

To our Esteemed Constituents and Partners

MESSAGE TO OUR CONSTITUENTS REGARDING COVID-19

As we are all in this together and affected by this pandemic, we at the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) share our thoughts with you all, and especially our constituents and partners, affected by the unfolding COVID-19 outbreak. We stand resolute with you to navigate safely through this difficult period. We register our heartfelt condolences to families that have lost loved ones to this pandemic and pray that those hospitalized and those who have tested positive will have a full and quick recovery. We salute the brave and hardworking men and women on the frontline of confronting this outbreak for their selflessness in treating the sick and halting its spread.

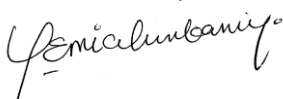
The effects of COVID-19 are remarkably pervasive. In the domain of agriculture, the pandemic is affecting both food supply and demand by disrupting supply chains for inputs and produce, and the availability of labour. With regard to agriculture research and innovation we anticipate that the commitments by governments of vast resources towards mitigating the consequences of containment measures, will adversely impact on our budgets. Furthermore, research activities are already being disrupted since most of them cannot be conducted from our homes where the pandemic has forced us to retreat. It is also most certain that many grounds gained in STI will be reversed if care is not taken.

In pursuance of our mandate, we commit to work with our partners to mitigate the immediate and medium-term impact of this pandemic and future similar unforeseen adverse events by: (a) intensifying efforts towards strengthening the capabilities for foresight in Africa; (b) convening/co-convening and participating in discourses on how agriculture research and innovation will mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on the continent's food and nutrition security, support the creation of jobs, and most importantly, improve the resilience of our food systems; and (c) proposing research and development initiatives to fast-track recovery strategies as well as improve the continent's capacity to prevent and control the emergence of zoonotic diseases.

I wish to take this opportunity to notify you that from 25th March to 24th April 2020 FARA staff will be working from their respective homes. As per the new directive of the host government, Accra is now locked down as a preventive measure to contain the COVID-19. We are not allowed to access our offices during this period of 14 days in the first instance. This arrangement may be extended depending on the circumstances unfolding in Ghana by mid-April. During this period, physical meetings will not be possible. All our meetings will be virtual using available ICT tools, notably mobile phone, Whatsapp, Skype and Zoom.

We are confident that by joining forces and with God on our side, the world will overcome this pandemic. Please stay safe!

Yours sincerely,



Yemi Akinbami (PhD)
Executive Director

