

**Press Release N°108/2013****6th AASW opens in Accra with a call for African Governments to increase investments in agricultural research**

**Accra, July 19, 2013** – The 6th Africa Agriculture Science Week (AASW) officially opened yesterday 18 July 2013, in Accra, Ghana, with a call to African researchers to explore new scientific and innovative ways to enhance Africa's agricultural development.

The Vice President of the Republic of Ghana, H.E Kwesi Bekoe Amissah-Arthur, formally opened the Science Week themed, 'Africa Feeding Africa

through Agriculture Science and Innovation.'

He said Africa could achieve food self sufficiency through agricultural science and innovation as there were examples to go, by including those in Ghana. "We need to emphasize on agricultural research; the application of scientific methods, and sustainable technologies and innovation based on scientific research," Mr. Amissah-Arthur said. "The need for action in research is urgent; as African governments we must increase funding for agricultural research and extension if we are to make the desired results and impacts."

Also speaking during the opening ceremony, AUC's Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, H.E Tumusiime Rhoda Peace, highlighted the critical role that agricultural research and development could play for supporting agricultural transformation and wealth creation for African citizens. "We should recommit ourselves from this General Assembly to accelerate the use of ICTs for technology dissemination, exchange of knowledge, access to inputs and output markets," she said. "This is why, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP), responds to the challenges of agricultural research and technology generation and dissemination as part of the solutions to ending hunger, malnutrition and poverty in Africa."

Delivering the key note address during the opening ceremony, IFAD President Dr. Kanayo Nwanze said, "We must reposition research *and* development so that it is research *for* development. This means measuring our results NOT by higher yields alone but by reduced poverty, improved nutrition, cohesive societies and healthy ecosystems; as I advocate for more investment in research, I also stress that research for the sake of research is wasteful and pointless. Research, ultimately, needs to have an application."

Meanwhile, FARA honored Ghanaian President, H.E John Dramani Mahama with the Africa Award for Excellence in Food Security and Poverty Reduction at the same ceremony.

CJ/HMC