



SPEECH BY VICE CHANCELLOR OF EGERTON UNIVERSITY, PROF EZRA MARITIM, DURING THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF TEGEMEO CONFERENCE ON "INTEGRATING CONSUMERS IN THE POLICY AND PROGRAM AGENDA IN KENYAN AGRICULTURE" ON 19TH APRIL 2005 AT SAFARI PARK HOTEL, NAIROBI.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE, HON KIPRUTO ARAP KIRWA, CHIEF OF AGRICULTURE, BUSINESS AND ENVIRONMENT OFFICE, MARGARET BROWN, DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLORS, DIRECTOR OF TEGEMEO, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

I WELCOME YOU ALL TO THIS CONFERENCE ON "INTEGRATING CONSUMERS IN THE POLICY AND PROGRAM AGENDA IN KENYAN AGRICULTURE". KENYA IS UNDERGOING RAPID TRANSITION IN ITS AGRICULTURAL SECTOR TO RAISE ITS PRODUCTIVITY. HOWEVER, SOME OF THE POLICIES GEARED TO ACHIEVE THIS OBJECTIVE HAVE THE UNINTENDED EFFECT OF RAISING COSTS OF FOOD FOR THE RURAL AND URBAN CONSUMERS. AS A CONSEQUENCE, CONSUMPTION PATTERNS FOR DIFFERENT FOOD TYPES CHANGES. IT IS WITH THESE CONCERNS THAT TEGEMEO INSTITUTE HAS ORGANIZED

THIS CONFERENCE TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF INTEGRATING CONSUMERS TO THE POLICY MAKING PROCESS IN THE COUNTRY.

THIS CONFERENCE IS RELEVANT AND TIMELY AND IN LINE WITH THE STRATEGY FOR REVITALIZATION OF AGRICULTURE. IT ADDRESSES ISSUES OF RAISING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY AND ALLEVIATING POVERTY AT A TIME WHEN THE GOVERNMENT IS IMPLEMENTING NEW ECONOMIC RECOVERY STRATEGY AND THAT OF REVITALIZATION OF AGRICULTURE.

THEREFORE, THE NEW CHALLENGES RAISE THE DEMAND FOR EMPIRICAL POLICY RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS THAT WILL INFORM THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW STRATEGIES. TEGEMEO INSTITUTE HAS *THUS TAKEN* UP THESE CHALLENGES AS IS WITNESSED BY THE CONFERENCE TODAY.

I WISH TO THANK USAID THROUGH DR. DWIGHT ALAN SMITH, THE MISSION DIRECTOR, FOR *YOUR* CONTINUED SUPPORT TO AGRICULTURE POLICY ANALYSIS IN THE *COUNTRY* THROUGH TEGEMEO INSTITUTE. THIS SUPPORT

HAS CONTRIBUTED TO STRENGTHEN THE POLICY REFORM DEBATE IN THE COUNTRY. EMPIRICAL POLICY RESEARCH HAS ALSO HAVE GUIDED AGRICULTURAL POLICY FORMULATION IN THE COUNTRY .WE URGE YOU TO CONTINUE SUPPORTING US IN THIS IMPORTANT AREA OF OUR ECONOMY.

ON ITS PART, THE INSTITUTE THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY HAS

UNDERTAKEN VARIOUS STEPS TO IMPROVE ITS MANDATE IN THE AREA OF AGRICULTURE POLICY ,RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS.RHE INSTITUTE LAUNCHED ITS

WEBSITE LAST YEAR IN ORDER TO MAKE AVAILABLE MOST OF ITS RESEARCH OUTPUTS. I AM INFORMED THAT THE WEBSITE HAS BECOME VERY POPULAR AND HAS BEEN RECEIVING MANY HITS PER DAY. THE INSTITUTE HAS NOW COMPLETED ITS STRATEGIC AND RESTRUCTURING PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 2005 TO 2010 WITH A VIEW TO EXPANDING IT'S RESOURCE BASE AND THEREBY INCREASING ITS RESEARCH CAPACITY. THIS WILL INVOLVE TAPPING THE EXISTING EXPERTISE IN THE UNIVERSITY TO EXPAND ITS AREAS OF INTERESTS SUCH AS ECONOMICS, ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, AND IN THE PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES.

TEGEMEO IS ALSO EXPLORING NEW WAYS OF INCREASING LOCAL CAPACITY IN POLICY RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS. THROUGH INCREASED LINKAGES WITH LOCAL AND OVERSEAS UNIVERSITIES AND WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, MINISTRY OF LIVESTOCK AND FISHERIES, AND THE MINISTRY OF COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING. TOWARDS THIS END, I WISH TO THANK USAID FOR SUPPORTING US TO TRAIN AT THE MASTERS AND PHD LEVEL. CURRENTLY USAID THROUGH THE TAMPA PROJECT IS SUPPORTING FOUR PHDS AND FOUR MASTERS STUDENTS IN VARIOUS UNIVERSITIES IN THE US.

I ALSO WELCOME LOCAL, NATIONAL, AND REGIONAL RESEARCHERS TO COLLABORATE WITH TEGEMEO PARTICULARLY IN THE UTILIZATION OF

THE HOUSEHOLD PANEL DATA THAT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED BY TEGEMEO SINCE 1997. THIS IS A RICH DATABASE WITH THE POTENTIAL TO PROVIDE EMPIRICAL SOLUTIONS TO SEVERAL DEVELOPMENT ISSUES AFFECTING THE COUNTRY. THE DATABASE IS AVAILABLE AND I ENCOURAGE TEGEMEO TO USE IT TO BUILD LINKAGES AND COLLABORATIONS WITH THOSE INSTITUTIONS INTERESTED IN THIS DATA.

LASTLY, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT AND COLLABORATION WITH US IN MANY FIELDS. INDEED, TEGEMEO HAS BEEN REQUESTED BY THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE TO SECOND A SENIOR POLICY RESEARCHER TO THE MINISTRY TO WORK CLOSELY WITH THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR COORDINATION UNIT (ASCU) TO IMPLEMENT THE STRATEGY FOR REVITALIZING AGRICULTURE. WE THANK YOU FOR THIS OFFER AND LOOK FORWARD TO FURTHER COLLABORATION IN FUTURE.

MR MINISTER SIR, IT IS NOW MY PLEASURE TO INVITE YOU TO ADDRESS THE GATHERING AND OFFICIALLY OPEN THE CONFERENCE.

THANK YOU.