

Celebrating
THE LEGACY & LIFE OF
YOUNES BERRADA



Morocco Ambassador to Africa

"WE BELONG TO GOD AND TO HIM WE
RETURN"

*In Memory of
Younes Berrada*



When someone you love becomes
A MEMORY
the Memory becomes
A TREASURE



R-L: Younes Berrada, Ms. Mouna Chbani, Mr. Ennahli Moulay Lahcen and Pr. Ismael Cakmak



Younes Berrada (center) with Ms. Hajar Mountassir



R-L: Younes Berrada, Ms. Hajar Mountassir, Pr. Daniel Nahon, Mr. Stephane Paoli, Ms. Selamawit Tekalign Mamo and Ms. Mouna Chbani



R-L: Younes Berrada, Ms. Selamawit Tekalign Mamo, Dr. Najat Mokhtar, Dr. Ismanahane El Ouafi, Dr. Faouzi Bekkaoui, Ms. Hajar Mountassir and Mr. Fayçal Benameur

FOREWORD

PROF. ADIPALA EKWAMU
Executive Secretary, RUFORUM
UGANDA



It was the night of 16th April when I received a call from Dr Simeon Ehui of the World Bank ‘*Sorry to let you know that our friend and champion from Morocco, Younes Berrada, has passed on. I had talked to him three hours ago and he was optimistic of getting better soon and resuming work.*’ I became totally confused and I took some minutes to respond. Simeon called back again. I answered and he told me ‘*We must continue with the work we started together in Gaborone, Botswana. We must do this in memory of Berrada and his drive for Africa.*’

Berrada and Morocco. We worked together for three days, brainstorming on various possibilities including beyond SHAEA. In October 2017, he was with us in Lilongwe Malawi attending the Annual meeting of RUFORUM Member universities where the World Bank announced approval of \$250 million IDA funding for SHAEA. We looked at each other and walked out holding hands the three of us (Berrada, me and Ennahli Moulay Lahcen). In his direct manner, he said ‘lets get to work, come to Morocco in December and we sell the idea to the OCP President and University of Mohammed the 6th Polytechnic’.

I first met Berrada in July 2017 in Botswana. RUFORUM and the World Bank had organised a meeting to design an initiative on ‘Strengthening Higher Agricultural Education in Africa (SHAEA)’. The initiative focused on Sub-Saharan Africa but I was keen to bring on board North Africa and I requested the World Bank to help with some connections. He identified OCP in Morocco and linked me to Berrada. And that was the beginning of my and RUFORUM engagement with

Since then we engaged intensively. We discussed various possibilities of forging greater partnership amongst African universities and research institutions, particularly to drive efforts for addressing the low agricultural productivity and the rampant food and nutritional insecurity in our continent. We developed a common bond on building the future of the continent through training young scholars and leaders. And we got the blessing and support from the OCP President- to promote mobility of African students and academics across the continent, strengthen research and community outreach and strengthen

digital technology for agriculture and teaching and learning. Younes travelled across several African countries exploring possibilities and establishing partnerships, some of which remain very vibrant up today: in Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, amongst others. We have since been working together to expand the reach of engagement across Africa. We worked towards strengthening staff capacities in African Universities and scaling up use of Digital technologies in African Universities. To effectively do this we engaged several universities in and outside Africa, and endeavored to bring on board development partners. We used the OCP platform to bring on board private sector engagement and made plans to engage current and former policy leaders in and outside the continent. During our RUFORUM Annual Convening in Ghana in December 2019, Younes and Hassan Tber convinced the meeting that Morocco hosted the 2020 AGM. We worked together to design an elaborate programme but alas, the COVID-19 outbreak could not allow us have a face to face meeting. We held a virtual meeting that still gave us a good exposure about Morocco: its people, education and research and advancement towards a green economy. We also developed an elaborate programme for a more structured engagement of UM6P and

OCP with RUFORUM. This required a lot of navigation from him with his colleagues in Morocco to support the initiative to the extent he earned the name 'RUFORUM Staff in Morocco'. He agreed with my strong conviction: the partnership was not simply about ferrying students from the rest of Africa to Morocco and engaging them in UM6P partnership with other institutions outside Africa, but rather fostering joint activities across Africa, allowing our people, especially students and staff to know Africa better, to believe in the diversity and beauty of our continent and people, rather than simply looking outside the continent. This was hard for many of his colleagues to swallow. Ten days before his death he called me to check on my health and about signing the UM6P-OCP-RUFORUM agreement. He informed me that he had not been well but was feeling better and strong enough to finalize the agreement. Then Simeon called me to pass on the news of his death!

Well my Moroccan friend, you did your part. Yes the work is unfinished: My hope is that there are others who will take your dreams forward. I will miss you: your friendship, humility, smile and passion for our continent. Until we meet again, Fare thee Well.

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L-R: Dr. Kaushik Majumbar, Dr. Chakib Jenane, Dr. Karim Senhadji, Dr. Hafez Ghanem, Dr. Irina I. Klytchnikova, Younes Berrada, Dr. Simeon Ehui and Dr. Faouzi Bekkaoui



L-R: Younes Berrada, Dr. Irina I. Klytchnikova, Ms. Meryem Inabi and Dr. Simeon Ehui

DR. SIMEON EHUI

**Regional Director for Sustainable
Development for Africa, The World Bank,
USA**



I would like to pay tribute to Younes Berrada, from the OCP Group, Morocco. It is with profound sadness that I just learned of his sudden passing. This is a loss to Africa. He was a great partner. He was a man of great kindness and unparalleled generosity. To Amiina, his wife and his children. I send my deepest condolences. May his soul rest in Peace.



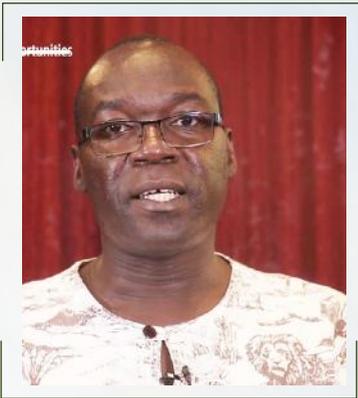
DR. FLORENCE NAKAYIWA MAYEGA
**Deputy Executive Secretary, Planning
Resource Mobilization and Management
RUFORUM, UGANDA**

Younes had a genuine belief in the potential of the RUFORUM network to impact the agri-food systems on the African continent. I recall the last physical meeting of February 2020 where he mooted the idea of establishing a policy think tank that will bring together different actors that will not only give direction but ensure that universities link to the private sector and other government agencies to develop agriculture in Africa. He truly embraced us each in our individual capacities and welcomed us in the Moroccan space. He usually told me, *"tell Prof Adipala everything will be okay"*. Fare thee well Younes.

PROF. CHRISTINE DRANZOA
**Vice Chancellor, Muni University
UGANDA**



It is very shocking and sad indeed to hear that Younes passed on. My sincere condolences. He served with utmost dedication. May He receive eternal reward and rest in peace.



DR. PATRICK OKORI
ICRISAT, Country Representative - Eastern
and Southern Africa Program
MALAWI

met Younes Berrada during RUFORUM’s strategic planning meetings all geared towards building Africa’s capacity to chart its own development pathway. During the meetings, Younes demonstrated his dedication to the noble goal that RUFORUM and its partners all strive to achieve. He was particularly determined to see Africa benefit from its rich heritage and always shared with no reservations any opportunity to see that happen. During one such planning meeting, where the integration and expansion of RUFORUM’s vision and mission to the Maghreb region was discussed, Younes was quick to note that the Maghreb had a lot to learn from Sub-Saharan Africa, and the same was true for Sub-Saharan Africa. He noted with concern the similarity of development challenges especially the need to lay a stronger foundation for the continent to give the increasing youth employment. And as an African Education Pan Africanist, he was key to the planning of the RUFORUM 2019 and 2020 meetings in Morocco. Younes

remained true to his conviction of” an Africa well quipped and capacitated for its own development” by sharing opportunities for cross-regional higher educational training and research. In fact, he was crucial for opening the door for RUFORUM strategic partnerships with the World Bank, UM6P, OCP, and the broader Arab world. Through these partnerships, the RUFORUM fraternity has benefited immensely, and his initial seed of solidarity in the education of Africa’s young people will continue to grow and bear fruit for years to come. His dedication to agriculture and higher tertiary education in Africa earned Younes a place in RUFORUM’s Board, where he was pivotal to the good leadership of the organization, providing guidance on growth and strategic expansion, programming and investments in Agricultural higher and tertiary education across Africa. Indeed, Africa’s young trained people and leaders now and in years to come, working in the agriculture sector, will be the beneficiaries of Younes’s good work.

In gratitude, as Africa’s Agricultural and Higher Tertiary fraternity RUFORUM and

partners will continue to forge ahead full speed, making the journey and moving further than Younes left us. The seeds of a pan African Agricultural Higher and Tertiary Education that Younes joined

RUFORUM to plant, yes, those trees with multiple fruits will shed their fruits some day in the not so long distant future. And till then, we say, fare the well, Younes, for thine works live after thee.

MR. OKALANY EMMANUEL

**Technical Specialist - Development and Partnership
RUFORUM, UGANDA**



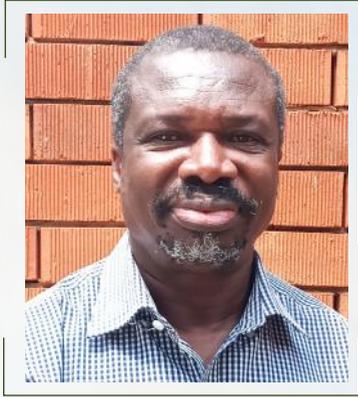
The news of Mr. Younes Berrada's passing on is heartbreaking! He had such an exceptional passion with humility for collaboration between Moroccan institutions and the rest of Africa. I remember when we first met in Gaborone, Botswana in July 2017, he was so passionate about the need for fast tracking the partnership between Moroccan universities and other African universities especially from the South of the Sahara. Despite being the first meeting, he wanted the partnership to be sealed there and then with clarity on what we could do together. He greatly advocated for the rest of Africa to visit and establish a partnership with Morocco and was central in hosting the RUFORUM partnership meeting in Marrakesh in March 2019. Even at his position, I remember him handing over to me my name tag and leading me to the meeting room. His humility was outstanding! RUFORUM, Morocco and OCP Group have lost a great ambassador. He had a passion and belief in Africa. What a loss to the continent! No words can express the passion and enthusiasm that he had. None the less he did his part and his legacy lives on. We shall miss him greatly. May His Soul Rest in Eternal Peace!

PROF. ELENIMO KHONGA

**Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural Resources
BOTSWANA**



A very sad event indeed for the RUFORUM family. May his soul rest in peace.



PROF. MAJALIWA MWANJALALO
Université Evangélique en Afrique
DR. CONGO

On behalf of DRC-RUFORUM member Universities, I want to express our condolence to you, the RUFORUM network, UM6P, the academic institutions of Morocco and the Education sector on the continent.

I met Younes in Cassablanca in one of the RUFORUM-UM6P joint meetings. Then we met again in three other fora. He was a very lovely person, with affection and respect, order, encouragement, and support. His heart was for Africa, linking Morocco to the rest of the continent and DRC in particular. His vision to see Africa malnutrition reduced and having Fertiliser science post-graduate programmes across all the corners of the continent need to be remembered and pursued by today's and future generations. Surely, his bond of common faith and common goal with RUFORUM, teaches us to look around and to learn to love Africa and build Africa. RUFORUM will certainly remember the contribution of this great son of Africa, especially during this period where the continent is facing a greater burden than before brought about by the attack of infinitesimal COVID-19 which has halted, bent history itself, and changed the trajectories of Higher Education Institutions in many of our countries. His acts of courage, bold project and belief that shape the continent's history should be remembered.

PROF. ISAAC SANGA KOSGEY
Vice chancellor, Moi University
KENYA



Our heartfelt condolences to the Family and RUFORUM fraternity for such a loss. May the Lord comfort the family and may his soul rest in eternal peace.



IR. JENNIE VAN DER MHEEN
 Wageningen University & Research
 Manager International Cooperation Africa
 NETHERLANDS

I first met Younes Berrada during the

Since that first meeting in Malawi, we have met in many places: Nairobi, Cape Coast, Marrakesh, Benguerir, and the last time in Wageningen. It was always a pleasure and a lot of fun to work with him.

2017 RUFORUM Annual General Meeting in Malawi. A time when Wageningen University & Research was discussing a large, new and complex programme with UM6P and African partners. Younes had a vision and always saw many opportunities. With his never-ending energy and with his mindset to focus on solutions instead of problems, any obstacle on the path he followed to achieve his goals was overcome.

We will always remember Younes for his tireless support to make new collaborations work, for his 'Moroccan hospitality' and for being a good friend. It has been a privilege to know him and work with him.

We will use his legacy and continue the work he started. We are really going to miss him as a professional partner in our collaboration and as a friend.



Signing of the UM6P-WUR Research Agreement, December 2019

MR. HASSAN TBER
Directeur OCP Consulting
MOROCCO



Younes Berrada loved people, he loved life and he loved God. He was full of generosity, close to all of us, sharing his philosophy of life. He was fully dedicated to his work not only because he held great responsibilities on topics of great purpose for the development of his country and the continent, but also because spirituality was for him in everyday life, in personal interactions and professional achievements. And that made the moments spent together so precious.

It was an honor for me working with Younes. He will be present with us through his invaluable achievements, his smile, his intelligence of life, his generosity. He made so many things happen, so many people getting to know each other.

We have lost a real friend, a great companion, whose impact is beyond what we see today. May his soul rest in peace through the Mercy of God.

PROF. JUDE LUBEGA
Acting Vice Chancellor
Nkumba University
UGANDA



Very sorry about the death of that very good friend of RUFORUM and Africa and what a pity indeed. The connection he brought RUFORUM with the Moroccans was really a great one and we pray that it remains forever though a vacuum has been created with this loss. He had a strong drive for intra-Africa cooperation and wanted Morocco more connected to the rest of Africa. He valued greatly the RUFORUM focus of connecting the continent though higher education and the young leaders being trained. We need to keep his dream and vision alive.

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HAJAR MOUNTASSIR
Office of the Chairman - OCP S.A
MOROCCO

Ne v e r without your red tie, blue costume and SDG pinned. Never without your glowing smile and charismatic aura. Not a day went by without you pouring us with love, blessings and teachings. I will always remember the first day I met you in your office on the second floor of OCP's General executive management building where you welcomed me in open arms. Since that day, you made a meaningful difference both in my personal and professional life. You gave me the right tools to grow and always challenged me to become a better person.

For several years, I was looking for a mentor and I had finally found you. You taught us to stay true to the honourable values, the same ones that solidified even further our relationship: kindness, generosity, sincerity and faithfulness. Your kindness and generosity had no boundaries. You committed your life to sharing knowledge with people who surrounded you and who loved you deeply. I will always be grateful for the long hours you put in introducing me to

so many areas I was passionate about. Whether it is agricultural development or green energy, you always made sure to make a tangible impact on the lives of others. Your contagious devotion towards our beloved country Morocco and our Continent helped us elevate our daily work to higher spheres for the betterment of society. You held sincerity and faithfulness as your first principles, almost as a way to heaven. What a blessing it was to listen to your beautiful prayers and read your messages every Friday. Yet, you left us on the first Friday of the sacred month of Ramadan.

Your life was full of service, love, help and laughs. I will miss your daily jokes, whether it was about my outfits, haircuts or nail polish. We also always joked about our natural clumsiness. Misplaced computers, broken phones and emails to wrong recipients became an everyday occurrence.

I will miss your impromptu calls talking about our personal lives, our future goals, remembering our work trips like Kigali, where you introduced me to so many inspiring individuals. You always sought to surround yourself with like-minded, innovative and passionate

people who support the most vulnerable throughout the world to have a better life. Sharing this purpose with you was an honour.

*Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;*

I am so grateful that our paths have crossed and I know many others that feel just the same. No words can do you justice Papa Younes but maybe this promise will: Selam, Mouna & I promise you Papa Younes to do our best to honour you in this life. Put beautifully by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow:

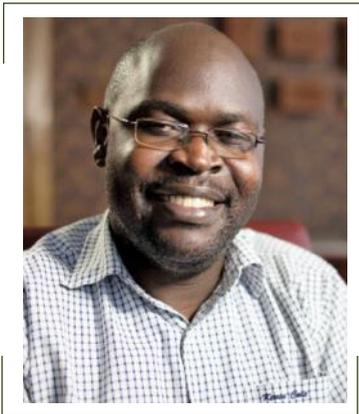
Remembering you gives us the inner strength and confidence to engage in a quest to become better people. Thank you for continuing to inspire us from up there.

We love you and miss you dearly Papa Younes. Hajar “la victorieuse



A tribute to Younes Berrada, the giant pillar of RUFORUM, OCP and UM6P Collaboration

DR. DRAKE PATRICK MIREMBE
Makerere University
UGANDA



First airport and took us to our hotel in Casablanca. That evening a gentleman with a heart of gold arrived, his name Younes Berrada in December 2019 when I accompanied Prof. Adipala Ekamu the Executive Secretary of RUFUROM and Dr. Otto Francis the K-Hub Manager at RUFORUM Secretariat on an exploratory visit to Morocco focusing on nurturing a partnership between OCP, Mohammed the IV Polytechnic University popularly referred to as UM6P (<https://www.um6p.ma/>) and RUFORUM. On arrival in Morocco, we were welcomed by a high level protocol team, organized by Younes who picked us from the world wide experience in multicultural settings and influence of western culture on his style of engagement was evident from the first sight. After exchanging the usual diplomatic pleasantries, Youness was quick to usher us into the Morocco welcome, the Moroccan tea. Being an exploratory visit, I was eager to focus on observing and listening to my host than talking to allow myself learn from my hosts on their expectation and philosophy of work.



R-L: Prof. Adipala Ekwamu, Younes Berrada, Mr. Rafiq and Dr. Francis Otto

Younes did not waste time to share with us his vision of Africa and that of Royal Kingdom of Morocco. Being western educated, Younes had an excellent understanding of the limiting factors of African development. Key among them were; lack of continental wide logistics which hinder trade and movement of human capital, access to critical resources which are abundant on the continent, access to technology and access to finance. Younes observed that Morocco was blessed by God as a preserver of phosphate for human kind and the Royal Kingdom of Morocco had a moral obligation to make this critical component of human development available and accessible on the African continent to fight hunger and malnutrition. He observed that, while OCP makes every effort to make phosphate available at affordable costs, the material remains out of reach for many farmers on the continent due to logistical challenges.

Younes strongly believed that Africa holds the next frontier of human development and advancement and outlined the “For African vision of the Royal Kingdom of Morocco”, which focuses on enhancing collaboration between the Royal Kingdom of Morocco on behalf of the Moroccan people with the rest of Africa. Younes informed us that because of that vision, UM6P was setup to accelerate human development on the continent and to act as a gateway to knowledge development and sharing across the continent. Younes was very passionate and spoke highly about the vision of UM6P, especially the cutting edge research, and the multicultural composition of the faculty. He observed that RUFORUM and other continental bodies are key for Morocco’s vision for African to succeed. Younes believed, that RUFORUM, OCP and UM6P provided a unique platform for accelerating human capital development, technology transfer

through a network of living labs and centers of excellence in key areas of data sciences, artificial intelligence, e-learning, smart energy, smart agriculture and fertilizer technologies.

Younes was able to organize critical meetings and engagements with various stakeholders during our visits in Morocco but also online to advance the RUFORUM agenda and the collaboration between RUFORUM and OCP. He was the key pillar in securing OCP support to RUFORUM in a

number of initiatives including the highly successful “Higher Education in Africa Partners Consultative Forum Meeting in Marrakesh, Morocco 20-22 March, 2019 hosted by OCP. Throughout my interactions with him I found Younes to be articulate, thoughtful, results oriented, with a heart for a common good for everyman.

Rest in Peace Younes, but your vision and legacy lives on. We met as strangers but bonded as brothers.



PROF. ADIL DEIFALLA MOHAMED ABDALLA
Water Management and Irrigation Institute
The University of Gezira
SUDAN

“A man with a rare mix of every good thing. Although I met him only twice but the impression he left was huge.”

We met in Marrakech Morocco for the first time during the consultative meeting held on 20th to 22nd March 2019. I was with Prof Mohammad Elsanousi the Vice Chancellor of the University of Gezira in Sudan. When Younes approached us, he introduced himself and welcomed us very politely to Morocco. I replied and greeted him in Arabic and he smiled and said to me that I thought we are the only Arabs here. I told him that RUFORUM is probably the only organization in which all the continent is

represented. He asked me if I have time to continue this conversation during lunch. We met after lunch, he wanted to know more about RUFORUM and we started to speak in Arabic but very soon we failed to communicate because in North Africa they have their own unique accent and terminology that others are not familiar with. We decided to continue in English and he laughed and said even the language failed to unite us.

The next day, again we met at UM6P, a

state of the art University. I was very impressed with the facilities and the quality of the staff and I asked Younes about the possibility of making this available to others. We started discussing the idea of leading the initiative to promote UM6P/Morocco partnership with Africa in general and RUFORUM in particular. His immediate reply was he will be more than happy to lead the initiative.

Our second meeting was in Kampala in September 2019. Our concern was on how to help introduce RUFORUM to Arab donors. He suggested that we needed to bring Algeria and Mauritania on board and activate the role of Egypt and Tunisia.

We also talked about fertilizers and how we could help African farmers to access quality fertilizers. We also talked about the hazards of soil degradation and possible ways of reclamation and

support that can be offered by OCP and UM6P.

After the last RUFORUM Annual General Meeting hosted virtually by UM6P in October 2020, I rang to thank him for the excellent and very impressive organization. And because of the advanced ICT services they have at UM6P, I suggested to him to consider having an ICT hub in North Africa hosted by UM6P networked with other such hubs in other African Universities and OCP supports RUFORUM to set up similar networks. He welcomed the idea and promised to discuss it with Prof Adipala Ekwamu.

Younes will be dearly missed and I believe that his soul is in a better place and that the RUFORUM family will be comforted by the good memories that we shared together.

May ALLAH comfort his family and May his soul rest in eternal peace.

MS. NAMUBIRU BECKY
 Publication Assistant, AFJRD
 RUFORUM
 UGANDA



Imourn with the entire RUFORUM Network and the OCP Group for the passing away of Yonnes Berrada. It is sad to read and think of the effect it has caused the RUFORUM Network and the OCP Group. We pray that God judges him mercifully. May his soul Rest in Peace.

PROF. KAY MUIR-LERESCHE
International Advisory Panel
RUFORUM



We are stunned by the loss of our friend, mentor and colleague. I am sure you will receive many condolences from within the RUFORUM network that will be passed to you by Adipala.

I just wanted to add my own personal condolences to his family and to all his colleagues at OCP and at UM6P. When I first met him he remarked how they were attracted to our network of universities by the film that he saw which showed our students out with small farmers making a difference. I realised at that moment that here was a man who cared about the most important elements of life - making a difference. The world has lost a true ambassador of development, of linking Morocco much more closely with Africa and of building capacity in our continent which has so much potential. We will really miss him and we hope that his passing does not loosen our ties, but that it will make them stronger as we share his vision for a much more inclusive and sustainable world.

Inna Lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un

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PROF. THERESA NKUO AKENJI
Vice Chancellor
University of Bamenda, Cameroon &
RUFORUM Deputy Board Chair



So sad to hear about the passing away of Younes Berrada. I only knew him for two years but I greatly appreciated his contribution during our RUFORUM Board meetings. He was always prompting us to collaborate across Africa and to engage policy makers and private sector. My hope is that RUFORUM partnership with UM6P and OCP will continue to grow and flourish. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

PROF. AMADOU TIDIANE GUIRO

Former Vice Chancellor,
 Université du Sine Saloum El-Hâdj Ibrahima
 NIASS (USSEIN), SENEGAL



“It is God who gives and takes away. In Younes Berrada he gave us an exemplary individual: a friend to all. He engaged with all from across Africa and also linked us to others from outside Africa. He was passionate about strengthening Africa’s agriculture and promoting use of new technologies. Certainly he had a focus on promoting fertilizer use across Africa. We will miss him as a continent and as a friend of and advocate for RUFORUM. May his soul rest in eternal peace.”



PROF. EMMANUEL TANYI

University of Buea
 CAMEROON

What a loss to Africa! But thanks to God, we had the opportunity to work with Younes Berrada and explore possibilities. He gave us opportunity to travel to Morocco and know Morocco people and culture. We had a beautiful time in Morocco in March 2019- we worked hard but also enjoyed ourselves. And he was there making introductions and connections across the different individuals and countries. And with a smile!

For me and others we engaged to explore partnership with UM6P and our universities in Cameroon and in other countries. He was passionate about Africa working together and promoted the work of RUFORUM. He was a great friend of RUFORUM. We thank him for his contribution.





ZINEB AGUISOUL

Business Partner Communication- AgroBioSciences
MOROCCO

“I often say that the hour of death cannot be predicted, and I always think of it in the distant future. I never thought I would be thinking of Si Younes as a memory. Yes— it came a little too soon... I had just started enjoying working with the great Berrada...”

Berrada and I met during the RUFORUM Annual General Meeting that I moderated in November 2020. I had just started working at UM6P and Si Younes was one of the first people to notice me. He reached out to me right after to ask me about my background, and this is when our journey began, until the day he passed away. I will forever remember his last words of encouragement on the phone a few hours before he left us. His support and praise for my recent performances has greatly motivated me to strive in his memory in order to make the projects he launched a success.

He had the most inspiring love for his projects. Every time he talked about them, his eyes would light up with the most amazing sparkle—a sparkle that

could never go unnoticed. Si Younes was an eternal optimist, and he was always positive. He had great tenacity and the kindest personality which was felt by every person who ever came into contact with him.

For me, Si Younes was a colleague, a mentor and a friend. He had a way of making each one of us at OCP and UM6P feel like we were his favorite.

We are so privileged to have worked with such an amazing soul, and all those who knew and appreciated him will keep the best and most cordial memory of him. His death leaves all of us with heavy hearts, and we send to his family and close ones our prayers and sincere condolences.

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PROF. NGONIDZASHE CHIRINDA

Mohammed VI Polytechnic University-
AgroBioScience (AgBS)

MOROCCO

I f i r s t
met Mr
Younes
Berrada
o n - l i n e

before a meeting to discuss the possibility of collaborating with the International Atomic Energy Agency. We both arrived at the on-line meeting early and began to talk as we waited for the others. Berrada asked me about life in Benguerir and my family. I told him life in Benguerir was terrific and that my wife was doing great. He then asked about kids, and I told him we had no kids and casually mentioned that we would probably have our first kid in Morocco. We both laughed so hard at that joke. When we later met, in person, at the University farm, within the context of a farm visit by a Dutch Ambassador, it was as if we had known each other for a long time. He was so cheerful, bright, sharp, and lively. He reminded me of the joke, and we both laughed. He referred to the joke whenever he introduced me to anyone, and we all laughed very hard. I remember how after several introductions, he changed and started whispering in my

ear, “I will not tell them you and your wife are planning to have a kid in Morocco”. That was the first and last time we met in person. We would later meet virtually on several occasions, as he invited me to several meetings. He had taken me under his wings and wanted me to contribute towards his goal of expanding the climate change work at UM6P.

Upon hearing the news of his transition, I was saddened as I reflected on the few memorable moments we shared and the future that was full of promise. Indeed, we belong to God, and to him, we return. I take this opportunity to bid farewell to a man of action. Fare-well, a great professional. Fare-the-well friendly colleague. Thank you for your contributions to building UM6P into a theatre of scientific dreams. May your soul rest in peace, knowing that we will continue building on your vision of an Africa that can adapt to climate change, contribute towards its mitigation while feeding itself.

“ Until we meet again in glory, I will be missing you.”

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MS. HIND BELARABI

Engineering | Marketing
MOROCCO

“Dear mentor, colleague and leader Ssi Berrada, It was too soon, and we never plan for it!”

Four years now, and I still remember perfectly the first time we met, beside Prof. Teckalign Mamo you were standing with your warm smile curious to know about me. A junior lady who recently joined the UM6P/CESFRA team.

Together, we have stood for the loss of Prof. Teckalign Mamo and with your professionalism and caring we have kept his memory alive. Through the years, you were my mentor, my advisor, and my best work partner. Working with you, has taught me to be always hospitable, tolerant, and caring because we never know what people are facing in their daily lives. Let there be the moment of peace and joy to them!

You taught me, to always do good whenever the opportunity comes, even though it can be as small as it appears but

in God's hands, it can be the greatest. You taught me the importance of standing by my values, keeping faith and be passionate and patient in pursuing my dreams.

You taught me, that success is focusing on goals, not fixate on obstacles. You taught me, that relations are important but bringing people together is essential.

Time has come and we were not prepared for it, in a blessed Friday of a holy month of Ramadan, you passed away. Ssi Berrada, you have marked our life and souls, you have been there for us and you have showed us the strength to be.

My Allah keep your soul in eternal peace and give courage to your bereaved family to bear the irreparable loss. Ameen.

“Surely we belong to Allah and to him shall we return.”



ASSOC. PROF. MICHEL EDMOND GHANEM & PROF. MOEZ AMRI
**Mohammed VI Polytechnic University- African Integrated Plant
 and Soil Research Group (AiPlaS)**
MOROCCO

On behalf of the African Integrated Plant and Soil Research Group (AiPlaS)

In times of loss, finding the right words is not easy. It is even more difficult when the lost person is someone of the caliber of Younes Berrada. Many people walk in and out of one's life, but only great people will leave footprints. Younes was one of those who wove in the life of others by his kindness, professionalism, and above all, his true smile, the smile that gives hope in difficult times. His sudden, unfair and shocking loss saddens us deeply and leaves a vacuum that will be difficult to fill. We still can't realize that he is no more amongst us. Throughout these last days, we kept reminiscing all the times we had with him.

We remember when we went visiting Younes at OCP headquarters, last year, to discuss an infrastructures project for

Mohammed VI Polytechnic University (UM6P), we were impressed how the discussion flowed freely. Younes was one of those people who have this innate sense of communication, who would immediately make you feel welcomed, whoever you are. His sensitivity, sense of fairness and engagement to the cause and vision of UM6P, Morocco and Africa, was notable. Throughout the frequent, and almost weekly, interactions we had with him, we have always felt how much he was open minded, clear thinking and disciplined in his professional approach. Making UM6P a great and serving university was his dream, he believed in this project and made us believe too.

Younes was highly cultured, sensitive to, and appreciative of, different cultures. He

was very good company, always here to help, assist and solve problems. He was the person to whom we would think first talking to when we went through some difficulties. “Let’s seek Younes’ advice”, we often said. By losing him, we lose a rock on which he had often relied. He was a friend of everyone, spontaneous and very respectful.

We shall not forget how generous he was always with his time and energy despite his many occupations. He would agree or disagree with you, but you would always feel supported and always listened to. OCP, UM6P, Morocco and Africa have

lost a visionary, dedicated, and creative person, and the world has lost an exceptional human being. We who have been fortunate enough to know Younes and work with him, have lost a dear friend and an inspiring leader, and a brother. His spirit will always be with us at UM6P.

Younes, although we deeply regret that you are no more, we are thankful to who you were to us. We won’t say goodbye, Younes. We will always remember you and carry you in our hearts. You and your family are in our thoughts and prayers... until we meet again.

DR. CODOU DIAW
Senior Program Manager, Mastercard
Foundation
CANADA



Oh, such a kind man; always went out of his way to help and facilitate connections with his colleagues. He was my first contact at OCP/OCP Foundation. May his soul rest in peace.



PROF. LEONARDUS VERGÜTZ

Mohammed VI Polytechnic University
MOROCCO

Even

though none of us is looking straight to the camera, this picture was taken over one year ago at UM6P, the day I met Younes. This picture is a great example of him, a hardworking and multitask person. Of course, I had no idea that I was meeting the most excited and passionate person about the UM6P project. Since this meeting we started to meet more and more often, up to the point of being in touch almost every day. After some time, I realized that he was behind every single action related to UM6P, putting all his heart and efforts to make it happen. And that the university and its whole ecosystem was his tool, his way to push for the development of Morocco and the whole African continent. If a small part of the initiatives he was driving are successful, OCP, UM6P, Morocco and Africa will see great things happening in terms of innovation and sustainable development. He was a visionary, intelligent and a very kind person. It is not very common to see a businessman like him to be so accessible and open to everybody around him. It was not only once or twice that I heard him talking



about the importance of family and how he would prefer to be with his family than in those many business meetings. I will always remember our conversations when he would like something and say: “NICE” with a big and open smile! Younes departed way too early and left us all very sad, and in many ways also very lost. Not only OCP and UM6P, but Morocco and the whole African continent lost one of its greatest and most dedicated sons. I will

always be very thankful for his friendship and all the good discussions, experiences and opportunities he brought to me. I hope to be able to honor him by helping to push for the development of the initiatives he

started. May his soul rest in peace and his legacy not be forgotten.

Inna lillahi wa inna raji'un do ilayhi do



MR. ENNAHLI MOULAY LAHCEN

Conseiller Vice Président agriculture, eau et assainissement, développement social chez banque africaine de développement

In these painful circumstances, words fail me to describe the loss of our late Younes Berrada May God accept him in His holy mercy. When I learned of the death of my late friend and brother Younes, emotions took hold of me and my wife. His loss was a family mourning for us.

Younes is no longer here, but his dedication, positivity and great kindness will be forever etched in our memories. There will remain of him all the good things and the wise words of which he always had the secret. I still remember as if it was yesterday, our first meeting in Ahmadabad, at the time I was not yet part of the OCP team. It was with him that I carried out my first assignment once I joined the Group. We traveled to Lilongwe, Malawi together to attend the RUFORUM Annual General Meeting. True to his image, he has remained as I knew him the first time. I have had the good fortune and immense pleasure of working with him on a number of files related to development issues. It is always difficult and unfair to want to sum up the life of a great man like Younes in a few lines. All those who knew and worked with Younes kept in mind his human qualities, his noble values, his intelligence, his commitment and his dedication. His spontaneity, his good faith, his sincerity and his radiant and almost permanent smile have given him the ability to easily forge and maintain relationships of trust and friendships with those around him, his partners and colleagues. His joy was to see the result of new partnerships between the Group and the development institutions that he initiated and successfully led thanks to his emotional intelligence and his interpersonal skills. Forever you will be in our hearts dear brother and friend Younes.

"We are Allah's and Unto Him we are returning"



DR. FRANCIS OTTO
KNOWLEDGE HUB MANAGER
RUFORUM
UGANDA

For three years (2018-2021), I have known Younes as a strong supporter of RUFORUM and a great advocate for Africa’s Agriculture and Higher Education sectors. In December 2018 Dr. Drake Mirembe and I accompanied Prof.

Adipala to Morocco in a bid to foster partnership between RUFORUM and UM6P/OCP in terms of Intra-African Collaboration in the field of Higher Agricultural Education in Africa. Younes was very actively involved in brokering talks between RUFORUM and UM6P/OCP. He was very helpful in assembling the teams and putting up all necessary documentations. He was what I would refer as a ‘go-between’ in our traditional marriages by ensuring that both parties understand each other and there is an ‘agreed position’. Finally, we had a clear visualization of what RUFORUM and UM6P/OCP partnerships should look like as depicted in the pictorials below.





L-R: Prof. Adipala Ekwamu, Younes Berrada and Dr. Francis Otto, 11 December 2018 at Hay-Hassani, Morocco

Younes was very kind man who treated every one with great humility and respect. He made us very comfortable throughout our 2018 visit to Morocco. In March 2019 Younes also played a very key role in organizing the Partnership meeting in Marrakech, Morocco. He was central in helping us refine the ideas and agree on action points for various partners especially how to work with UM6P of specific issues. I am very sure that Younes had RUFORUM at his heart and help many people believe in our course. We will surely miss his service.

Dr. Mary Shawa
Retired Principal Secretary
Government of Malawi and RUFORUM Board
Member



Oh, what a loss to Morocco, RUFORUM and Africa! He was committed to promoting Pan-Africanism and the partnership between RUFORUM and UM6P/OCP. We shall continue to pray for his soul and for his family



DR. FRANNIE LÉAUTIER

Senior Partner at SouthBridge Group and CEO
of SouthBridge Investments

My first meeting with Younes Berrada took place in Casablanca nearly seven years ago. His values came out straight at me that very first day. He had been mentoring a young woman from Africa who had recently moved to Casablanca to join OCP Group. During the time I have known him, I would see first hand how he played the role of mentor to young men and women who came from very diverse backgrounds. His style and approach allowed him to help them succeed, contribute effectively, and grow. Both at OCP Group and at Mohammed VI Polytechnic University.

Younes had a highly business-focused and strategic mind. He would spot opportunities and find ways to build partnerships and relationships that he would oversee to implementation. His ability to drive engagements between diverse teams helped launched many initiatives. I particularly highlight his work of bringing global experts in agricultural finance and innovation to Ben Guerir, following an extensive engagement on issues in Washington. Another critical innovation was the

launching of the first digital platform for idea and knowledge sharing, bringing the IT expertise of OCP to deliver solutions of value. This initiative has become a highly useful tool especially during the lockdown and travel restrictions from COVID-19 pandemic policy actions by countries.

I remember Younes passion for innovation, which shone through as he took me on a tour of the Fourth Industrial Revolution responses of OCP Group in 2016. He held the unique ability to be amazed even having seen some of the innovations multiple times. I was delighted in seeing engagement with the staff who demonstrated to us the use of 3D printing, virtual reality and other innovations the staff of OCP had engineered. We discussed the potential for these technologies and their tremendous capacity to transform what and how OCP conducted its business.

Younes understood and had a passion for Africa as a continent. He saw the ability of education, idea exchanges and dialogue, as well as business relations as a key tool in speeding up the integration of Africa. And he engaged in making these ideas a reality by putting together university and research center exchanges

between a large number of countries in cities from Abidjan to Accra, Ben Guérir to Casablanca, Kigali to Nairobi, and Marrakech to Washington. All these while keeping an eye on the final outcome and final impact on the farmer at the end of the agricultural value chain. Through these efforts he brought many ideas to the work of OCP and of the University Mohamed VI, such as circular economy, blockchain solutions and digital innovation for supply chain efficiency and speed.

Because of his understanding of the value of person-to-person exchanges, Younes pushed hard to get a partnership that linked many of the agricultural universities in Africa to Moroccan researchers and thinkers. This is through his work to close the partnership between RUFORUM and OCP and indeed to link it to the work of Mohammed VI Polytechnic University. The outcome of that engagement is tremendous: multiple researchers connected to each other, critical research ideas exchanged, and new partnerships created. I was most impressed by one particular outcome, which was to create a competition (RUFORUM Young Innovators Competition) and a prize for young people especially women researchers from Africa normally excluded from engaging in research and those coming from countries in conflict.

I watched over dinner in Nairobi at the award ceremony, where I was seated at the same table as Younes, the emotion on his face when the young women were called out to receive their prizes on stage.

So I remember Younes for his contribution to African agricultural sector productivity and to the improved performance of Mohammed VI Polytechnic University, as well as to the innovations that made OCP Group add value to improving the efficiency of its production and supply chains and hence to agricultural productivity and food security in Africa. I remember most vividly and warmly felt his strong values, his professionalism, his work ethic, his ability to spot innovation, his focus on follow through, his mentoring of young African researchers and innovators. But most of all, I remember Younes for his humanity. In today's world where seeing the humanity in others is in high demand, I am proud to say that I knew a man who had that by the bucket load.

I end with a proverb that fits Younes life *"to threaten the brave with death, is like threatening a duck with water"*. Younes, you were brave, daring and caring. Take this much deserved rest knowing that you have left an indelible contribution to the future generation in Africa and to the food security of many on the African continent. Farewell my friend.



Younes was
a great
man who

OCP Group Legal Department

inspired all people working with him. He was a man of beliefs, he believed in UM6P, as great platform for creating bridges with other countries in Africa, he believed in the strength and capabilities of it fellows' collaborators. He believed, that through education and research we will reach great expectation!!

Younes was a beautiful soul who knew how to cultivate love, peace and friendship around him. He was also a faithful and generous friend, a valued and committed colleague, a caring and loving father.

We will remember him as a great diplomat, a hardworking person, always optimistic, who aimed also to pursue philanthropic goals. We will remember, forever and with great sorrow, his laughter, good humor, kindness, goodness of heart and eternal optimism.

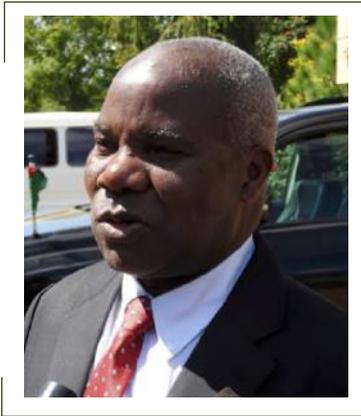
Although he is gone he will remain alive in our heart and through his legacy. His memory will always be engraved in our hearts! It was a great honor to have known and worked with Younes, he will truly be missed!!! May his soul rest in Peace!!”

Meryem Inabi and Selamawit Tekalign

No amount of words, expressions or messages could ever do you nor your life justice, Mr. Berrada! Your journey has been full of service to humanity, chivalry, giving, love, commitment and belief! You have transitioned and yet you are and will always be here in many ways. Your imprint is beautifully unique, you embodied the true meaning of “Niya” faith in all that you did. It is the path of greatness and supremacy that which you had chosen and followed, the path of light, the path of honor, the path of Glory.

With love,
Always.





PROF GEORGE KANYAMA PHIRI
RUFORUM Board Chair & Vice Chancellor
Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural
Resources (LUANAR)
MALAWI

Africa! We have lost a person with a big heart and dream for Africa. He promoted the ideals of Pan-Africanism, believing in a one Africa with Africans across the continent working with each other across language and cultural boundaries. At various events where we interacted he urged for greater interaction and collaboration amongst African Universities. At the RUFORUM Board meeting he urged for collaborative research and training programmes with students and staff moving across the continent. He was keen to see North Africa more linked to Sub-Saharan Africa. Indeed he pushed these ideas by promoting partnership with North African Universities, development agencies and global knowledge centres. The last event he organised in Morocco was in March

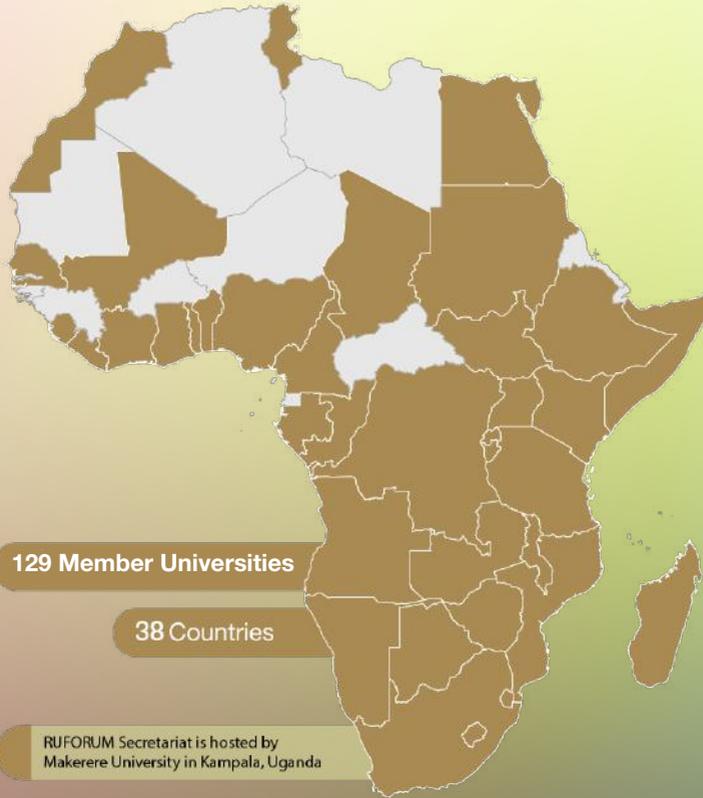
This 2019 about Global Partnerships for Higher Education in Africa. He brought together knowledge centres from North America, Europe, Arab World, Asia, African university leaders and development partners including the World Bank, Islamic Development Bank, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, Mastercard Foundation, African Development Bank, Arab Bank for Agricultural Development in Africa, Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development and OCP. We worked together for a full week designing collaborative initiatives. In all these he pushed for RUFORUM central role as an African Higher Education initiative to connect the continent and build capacity for the continent. We will continue to push these dreams forward. I do hope that UM6P and OCP will continue to push the partnerships with RUFORUM. Rest well, RUFORUM friend in Morocco!

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Farewell thee Younes Berrada
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2021



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