

# **Africa Graduate Mentorship and Coaching Programme (AGMCP) Memorabilia 2022**

## **My Journey Through The AGMCP**

**Alex Malaala**

# Introduction

To apply for AGMCP, I received a call from AGMCP fellow, Innocent Unzimai who shared with me what the programme was about and encouraged to apply, because of the experience he had acquired and hoped it would help me to improve in different aspects of life.

I applied in the last few days, with high hopes, though expecting a lot of competition being an African programme, though I was a step ahead in a positive direction. In mid-December, a congratulatory message came through informing me that you have been shortlisted for the next round of the AGMCP 3rd cohort application process.

During the interactive session, I was a little tense since I had not seen anyone from Uganda but later, a colleague (Fiston) who happened to have applied logged on, which somehow calmed me down, interacted through the session and after the session, I was eagerly waiting for the decision.

On 31<sup>st</sup> December, I received the congratulatory mail and I was attached to a great mentor Prof. Oluwole Fatunbi of FARA, who has been very fundamental in the career and professional guidance during this programme.

We had our first session before the commencement of the programme where we shared the expectations from both sides and embarked on taking right path from the start.



## Activities, Experiences, and Lessons

I have been impressed by the diversity of the monthly check-up calls which were well-packaged to benefit all mentees from different backgrounds.

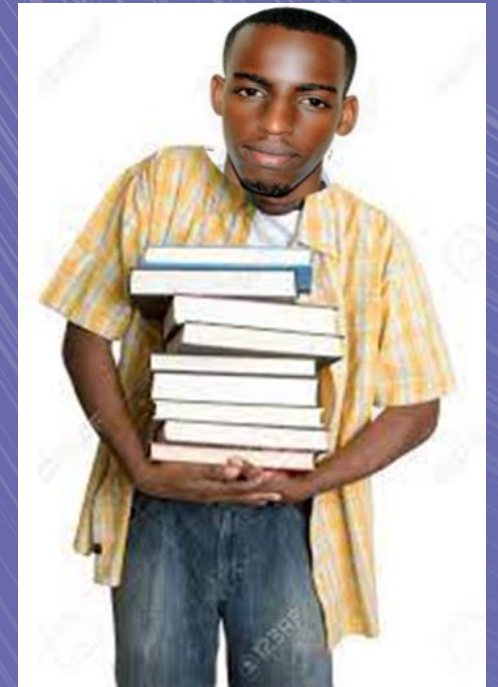
There were some particular check-up calls on scientific writing-abstract writing and journal publication, it was very crucial in guiding on how to report the research findings. These supplemented what my mentor had already emphasized, how writing is key, **“ if you don't publish, you've not worked and won't be recognized as well.”** This knowledge enabled me to publish one paper within this period which has increased my visibility online in scientific circles.

My mentor Prof Oluwole also shared a compilation of, **“10 Simple Rules for scientist and researchers”**, including Ten rules for Getting Published, Successful Collaboration, Making Good Oral Presentations, Starting a Company, Organizing Scientific Meetings, Rules to Commercialize Scientific Research, etc which have been so instrumental in my career development. It has also guided me in prioritizing and focusing on the most important issues i.e. Doing Less and Doing it Better. Also, exposure to different disciplines in the social sciences sector and robotics was an experience, that we from biological or plant science rarely encounter.

The training for writing for media exposed me to skills for writing and communicating the research findings to non-scientists, a seminar on marriage, relationships, and work-life balance put into perspective setting limits to everything we do in order to not neglect others would be important things in life, seminar on scholarships & professional networking was informative on how I find opportunities faster while building relationships that aid future professional career development



**PUBLISH  
OR  
PERISH**



## Recommendations

AGMCP could bring in guest speakers from other disciplines including biological sciences to accommodate mentees like me majoring in Plant Breeding and Genetics.

Most of the conferences and workshops are in West Africa, hence a mentee outside the sub-region will not likely attend physically unless the program is able to sponsor.

Physical meetings for the fellows with the mentors would as well be ideal since there are now relaxed travel restrictions



# Acknowledgement

I am thankful to the team at IMAGES initiative for the opportunity to participate in the AGMCP 2nd cohort fellowship which has greatly impacted my life.

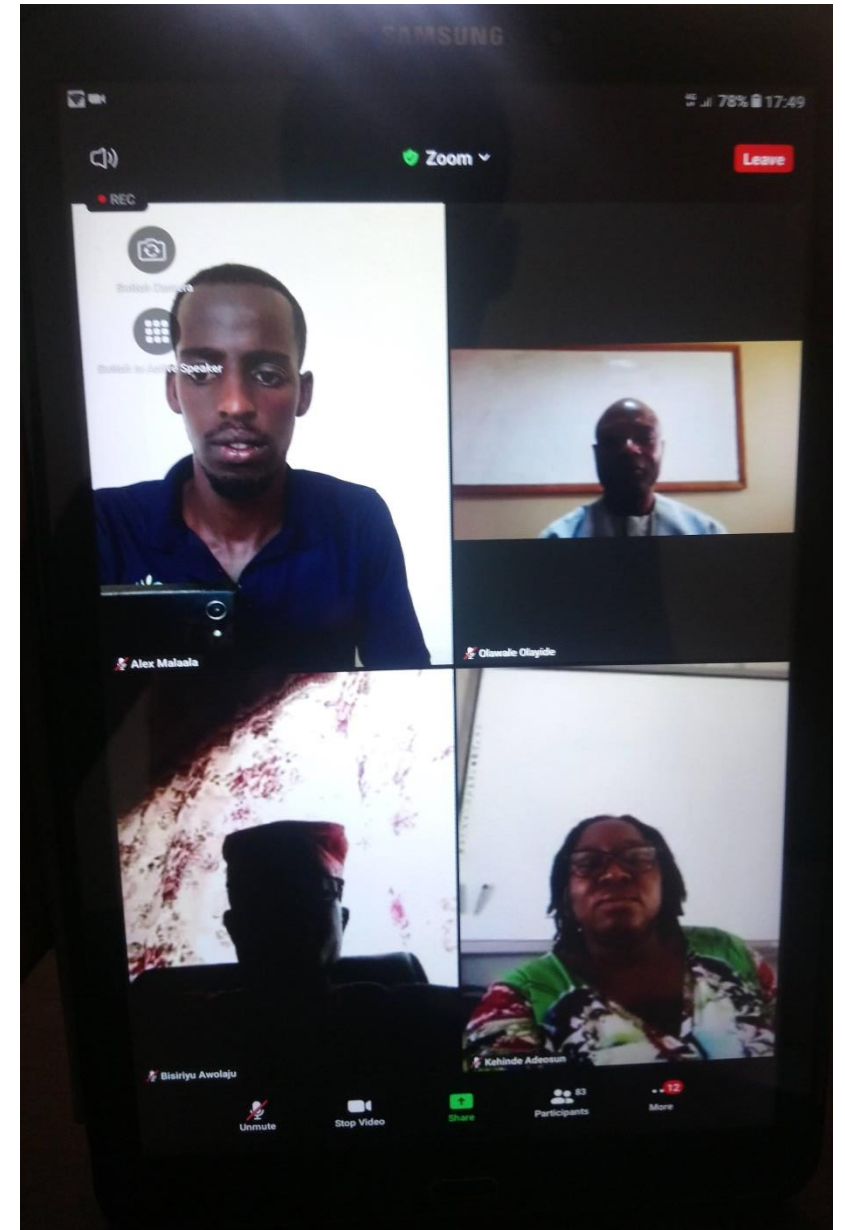
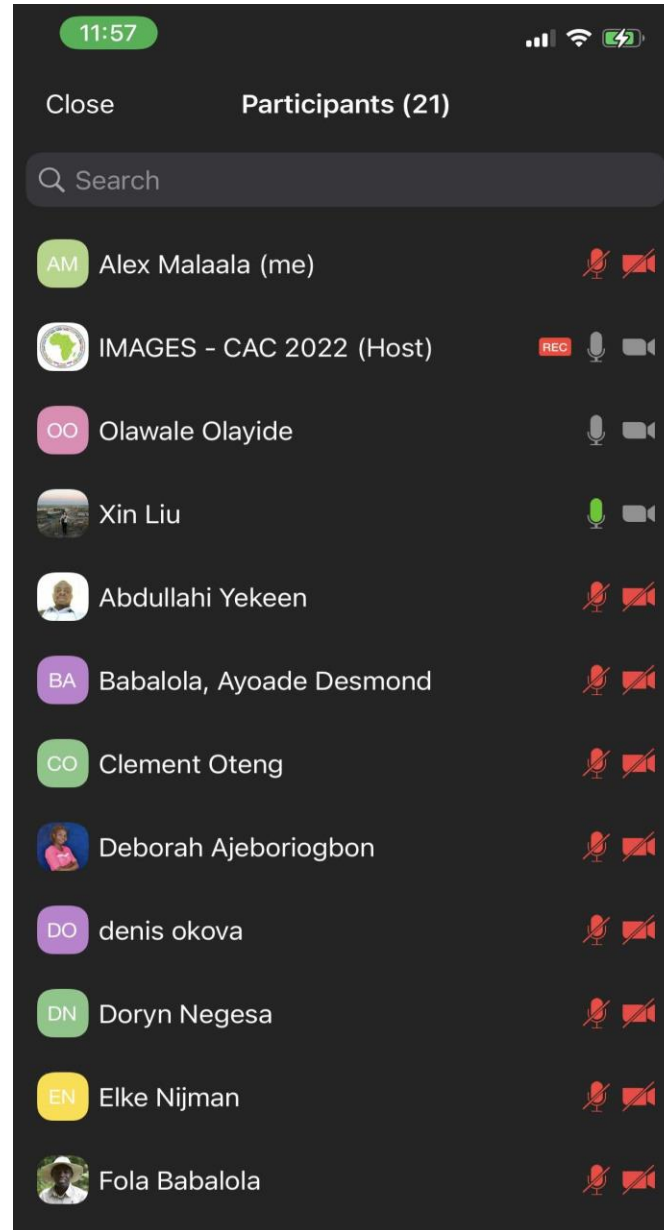
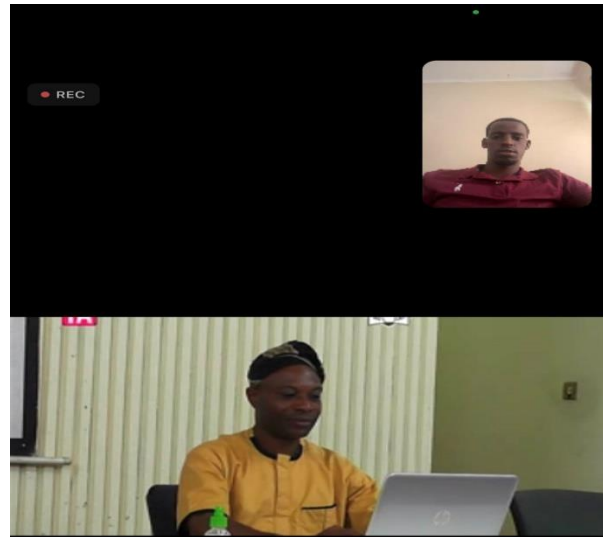
Special thanks to the President, Dr Olawale Olayide for spearheading this thoughtful initiative meant to shape the lives of the upcoming generation.

My appreciation also goes to my great, humble mentor, Prof. Oluwole Fatunbi, at FARA who has been instrumental in making me a better person in every possible way. It is so rare to find someone so vast yet open-minded with genuine concern for one's growth. Am indeed better than I came and hopefully, we can work on many more things in transforming agriculture and lives in Africa.

Also congratulate all the mentees for this cohort for successfully accomplishing this program



# Pictures during some of the AGMCP session



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Please find the attached links to the different platforms.

## My growing Social Media Presence

Google scholar : <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=dRPAEXEAAAAJ&hl=en>

Academia: [https://mak.academia.edu/MalaalaAlex?from\\_navbar=true&trigger=account-menu](https://mak.academia.edu/MalaalaAlex?from_navbar=true&trigger=account-menu)

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FARAexperts forum: <https://experts.farafrica.org/user/605>

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