

18th RUFORUM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2022

Theme: Strengthening Africa's Agri-food Systems in the Post COVID-19 Era – Opportunities and Challenges

STRENGTHENING HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA: WHERE ARE WE AND WHAT ARE THE NEEDED ACTIONS?

Date: 05th October 2022

Time: 15:00 – 19:00 EAT

Venue: Virtual

Registration (Link): <https://bit.ly/3AsEyMY>

Concept Note

**Contact: Professor: Adipala Ekwamu, Executive Secretary RUFORUM
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Background

Africa's Agenda 2063 aspires that Africa will be a prosperous continent with resources and means to drive its own development. The continent will *have well educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation for a knowledge society*. As the first step to achieve this desired state, the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024 (STISA 2024) was developed in 2016. The STISA 2024 targets improvements in ST&I infrastructure, professional and technical competence, and entrepreneurial capacity as well as policies and programs. However, ST&I readiness and indeed human capacity in Africa is still significantly low compared to the rest of the world. The skills gap and the challenges associated with knowledge generation have been well documented. For example, advanced degree holders of Sub Saharan Africa (SSA) contributed only 1% of the global researchers. Africa has **198 researchers per million people**, compared with 428 in Chile and over 4,000 in the UK and US. The number of publications by 2014, was only 18,000, a mere 1.4% of the total global publications and by 2017, and the R&D expenditure dismally low at less than 0.5% of Africa's GDP.

Deployment of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) has been generally accepted as an effective route to achieve equitable development at national level. Evidence for such has been achieved for countries such as China, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, and Singapore where national governments deliberately invested in knowledge generation, development of technologies and innovations to guide policy making, create jobs and improve service delivery for their citizens and consequently increase local tax revenue and exports. There is however, need for human capital that will harness ST&I and make it meaningful for the development and transformation

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of society. Quality and quantity of learners are needs across the whole education value chain. Appropriate mechanisms have to be put in place to channel the population to education tracts that will have maximum benefit to development. Africa needs options to drive basic, TVET and advanced degree education in the right combination. For advanced degrees, the [World Economic Forum](#); notes that to achieve just the world average for the number of researchers per capita, Africa will need another million new PhDs. Yet such PhDs should be structured to contribute towards addressing the key challenges experienced on the continent.

It is against this background that the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) a network of 157 universities from 40 countries has been exploring options to galvanise human capital development under the 2030 Vision- Agricultural Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy (AHESI). The RUFORUM strategy is anchored in the need to look at the structural and capacity needs for *vibrant, transformative universities catalyzing sustainable, inclusive agricultural development to feed and create prosperity for Africa*.

Dialogue Objectives

RUFORUM Network is proposing a half day dialogue /webinar that will engage high-level political, technical and academic leadership to identify options for increased investment for human capital development with special emphasis on Agriculture, Science, Technology and Innovation Capacity. It will bring together different actors from across the continent and other regions to share experiences and map out the possible options for Strengthening Human Capital Development to support the Development of Agricultural in Africa. The dialogue will:

- i) Provide a platform for open sharing of experiences, lessons and emerging issues related to human capital development in Africa
- ii) Identify areas where actors can pool expertise, infrastructure, funding and partnerships to achieve maximum impact related to Building Science, Technology and Innovation Capacity at national and regional levels
- iii) Propose areas of synergy, implementation and coordination mechanism for Building Human Capacity at national, regional and continental levels

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Draft Programme

Moderator: Prof. Theresia Nkuo-Akenji, RUFORUM Board Chair and Vice Chancellor University of Bamenda, Cameroon

Time	Activity
Session 1: Opening and Setting the Scene	
15:00 – 15:10	Opening Remarks by Prof. Adipala Ekwamu , Executive Secretary, RUFORUM
15:10 – 15:25	Official opening by H.E Prof. Mohammed Belhocine , AUC Commissioner for Education, Science and Technology - AUC Strategic Frameworks for Human Capital Development for Africa
15:25 – 15:55	Keynote Address by Dr. Oliver K. Kirui , Research Fellow in the Development Strategy and Governance Division (DSGD) at IFPRI - Current Status of Human Resource Capacity and Needs in Africa
15:55 – 16: 25	Discussion
Session 2: Present and Future Direction: Lessons learnt over the last decade	
16:25 – 16: 40	Perspective on the African Centres of Excellence Initiatives from Dr. Roberta Malee Bassett , Global Lead for Tertiary Education Global Practice, the World Bank
16:40 – 16:55	Perspective from Prof. Olusola Bandele Oyewole , Secretary General, the Association of African Universities (AAU)
16:55 – 17:10	Perspective from Mr. Bernie Burrola , Vice President for International Programmes, American Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU)
17:10 – 17:25	Perspective from Dr Stephen Onakuse , President, Agrinatura
17:25– 17:40	Discussion
Session 3: Other Capacity Development Initiatives in Africa: Lessons learnt over the last decade	
17:40 – 17:55	Perspective from RUFORUM: Dr. Florence Nakayiwa , the Deputy Executive Secretary: Planning, Resource Mobilisation and Management, RUFORUM
17:55 – 18:10	Perspective from Dr. Richard Wekesa , Principal Bukura Agricultural College, Kenya for investing in TVET for enhancing Employability and Technology Delivery
18:10 – 18:30	Discussion
18:30 – 18:40	Summary of Key Messages and Recommendations: Dr. Anthony Egeru , RUFORUM Secretariat
18:40 – 18:50	Closing Remarks by the Sessions Moderator

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