

## RUFORUM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING LILONGWE, MALAWI 2017

### 14<sup>th</sup> RUFORUM Principals and Deans Open Meeting

#### Concept Note

##### Background

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) is a network of 66 universities in 26 African countries. RUFORUM's mission is to strengthen the capacities of African universities to foster innovations responsive to the demands of small-holder farmers through the training of high quality researchers, the output of impact oriented research, and the maintenance of collaborative working relations among researchers, farmers and national agricultural research institutions. The universities recognise the rapidly evolving Africa's higher education and thus are committed to partner with other actors to deliver quality, affordable and relevant education in the continent.

The refreshed Strategic Business Plan 2015-2020 and the mid-term review undertaken in April 2017 recognise the importance of all three traditional mandates of the universities – namely training, research, and outreach and increasing policy advocacy. There is also a call on the universities to strengthen Vocationalisation as a mechanism to train market and industry ready graduates as well as entrepreneurial graduates to engage in enterprise development. These recognitions come at the backdrop of a youthful population boom in Africa whose needs for jobs and good quality life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century must be squarely addressed. Universities have been recognised as well placed to strategically respond to these needs.

The Principals and Deans are heads of academic programmes in RUFORUM member universities and, as such, play a pivotal role in shaping the strategic direction of the Organisation and are responsible for ensuring delivery of quality educational programmes. They are responsible for monitoring the skill requirements for the evolving market and to steer readjustments in training focus and delivery. Accordingly, the Principals and Deans form one of the Board Committees that is central to RUFORUM's operations. During the 13<sup>th</sup> Principals and Deans meeting held in October 2016 in Cape Town, South

Africa, it was highlighted that RUFORUM universities are required to: i) produce more relevant and user oriented research; ii) train proactive and skilled graduates; iii) promote institutionalization of enabling policies, principles and practices; and iv) mainstream new approaches in pedagogy and academic management. Accordingly, during the same meeting, the Principals and Deans deliberated on the need for transformative curriculum development and leadership in higher agricultural education in Africa. These aspirations are part of the wider RUFORUM universities commitment to a transformative higher education sector in the continent for development relevance.

**Purpose of the Side Event** The 14<sup>th</sup> Principals and Deans meeting brings together Principals and Deans from all RUFORUM member universities as well as associated universities seeking common goal of transforming higher education in Africa. This 14<sup>th</sup> convening of Principals and Deans will engage examine actions and opportunities for accelerating transformation of Higher Agricultural Education with a view of training market ready and entrepreneurial graduates in Africa.

**Objectives of the side Event** The 14<sup>th</sup> Principals and Deans meeting will hold open dialogue with invited actors to:

1. Deliberate on proposed RUFORUM Vision 2030 Strategy and its implication for the member universities
2. Engage with the Andrew Young Foundation on how best to strengthen entrepreneurship education and business incubation
3. Engage with GFAR representative on development of Transformative curriculum development
4. Receive update from the Oil and Gas African Higher Education Centre of Excellence at the University of Port Harcourt in Nigeria
5. Review the online Students supervision platform developed through EDULINK II Project led by Egerton University in Kenya
6. Receive update on the SENTINEL Project
7. Review two upcoming calls from the RUFORUM Secretariat under the Mastercard funded TAGDev (2016-2024) project

**Approach and Methodology**

The meeting will involve presentations and open discussion. It will involve other actors in addition to the Deans and Principals

**Venue and Participants**

The 14<sup>th</sup> Convening of the Principals and Deans Committee Open Meeting will be held on 26 October 2017, 0830-1300 at the BICC, Lilongwe, Malawi.

**Side Event Organizers and Contact**

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## Programme

SESSION: Hall		
Time	Sub Theme	Responsible
8.00 – 8.30	Participants Registration	Mr Moses Waswa
8.30 – 8.35	Remarks by the Chair of the Deans & Principals Committee	LUANAR
8.35 – 9.00	RUFORUM at a Glance and key emerging issues	Mrs Sylvia Mkandawire
9.00 – 9.45	Presentation by Andrew Young Foundation	TBC
9.45 – 10.05	Report on GFAR	Prof. Agnes Mwang'ombe
10.05 – 10.20	Introduction of the SENTINEL project	Dr Moses Osiru
10.20 – 11.00	Introduction to the online Students supervision and mentoring platform	Egerton University
<b>11.00 – 11.30</b>	<b>Health Break</b>	All
11.30 – 11.50	Update on the Oil & Gas ACE	Prof. Joel Ogbonna
11.50 – 12.10	Introduction to the FAO e-learning Hub	FAO/RUFORUM
12.10 – 13.10	Calls for CARP+ and Entrepreneurship Innovation Challenge	Dr Anthony Egeru