Foreword

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. The announcement to establish Africa Economic Research Consortium Alumni Association (AERCAA) a year ago saw us make the first step in building a strong unified voice. We recognize that the strength of the alumni is the diversity of its membership, and thus we need to harness the synergies to foster a strong networking.

The AERC network has expanded in the last quarter of a century through the capacity building activities. AERC fellows are spread across all parts of the globe and this alumni association offers an opportunity to bring together this strong resource base to support sustainability of AERC activities. As a unified voice, the alumni provides a platform to articulate development issues confronting the sub-Saharan African region, and mobilization of resources for AERC activities.

While an interim Steering Committee, supported by AERC secretariat, is working to put together the essential structures that establish a strong foundation for the alumni, it takes the input of the whole membership to accomplish a mile. A recruitment drive was launched in June 2014 but we call on AERC fellows to make an effort to recruit the next fellow. A platform has been created to facilitate interaction among members and the Steering Committee is gearing to roll out the alumni activities in the coming days. Feel free to give your feedback to the Steering Committee using alumni@aercalumni.org so that it can serve you better. Remember Our Voice is Our Strength.

WHERE THEY ARE

Cabinet Secretary National Treasury Kenya,
Secretary to Treasury Malawi
Governor, Central Bank of Kenya
Deputy Governor, Bank of Uganda

Deputy Governor, Central Bank of Zimbabwe
Deputy Director, Africa Department International Monetary Fund
Vice Chancellor Makerere University
Vice Chancellor University of Ghana
On November 30, 2013, as AERC celebrated its 25 years of capacity building activities in Africa, an announcement was made to establish an Alumni Association. Recognized was the need to harness a significant resource base that AERC has produced through its capacity building activities over the years to build a unified voice that articulates the development issues facing the economies in the Sub-Saharan Africa and contributes to sustainability of AERC activities. Noted also was that the AERC network is diverse with representation globally as some of the AERC fellows hold key positions in international organizations, government departments, and universities, and others are giving back to the community by participating in the AERC training programs, while others are now resource persons in AERC thematic research. Further, it was noted that while some fellows are still actively participating in AERC activities, others are caught up in their new roles but are willing to support AERC at a different capacity. Establishing the alumni was thus seen as a channel to facilitate harness the synergies of this resourceful membership.

Following the announcement to establish alumni association, some AERC fellows volunteered to form a Steering Committee to put together structures that lay foundation for the association. The Steering Committee started conceptualizing the alumni in January 2014 and with the support of AERC secretariat it has made some achievements but there is a lot more that needs to be done. The first task was to establish a platform to facilitate the registration of members and support the activities of the alumni. Then during the AERC Biannual Meetings June 1-5, 2014 in Accra Ghana, the recruitment drive was formally launched.

So far, about 200 AERC fellows have registered as alumni members. To ensure that the alumni is accurately capturing the membership a vetting process is being used to ensure a core member has successfully gone through the AERC capacity building programs. In addition, those who support AERC as resource persons both in training and research program have also registered as associate members or friends of the alumni. It is a challenge though getting to those AERC fellows who are not currently actively involved in AERC activities. We request those who have registered to make an effort to spread the word on the alumni association. Some registered alumni members have agreed to be Interim Country Focal Points representing Cameroon, Cote d’ Ivoire, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, south Africa, Sudan, Togo, Uganda and Zimbabwe. We are looking to have all countries having an interim country focal point.

In the next six months, the Steering Committee aims to continue with the recruitment drive, finalize with the draft AERCAA constitution, roll out the activities of the alumni, and put in place operational guidelines. Please visit the AERCAA website for updates and make your contributions by send a message to alumni@aercalumni.org.

AERC Alumni Association

A call for articles for the next issue of the AERCAA Newsletter April 2015 will be made on the alumni website. Be on the lookout and participate.

Please share any challenges encountered in registration process and accessing the alumni platform through info@aercalumni.org.

We are looking to have Interim Country Focal Points in all countries represented by the core members of the alumni. You are welcome to volunteer yourself or nominate someone who is a core member. Please share this information using info@aercalumni.org.

While we have a big pull of registered alumni CORE members, the verification process is taking longer due to inadequate/not clear information provided in the registration process to help in identifying clearly a member. Please provide information on the year you graduated from CMAP/CMAAE/CPP or the title of the recently finalized/published AERC Research paper, whichever is relevant to you.

We are rolling out the Policy Debate Blog in the New Year after clearing verification of all currently registered members.

Help us to find potential alumni members holding key positions in government, universities, international organizations and private sector.