under the theme *“No One Left Behind: Agri-food Innovation and Research for a Sustainable World”* was attended by over 500 participants representing academia, government, civil society, research and the private sector. The four day Conference was held from 5 - 8 April, 2016 in Johannesburg, South Africa. **Seed Enterprise Management Institute (SEMIS)** program leaders; Prof. Agnes W. Mwang’ombe, Prof. Florence M. Olubayo and Mr Daniel O. Wasonga attended the conference representing SEMIS and University of Nairobi.

During the Opening Ceremony, Dr Lindiwe Majele Sibanda, Chief Executive Officer at Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) applauded the Conference Organisers for bringing together key stakeholders to promote effective, targeted investment that will build partnerships, capacities and mutual accountabilities at all levels of the agricultural system. This action she hoped would ensure that today’s agricultural research will impact on the rural poor. She also emphasised the need to work together and develop collaborative strategies that are realistic to emerging challenges, enforce higher stakeholder commitment towards engaging, debating and formulating real policies that are holistic and not linear in approach. She applauded all the female participants and thanked them for their contribution to the Agricultural development sector.

The GCARD3 conference had five major plenary themes. Theme1: Scaling up –from research to impact; Theme 2: Showcasing results and demonstrating impact; Theme 3: Keeping Science relevant and future focused; Theme 4: Sustaining the business of farming and; Theme 5: Ensuring better rural futures.



SEMI's participated in fourth plenary session under the sub-theme; *“Linking farmers to transparent, sustainable and profitable inputs and output markets”* where program leader, Prof. Agnes Mwang’ombe, made a presentation on *Capacity Building of Seed Companies’ personnel in Sub-Saharan Africa for Improved uptake of High yielding Seed Crop Varieties*. SEMI's also took part in the conference exhibition alongside other 13 exhibitors. SEMI's short term training program for the different seed courses came out strongly as well as seed processing and provision of breeder seed for companies/farmers. University of Nairobi’s Faculty of Agriculture courses were exhibited as well. The conference included a one day field trip to ARC-VOPI Rooderplaat and the Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute campus.



SEMI's Exhibition

Way Forward

The Conference noted the need for capacity building across the research for development sector and for universities to be included into the global consultations under GFAR. Universities were challenged to transform themselves towards academic enterprises and knowledge entrepreneurship whilst staying grounded as student –centric institutions that are preparing students to be “master thinkers”, able to grasp a wide array of skills and contribute to the desired workforce, a gap that still needs to be addressed.

Capacity building of farmers/growers in the seed sector was also noted as being vital and given case scenarios confirmed this where trained farmers had increased production from their farms as opposed to their ‘un-trained’ counter parts.