

# **Development of Agriculture**

## **Recognition of Prime Movers and Stakeholders' Expectations**

*An Address to the 18 Convocation Luncheon of SUA*

*By Prof Bruno Ndunguru,*

*SUA Alumni and Director of Tea Research*

After acknowledging being invited as the Guest Speaker for the SUA Convocation luncheon, Professor Ndunguru chose to start the ball rolling by narrating key milestones leading to the establishment of the Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA). He gave vivid descriptions of the first batch of undergraduates to arrive in Morogoro (1969) and graduation (1972); The very first field experiments carried out by Enyi and Gibbon (July 1969); The starting of Divisions of Forestry (1973) and Veterinary Science (1976); The first Deanship election (1979) and ultimately the establishment of SUA in 1984.

### ***Recognition of prime movers of agriculture***

Prof. Ndunguru narrated the prime movers of agriculture as the following:

- New technology for large and smallholder farmers generated from investments by the public and private sector in research. New technology has to be continuously developed/improved to meet the changing needs of the farmers; Human capital at all levels: professional, managerial, technical, and artisan, achieved through investment in schools, colleges, and faculties of agriculture, forestry, and natural resources, as well as on the job training and experience;
- Sustained growth in physical and biological infrastructure through investments in roads, dams, irrigation systems, grain stores, rural electricity, and information systems, and large scale genetic improvements of livestock herds and tree crops;
- Effective institutions particularly able to serve smallholder farmers: research, extension, credit, marketing, and land reform and settlement;
- An enabling political and economic environment with budgetary commitment to agriculture, appropriate pricing, marketing and trade policies to facilitate agriculture growth and food security.

He strongly hinted that, “No prime mover on its own can get agriculture to grow on a sustainable basis.”

### ***Expectations from different stakeholders***

While the Government expects SUA to be exemplary as a teaching and research entity (academic excellence) producing quality graduates, it also expects from SUA the following: improved capacity of extension staff; Source of inspiration and guidance for agriculture related issues; Provision of leadership in moving agriculture; and ultimately foreign exchange earnings from agriculture

On the other hand the donors expect from SUA a wider impact of donor funded research on agriculture; Increased confidence on donor resource use and accounting; and ultimately tangible contribution of agricultural incomes to the rural people.

In order to get tangible agricultural development, Professor Ndunguru stressed that: “Policy framework must be supportive; Quality of science and technology transfer process must be of highest standard; and that financial control must be beyond reproach.”

#### *Strengths and Weaknesses of SUA - perceptions*

The Guest Speaker, with great articulation and humor, listed the achievement of SUA he came to know in 1969, left it in 1985 and the way it is today. He narrated the achievements of SUA since 1969 in terms of staff, graduating students, research activities, number of degree programmes.

Prof Ndunguru commended the outstanding performance of SUA staff in the same period (from 0 to 30). However, he did not mince words to point out perceived SUA’s weaknesses, which included: Over dependence on donor funding for research (>98%); Shy on debating technical matters of public interest (not proactive); Lack of rational utilization of the large human resources; Weak in managing the University Farm (>3000 ha); Weak Linkage with parent ministries; Not established itself as a centre for strategic backstopping; and that Demand of SUA graduates is not clearly established.

#### *Way Forward in Agricultural Development*

Professor Ndunguru presented his advice for a way forward in agricultural development, as far as SUA is concerned by exploring three approaches: Firstly is to “Establish whether the current human and financial resources are effectively utilized (Managerially, Financially, Technically, and Strategically).” Secondly is to establish “any need to transform SUA so as to broaden the scope to include other areas of study to address the prime movers of agriculture.” Lastly but not least is to explore adopting the Tea Research Institute of Tanzania (TRIT/WATCO) Model whereby “there is a direct interaction between producers, researchers, extension processors, transporters and marketing.”

#### **Prof Ndunguru’s Activities after leaving SUA in 1985**

**1985 – 86** He was in Benin, West Africa, where he helped establish a FSR Programme (OAU, STRC, SAFGRAD);

1986 – 1992) at ICRISAT Sahelian Centre in Niamey, and Niger (CGIAR) where he lead a team of Scientists to develop and promote groundnuts in Sahelian Countries (from Tchad to Senegal);

**1992 – 1994** lead a team of Scientists to develop and promote groundnuts for SADC countries between ICRISAT/SADC (CGIAR)

**1994 – 1998** at SACCAR/SADC office in Botswana where he coordinated regional agricultural and natural resources research and training for 13 states

**1998-2002**, Joined – Cranfield University, The biggest achievement was establishing a sustainable cost effective high quality research institute for the tea industry in Tanzania.