EAS – AAU KNOWLEDGE FORUM LAUNCHED

The Ethiopian Academy of Sciences in collaboration with Addis Ababa University College of Health Science launched The EAS –AAU Knowledge Forum on 26 April, 2016. The EAS-AAU Knowledge Forum was launched at the Addis Ababa University College of Health Science Hall, Black Lion Hospital. The first speaker of the EAS –AAU Knowledge Forum was Dr. Yayehyirad Kitaw, a prominent health professional, independent consultant, winner of various honorary awards, Founding Fellow of the EAS and member of the Health Working Group.

Professor Sileshi Lulseged, Founding Fellow of the Ethiopia Academy of Sciences and Chairperson of the Health Sciences Working Group opened the program with a welcoming remark. He remarked that the EAS –AAU Knowledge Forum shall be a knowledge exchange platform between senior Fellows and young and aspiring experts.

Professor Sileshi indicated that the EAS – AAU Knowledge Forum will be held regularly to stimulate discussion on topics of relevance in the public health sector, to provide a forum for senior professionals to share their experiences and inspire the young and to serve as a channel for networking among health and academic institutions.
The title of the Presentation was “Lesson for the Future in the Health Sector in Ethiopia: Sharing Experiences with the New Generation”. Dr. Yayehyirad focused his presentation on the need to learn from history in the public health sector. He briefly narrated the history of public health in Ethiopia and its current status together with indicators of its future direction. He presented various perspectives on how the development of public health in Ethiopia can be enhanced.

Participants from various health organizations, health science students and Fellows of EAS took part in the Knowledge Forum.

At the end of the program, Professor Demisse Habte, President of EAS presented a token to Dr. Yayehyirad Kitaw as an appreciation of the comprehensive presentation he made in the first Forum.
The Seventh Public Lecture of the year in a monthly series entitled ‘Chronic and Non-communicable Diseases in Ethiopia’ was held on Thursday 7 April, 2016 at the Auditorium of the Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa Institute of Technology (AAiT). The Public Lecture was delivered by a distinguished Internist, Chronic and Non-communicable Diseases Specialist and Founding Fellow of the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences, Dr. Shitaye Alemu. Professor Sileshi Lulseged, Founding Fellow of the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences and Chairman of the Health Working Group Chaired the Public Lecture.

Chronic and non-communicable diseases are non-contagious in nature. Unlike communicable diseases chronic and non-communicable diseases can be avoided and contained through improved life-style.

In the developed world there is awareness on chronic and non-communicable diseases. Numerous ways can be stated as to how the developed nations attempt to control these diseases. Of these; improving lifestyle, diet selection and control, understanding family history and the habit of regular exercising are the major ones.

The presentation by Dr. Shitaye mainly focused on four of the major chronic and non-communicable diseases, high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetics and cancer. Participants raised various questions and concerns based on their personal and family experiences.

In her conclusion, Dr. Shitay stressed on the attention and efforts that need to be invested to tackle these health problems. She also noted on the potential threat and the inevitable damage that the wide and rapid spread of these chronic diseases will result in if not properly addressed. Dr. Shitaye alerted the attendants to play their part in tackling these health hazards.
The Ethiopia Academy of Sciences hosted a one and half day event organized by the Network of African Science Academies titled **Harnessing Modern Agricultural Biotechnology for Africa’s Economic Development**. The event was held from 21-22 April, 2016 at Intercontinental Hotel Addis Ababa. The event was organized in partnership with Global Young Academy (GYA), the Academy of Sciences of South Africa (ASSAf) and the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences (GAAS).

The main objectives of the event include facilitating dialogue between scientists and policymakers together with other stakeholders that will lead to the dissemination of the NASAC policymakers’ booklet on agricultural biotechnology for Africa, establishing relationships and provide supportive mechanisms that will influence policy change in Agricultural Biotechnology in Africa and increasing awareness of African policymakers on Agricultural Biotechnology key messages and recommendations made by scientists.

Professor Masresha Fetene, Executive Director of the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences, presented the activities of the Academy in promoting biotechnology research and innovation in Ethiopia.

Representatives of various international organizations including the UN-Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the African Union Commission, representatives of various African Science Academies, government officials and other concerned parties participated in the event.
The eighth Public Lecture of the year in a monthly series entitled “Globalization of Teff: The Phenomenon and Its Implications from Ethiopia's Perspectives” was held on Thursday 28 April, 2016 at the Auditorium of the Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa Institute of Technology (AAiT). The Public Lecture was delivered by a Senior Researcher in Plant Breeding and Genetics and a Fellow of the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences, Dr. Kebebew Assefa. The Public Lecture started by presenting salient features on the agronomy and cultivation of teff in Ethiopia and expounded on the cultural values and health benefits of teff and proceeded to the internationalization of teff and its implications to Ethiopia.

Teff is one of the most widely cultivated crops in Ethiopia with a total area coverage of over 3 million acres contributing to about 20% of the annual total grain production of the country. It is the main source of the national bread (Enjera) and the teff flour has found its way in the preparation of many new and innovative dishes.

The cultivation and use of Teff has been limited to Ethiopia and Eritrea for many centuries. However, it is now cultivated in some states of America, Spain, the Netherlands and in Israel. Various formulations of teff has found its way in the global market slowly with little benefit sharing schemes towards Ethiopian farmers. The latter issue was hotly debated in the Public Lecture.

People representing various non-governmental organizations, professionals representing agricultural and research institutions, individuals, officials representing governmental agricultural institutions, university lecturers and instructors, university students, high school students, EAS and EtYAS Fellows and individuals from the general public attended the Public Lecture.
Professor Tekalign Mamo, Founding Fellow of the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences and leader of the Ethiopian Soil Information System (EthioSIS) and the Agriculture Commercialization Cluster (ACC) Programs at ATA, received the 2016 IFA Norman Borlaug Award for his continuous efforts and commitments to improving soil quality in Ethiopia and Africa. Professor Tekalign Mamo was nominated by ICL Fertilizers, and was chosen from among six nominees. The award ceremony took place on 9th May, 2016 in Paris, France.

Professor Tekalign Mamo has made significant contributions to the growth of grain production in Ethiopia since 2000. He is known for introducing community-based land rehabilitation work during his time in office as a State Minister of Agriculture. Professor Tekalign’s leadership in rehabilitation of soil and its wellbeing resulted in the transformation of over 15 million hectares of degraded land in Ethiopia.

Image sources: http://www.ethiosports.com

“Ethiopia's Malaria Landscape: Historical Ecology, Complexity, and Silver Bullets” the Ninth Public Lecture Held

The ninth Public Lecture of the year in a monthly series entitled “Ethiopia's Malaria Landscape: Historical Ecology, Complexity, and Silver Bullets” was held on Thursday 2 June, 2016 at the Auditorium of the Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa Institute of Technology (AAiT). The Public Lecture was delivered by Professor James McCann, a senior historian, historical ecologist and an Associate Fellow of the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences.
Professor Sileshi Leulseged, Fellow of the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences and Chairman of the EAS Health Working Group, chaired the lecture.

Professor James McCann started the lecture by expounding the material and social base of science. He indicated that his lecture is based on his book, “The Historical Ecology of Malaria in Ethiopia: Deposing the Spirits”, a book that emanated from a collaborative project among entomologists, agriculturalists, epidemiologists, social scientists and archeologists.

Professor McCann emphasized that “Malaria is an infectious disease like no other. It is a dynamic, shape-shifting force of nature that constitutes Africa’s most deadly and debilitating vector-borne disease.” Malaria has adapted itself and beaten various and continuous biomedical efforts to control it. Professor McCann convincingly presented that “medical science is a necessary but not sufficient lens from which to understand the disease”. In addition to medical efforts to eradicate Malaria, the problem begs for ecological understanding and integrated effort.

Professor McCann reiterated that the question of shifting historical context, why here, why now and what a nation needs to do to address this problem must be answered.

Finally, Professor McCann ended the Lecture by stating that the silver bullets to address the issue as Cooperation, Preparedness and Commitment.

Participants from various health sectors, representatives of governmental and non-governmental organizations, people from research institutions, university students, high school students, EAS and EtYAS Fellows attended the Public Lecture.
Training on Project Cycle Management for Researchers Held

The Ethiopian Academy of Sciences conducted a three days training on Project Cycle Management for Researchers in partnership with the FDRE Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) from 25 – 27 May, 2016 at Ghion Hotel. The training aimed at developing understanding on the need to effectively manage research projects/programmes, providing tools and ideas for more effective execution of research projects and discussing the basic project management principles and practices to strengthen/firm up abilities, skills and competencies in research project management.
The training was given in four major contents that consisted of overview of research and research project management, research project execution and available tools, monitoring and evaluation and research project completion. Professor Masresha Fetene, Professor Zemede Asfaw, Dr. Beyene Kebede and Dr. Solomon Bekure offered the training.

Thirty-five researchers who won research awards on the first and the second Annual Research Grant Competition of MoST and 25 researchers and research directors from public and private universities participated on the training.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

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