**Leaders in the Civic Engagement Movement: Rwanda**

Co-edited by Lorlene Hoyt and Amy Newcomb Rowe

June signals the ninth edition of the expanded series. This issue includes an introduction to Rwanda and the University of Rwanda. Also, we feature interviews with Dr. James Gashumba, Coordinator of University of Rwanda and former Rector of Umutara Polytechnic; Mr. Paul Sserumaga, Senior Lecturer at University of Rwanda; and Dr. Hellen Amuguni, Research Professor at Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine, Tufts University.

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**Rwanda**

Located in the Great Lakes region of central Africa, the Republic of Rwanda is a small country near the equator and bordered by Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, and Tanzania. Rwanda is known as the “land of a thousand hills” and is home to the Virugna volcano range, soil-rich farmlands and three national wildlife parks: Volcanoes Park, Akagera Park, and Nyungwe Park. The latter hosts the largest mountain rainforest in Africa, and the country has a long and successful environmental conservation history.[[1]](#footnote-1) Rwanda’s turbulent political history, from German and Belgian colonialism to civil war in the 1990s, has overshadowed its rich, natural diversity. With approximately 12 million people (67% under the age 25), [[2]](#footnote-2) and a recovering economy, Rwanda’s tourism industry is one of the fastest growing economic contributions to the region’s stability.

Rwanda is a presidential republic system giving executive and legislative powers to an elected president who serves seven-year terms. The Ministry of Youth was established in 2008 to create new policies for economic and social development. The youth unemployment rate since 2005 stands at 14%.[[3]](#footnote-3) The majority of Rwandan youth are employed by micro-enterprises mainly in the informal sector and without technical or specialized skills.

Civil society in Rwanda has steadily grown since the 1990s but is mainly dominated by international agencies and foreign groups. Prior to 1994, traditional community associations and cooperatives were key features of Rwandan and East African societies in general. The greatest need today is for civil society to continue providing opportunities for peace-building and education. Although civic and political participation remain low and civil society organizations have limited ability to work with government, there are increasing efforts to achieve constitutional democracy and respect for human rights for all citizens. Rwanda’s President Paul Kagame expressed these views last month during a [speech](http://now.tufts.edu/articles/remembering-rwandan-genocide) at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts.

**University of Rwanda**

Since the 1960s, 23 higher education institutions have been established in Rwanda,11 public and 12 private. In March 2013, the Rwandan government consolidated all public institutions into one university with six colleges and named them University of Rwanda.[[4]](#footnote-4) The University of Rwanda’s mission is focused on preparing students for employment and “for service to their communities and country through applied service learning programmes nationally and internationally.” The six colleges present a multi-disciplinary and multi-campus approach to higher education and include: Arts and Social Sciences, Animal Sciences, Business, Education, Medicine and Health Sciences, and Science and Technology. Today, there are16 campuses, three Deputy Vice-Chancellors and six College Principals. The Nyagatare Campus is a member institution of The Talloires Network contributing to the Youth Economic Participation Initiative. It also has an active partnership with Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine.

Formerly known as Umutara Polytechnic and now the Nyagatare Campus of the University of Rwanda, this specialized school has been in operation since 2006 and has graduated several thousand students already. The Nyagatare campus is located in the Eastern Province near the Ugandan border and about 160 kilometers north of the City of Kigali. This campus originated from community-based initiatives in a rural area of intensive crop and livestock farming. The university has five science faculties: Agriculture, Veterinary Medicine, Technology and Applied Sciences, Information and Communications Technology, Commerce and Applied Economics, and a support center for Communication and Languages. Though a small school respectively, with approximately 4,000 students and increasing from 200 students the first year, the campus is attracting more students and staff because of the demand for technical specialists. There are more than 160 faculty who collaborate with national and international universities. Nyagatare Campus as a polytechnic university aims to train highly skilled and hands-on professionals suitable for the rapid economic transformation that Rwanda is undergoing.

**Dr. James Gashumba, Coordinator, University of Rwanda – Nyagatare**

by Lorlene Hoyt

****Since December 2011, Dr. Gashumba served as Rector of Umutara Polytechnic, an institution of higher education initiated by residents of the war ravaged Umutara region, in the north-east of Rwanda. Located in the city of Nyagatare, “the community was crying out for a higher education institution,” explains Dr. Gashumba. “We began as a community university,” he continues, “and the expectation was that we would focus on community service and outreach to solve problems.” The university is currently in “a period of transition” as it has recently merged with others to form the University of Rwanda. Dr. James Gashumba’s official title is now Coordinator, [University of Rwanda – Nyagatare Campus](http://www.nyagatarecampus.ur.ac.rw/), though his role and responsibilities remain unchanged. Professor James McWha is Vice Chancellor of the University of Rwanda, overseeing multiple colleges and campuses.

Born and raised in Uganda, Dr. Gashumba was influenced by his father who “kept cattle” while he was growing up. As a boy, he “dreamed of becoming a veterinarian,” and the journey began in earnest when he applied to Makerere University. After Dr. Gashumba received his Bachelors in Veterinary Medicine, he went to the University of London for a Ph.D. and also worked as a technical advisor for the World Health Organization, training researchers and field workers in East and West Africa. He later followed his roots to Rwanda, where his forefathers lived before they migrated to Uganda.

Dr. Gashumba is the Principal Investigator for the Solve the Equation East Africa program, or SEE, supported by the [Talloires Network’s Youth Economic Participation Initiative](http://talloiresnetwork.tufts.edu/yepi/). SEE is a collaborative network between four universities in East Africa ([University of Nairobi](http://www.uonbi.ac.ke/) in Kenya, [Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences](http://www.muchs.ac.tz/) in Tanzania and [Makerere University](http://mak.ac.ug/) in Uganda) working to increase graduate employment by supporting the development of youth technical skills and providing business incubation centers. “Why reinvent the wheel? We focus on partnerships to share experiences and learn from one another,” says Dr. Gashumba. This network of universities is in the process of identifying community partners including bank and farming communities. Paul Sserumaga, senior lecturer in Animal Nutrition, Poultry Management and Water and Wastewater Quality and Treatment in the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at University of Rwanda – Nyagatare, “has taken the lead on several cooperatives with women-led cooperatives” Explains Dr. Gashumba, These cooperatives are led by alumni who “see participation in the community as very important,” he notes. When prompted to highlight a challenge associated with coordinating such a diverse network, he explains, “Distance is a problem. We still don’t have very good ways of communicating. We rely on e-mail exchange and sometimes use Skype.”

Community engagement is “part of the university mandate. Our focus is outward and we are community-oriented,” says Dr. Gashumba. In addition to the SEE program, engagement is “routine in the curriculum.” Students of agriculture and veterinary medicine, for example, do field work with farmers, helping them turn their farms into viable businesses.” Defining and measuring student learning outcomes in these community-based activities is difficult, however. “It’s all well and good to say we are teaching through community outreach, but we are struggling when it comes to assessment. Teachers are discussing different approaches and we are eager to learn from others,” he says.

Dr. Gashumba would like to “return to research” to focus on diseases affecting cattle. Of particular interest to him is the [“One Cow per Poor Family” program run by Unicef](http://www.unicef.org/equity/index_65274.html) (or Girinka Program). Approximately 90 per cent of cattle were slaughtered during Rwanda’s 1994 genocide, making a vital source of nutrition and income scarce. “Many of the cows in the program are imported from Europe” and suffer as they attempt to cope with tropical temperatures and parasitic diseases. He wants “to see how farmers can improve milk production,” to feed locals and generate income.

*Dr. Gashumba obtained his Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine at Makerere University in Uganda, then proceeded to the United Kingdom where he earned both his MSc and Ph.D. at the University of London. Dr. Gashumba has had a long career in research in both veterinary and medical parasitology in Europe (mainly England), Africa and Australia. In the 1980s, he served as a technical advisor to the World Health Organization by training research and field workers in East and West Africa. Dr. Gashumba has published in international peer-reviewed journals. He also has experience in tertiary teaching (parasitology) and worked with several secondary schools in Australia particularly in curriculum development in the teaching of science.*

References:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Umutara_Polytechnic>

<http://www.unicef.org/equity/index_65274.html>

**Lideres en el Movimiento del Compromiso Cívico: Dr. James Gashumba, Coordinador, Universidad de Ruanda – Nyagatare**

Por Lorlene Hoyt

Desde diciembre del 2011, el Dr. Gashumba se desempeñó como Rector de Umutara Politécnica, una institución de educación superior iniciada por los residentes de la región de Umutara, en el noreste de Ruana, cual fue devastada por la guerra. Ubicada en la ciudad de Nyagatare, "la comunidad estaba pidiendo por una institución de educación superior," explica el Dr. Gashumba. "Empezamos como una universidad de la comunidad", y continúa, "y la expectativa era que íbamos a centrarnos en el servicio comunitario y la divulgación con el fin de resolver problemas". La universidad está en "un período de transición," ya que se ha fusionado recientemente con otros para formar la Universidad de Ruanda. El título oficial del Dr. James Gashumba ahora es coordinador de la [Universidad de Ruanda del campus de Nyagatare](http://www.nyagatarecampus.ur.ac.rw/), sin embargo su papel y sus responsabilidades se mantienen sin cambios. El profesor James McWha es vicerrector de la Universidad de Ruanda, supervisando varios colegios y universidades.

Nacido y criado en Uganda, el Dr. Gashumba fue influenciado por su padre quien “tenia ganado" mientras él estaba creciendo. Él "soñaba con ser veterinario," y su sueño comenzó formalmente cuando aplico a la Universidad de Makerere. Después de recibir su Licenciatura en Medicina Veterinaria, se fue a la Universidad de Londres para completar su doctorado y también trabajó como asesor técnico de la Organización Mundial de la Salud, capacitando a los investigadores y los trabajadores de campo en el noreste y este de África. Más tarde siguió sus raíces a Ruanda, donde sus antepasados ​​vivieron antes de emigrar a Uganda.

Dr. Gashumba es el investigador principal de Resolver la Ecuación de África Oriental, o SEE, apoyado por de la [Iniciativa Juvenil sobre la Participación](http://talloiresnetwork.tufts.edu/yepi/) Juvenil de la Red Talloires. SEE es una red colaborativa entre cuatro universidades en África Oriental ([Universidad de Nairobi en Kenia](http://www.uonbi.ac.ke/), [Muhimbili Universidad de Salud y Ciencias Asociadas](http://www.muchs.ac.tz/) en Tanzania y la [Universidad de Makerere](http://mak.ac.ug/) en Uganda) que trabajan para aumentar la emplealidad de graduados, apoyando el desarrollo de habilidades técnicas y proporcionando centros de incubación de empresas. "¿Por qué reinventar la rueda? Nos enfocamos en las asociaciones para compartir experiencias y aprender unos de otros," dice Dr. Gashumba.

Esta red de universidades está en el proceso de indentificar los socios de la comunidad, incluidas las comunidades bancarias y agrícolas. Según el Dr. Gashumba, Paul Sserumaga, profesor titular de Nutrición deAnimal, Manejo de Aves y Calidad y Tratamiento de Aguas Residuales de la Facultad de Medicina Veterinaria de la Universidad de Ruanda - Nyagatare, "ha tomado la delantera en varias cooperativas con las cooperativas lideradas por mujeres." Estas cooperativas son dirigidas por ex alumnos que “ven la participación en la comunidad como algo muy importante," señala. “La distancia es un problema," responde el Dr. Gashumba cuando se le pidio resaltar un desafío asociado con la coordinación de una red tan diversa. Él explica: "Todavía no tenemos muy buenas maneras de comunicarnos. Dependemos en el intercambio de correo electrónico y, a veces usamos Skype."

La participación comunitaria es "parte del mandato de la universidad. Nuestro enfoque es hacia afuera y estamos orientados hacia la comunidad, "dice el Dr. Gashumba. Además del programa SEE, el compromiso es "rutina en el curriculo.” Los estudiantes de agronomía y veterinaria, por ejemplo, hacen trabajos de campo con los agricultores, ayudando a convertir sus fincas en negocios sostenibles y viables". Definir y medir los resultados del aprendizaje de los estudiantes en estas actividades basadas en la comunidad es difícil, sin embargo. "Toda esta muy bien en decir que estamos enseñando a través de la comunidad, pero estamos batallando en la evaluación. Los maestros discuten diferentes enfoques y estamos ansiosos de aprender de los demás," el dice.

Dr. Gashumba le gustaría "volver a la investigación" para centrarse en las enfermedades que afectan al ganado. Un interés particular para él es el programa "[Una vaca por familia pobre](http://www.unicef.org/equity/index_65274.html)" dirigido por Unicef ​​(o Programa Girinka). Aproximadamente el 90 por ciento del ganado fueron sacrificados durante el genocidio en Ruanda en 1994, haciendo una fuente vital de nutrición e ingresos escasa. "Muchas de las vacas en el programa son importadas de Europa," y sufren para acoplarse a las temperaturas tropicales y enfermedades parasitarias. Él quiere "ver cómo los agricultores pueden mejorar la producción de leche," para alimentar a la gente y generar ingresos.

*Dr. Gashumba obtuvo su Licenciatura en Medicina Veterinaria de la Universidad de Makerere en Uganda, despues procedió al Reino Unido, donde obtuvo tanto su maestría y su doctorado de la Universidad de Londres. El Dr. Gashumba ha tenido una larga carrera en la investigación, tanto en parasitología y veterinaria en Europa (principalmente en Inglaterra), África y Australia. En la década de 1980, se desempeñó como asesor técnico de la Organización Mundial de la Salud capacitando a los investigadores y trabajadores del campo en África oriental y occidental. Dr. Gashumba ha publicado en revistas internacionales arbitradas. También tiene experiencia en la enseñanza terciaria (DT) y trabajó con varias escuelas secundarias en Australia particularmente en el desarrollo del currículo en la enseñanza de la ciencia.*

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**Mr. Paul Sserumaga, Senior Lecturer, University of Rwanda – Nyagatare**by Ahsen Utku

Mr. Paul Sserumaga is senior lecturer in Animal Nutrition, Poultry Management and Water and Wastewater Quality and Treatment at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Rwanda. He holds a Bachelor of food science of Makerere University, Uganda and a Masters degree in food production management of The University Nottingham in the UK. He also holds a certificate in Financial Management. He started his career working in corporations such as the Coca Cola Company in 2001, then switched to the food industry in 2002 and gained experience in animal nutrition. During that time, he developed a keen interest in higher education and has been actively engaged in teaching since 2009.

Mr. Sserumaga and his team began focusing on civic engagement activities as a small group of teachers and practitioners in Uganda where they started a park for local farmers. After 2011 they were organized by a USAID sponsored project under Respond called “One Health in Central and East Africa.” They were involved in similar activities that addressed environmental challenges having implications in One-health. At the moment, Mr. Sserumaga and his colleagues work for the only veterinary school in Rwanda. From having only a department of Veterinary Medicine in 2010, the school has grown with new departments such as the Department of Wild Life, Department of Livestock Production Technology and Development and a Department of Environmental Health and Epidemiology.

In their civic engagements, Mr. Sserumaga and his team mates have addressed issues including environmental health issues, unemployment and poverty and hunger. The Strategic partners that have made these activities possible include; the government of Rwanda through IPEMP project, the Dutch government through SPARK-UP, USAID through OHCEA and the Talloires Network through Tufts University the Youth Economic Participation Initiative to Solve the Equation East Africa (SEE).

SEE is a local network of four universities in four countries; Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, which realized that they have common problems around graduate unemployment. SEE seeks to improve graduate employment through training for entrepreneurship coupled with participatory business incubation-based learning among youth and other community members.

According to Mr. Sserumaga, the first and most important achievement for SEE is, “Accepting and knowing that we share similar problems among the member universities and moving forward to jointly solving them.” He says, “We also agreed to work with groups, teams and networks through projects like student or faculty exchange. We were able to establish student clubs both under One Health and the Entrepreneurship club whose motto is “Job creaters YES, job seekers NO.” Also under the Ambulatory Vet-On-Call services supported currently by Tufts’ Cummings Veterinary School, we are doing great work with Akagera National Park and the farming community. This helps us to contribute positively to food and nutritional security in our area as well as to local tourism. “People are happy with that contribution,” he says.

Networking and healthy collaborations with regional partners has been one of the key factors of Mr. Sserumaga and his team’s success. “While establishing a veterinary-medicine faculty, University of Nairobi helped us to develop the curriculum,” he notes. “The laboratory facilities were minimal, and thankfully we received support from Makerere University and then National University of Rwanda. Under OHCEA, we have obtained academic books and some laboratory equipment from Tufts University.” According to Sserumaga, OHCEA network initiated the collaboration between fifteen universities in Eastern Africa and two collaborators in United States of America; Tufts University and the University of Minnesota. All these collaborations and networks among universities have revealed the power of unity and have enhanced the sharing of experiences. The scope of the exchange program has expanded quickly in the last five years.

The outcomes of civic engagement for University of Rwanda - Nyagatare campus are highly based on the good relations with the community. “Our campus was established as a community university,” he says. “The community offered money, cows, labor and some offered other things all together. They expect a lot from us being a community initiated university. And thanks to our partners, we have started to pay back the community. We have so far produced three cohorts of graduates, are engaged in community specific projects and activities, and soon starting short courses under Talloires and are conducting demand driven research with Tufts Veterinary School.”

These projects, along with creating positive impacts on society, have also contributed to the reduction of youth unemployment, but there is still a lot that needs to be done. “We have provided employment, however, a lot of families are still very underemployed,” he indicates. “As the country grows the employment grows, but there is still a gap.”

*Mr. Sserumaga is a product of Makerere University’s Department of Food Science and Technology in Uganda and also of the School of Biosciences, Department of Food Sciences of The University of Nottingham in the UK. He has worked in beverage, poultry and education industries. His current professional area is animal nutrition. He is greatly interested in using the knowledge and skills of science into tools of socio-economic transformation. He is the Rwanda Coordinator of the SEE program and a Head of Department Livestock Production Technology and Development in University of Rwanda- Nyagatare Campus.*

**Dr. Paul Sserumaga, Profesor Titular, Universidad de Ruanda – Nyagatare**

Por Ahsen Utku

Dr. Paul Sserumaga es profesor titular de Nutrición de Animal, Manejo de Aves y Calidad y Tratamiento de Aguas Residuales de la Facultad de Medicina Veterinaria de la Universidad de Ruanda. Él tiene una licenciatura en ciencias de alimentación de la Universidad de Makerere, Uganda y un magister en gestión de la producción de alimentos de la Universidad de Nottingham en el Reino Unido. También posee un certificado en Dirección Financiera. Comenzó trabajando en empresas como la compañía de Coca Cola, luego cambió a la industria alimentaria y adquirió experiencia en nutrición de animal. Durante ese tiempo, él desarrolló un gran interés en la educación superior y ha participado activamente en la docencia desde 2009.

Dr. Sserumaga y su equipo comenzaron a concentrarse en las actividades relacionadas con la participación ciudadana como un pequeño grupo de profesores y profesionales en Uganda donde iniciaron un parque para los agricultores locales. Después del 2011 organizaron un proyecto patrocinado por USAID bajo Responde llamado "Una Salud en Centro y el Este de África." Ellos estuvieron involucrados en actividades similares que abordan los retos medioambientales que tengan repercusiones en la eco-salud. Por el momento, el Dr. Sserumaga y sus colegas tienen la única escuela de veterinaria en Ruanda, donde han aumentado el número de departamentos, como el Departamento de Vida Silvestre, Departamento de Salud de Ganadería o el Departamento de Salud Ambiental.

Aparte de los problemas ambientales y de salud, Dr. Sserumaga y su equipo abordaron otros retos importantes como el desempleo, la pobreza y el hambre en la sociedad a través del proyecto SPARK-UP en Burundi, que buscaba la coordinación y la cooperación entre instituciones de diferentes lugares, pero con similares problemas sociales y ecológicos. "Ya que compartimos problemas similares, buscamos formas de trabajar juntos," dice. "El año pasado nos quedamos muy contentos de ser financiados por el Proyecto SEE (Resolver la ecuación de África oriental) que tiene por objeto la educación para el espíritu emprendedor entre las universidades de Ruanda, Kenia, Uganda y Tanzania."

Este primer paso, para el Dr. Sserumaga, es el mayor y más importante logro que tienen hasta fecha. "Aceptando y sabiendo que compartimos problemas similares y moviendonos de forma conjunta para resolverlos fue el primer logro," el dice. "Tambien estuvimos de acuerdo en trabajar en grupos, equipos y redes a través de proyectos como intercambios de estudiantes o de profesores. Logramos establecer clubs de estudiantes bajo los campos de Eco-Salud asi como en Gestión Empresarial. Estamos haciendo buen trabajo con parques nacionales también, y aprendiendo como contribuir al turismo local. Manteniendo los animales en el parque vivos y sanos es importante no solo para los agricultores sino también para la region. En esta manera, el Dr. Sserumaga y su equipo ayudan a las empresas locales en su comunidad. "La gente está feliz con eso," él dice.

Estableciendo contactos y colaborando con socios regionales ha sido uno de los factores claves del Dr. Sserumaga y el éxito de su equipo. "Dimientras que establecimimos la facultad de medicina veterinariavet, la Universidad de Nairobi nos ayudó a desarrollar el plan de estudios," señala. "Las instalaciones de laboratorio fueron mínimas, y por suerte recibimos el apoyo de la Universidad de Makerere y la Universidad de Nairobi." Según Sserumaga, quince universidades en el este de África colaboraron en este proceso.

El alcance del programa de intercambio se ha expandido rápidamente en los últimos cinco años. La escuela Cummings de Medicina Veterinaria de la Universidad de Tufts forma parte del cuerpo docente y de el intercambio de estudiantes. "También contamos con investigadores y proyectos porque queremos mejorar nuestra capacidad para la investigación," agrego.

El Dr. Sserumaga cree que los resultados del compromiso cívico para la Universidad de Ruanda del campus Nygatara están basados ​​en las buenas relaciones con la sociedad. "Nuestro campus se estableció como una universidad de la comunidad," dice. "Algunos ofrecieron casas, algunos ofrecieron otras cosas. Y se esperaban mucho de nosotros por ser una comunidad. Sin embargo, teníamos pocos recursos. Ahora, la gente está contenta porque estamos produciendo graduados. Estos graduados regresan a la comunidad y ayudan con genética, alimentación animal, y ayudan a la gente pobre darle de comer a sus animales."

Estos proyectos, junto con la creación de un impacto positivo en la sociedad, también han contribuido a la reducción del desempleo de los jóvenes, pero todavía hay mucho que hacer. "Hemos proporcionado empleabilidad, sin embargo, muchas familias siguen siendo muy subempleados," él indica. A medida que el país crece el empleo crece, pero hay una brecha ".

*Sr. Paul Sserumaga es profesor titular de Nutrición de Animal, Manejo de Aves y Calidad y Tratamiento de Aguas Residuales de la Facultad de Medicina Veterinaria de la Universidad de Ruanda - Nyagatare. Él tiene una licenciatura en Ciencias Alimentarias grado de la Universidad de Makerere, Uganda, y una Maestría en Dirección de Producción de Alimentos de la Universidad de Nottingham en el Reino Unido. También posee un certificado en Dirección Financiera. Sr. Sserumaga tiene más de siete años de experiencia en la industria como un especialista en nutrición y alimentos para animales de producción en la industria de las aves de corral y es oficial de control de calidad.*

**Dr. Hellen Amuguni, Professor, Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine, Tufts University**

By Amy Newcomb Rowe

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A native of Kenya, Dr. Amuguni began her veterinary career at the University of Nairobi and is now a research professor at Tufts University’s Department of Infectious Disease and Global Health. She is the technical advisor for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) [Respond Project](http://www.respond-project.org/pages/index.php) Africa, which coordinates programs across six African countries including Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Democratic Republic of Congo. Dr. Amuguni’s department together with the University of Minnesota’s School of Public Health and [Development Associates Inc.](http://www.develassoc.com/), provide technical and organizational support to institutions, governments, and civil societies to respond to pandemic diseases.

The goal of the five-year Respond Project is to merge the medical and veterinary fields that so often work in silos but when combined “yield greater knowledge and capacity for both disciplines,” says Dr. Amuguni. In East Africa alone, the project covers 14 universities, 7 public schools and 7 technical veterinary schools. In addition, Respond works in South East Asia with the South East Asia One Health University Networks (SEAOHUN) also a network of 14 universities in four countries. Both projects work to build the capacity of the current and future workforce to be able to prepare, respond and control any emerging pandemics using a [One Health Approach,](http://ohcea.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/OHCEA-Brief2-March-2014.pdf) sensitizing people to the idea of one health through integration of core competencies into curricula and programs. “It is difficult for universities to link with the governments in some countries,” explains Dr. Amuguni, “which is where our work begins with One Health, bringing together committees made up of university staff and ministry officials.”

Her team leads training workshops, program evaluations, and curricula development with an eye toward interdisciplinary outcomes. Most governments desire citizens to be prepared and skilled for possible pandemics and Dr. Amuguni’s One Health teams provide the necessary skills to prepare and protect people for such cases. In addition to her work with USAID, Dr. Amuguni is a co-investigator for the Cummings Foundation and Institute for World Justice Grant to provide ambulatory services for communities in Rwanda through the University of Rwanda, Nyagatare, and Veterinary School. University of Rwanda is recipient of the [Talloires Network Youth Economic Participation Initiative,](http://talloiresnetwork.tufts.edu/yepi/) a demonstration grant program providing support to universities to prepare their students for employment after graduation.

Rwandan students go to rural communities to meet farmers and examine animals. They record their findings and bring information back to the classroom to be shared with a virtual network of students in the One Health Club and student exchange. This summer’s research program will take two students from Tufts University to visit University of Rwanda, Nyagatare. These experiences and real-world responsibilities prepare students for medical and government jobs.

Dr. Amuguni also a [gender specialist](http://repository.forcedmigration.org/show_metadata.jsp?pid=fmo%3A5237) ensures that students and staff are engaging in ways that are gender and culturally sensitive. She realized after many years in fieldwork that it is indeed women who take care of animals in most African households. She was keen to observe the roles of women and men and to create effective trainings for local people as well as university staff. Using participatory rural approaches, she created gender sensitive livestock training materials and programs for women and men, to assist communities with forming effective alliances to solve local problems. Through the RESPOND project, Dr. Amuguni has worked with partners in Uganda to develop a Gender and One Health short course that they hope can be adopted in the region and around the world. “The university has three main objectives,” Amuguni explains, “to educate, conduct research, and translate that research to affect positive change in society.” In other words, for Dr. Amuguni, research must be communicated in ways that everyone can understand and bring communities into conversation that enhances collective knowledge. This is a crucial strategy in advancing the study of veterinary medicine and infectious diseases because local communities must take the lead in developing interventions. “Their pragmatic knowledge of rabies and tuberculosis informs university research and working together is the absolute best way to mitigate the risks of infections,” she says. Clearly, local people are a central and valued part of Dr. Amuguni’s work.

*Dr. Amuguni trained as a veterinarian at the University of Nairobi, Kenya. She earned a Masters degree in International Development with a focus on participatory development and gender from Clark University, and a Ph.D. in Infectious Diseases from Tufts University. Dr. Amuguni has worked previously as a veterinarian, community development specialist and gender consultant in the horn of Africa mostly with pastoralist communities. She has worked and consulted for various organizations including Food for the Hungry International, Heifer Project International, Veterinarians without Borders (VSF-B) under the umbrella of the UN-Operation Lifeline Sudan, SNV Netherlands Development Organization and AU/IBAR. She facilitates in Immunology seminars, International Veterinary Medicine forums and Problem Based Learning courses at Tufts and is the Co-Director of the Human Dimensions of Conservation Medicine course for graduate students in the masters in Conservation Medicine program.* To view a short video about the University of Rwanda’s first ambulatory veterinary clinic, see: <http://youtu.be/5So2q52ouZk>

**Dra. Hellen Amuguni, Profesora en La Escuela Cummings de Medicina Veterinaria, Universidad de Tufts**

Por Amy Newcomb Rowe

La Dra. Amuguni, nativa de Kenia comenzó su carrera veterinaria en la Universidad de Nairobi y ahora es profesora de investigación en el Departamento de Enfermedades Infecciosas y Salud Global de la Universidad de Tufts. Ella es asesora técnica de la Agencia de EE.UU. para el Desarrollo Internacional (USAID) [Proyecto Responde África](http://www.respond-project.org/pages/index.php), que coordina programas a través de seis países africanos, como Kenia, Uganda, Tanzania, Ruanda, Etiopía y la República Democrática del Congo. El departmanento de la Dra. Amuguni junto con la Escuela de Salud Pública de la Universidad de Minnestoa y [Socios de Desarollo Inc](http://www.develassoc.com/)., proporcionan apoyo técnico y organizativo a las instituciones, los gobiernos y las sociedades civiles para responder a las enfermedades pandémicas.

El objetivo del proyecto de cinco años Responde es de integrar los campos de medicina y veterinaria que tan a menudo trabajan en silos, pero cuando se combinan "dan mayor conocimiento y capacidad en ambas disciplinas," dice la Dra. Amuguni. En solo el este de África, el proyecto abarca 14 universidades, 7 escuelas públicas y 7 escuelas técnicas de veterinaria. Además, Responde trabaja en el sudeste de Asia con las Redes Universitarias Una Salud del Sur de Asia Oriental (SEAOHUN) también una red de 14 universidades en cuatro países. Ambos proyectos trabajan para construir la capacidad de la fuerza laboral actualmente y la del futuro para ser capaces de preparar, responder y controlar las pandemias emergentes usando el enfoque de [Una Salud](http://ohcea.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/OHCEA-Brief2-March-2014.pdf), sensibilizando a la gente a la idea de una salud a través de la integración de las competencias básicas de Una Salud en los planes de estudios y programas. "Es difícil para que las universidades se vinculen con los gobiernos en algunos países", explica la Dra. Amuguni "es donde nuestro trabajo comienza con Una Salud, cual reúne a los Comités compuestos de personal de la universidad y funcionarios del ministerio."

Su equipo dirige talleres de formación, evaluación de programas y planes de estudios con un enfoque a los resultados interdisciplinarios. La mayoría de los gobiernos desean que los ciudadanos esten preparados y capacitados para posibles pandemicas y los equipos Una Salud de la Dra. Amuguni proporcionan las habilidades necesarias para preparar y proteger a la gente para estos casos. Además de su trabajo con USAID, la Dra. Amuguni es investigadora de la Fundación Cummings y el Instituto para la Justicia Mundial para proporcionar servicios ambulatorios para las comunidades en Ruanda a través de la Universidad de Ruanda, Escuela de Veterinaria de Nyagatare. Universidad de Ruanda es recipiente de la Iniciativa Juvenil Sobre Participación Económica de la Red Talloires, una beca proporcionando apoyo a las universidades para preparar a sus estudiantes para el empleo después de graduación.

Estudiantes Ruandeses van a las comunidades rurales para conocer a los agricultores y examinar a los animales. Anotan sus hallazgos y traen la información a sus clases para ser compartida con una red virtual de los estudiantes en el club de la Una Salud y de intercambio de estudiantes. Este verano el programa de investigación se llevará a dos estudiantes de la Universidad Tufts a visitar la Universidad de Ruanda. Estas experiencias y responsabilidades preparan a los estudiantes para los trabajos médicos y gubernamentales.

La Dra. Amuguni también es [especialista en temas de género](http://repository.forcedmigration.org/show_metadata.jsp?pid=fmo%3A5237), asegurando que los estudiantes y el personal esten involucrandose en formas que sean sensibles culturalmente y también en cuestiones de género. La Dra. Amuguni se dio cuenta después de muchos años de trabajo que las mujeres son las que cuidan a los animales en la mayoría de los hogares. Ella estaba dispuesta a observar los roles de mujeres y hombres y para crear cursos de formación para la población local, así como el personal de la universidad. Ella creó el material de formación sensible a cuestiones de género y programas para las mujeres y hombres para ayudar a las comunidades a formar alianzas para resolver problemas locales. A través del proyecto Responde la Dra. Amuguni ha trabajado con socios en Uganda para desarrollar un curso corto de Género y Una Salud que esperan pueda ser adoptado en la región y alrededor del mundo. "La universidad tiene tres objetivos principales:" Amuguni explica, "para educar, investigar y traducir la investigación para lograr cambios positivos en la sociedad."

Osea, para la Dra. Amuguni, la investigación debe ser comunicada de manera que todos puedan entender y para que las comunidades sean parte de la conversación y el conocimiento colectivo. Esta es una estrategia fundamental en el avance de los estudios de medicina y enfermedades infecciosas veterinarias ya que las comunidades locales deben tomar la iniciativa en el desarrollo de enfoques de intervención. "Su conocimiento pragmático de la rabia y tuberculosis informa a la investigación universitaria y el trabajo conjunto es la forma más favorable para mitigar los riesgos de las infecciones", dice ella. Claramente, la población local son una parte valiosa en el trabajo de la Dra. Amuguni.

*Dr. Amuguni se preparo como veterinaria en la Universidad de Nairobi, Kenia. Ella pasó a ganar su título de maestría en Desarrollo Internacional con un enfoque en el desarrollo participativo y de género de la Universidad de Clark, y un doctorado en Enfermedades Infecciosas de la Universidad de Tufts. La Dra. Amuguni ha trabajado anteriormente como consultora veterinaria, especialista en desarrollo comunitario y de género en el cuerno de África en su mayoría con las comunidades de pastores. Ha trabajado y asesorado a diversas organizaciones, entre ellas el Hambre Internacional, Proyecto Heifer Internacional, Veterinarios Sin Fronteras (VSF-B) bajo el paraguas de la ONU-la Operación Supervivencia en el Sudán, la Organización Holandesa para el Desarrollo SNV y la UA / IBAR. Ella facilita seminarios, foros de Inmunología, Medicina Veterinaria Internacional y cursos de aprendizaje basado en problemas y es directora de las Dimensiones Humanas del curso de Medicina de Conservación para estudiantes de posgrado en el programa de Medicina de la Conservación.* To view a short video about the University of Rwanda’s first ambulatory veterinary clinic, see: <http://youtu.be/5So2q52ouZk>

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1. Africa Studies Center, University of Pennsylvania <http://goo.gl/DZiUVf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Rwanda National Youth Policy 2005 <http://goo.gl/ygE6qr> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda <http://goo.gl/2NzJwG> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The Republic of Rwanda, Minister of Education news brief 2013: <http://goo.gl/4iPsil> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)