

# 2014 ANNUAL REPORT



# KEY OBJECTIVES

- Scale up Africa-Australia institutional research partnerships
- Strengthen the academic and leadership capacity of our network's partners
- Be an influential voice in policy making across the critical issues affecting Australia and Africa.
- Provide an intelligence and advisory portal for expertise on Australia-Africa issues.

**RESEARCH AREAS**  
FOOD SECURITY • PUBLIC HEALTH • EDUCATION • MINING & MINERALS  
PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Australia and Africa are two Southern continents facing similar challenges: increasing agricultural productivity, management of scarce water resources, the revolution in higher education. The AAUN draws on the strengths of our network partners in each continent to provide sustainable solutions to our shared challenges.

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# INTRODUCTION FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

Having completed the second year since our launch in July 2012, we are pleased to report that our initial ambitions and goals are on time and with adequate support. The Australian and African wings of AAUN are established, with equal partnership, governance, quality review, and programs in place.

Our research programs, team-building and exchange are progressing, with six competitively funded projects initiated in 2013 and a further 15-17 in 2014. Early publications are appearing, as are some further grants. Our website is fully functional, and we are building engagement between our partners through our competitive “Partnership and Research Development Fund” in which we match external funding with our internal subscription funding, infrastructure and assets.

In 2015 we look forward to further results, with additional support for students and emerging researchers. We will continue with our 3-5 strategic conferences and workshops each year in Africa and Australia, along with regular teleconferences at research and administrative levels of leadership.

We are very grateful to our sponsors and supporters in the Australian and South African Governments, University leaders and researchers, students and alumni, for joining our venture. We are committed to ensuring academic and economic returns on all their investments, while serving to strengthen education and economic diplomacy between our continents.

**“We are committed to ensuring academic and economic returns on all their investments, while serving to strengthen education and economic diplomacy between our continents.”**



*Professor John Hearn  
Co-Chair, AAUN Australia*



*Professor Cheryl de la Rey  
Co-Chair, AAUN Africa*

# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

The AAUN wishes to acknowledge the following partners for their sponsorship.

The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR); the Department of Education; the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the International Mining for Development Centre (IM4DC) have all contributed to the AAUN's Partnership and Research Development Fund (PRDF) and our International conferences. Without support, the AAUN would not be able to carry out its vision sustaining research and education collaboration and leadership across areas of priority for Australia and Africa and marshalling Australian and African expertise as an equal partnership to address the challenges both continents face.



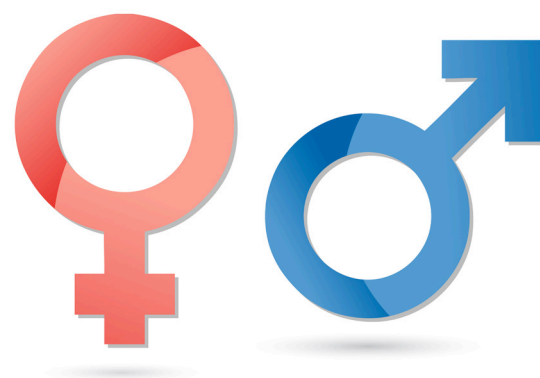


# RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

The following five selected examples from the AAUN research programs are in their early stages but show promise. They are principally in the areas of food and environmental security and reflect the early support from the Australian International Food Security Centre (AIFSC). Further projects are now being initiated with the support of the Department of Education (Australia), AIFSC-ACIAR, the International Mining for Development Centre (IM4DC), the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade – especially in our strategic conferences and workshops; and the Human Sciences Research Council (South Africa). Annual quality review of projects has the criteria of excellence, quality, feasibility, innovation and impact, while building our teamwork and partnership.

## Integrating HIV and gender-related issues into environmental assessments for Australian mining companies operating in Africa

With over 20 million people living with HIV in eastern and southern Africa, AAUN researchers are now exploring how large-scale development projects are increasing the risk of HIV transmission in these areas. Their work builds upon that of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Regional Centre for Eastern and Southern Africa, which recently investigated environmental impact assessment (EIA) practice—which is required of major new developments in virtually all countries worldwide—with respect to the inclusion of HIV in Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Uganda and Zambia.



Led by Associate Professor Angus Morrison-Saunders of Murdoch University, the project focuses on the Australian mining companies operating in Africa and aims to understand how enhanced planning for HIV prevention might be integrated into EIA processes. The expected outcome is the collaboration of mining industry partners with leading HIV researchers and EIA practitioners to develop effective measures for implementing enhanced EIA policy at an operational level. At Murdoch University, The Africa Research Group has already established a collaborative network of experts that includes the Kheth'Impilo-Murdoch University HIV Alliance, the Australian African Mining Industry Group, the University of Pretoria, Makerere University, and the Southern African Institute for Environmental Assessment.

**“The project focusses on the Australian mining companies operating in Africa and aims to understand how enhanced planning for HIV prevention might be integrated into EIA processes.”**



Supported by the PRDF, focused workshops which brought together academics, industry representatives, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and environmental consultants were held in Perth as part of the International AIDS Conference in July 2014. An inception workshop was held at Murdoch University to discuss pressing issues around mining, HIV and gender in the African context, and to explore how the shared knowledge of participants could be used to formulate clear research directions to address these issues. The engagement of key stakeholders, particularly industry representatives (AAMIG, Golden Rim Resources, Paladin Energy, Resolute Mining), UNDP and Kheth'Impilo proved valuable in understanding not just the disparate views of the mining sector, NGOs and civil society, but also the areas where there was a clear agreement on the responsibilities of the mining industry. A special session sponsored by Murdoch University titled “The Role of Extractive Industries in Building Sustainable Health Programmes,” as well as an “HIV and Mobile Populations” seminar were also held to further highlight the issues surrounding HIV and gender in Africa.





## Building an AAUN coalition to support improved nutrition and health of children under 5 years, pregnant and lactating mothers

### Project1:

Improving maternal health and reducing child mortality are two of the Millennium Development Goals, and this project seeks to address these complex problems through improved international collaboration. One of the larger AAUN teams, this project is led by Associate Professor in Veterinary Science Robyn Alders of the University of Sydney. Other team members come from the University of Nairobi, the Universities of Queensland, Griffith, Melbourne, Western Australia, Wollongong and Mauritius, Makerere University in Uganda, Lilongwe University of Agriculture in Malawi and Ibadan University in Nigeria.

**“The project team has also been active in engaging policy developers, particularly at the University of Pretoria where two events have been held for this purpose.”**

A key output has been the development of a database template to enable data to be compiled across a range of sectors (agriculture, human health, livestock, education and environment) at national, provincial and district levels. Data collection has commenced, and this will inform prioritisation of projects for the next round of AAUN funding. Significant differences have been identified in the availability of data – Nigeria, for example, has a wealth of available data whereas gaps exist in Malawi, which has hindered progress in that country.

The AAUN funding supported travel for some of the team to meet at the International Africa Forum in April, and for Prof Robyn Alders to meet with Prof Mavis Malaudzi in June to discuss ways to further collaborate, and to present a paper on village chickens at the UP Schools of Health Care Sciences and Veterinary Sciences.

The project team has also been active in engaging policy developers, particularly at the University of Pretoria where two events have been held for this purpose.

### Project 2:

In a separate but related project, led by Professor Kolawale Falade of the University of Ibadan in Nigeria (please see the table on pages 12-13 for the research partners), the focus has been on protein energy malnutrition (PEM). The World Food Program estimates that 45% of deaths of children under five are caused by malnutrition (3.1M deaths/year) and PEM is the most lethal form of this condition.



Team brainstorming session. For this project, the team has already collated grain nutritional data, developed a review paper called “Potential role of combinations of some underutilized crops on food and nutrition security in Africa,” and written two review manuscripts for publication.

The funding has supported a meeting of the team in January, which coincided with the South African Association of Food Scientists and Technologists (SAAFoST) chapter meeting, where Profs Taylor, Jayasena and Falade each gave presentations. Dr Johnson also presented to the SAAFoST when he attended the April AAUN International Africa Forum.

The project enabled a Memorandum of Understanding between Curtin University’s International Institute for Agri Food Security and the University of Pretoria’s Institute for Food, Nutrition and Well-being to be established. Several journal publications will result from the collaboration. The target outcome of the project was two high impact publications, and thus far data has been collected for this purpose.



Prof Amanda Minnaar, from The University of Pretoria Department of Food Science, standing next to the extruder.

**“This AAUN project is designed to alleviate PEM through the production of high quality extruded foods from locally available grains supplemented with leaf and legume proteins.”**



Food Security researchers from The University of Pretoria.





### Reducing hypertension in sub-Saharan Africa through salt reduction strategies

AAUN researchers are currently in the first stage of a collaborative project that explores how salt reduction strategies can help reduce hypertension in sub-Saharan Africa—an issue that has become increasingly prevalent due to urbanisation, a shift in dietary patterns to more processed, salty foods and increasing rates of obesity. Using a 24-hour urinary collection study, the aim is to estimate the baseline population-level dietary salt intake in two African countries—Ghana and South Africa—and then track hypertension over time, as well as related health expenditures and covariates that affect prevalence and treatment.

The project has brought together Associate Professor Karen Charlton from the University of Wollongong, Professor Richard Biritwum from the University of Ghana and Dr Paul Kowal from the University of Newcastle, as well as organisations such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in South Africa. Elias Menyanu, a PhD student from the University of Ghana, has also been recruited to the project and is conducting his research in-country.

The long-term expected outcome is the inclusion of 24-hour urinary sodium excretion analyses within the WHO Study on global AGEing and adult health (SAGE) studies that are currently operating in both Ghana and South Africa. This has not been previously attempted in any of the SAGE sites in participating countries that include China, Ghana, India, Mexico, Russia and South Africa. The pilot test—which was funded by the AAUN PRDF grant—was conducted by the SAGE team in Ghana earlier this year, while completion of interviews and sample collection in South Africa is anticipated by the end of 2015.

The team has since been awarded an external grant by Bloomberg Philanthropies, administered by the Centers for Disease Control, USA to cover the nested urinary study in the WHO-SAGE Wave 2 data collection in both Ghana and South Africa. The grant was awarded with a view to funding a follow-up in Wave 3 which will be conducted in 2016-17 prior to implementation of South Africa's mandatory salt reduction legislation.

*The project aimed to support the first stage of a collaborative project, and brought together researchers to discuss methodology and logistics related to collection of 24hr urine samples on a large scale within a community-based survey in developing countries.*



### Evaluating the Effectiveness of Photosensitization in Controlling Aflatoxin Accumulation in Maize

This project, led by Prof Sheila Okoth of the University of Nairobi, addresses carcinogenic aflatoxin accumulation in maize – a problem with both serious health and economic implications for maize producers. Prof Okoth collaborated with researchers from the University of Queensland and Murdoch University in Western Australia.

One of the key benefits of AAUN collaborative projects is the opportunity for skills and knowledge transfer. This was a clear outcome for this first phase of research, as the funding enabled Prof Okoth to travel to Australia and learn the necessary photosensitization techniques to further progress the work. Prof Okoth also presented to faculty and students at the University of Queensland a case study of aflatoxins and fumonisins exposure in parts of Kenya.

The funding also provided partial support to Dr Peter Sopade of the University of Queensland to visit the University of Nairobi and present to students of the Mycotoxins Research Group and Centre of Biotechnology and Bioinformatics on research design and biostatistics. This lecture highlighted possible areas of collaboration and inter faculty exchange programs.

As this initial phase of the project was focused on skills transfer and development, Prof Okoth will request additional funding to support the experimental phase. Additional funding requests have also been submitted to the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR). Publications are expected after the experimental phase of the project has been completed.



*Visit to groundnut field to observe agronomic practices to reduce aflatoxin contamination. From left to right: Dr Rao Rachaputi, Dr Yasmina Sultanbawa, Dr Mary Fletcher, Prof Sheila Okoth, Zahid Shar.*



*Group meeting to develop future collaborative projects and to discuss way forward. From right to left: Jie Zhang, Dr Mary Fletcher, Benigni Alfred Temba, Dr Yasmina Sultanbawa, Titilayo Falade, Dr Rao Rachaputi, Prof Sheila Okoth, Zahid Shar*



# PARTNERSHIP & RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT FUND – 2013/2014

The Partnership & Research Development Fund (PRDF) offers grants of an average of \$10,000 AUD to foster partnership within the network and support planning workshops and research collaborations that address distinct mutual challenges.

It provides one year of catalytic seed funding which may cover the costs of exploratory research initiatives, targeted workshops, faculty exchanges and the formation of collaborative networks, among other activities.

Name of Project	Principal Investigator(s)	AAUN Partners	Non-AAUN Partners	Objectives & Outcomes achieved
Evaluating effectiveness of photosensitization in controlling aflatoxins accumulation in maize	Professor Shelia Okoth, University of Nairobi	University of Queensland; Murdoch University	University of Georgia; University of Cape-Coast	To use photosensitization technology to treat maize contaminated with Aspergillus flavus, which is known to produce aflatoxins that can cause acute, potentially fatal, illness and chronic diseases. Laboratory visits and international seminars have allowed for skills transfer and development among participating members, and facilitated exploration of future collaboration. The team has submitted a concept note to the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) based on their AAUN collaboration efforts.
Improved Productivity, Postharvest Handling, Safety and Biosecurity of Cowpeas/ Bambara groundnuts: A Value Chain Analysis in Eastern, Western and Southern Africa	Dr Casper Madakadze, University of Pretoria & Dr Amin Mugera, University of Western Australia	University of Cape Town; Murdoch University; University of Ibadan; University of Pretoria; Makerere University	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Nigeria	To increase productivity in the production and post-harvest handling of cowpeas and Bambara groundnuts, which are an inexpensive source of protein grown in Southern, Eastern and Western Africa. In April 2014, the project team met for a workshop in Pretoria where they produced a concept note to guide the development of a full proposal. So far, the project has been successful in learning exchanges and forming a targeted research group. The team hopes to continue working virtually on the proposal and a critique of available literature.
Harnessing the benefits of agro-biodiversity for sustained food security in the context of climate change and variability	Dr Peter Johnston, University of Cape Town	University of Malawi; Curtin University; University of Pretoria; University of Ibadan; University of Melbourne; University of Western Australia	University of Stellenbosch; South African National Biodiversity Institute	To emphasise the merits of agro-biodiversity and provide pathways for implementation to improve access to nutritious food and reduce climatic risk in Africa. The team met in Pretoria to discuss issues around agro-biodiversity in both African (smallholder) and Australian agriculture, and the added challenge of climatic risk to food security. These discussions led to the development of a concept note for further development.

Value chain analysis: Improved nutrition and health of children under 5 years and pregnant and lactating mothers through the production of high quality extruded foods supplemented with leaf and legume proteins	Associate Professor Kolawale Falade, University of Ibadan	University of Pretoria; Curtin University	Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology	To alleviate Protein-Energy Malnutrition (PEM) through high-quality extruded foods from locally available grains supplemented with leaf and legume proteins. So far, the team has collated grain nutritional data, developed a review paper called "Potential role of combinations of some underutilized crops on food and nutrition security in Africa," and written two review manuscripts for publication. A MoU has been established between Curtin University and the University of Pretoria, and there have been two research, training and planning visits in each direction. A literature review on "Critical nutritional considerations necessary to develop extruded foods utilizing underutilised products (socio-economic) in Africa for pregnant, lactating and infants" is also being developed.
Building an AAUN coalition to support improved nutrition and health of children under 5 years, pregnant and lactating mothers	Associate Professor Robyn Alders, University of Sydney and Professor A Oelofse, University of Cape Town, Prof Mavis Mulaudzi, University of Pretoria	University of Nairobi; University of Queensland; University of Wollongong; Makerere University; Griffith University; University of Melbourne; University of Western Australia; University of Ibadan; Curtin University	Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources/ CARD; RUFORUM; Medical Research Council, South Africa	To understand the interactions between food production, distribution, access and processing, in order to address chronic under-nutrition due to food shortages and chronic obesity due to imbalanced consumption of energy-dense foods with poor nutrient content in Africa. The team has compiled data on food/nutrition security and associated diseases in Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Nigeria, South Africa and Uganda at national, provincial and district levels. They plan to meet to analyse the data and discuss where to publish their findings. They will also explore options for the development of a proposal to seek funding for a larger project.
Reducing hypertension in sub-Saharan Africa through salt reduction strategies	Associate Professor Karen Charlton, University of Wollongong	University of Ghana; University of Newcastle	Human Sciences Research Council, South Africa; World Health Organization	To reduce the risk of hypertension in sub-Saharan Africa through the development of population-wide salt-reduction strategies. So far, the teams has developed and tested a methodology for a 24-hour urinary collection study to be incorporated into the WHO Study on global AGEing and adult health (SAGE) studies that are currently operating in Ghana and South Africa. The principal investigators also have been awarded a grant by Bloomberg Philanthropies, USA, to cover the nested urinary study in the WHO-SAGE Wave 2 data collection, with a view to funding a follow-up in Wave 3 prior to the implementation of South Africa's mandatory salt reduction legislation.
Integrating HIV and gender-related issues into environmental assessments for Australian mining companies operating in Africa	Associate Professor Angus Morrison-Saunders, Murdoch University	University of Pretoria; Makerere University	The Southern African Institute for Environmental Assessment; Australia-Africa Mining Industry Group (AAMIG); Kheth'Impilo	To reduce the risk of HIV transmission near large-scale development projects through enhanced Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) policy. Workshops and seminars, which brought together academics, industry representatives, NGOs and environmental consultants, were held in Perth as part of the International AIDS Conference in July 2014 to discuss issues around mining, HIV and gender. The team has also published an article called "Planning for HIV prevention in the extractive industry in Africa through enhanced environmental impact assessment."

# PARTNERSHIP & RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT FUND – 2014/2015

The 2014 Partnership & Research Development Fund (PRDF) attracted 27 applications, of which 16 are being funded. These 16 projects comprise two development projects, two mining projects, seven food security projects, four education related projects and one health project. Many of these had been developed through workshops in Pretoria and Canberra in 2014. Further funding initiatives are a priority.

Name of Project	Principal Investigator(s)	AAUN Partners
Surveillance and monitoring of food security for Africa: proposal development	Dr Ranil Coorey, Curtin University	University of Ghana, Makerere University of Pretoria,
Where does your food come from? Food supply in the context of trade, agriculture and nutrition	Dr Joel Negin, University of Sydney	University of Pretoria, Makerere University
Mining for a Healthier Community	Dr Helen Macdonald, University of Cape Town	University of Mauritius, University of Melbourne, University of Queensland
Estimation of Rock Size Distributions Using Image Analysis	Dr Anthony Amankwah, University of Ghana	University of Pretoria, Curtin University
21st Century Skills for Education Practitioners : Rapid e-Learning Tools to develop Interactive Learning Materials	Associate Professor Mohammad Issack Santally, University of Mauritius	Makerere University, Curtin University
Master of Biosafety Joint Development Project	Associate Professor Andrew Drinnan, University of Melbourne	University of Ghana, University of Nairobi,
Mapping Australia-Africa Partnerships in Higher Education	Professor Crain Soudien, University of Cape Town & Profesor Anthony Welch, University of Sydney	Makerere University, University of Pretoria
Integrated design of highly palatable extruded and other foods for nutrition	Prof Kolawole Falade, University of Ibadan	University of Pretoria, Curtin University,
Development of sweetpotato postharvest-handling technologies for improved safety and quality of fresh and processed forms	Dr George Abong', University of Nairobi	Makerere University, University of Queensland
Enhancing community-based farming systems by integrated and efficient soil-water-nutrient management regimes in sub-Saharan Africa: from research to farm business enterprises	Associate Professor Inakwu Odeh, University of Sydney	University of Nairobi, University of Ibadan, University of Ghana



Name of Project	Principal Investigator(s)	AAUN Partners
An Analysis Of The Value Chain For Indigenous Edible Insects And Their Potential Role In Mother And Child Nutrition In Eastern And Southern Africa: Focus On Mopani	Professor Mavis Mulaudzi, University of Pretoria	Makerere University, University of Zambia, University of Melbourne
Developing and retaining the next generation of academics and researchers	Associate Professor Mbulgeni Madiba, University of Cape Town	University of Mauritius, University of Pretoria, Monash University, University of Sydney
Assessing the Benefits of Agro-biodiversity in the Context of Climate Variability and change	Dr Peter Johnston, University of Cape Town & Prof Janet Bornman, Curtin University	University of Ibadan, University of Pretoria, University of Western Australia
Building an AAUN coalition to support improved nutrition and health of children under 5 years, pregnant and lactating mothers	Professor Mavis Mulaudzi, University of Pretoria & Associate Professor Robyn Alders, University of Sydney	Griffith University, University of Wollongong, University of Melbourne, University of Western Australia, University of Ibadan, Makerere University, University of Mauritius, University of Nairobi, University of Zambia
A Study of the Experiences of Ghana, Kenya and Mauritius with Special Economic Zone (SEZ): Imperatives of Law and Economics	Dr Emmanuel Laryea, Monash University	University of Ghana, University of Nairobi, Murdoch University
Mapping HR and Entrepreneurial Networks and Resources in East African Community Special Economic Zones	Prof Felix Mavondo, Monash University	Makerere University





# 2014 EVENTS

## AAUN International Africa Forum

April 4-6 2014

In April 2014, The University of Pretoria hosted the AAUN International Africa Forum at its Hatfield Campus; the second AAUN event to be held on African soil. The purpose was to provide an opportunity for members discuss the progress of their current projects and to develop networks to facilitate the establishment of new ones in the areas of food security, public health, mining and minerals, education and public sector reform.

Over 120 delegates from 13 different countries and 50 different organisations participated, including university academics and executives, the High Commissioner for Australia, senior representatives from business, and the media. A number of potential opportunities for new projects developed, many of which have now progressed to formal requests for funding in the latest round of the Partnership

& Research Development Fund (PRDF). In addition to the workshops, participants also heard from a range of speakers on current issues related to AAUN's research themes.

The Forum was supported by South Africa's National Research Foundation, which assisted with travel costs for a number of African delegates. The Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), the Australian Government Department of Education, the University of Pretoria and Australian Volunteers International also provided support.

The next event in Africa is currently being planned for May 2015 to coincide with the ACU SARIMA 2015 Conference on research and innovation for global challenges. We hope that this will give members an opportunity to further build their networks and establish new research partnerships within AAUN and beyond.

**"A number of potential opportunities for new projects developed, many of which have now progressed to formal requests for funding in the latest round of PRDF."**



### In Memory of HE Graeme Wilson

*The AAUN Executive Team was saddened this year by the loss of one of its greatest supporters, His Excellency Graeme Wilson, who at the time of his passing was the Australian High Commissioner to South Africa and a number of other Southern African nations.*

*Mr Wilson was a great advocate for education, particularly in the context of the Africa-Australia relationship, and we deeply regret his loss to us. His work with the AAUN and the Australia Awards helped strengthen these ties. We would like to acknowledge our deepest thanks and gratitude to his family for the support he provided, and to extend our heartfelt sympathy to them.*

## Australia Africa Conference 2014

July 15-16 2014

The Australia Africa Conference 2014 was held at the Crawford School of Public Policy, Australian National University, with the theme "Promoting Strategic Engagement and Partnership between Government, Academic and Business." It was jointly hosted by the African Diplomatic Corps in Canberra, the Australia Africa Universities Network (AAUN), the Australia Africa Business Council (NSW and ACT chapters) and the Crawford School at the Australian National University. More than 150 participants attended, including representatives from government and business in both Australia and Africa.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator the Honourable Brett Mason, and the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana, Professor Ernest Aryeetey addressed the conference as keynote speakers. Both applauded the significant relationship between Australia and Africa and emphasised the importance for governments, researchers and businesses to share ideas and knowledge to engender such cooperation. Professor Samuel Makinda of Murdoch University and Kenya, addressed the conference dinner and delivered a presentation titled "International Knowledge Flows and Development in Africa: Why academics, governments and businesses should work together."

In addition, over 20 high profile speakers from Australia and Africa delivered presentations around three priority areas (Mining and Minerals; Education, Science and Technology; Health, Nutrition and Food Security) for future cooperation between Australia and Africa, and established the framework for identifying programs and policy interventions which can improve development cooperation in the targeted areas. The High Commissioner of Kenya, His Excellency Mr. Isaiya Kabira, said that it was a very rewarding and important platform to facilitate discussions, learning, create joint ventures and generally improve development cooperation between Australia and Africa.





# FUTURE DIRECTIONS 2015-17

## Co-Chairs John Hearn and Cheryl de la Rey

This annual report presents considerable progress for AAUN in Australia and Africa. Now entering our third year, the challenge is to strengthen our research programs and partnerships; build further innovative research teams and opportunities for established and emerging researchers; engage alumni in our development; and attract the necessary funding to sustain our growth and impact.

Research programs are progressing well, and the current round of Partnership Research and Development Fund (PRDF) catalyst grants provide us with over 20 programs and research teams in food and environment security, public health, higher education, mining and economic development. This research portfolio will be fostered to focus on key questions and challenges that can make an impact and practical improvements. We will also increase the mobility of researchers in implementing the programs.

Governance of AAUN is strong, with the Australian and African wings communicating through regular teleconferences and steering groups, as well as with annual conferences and workshops in Australia and Africa. Equal partnerships and regular quality review of the work and of all expenditures will ensure that investments are selective and based on evidence, and that accountability is ensured. These principles in turn will ensure maximum return on investment in both academic and financial terms.

We are engaged in raising the resources needed for AAUN to deliver on its goals and ambitions. Our approach is on the basis of matched funding from AAUN and agencies to co-invest in our agreed programs. We are grateful for the continued support of our Australian and South African agencies, and the commitment and subscriptions of our partners (see page XX). Nearly half of subscription income is co-invested in this way, and the teamwork is drawing interest from some international agencies who will be engaged on the basis of achievement and results in the coming year.

The year 2015 promises to lift AAUN further. Our next African Conference and AGM is in Johannesburg 10-11 May and the Australian Conference is planned for late August in Perth (TBC). Strategic workshops at several universities being planned in East and Southern Africa; and research and education programs are ramping up. We expect to see additional members and associates, as well as potential engagement with selected partners and funding agencies from other continents.

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*AAUN Annual Report editors: Bee Nortjé, Daniella Carlucci & Jennifer McKellar.*

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE 2015  
INTERNATIONAL AFRICA FORUM**

**11-12 MAY - JOHANNESBURG**

**ALLIED WITH THE ASSOCIATION OF COMMONWEALTH  
UNIVERSITIES – SARIMA CONFERENCE 11-14 MAY.**

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU IN  
PERTH AT THE 2015 AUSTRALIA AFRICA  
CONFERENCE**

**30-31 AUGUST (TBC)**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT [AAUN.EDU.AU](http://AAUN.EDU.AU)**



# AAUN AUSTRALIA AFRICA

## UNIVERSITIES NETWORK



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