

# Press Release



For immediate release | 9 December, 2015

RUFORUM recognised for its exemplary leadership and role in promoting Networking and collaboration in Higher Education, Research and S&T across Africa

9<sup>th</sup> December, 2015  
Pretoria, South Africa



Photo Credit: Science Forum South Africa

On the 9th December, 2015 during the Science Forum South Africa (SFSa), RUFORUM was awarded with the SFSa **Science Diplomacy Award** in the category recognizing “an international science partnership which has made an outstanding contribution to advancing African regional cooperation, integration and development .” RUFORUM was recognised for it’s work in supporting postgraduate training and networks of specialisation, especially in the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). The Award was conferred by Minister Naledi Pandor at the CSIR International Convention Centre in Pretoria. Specifically the Committee noted that RUFORUM had been instrumental to promote regional integration and cooperation in agricultural research in support of regional development strategies.

RUFORUM has enhanced networking of African universities, linking them both to the rural communities and policy makers and supported internal transformation of higher education institutions for impact. RUFORUM has trained over 381 PhDs and 1,373 Masters within Africa with a 94% retention rate of alumni working in their countries of origin.

While receiving the award, the Executive Secretary, Professor Adipala Ekwamu thanked the South African Minister of Science and Technology, Dr. Naledi Pandor for convening the Forum that brought over 1,500 participants to talk about Science, Technology and research geared towards addressing the Science Agenda for Africa. Professor Adipala attributed this success to African universities working together as a network and focusing on where they

could work together rather than on competition. He also thanked her for South Africa's role in strengthening regional collaboration.

Among the delegates who attended the forum were H.E Dr. Nkosazana Clarice Dlamini Zuma, African Union Chairperson and Dr. Martial De-Paul Ikounga, African Union Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology. RUFORUM thanks the Forum for this recognition.



#### Notes to Editors:

**The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)** is a network of 55 African Universities with mission to 'strengthen the capacities of Universities to foster innovations responsive to 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, national agricultural research institutions'. RUFORUM was established in 2004, with Secretariat hosted by Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. RUFORUM signed MoU with the African Union and has mandate to support capacity building for science, research and technology development in Africa. RUFORUM has supported the training of over 1500 postgraduate students, the generation of over 300 agricultural technologies and mobilized over US\$70 million for strengthening postgraduate education in Africa. Please visit [www.ruforum.org](http://www.ruforum.org) for more information.

**The Science Forum South Africa (SFSA):** The Forum has the objective to encourage a dynamic debate between all stakeholders on the role of science in society, in South Africa, but also in Africa and globally. Inspired by other international "open science" events, the Forum has as theme "Igniting Conversations about Science." An important part of the Forum is the awarding of its Science Diplomacy Awards in a range of categories to recognize achievements and excellence in international cooperation in science, since an important goal of the Forum is to promote international partnerships and solidarity. Against this background South Africa's Minister of Science and Technology, Minister Naledi Pandor convened on 8-9 December 2015 in Pretoria, the first "Science Forum South Africa" (SFSA). The two-day forum brought together more than 1,500 participants for discussion and debate in four plenary sessions, 32 (parallel) short seminars and 18 individual lectures (labelled as "Science talks." The SFSA also included an exhibition and public outreach activities.

For additional information, photos and interviews with key delegates, contact Miss. Joan Apio, below.



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