

## Ministerial Round Table on Strengthening Education, Science and Technology in Africa

Dates: 26 October 2017  
Venue: BICC, Lilongwe, Malawi

### Concept Note

#### Background

Poverty reduction and indeed economic development in Africa remains a challenge for Africa's 54 nations. The African Union Agenda 2063<sup>1</sup> calls for "an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena." The vision coalesces African leaders in determination to 'eradicate poverty in one generation and build shared prosperity through social and economic transformation of the continent'. A ten-year implementation plan has been developed for the implementation of Agenda 2063 which outlines flagship programs and projects. This Implementation Plan, the first in a series of five ten-year plans over the Agenda 2063 fifty-year horizon was adopted by the AU Summit in June 2015 as a basis for the preparation of medium term development plans of member states of the Union, the Regional Economic Communities and the AU Organs.

The Implementation Plan has within it 12 focus areas for action, based on the review of national and regional level action plans. Key areas of focus include 1) Human Capital Development; 2) Agriculture/value addition and agro-businesses development; 3) Employment generation, especially the youth and females; 4) Gender / Women development and youth empowerment; 5) Good governance including capable institutions as well as 6) Science, Technology, Innovation, among others. The First Implementation plan also recognizes the approved continental frameworks for driving development in Africa including the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program (CAADP), the Science Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA), Programme for Infrastructural Development in Africa (PIDA) and Accelerated Industrial Development for Africa (AIDA), among others. The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)<sup>2</sup> is a key player in implementing the CAADP and STISA frameworks and has mandate from the AU to support priority area 1 of the STISA.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/pdf/au/agenda2063.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> RUFORUM is the network of 66 African Universities across 26 African countries on the continent whose mission is to 'strengthen the capacities of Universities to foster innovations responsive to the demands of smallholder farmers and value chains through the training of high quality researchers, the output of impact-oriented research, and the maintenance of collaborative working relations among researchers, farmers, market actors, national agricultural research and advocacy institutions, and governments'.

## Introduction

RUFORUM is in the process of designing a new vision with enhanced alignment to the AU Agenda 2063 and the approved implementation plan. Its focus is on enhancing use of skills and knowledge for transformation of Africa's agricultural sector by 2030. The 'visioning' will lead to a new Strategic Plan and Implementation Framework for RUFORUM, in line with the African Union Agenda 2063 Implementation Plan and the relevant continental frameworks in Africa. The current timing is particularly important as various initiatives are now in the offing, highlighting the importance of clarifying the vision for future action, interlinked with the African Union Agenda 2063 in Africa and ensuring that this builds on lessons learnt in driving agricultural led economic development of the Continent. As part of this process RUFORUM is also in the process of designing the Strengthening Higher Agricultural Education in Africa (SHAEA) Project in partnership with African governments and the World Bank.

Other key on-going initiatives include the recently established (done at the 25th AU Assembly) Committee of ten Heads of State and Government (two from each geographic region of Africa) as African champions of Education, Science and Technology. The African Union Commission formally announced the Committee of 10 Heads of States Championing Education, Science and Technology at the 2016 RUFORUM Biennial Conference and African Higher Education Week. The ten Heads of State and Government are: President Macky Sall, Senegal (Coordinator); President Ernest Bai Karoma, Sierra Leone; President Abdel Fattah El Sisi, Egypt; Beji Caid Essebsi, President of Tunisia; President Bongo Odimba, Gabon; President Idriss Deby Itno, Chad; President Peter Mutharika, Malawi; President Hage Geingob, Namibia; President Uhuru Kenyatta, Kenya; and President Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, Mauritius. RUFORUM has been facilitating the provision of technical backstopping support to the Committee of 10 including a core team of experts to support the planning for the meeting, at the request of African Ministers of Science, Technology and Education<sup>3</sup>.

## Rationale and Objective of the event

The Round-table meeting of African Ministers of Education, Science and Technology of selected African Countries will be organised to obtain further direction and guidance to on-going initiatives in the area of education, science and technology in Africa. The overall goal will be to provide broad direction to the various initiatives being supported/backstopped by RUFORUM and to provide further guidance in the development of RUFORUM vision 2030. More specifically, the objectives of the roundtable meeting of Ministers will be to:

1. Receive the outputs of the third Planning meeting for the Committee of 10 Heads of States that will be held 23-24 October, 2016 at the same venue and guide next steps;

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<sup>3</sup> See meeting Communique at [http://ruforumbiennial.org/sites/all/themes/corporate-site/corporate/images/RUFORUM\\_Biennial\\_Ministerial\\_Communique\\_2016.pdf](http://ruforumbiennial.org/sites/all/themes/corporate-site/corporate/images/RUFORUM_Biennial_Ministerial_Communique_2016.pdf)

2. Deliver statements from countries represented on perspectives for strengthening higher agricultural education as well as science and technology more broadly in selected African countries;
3. Provide leadership and input to the “Strengthening African Higher Agricultural Education in Africa -SHAEA” a new initiative of RUFORUM, the World Bank and African Governments;
4. Dialogue on key issues in science, technology and innovation in Africa;
5. Input into RUFORUM’s visioning process towards a new Strategic Plan 2030.

**Approach,  
Venue, Date  
and Agenda**

The round table dialogue will take place on 26 October 2017 at the Bingu International Conference Center (BICC) in Lilongwe, Malawi. At the meeting, the following countries are expected to participate: Malawi, Ivory Coast and Liberia. From Malawi, three ministers will attend from the Ministries of Education, Science and Technology, from Agriculture and from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; From Liberia, the Minister of Education and similarly from Ivory Coast from the Ministry of Education. The meeting will be chaired by the Minister of Education, Science and Technology of the Government of the Republic of Malawi.

**Convenor and  
Contact Persons**

The Principal hosts of this event will be the Government of Malawi and RUFORUM. The Contact Persons are Dr Moses Osiru ([m.osiru@ruforum.org](mailto:m.osiru@ruforum.org)) and Prof. Adipala Ekwamu ([e.adipala@ruforum.org](mailto:e.adipala@ruforum.org)).

**Draft Agenda**

Time	Activity	Responsible person
8:45-09:00	Arrival of guests	David Ekepu
09:00-09:10	Remarks by RUFORUM Executive Secretary	Prof. Adipala Ekwamu, RUFORUM
09:10-09:20	Welcome Remarks by the Minister of Education, Science and Technology, Malawi.	Hon. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Malawi
09:20-09:40	Presentation on outputs of the C10 third planning meeting	Dr. Moses Osiru, DES, RUFORUM
09:40-09:50	Clarifications	Chair
09:50-10:10	Presentation on the SHAEA initiative and other proposed initiatives	Dr. Moses Osiru, DES, RUFORUM
10:10-10:30	Discussions	

10:30-11:00	HEALTH BREAK AND GROUP PHOTOGRAPHS	
11:00-12:00	Statements from Ministers of Agriculture, Education, Science and Technology	Respective Hon. Ministers
12:00-12:45	Discussions	Chair
12:45-13:00	Closing remarks	Minister of Education, Science and Technology, Malawi
13:00	LUNCH	Rose Kalizang'oma