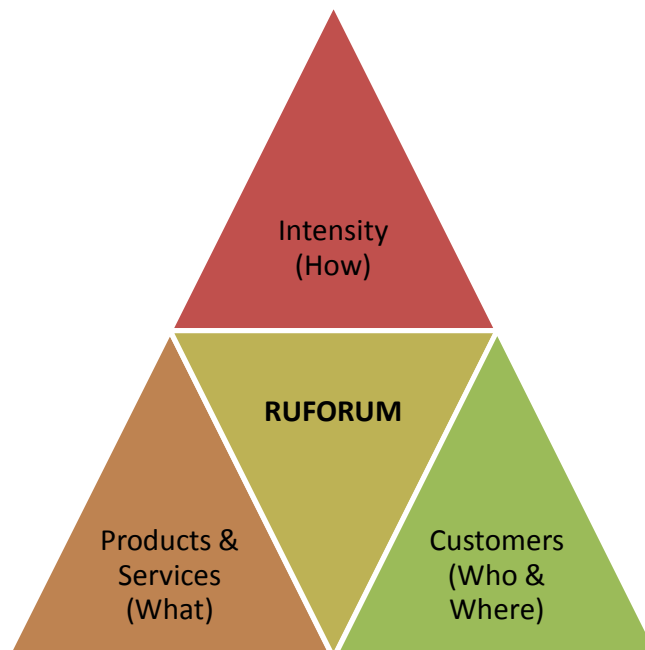




Business Plan 2011 – 2016

Consolidating Lessons and Success for Balanced Growth



Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture

May 2011

Table of Contents

FOREWORD	II
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	III
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	IV
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. RUFORUM’S VISION AND STRATEGIC GOALS	1
VISION	1
STRATEGIC GOALS	1
POTENTIAL IMPACT ON AFRICAN HUMAN AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT	1
MONITORING AND EVALUATION	2
3 BUSINESS PLAN	3
RUFORUM BUSINESS PRINCIPLES	3
RUFORUM’S EVOLUTION AND THE NEW BUSINESS PLAN.....	3
CHARACTERISTICS OF RUFORUM’S CORE BUSINESS	3
RUFORUM IN A CHANGING CONTEXT	6
4. VALUE PROPOSITION AND CUSTOMER SEGMENTS	8
NEW DEMANDS ON RUFORUM AND POSSIBLE VALUE ADDED	8
5. BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH STRATEGY	10
RUFORUM GROWTH MODEL: BALANCED GROWTH FROM A CONSOLIDATED CORE.....	10
ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS: REQUIREMENTS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR RUFORUM GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY	11
6 FUNDING STREAMS AND FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS: FROM NICHE TO BALANCED GROWTH	13
UNDERSTANDING THE NICHE	13
PHASED IMPLEMENTATION OF BALANCED GROWTH STRATEGY	14
BUDGET FOR PHASED IMPLEMENTATION.....	15
7. RESOURCE MOBILISATION STRATEGY	18
SPECIFIC FUND RAISING TARGETS	18
8. PARTNERSHIPS, COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING	20
PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY	20
COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING STRATEGY	20
9. GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS	21
10. OVERVIEW OF RISKS AND RISK MITIGATION STRATEGY	23
APPENDICES	24
APPENDIX A: IMPACT PATHWAYS	24
APPENDIX B: RUFORUM CONCEPTUAL PROGRAMME DIAGRAM.....	25
APPENDIX C: EXTRA FINANCIAL INFORMATION	26
APPENDIX D: RUFORUM ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE.....	30

Foreword

This Business Plan documents a strategic operational and funding model for the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM). RUFORUM is a consortium of 25 universities in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa (ECSA) with the mandate of strengthening university capacity to train high calibre graduates and conduct innovative research responsive to small-holder farmers' needs. The Business Plan has been constructed through a series of internal and external consultations to support RUFORUM operations between 2011 and 2016. The Plan has been written from a management and business perspective; it summarises key results of strategic growth and resource requirement analyses, and seeks support from various RUFORUM partners.

The Business Plan presents the roadmap for RUFORUM's desired course of service delivery from 2011-2016. The document articulates the goals, guidelines, activities, and timelines that are critical to making important decisions about focus, expansion, partnerships and resource base. This Plan also provides RUFORUM member universities, existing and potential development partners, governments and other stakeholders with the key information about RUFORUM's strong capabilities in building the next generation of African researchers, teachers and scientists who can contribute to agricultural growth, natural resources management and food security on the continent.

Chair, Board of Trustees

Acknowledgements

This Business Plan is an output of several consultations held with key stakeholders, including the various governance organs of RUFORUM (the Board of Trustees, International Advisory Panel, the Technical Committee and the Committee of Deans); a reflection meeting held in Bellagio, Italy in March 2010 with Development Partners and others stakeholders including USAID and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; a RUFORUM Partner Platform meeting held in London in March 2011 with stakeholders such as the World Bank, International Development Research Centre, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, European Commission, The Department for International Development of the British Government (DFID), Earth University, Association of Public Land Grant Universities (APLU), Agri-Natura (European Network of Agricultural Universities and research institutions), the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), ALine, and the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA). The Business Plan also benefitted from discussions held with African Union officials, especially the Commission for Rural Development and Agriculture, and the Commission for Human Resource, Science and Technology; the New Partnership for Africa Development (NEPAD), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the strategic direction provided by African Ministers of Agriculture, Education, Science and Technology and Finance and Economic Development during the Ministerial Conference on Higher Education in Agriculture in Africa (CHEA) held in Kampala, Uganda in November 2010. The Business Plan format was also informed by the BecA-ILRI Business Plan development. RUFORUM acknowledges the collegial input from Dr. Gabrielle Persley of the Doyle Foundation and then senior advisor to the Director General of ILRI.

The RUFORUM Secretariat acknowledges most gratefully the input and guidance received from Dr. Joyce Moock, former Associate Vice President of the Rockefeller Foundation, Dr. Howard Elliott, former Deputy Director General of ISNAR, Mr. Brady Walkinshaw, Programme Officer of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Dr. Malcolm Blackie formerly with the Rockefeller Foundation, Dr Anne Conroy of the Irish Embassy, Malawi, and Dr Patrick Okori from Makerere University. Their insights, and input from the Secretariat staff, helped to shape the direction of and focus the Business Plan.

While acknowledging all the above input, this Business Plan, approved on 29 April 2011 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, represents the strategic direction for the period 2011-2016 shared by the 25 RUFORUM Network universities and the RUFORUM Board of Trustees.

Executive Secretary
RUFORUM

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AAU	- Association of African Universities
AGRA	- Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa
ANAFE	African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resource Education
APLU	- Association of Public Land Grant Universities
ASARECA	- Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa
ATPS	- African Technology Policy Studies Network
AU	- African Union
BeCA	- Biosciences eastern and central Africa
BMGF	- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
CAADP	- Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme
CARP	- Community Action Research Programme
CGIAR	- Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CGS	- Competitive Grant System
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CTA	- Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation
EAC	- East Africa Community
ECSA	- Eastern, Central and Southern Africa
FAP	- Field Attachment Programme
FARA	- Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
FANRPAN	- Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network
IAUA	Indian Agricultural Universities Association
IARC	- International Agricultural Research Centres
ICT	- Information and Communication Technologies
IFS	- International Foundation for Science
IGADD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development
ILRI	- International Livestock Research Institute
IUCEA	- Inter-University Council of East Africa
M&E	- Monitoring and Evaluation
NARI	- National Agricultural Research Institute
NEPAD	- New Partnership for African Development
PME	- Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit
REC	- Regional Economic Commission
R & D	- Research and Development
RUFORUM	Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture
SADC	- Southern Africa Development Community
SRO	- Sub-Regional Organisation

1. Introduction

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) Business Plan 2011-16 has five objectives:

- To guarantee that RUFORUM builds a solid higher education platform enabling the African university community to contribute to the productivity of small-holder farmers;
- To develop the RUFORUM business model to secure organisational/financial sustainability and construct a set of indicators measuring achievable impacts;
- To identify realistic targets for extension of RUFORUM's core business areas of human and institutional capacity-building, and carefully managed exploration of new opportunities;
- To ensure that RUFORUM is grounded in strong strategic and operational management that can identify risks and factors for success;
- To situate RUFORUM as a robust contributor to AU, COMESA, FARA and CAADP strategic frameworks and goals.

2. RUFORUM's Vision and Strategic Goals

Vision

RUFORUM envisions a vibrant agricultural sector linked to African universities that can produce high-performing graduates and high-quality research responsive to the demands of Africa's farmers for innovations, and able to generate sustainable livelihoods and national economic development.

Strategic Goals

- Train a critical mass of MSc and PhD graduates who are responsive to stakeholder needs and development goals;
- Develop collaborative research and training facilities that achieve economies of scope and scale;
- Increase the participation and voice of women in research, production and marketing;
- Improve adaptive capacities of universities to produce high quality and innovative training, research, and producing high quality outreach services;
- Increase the use of technology to support effective, decentralised learning and sharing of knowledge;
- Mainstream new approaches within university teaching/research that have impact across the agricultural sector's full value chain;
- Create a dynamic regional platform for policy advocacy, coordination, and resource mobilisation for advanced learning/doing.

Potential Impact on African Human and Institutional Capacity for Agricultural Development

RUFORUM is an African owned network organisation responding to African development challenges and particularly towards overcoming the challenges of engaging African universities with development processes. RUFORUM serves its member universities by helping them contribute to the productivity of small-holder farmers through strengthening (quality and quantity) human resource capacity and subsequently agricultural research for development. Decades of underinvestment in agricultural training and research have left Sub-Saharan Africa the only continent where crop and livestock productivity continue to dwindle. The continent's national agricultural research systems (NARS) are characterised by weak human and institutional capacities, along with an aging pool of well-qualified and experienced researchers close to retirement. Even more challenging, the lack of attention to agricultural higher

education has resulted in many cases of isolated education systems misaligned with market demands and not attuned to evolving needs across the value chain. RUFORUM was explicitly created to address these inadequacies. It seeks to put agricultural tertiary education and training in synch with labour market requirements and to link with other actors in the agricultural sector through regularised forums and collaborative training and research.

Realisation of RUFORUM's vision and goals will make a critical contribution to the ability of African universities to improve the lives and livelihoods of thousands of small-holder farmers. Leveraging the benefits of collective action across 15 countries and 25 universities, improving higher education quality standards, while simultaneously harnessing economies of scale to lower higher education costs, is the underlying theme of RUFORUM's Business Plan. RUFORUM has already established an international reputation for designing and implementing successful capacity strengthening programmes with tangible results not only in the delivery of employable graduates and strengthened teaching departments, but in cases of successful public/private partnerships that impact smallholder farming through research for development partnerships. The Business Plan describes how RUFORUM will achieve its goals of re-positioning the agricultural training system to be highly productive and fully integrated with Africa's farming communities and the set of public and private organisations with which they serve and interact.

Monitoring and Evaluation

RUFORUM will place emphasis on improving its ability to capture lessons from implementation and providing information for evidence-based decision making both for the Secretariat but also in support of building M&E capacity of African universities. Appendix A presents the basic impact pathway that will guide RUFORUM's progress towards impacting on African farming communities. M&E will play two roles: 1) keeping RUFORUM on track by providing the means of taking corrective action in a timely fashion, and 2) providing the evidence of impact that justifies future investments and feeds back into the learning and messages RUFORUM sends as global public goods. M&E is critical to the production of relevant and evidence-based public good messages as well facilitating timely correction of RUFORUM's activities. Action will be taken in the early stages of the Business Plan to operationalise the M&E logical framework and the management information system. The development and implementation of the M&E framework can be further divided into four components:

1. Design of an objectives-based, results oriented framework, including benchmarks and performance indicators for M&E of RUFORUM's programmes, and the design of an M&E component for incorporation in all research projects;
2. Establishment and utilization of mechanisms for collecting and storing data needed to track the execution of all areas of activity;
3. Establishment and implementation of processes for monitoring progress in achieving planned outputs, short-term and long-term outcomes, and intended end results;
4. External evaluation of all outcomes and impact of RUFORUM programmes and activities relative to its overall programme objectives (on a 3-4 year basis).¹

In placing a strong accent on the monitoring and evaluation as well as innovative use of ICTs as an underpinning of the programme, RUFORUM will work with an M&E expert organisation to sharpen and activate the system, and with a local African organisation, which will assist in data collection.

¹ The intended end results are agricultural innovations, employment of high-quality professionals, and policy/practice reform relevant to all points on the agricultural value chain, which are assumed to be key determinates of the improved well-being of small-holder farmers and their contribution to national development.

3 Business Plan

RUFORUM Business Principles

The Business Plan provides the basic model for RUFORUM's strategic design and implementation. It is based on the principles of:

- **Grounding** agricultural research in the hands of a well-informed critical mass of locally based professionals;
- **Quality** postgraduate training;
- **Relevance** of research, training and related services responsive to farmer needs and innovation opportunities;
- **Leverage** as a network of 25 universities across 15 countries for collective action;
- **Affordability** of joint university programmes building economies of scale;
- **Retention** of capacity through farmer and employer demand;
- **Financial Sustainability** through recovery of all direct and indirect costs for staff and operations

RUFORUM's Evolution and the New Business Plan

Established in 2004, RUFORUM is a consortium of 25 universities in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa (ECSA). It had previously operated as the Forum on Agricultural Resource Husbandry (FORUM) programme of the Rockefeller Foundation from 1992 till 2003. Its purpose was to facilitate the active participation of university professionals in priority national development activities and to provide quality training for African graduate students at their local universities. The programme relied on providing mentoring support and research opportunities through a competitive grants system for MSc training initially in Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Uganda and Zimbabwe with a \$14.5 million investment over the 12 years. Since it became an autonomous, wholly African owned and led organisation, it has experienced marked growth -- more than doubling its original membership of 10 universities².

Overall guidance of the network is provided by the Board and other organs of the network including the International Advisory Panel (IAP) and the Technical Committee (TC). The RUFORUM Secretariat is hosted by Makerere University in Uganda. In August 2005 a meeting of African Ministers for Education endorsed RUFORUM and reaffirmed their commitment to higher education training and agricultural research in African universities. That same month, participants at the first RUFORUM Annual General Meeting approved the Ten-Year Strategic Plan (2006-2015) and the Five-Year Business Plan (2006-2010). RUFORUM plans were given further considerable momentum in 2009 by a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to enable the organisation to consolidate its gains and fortify its operations. Staffing increased from 5 to 15. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation support stabilised RUFORUM and positioned the Secretariat and network to win grants from other funders.

Characteristics of RUFORUM's Core Business

1. Demand-driven agricultural capacity development and RUFORUM added value

The main flagship of RUFORUM is the Competitive Grant System (CGS) for MSc training. Since 2004, the RUFORUM CGS has awarded some 82 grants, all with recognised research outputs. Over 280 MSc students have graduated and been deployed. A further 95 MSc students are expected to join the

² At the 9th Board meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (28th and 29th April, 2011), four additional universities (Catholique University of Mozambique, Mzuzu University, University of Juba and University of Namibia) were admitted after their applications for membership were accepted bringing the total membership to 29 universities.

development workforce by 2012. A RUFORUM supported MSc Programme is billed at US\$30,000 per student and PhD at US\$60,000. These figures are much lower than training in other countries including South Africa, Europe and the United States. Lessons from the CGS highlight the following benefits:

- **Re-orientated MSc. training to be field/community based:** by promoting innovative partnership arrangements for research implementation the CGS has provided incentives for faculty to emphasise community based training programmes;
- **Incentives for increased quality:** Increased number and quality of publications in peer reviewed journals (over 220 articles were published from RUFORUM research between 1992 and 2003 alone from an investment of US\$14.1million) and, facilitating MSc degree completion within 30 months;
- **Opportunity for promotion:** Staff promotion is increased both from the research publications, community impact and increased competencies of experienced staff;
- **Strengthened post-graduate education:** Many of the universities are now initiating and/ or strengthening PhD programmes (for example, Makerere University, University of Nairobi, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Bunda College of Agriculture);
- **A pipeline of human resources:** The MSc products provide a pipeline for students to filter into regional and other PhD programmes and for supporting development processes;
- **Creation of Communities of Practice:** RUFORUM students and faculty principal Investigators (PIs) have built a community of professionals in the region that are beginning to impact the research and development environment in Africa.

Of the registered 85 PhD students in RUFORUM Regional PhD programmes since 2008, 51% are university staff, 34% are employees of National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARIs) and Government Ministries, and 15% are from private sector. Of all students (both PhD and MSc), 30% are females.

The demand for focus on PhD programmes continues to grow and is coupled with the need to harness success at the MSc level. RUFORUM finds itself pulled in many directions and in some cases, without the necessary project funding to cover full costs of operations for its PhD programmes, particularly the institutional strengthening components. The changing local, national and global context further heightens the need for RUFORUM to evolve. Hence a priority in the new Business Plan is to clarify essential core activities of RUFORUM and focus efforts on these as the basis on which it can grow in logical steps based on arising opportunities. It will ensure that such opportunities are associated with full-cost recovery of direct and indirect costs for staff and operations so that the core is progressively strengthened.

2. An Integrated set of Current Core Activities

The basic scenario for RUFORUM commits it to consolidate around two programme areas in research and institutional strengthening underpinned by two support functions, M&E and ICT that serve both the RUFORUM Secretariat's own functions as well as potential methodological and support services to RUFORUM member universities. The Secretariat's own strengthening constitutes a fifth core area.

Core Area 1: Demand-driven research, community action, and institutional strengthening grants

- 1.1 The RUFORUM Competitive Grants Scheme (CGS)
- 1.2 Institutional Grants for Strengthening Weak Departments and for Emerging Issues
- 1.3 Commissioned Community-Action Research (CARP) by University Teams of faculty and students
- 1.4. Regional MSc and PhD programmes

Core Area 2: Activities to guide and support research and institutional grants

- 2.1 Field Attachments for MSc students spending additional time in the field as interns with NGOs, NARs, or private sector organisations
- 2.2 Training in research methods
- 2.3 Promoting female participation
- 2.4 Quality assurance for graduate training in network universities
- 2.5 Building curriculum in emerging critical areas, e.g., climate change, water, etc.
- 2.5 Professional Community Building
- 2.6 Establishment and support of the operations of National Forums³

Core Area 3: Monitoring and Evaluation

- 3.1 Maintaining M&E System
- 3.2 Conducting various M&E activities
- 3.3 Dissemination and Advocacy
- 3.4 Strengthening M&E Capacity

Core Area 4: Harnessing ICT for improved Performance at the Secretariat and Universities

- 4.1 Implement technology-mediated learning, teaching, and research
- 4.2 Develop RUFORUM network's capacity to create and use open educational resources
- 4.3 Improve the dissemination of African agricultural research information
- 4.4 Build Secretariat capacity to manage the information needs of RUFORUM

Core Area 5: Tightening and Enhancing RUFORUM Governance and Management

- 5.1 Strengthen and ensure functionality of the RUFORUM governance structures
- 5.2 Strengthen the demand-side of the RUFORUM programmes
- 5.3 Strengthening national, regional and international networking and partnership
- 5.4 Strengthen RUFORUM Secretariat's management capacity
- 5.5 Strengthen the Secretariat capacity for resource mobilisation

These areas are mutually supportive. For example, research findings feedback into development of curriculum; reviews of agriculture R&D by National Forums inform M&E, which in turn help to determine new areas for research and further development of graduate skill sets; and institutional strengthening grants enable universities to develop cutting edge courses in emerging thematic areas that make it more appealing to the best students, attract long-term and sustainable funding, and make their graduates increasingly competitive for employment.

3. Burgeoning Portfolio of Non-core Activities

Over the past year or two RUFORUM has taken on a number of projects that go beyond the core activities described above. This valuable learning has come at the cost of financial and operation strain on the organisation, and overload on staff. In order to determine which of these additional activities constitute genuine enhancement of the core, RUFORUM engaged in an internal assessment to

³ Seven National Forums are currently operational in Tanzania, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Zambia. National Forums are designed to provide a platform for stakeholders to articulate demands on university services, advocate for change, and provide feedback on the utility of RUFORUM's activities. The Forums typically are composed of member universities, representatives of farmer organizations, policy makers, members of the private sector, and members of the national agricultural research and extension system. More information on the National Forums can be accessed at www.ruforum.org

consolidate the RUFORUM brand of core activities. The current portfolio of multiple RUFORUM projects have been classified into three categories depending on the degree to which they strengthen the core activities and fit RUFORUM's comparative advantage as a university network organisation. *Category I* includes the core activities set out above. *Category II* are closely related to the core but can only be justified on the basis of obtaining full staff and operational costs. *Category III* projects are important but not critical in supporting core activities and can better be implemented by other organisations/universities.

The new Business Plan is designed to sharpen focus on core activities and strengthen those complementary initiatives that support core, while realising full direct and indirect costs. Initiatives in this category that cannot provide the necessary revenues for quality implementation will not be renewed. *Category III* projects will either be terminated completely at the end of their grant period or given over to member universities that wish to take on full responsibility for their implementation. RUFORUM will, however continue to leave space available for exploration of new initiatives that have a compelling rationale for future inclusion in core. This might, for instance, include managed expansion into another part of the continent or partnership with an Africa-wide agricultural education initiative to which RUFORUM might contribute from its comparative strengths and, in turn, realise means of strengthening its core activities.

Under the new Business Plan, RUFORUM will consider the following factors when investing in any new initiative:

- The contribution of the initiative to RUFORUM's organisational balance and sustainability;
- RUFORUM's comparative advantage considering the:
 - Scale that RUFORUM can manage;
 - Pressures on RUFORUM's core competencies;
 - RUFORUM's credibility and legitimacy in serving the client segment;
 - Cost –recovery;
- The ability to redesign the activity to contribute better to RUFORUM's mission.

RUFORUM will continually be aware of both its reputational and financial risk in taking on a new initiative. Financial cost recovery may not compensate RUFORUM for the opportunity cost of key personnel diverted from its core business. Most important, any future strategy would need to take into account the changed 'context' in which RUFORUM will have to operate.

RUFORUM in a Changing Context

There have been critical changes in the external environment over the past decade leading to exciting opportunities to increase the role of agriculture and higher education in development. These include:

A. A New Vision for sub-Saharan African Agriculture:

- Global challenges of energy, climate change, and talent pools leading to a "new agriculture";
- Emerging innovations in science, technology, and commodity value chains that boost productivity, coupled with new forms of collective action and revolutions in biotechnology and information technologies;
- Islands of success that demonstrate the ability of small-holder farmers beginning to move from basic subsistence to food security and to market-oriented product development;
- Appreciation by African governments and external funders that engagement with farming must change from low-skill manual labour to farming as a knowledge-intensive sector, and that this

requires new professional skill sets, understandings, and creative approaches that can respond to the demands for innovation and management;

- Increased need to harness the potential of women in agricultural research for development;
- Increased progress in several countries in developing policies favourable to agricultural growth and equitable development;
- Economic liberalisation creating a lively private sector that results in more job opportunities;
- Ownership by African government of the CAADP process, with 26 of Africa's 53 states having conducted round-tables signed CAADP compacts and more soon to follow.

B. Higher Education in National Agricultural innovation Systems:

- New models and improvements of university education as a result of major reforms ushered in by the structural adjustment programmes of the 80's;
- The information and communications revolution enabling African university students and staff to partake in global knowledge;
- Overall realisation by governments and the international funding community that Africa needs to build its own relevant knowledge bases especially to bolster efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with support from universities;
- Realisation of the increasing proportion of aging well-trained scientists at research institutions, and the generation gap and thus increased demand for post-graduate agricultural scientists in the public and private sectors;
- Creation of networks and other economies of scale, thus reducing the unit costs of training and research;
- Evolution of extension approaches towards pluralistic, publicly funded, privately serviced agricultural advisory services;
- Comprehension of the benefits of markets and value chains providing incentives for participatory research and cross-disciplinary coursework.

The main implications of these trends for RUFORUM's future plans include increasing demand for the following:

- Deepening analytic skills, while at the same time broadening application and workplace skills;
- Increased use of M&E to enhance learning both by the Secretariat but also across the network, particularly by individual universities in order to upgrade their training programmes (curriculum, pedagogy, experiential learning approaches etc);
- Increased capacity for characterisation of agro-ecosystems including integration of land use and environmental topics (including biodiversity, bioenergy, carbon sequestration, etc.);
- Institutional and programmatic integration of universities into national development processes for improved quality of training and relevance of university products;
- Expanded enrolment of women, commensurate with their predominant role in the sector;
- Well-mentored graduates with real world experience who can be matched with the evolving public and private sector employment niches of the Eastern, Central, and Southern Africa agricultural R&D sector and beyond;
- Graduates who are scientist entrepreneurs capable of creating small-holder farmer innovation systems in response to market needs;
- Agricultural advisory service providers who can assist farmers to more innovatively acquire and utilise market information and value addition for enterprise development and livelihood improvement.

In order to chart its growth pathway in more specific terms, RUFORUM has conducted a series of internal and expert consultations including an international expert reflection meeting held in Bellagio, Italy in April 2010 and a donor roundtable held in London in March 2011. These sessions, along with a number of discussions with RUFORUM’s Board Sub-Committee held in Nairobi in April 2011 and Technical Committee meetings have helped to clarify a trajectory for RUFORUM’s current set of core activities into the current Business Planning period.

4. Value Proposition and Customer Segments⁴

New Demands on RUFORUM and Possible Value Added

RUFORUM has identified multiple customer segments (Table 1). It is useful to distinguish three main classes of demand and the nature of the products and services that each demands. The following sub-sections identify: 1) RUFORUM **members** that benefit from “club goods”; 2) **Users of the “new graduates”** that pay for graduates in the market as private goods, and 3) **global and regional partners** that will be intensive users of “global public goods” generated by RUFORUM experiences and synthesis. New knowledge and better understanding of university development synthesised by RUFORUM is a “public good” in the sense that once produced it is freely available to all.

Table 1: RUFORUM Customer Segments⁵

Customer Segments	RUFORUM Offering	Value Added to Customer	Example or vehicle
A. RUFORUM Members	“Club Goods”	Products and services to members only	Institutional strengthening, GRG grants, peer support; improved pedagogy, collective course offerings
B. Users of “New University Graduate”	“Private Goods”	The New Graduate: high standards, result-oriented, field trained	MSc and PhD Graduates, field attachments, CARP
C. Global and Regional Partners	“Public Goods” Service based on RUFORUM Knowledge	Knowledge and information, inter-sector bridging and coordination	University-NARI joint Planning, Demand assessments, CAADP Pillar 4, West Africa Pilots, coordination of reforms to higher education

This distinction among the types of goods is important because it differentiates among 1) RUFORUM members who derive special benefits from membership and may be willing to pay higher membership fees for “club goods”; 2) employers of the “New Graduates” who pay market rates to the individual graduate that may include a quality premium, and 3) the insatiable demand for public good knowledge about universities, and services as a bridging organisation among universities, NARIs, extension and the private sector that is needed for policy making. The public finance dilemma is getting the customers to cover the full cost of having and maintaining a RUFORUM.

RUFORUM meets the demand for products and services by adding value to the contribution of each of these customers in a number of ways. The value addition considers reduction in effort by the customers

⁴ The identification of new customer segments responds to a changing context which creates opportunities.

⁵ RUFORUM will, under circumstances of viability and full cost coverage explore new opportunities that reinforce the core and/or represent expansion of the core and new areas such as expansion to West Africa, cooperative planning and implementation of CAADP Pillar 4 and coordination of integration of emerging themes support of core capacity building activities.

to meet their roles in contributing to agricultural development as well as cost-reducing and benefit-enhancing partnerships. A decision by RUFORUM to change the balance of its services in favour of new customers will have important implications for funding as well as the nature of its core functions. This is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Customer Segment, Nature of Demand, and Implications for Funding

CUSTOMER SEGMENT	RUFORUM VALUE PROPOSITION	IMPLICATION FOR FUNDING STRATEGY
RUFORUM MEMBERS		
1. Established Graduate Universities	Improve graduate programs: increase in numbers and quality of MSc students (including time of completion); improved research by supervisors; wider regional experience; improved pedagogy	Most students will require public or donor funding. Need to create mechanism to facilitate "buy-in" by those who can pay.
	Evidence based advice	Research into university policy and resources: a public good
	Resource mobilization	Information and analysis: "evidence": The knowledge is a public good; the service is a private good
2. New Universities and Faculties	Improved staff; strengthened capacity for research	Supply of field-trained MSc teachers and candidates for higher education
3. Staff in Universities	Participation in Communities of Practice; ability to write winning proposals	Limited RUFORUM investment in facilitating self-organising groups
	Opportunity for further academic and practical training	Participation in research and publication
RUFORUM "USERS"		
1. Agricultural Technical Schools	Users of CGS MSc graduates as teachers	Market for graduates has private as well as public component; may sponsor staff upgrade
2. Local Government/ policy	Users of CGS MSc graduates as agricultural advisory service providers; policy makers; increased relevance of universities to societal/farmer needs	Graduates as change agents supporting farmers to innovate; local government may sponsor staff to upgrade, advisory services may support adaptive research
3. NARIs	Users of CGS MSc and PhD graduates as research implementers and managers both during training and subsequently	Support research; integrate NARI research activities into university training
4. NGOs, CSOs	Users of CGS and participants in CARP; users of MSc graduates as development workers; candidates for interns: mutual benefit	Internships paid by NGOs executing development projects
5. Private Sector Agribusiness	Users of CGS and participants in CARP; users of MSc graduates as staff for development activities; increased supply and quality of candidates for interns; uptake of new technology	Relevance of training links candidates to job market or paying employer
6. Donor Agencies (local, sub-regional)	Field-tested MScs widely adaptable	Donors may support training to create resources for programmes they support. Donors may also siphon off talent for their own use

CUSTOMER SEGMENT	RUFORUM VALUE PROPOSITION	IMPLICATION FOR FUNDING STRATEGY
GLOBAL AND REGIONAL PARTNERS		
1. Other Regions	A model of regional network that may be applicable in other regions	The model can be piloted if full costing and replacement of staff time is forthcoming
2. Sub-Regional Development Partners	Sub-Regional Organisations (SROs) and International Agricultural Research Centers (IARCs) regional programmes are potential collaborators	RUFORUM/SRO links strengthened; University/NARI links at national level strengthened
3. Regional policy institutes	Legitimacy of RUFORUM with members; insider knowledge.	Potential for funding by donors and governments of commissioned research
4. African Regional Organisations	Knowledge, legitimate voice for sub-regional universities in ECSA	Role of bridging organisation to sub-region needs to be funded by donors at national, regional, continental

5. Business Development and Growth Strategy

RUFORUM Growth Model: Balanced growth from a consolidated core

Based on a strategy for balanced growth, RUFORUM will focus on a systematic organisation growth that ensures reinforcement of the core activities and a viable organisational growth at full operational costs. A balanced growth strategy argues that RUFORUM can expand incrementally and (perhaps alternately) along three axes. As illustrated in Figure 1, these are: The What, The How, and For Whom choices.

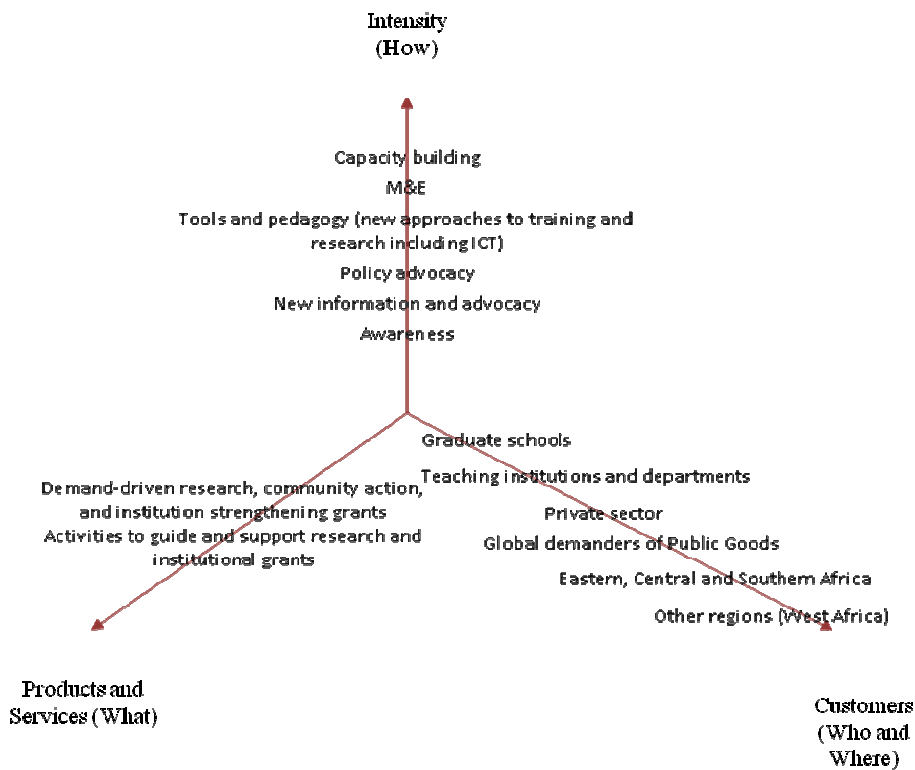


Figure 1: The RUFORUM balanced growth tripod

This three dimensional diagram depicts the trade-offs that RUFORUM must make in order to achieve balanced growth. This ensures that RUFORUM consolidates its base, learns lessons from its experiences and feeds these back into a stronger core capacity to serve its various stakeholders. Special attention has been given to determining the breadth and depth of engagement especially in the Regional Postgraduate Programmes (MSc and PhD), and exploring new and emerging opportunities such as climate change and water. RUFORUM will place emphasis on improving its ability to capture lessons from implementation and providing information for evidence based decision making both for the Secretariat but also in support of higher education in agriculture.

Alternative Scenarios: Requirements and Implications for RUFORUM Growth and Sustainability

Steady-state growth along only one path usually runs into diminishing returns: either the market dries up, the knowledge or technology becomes obsolete, or the source of inputs declines in quality or becomes more expensive. Therefore, RUFORUM is obliged to explore alternative scenarios for its organisational development strongly linked to demand. Demand must be “effective”, i.e. supported by the right financial arrangements and institutional support, if RUFORUM is to be sustainable.

RUFORUM has achieved success in a strong niche in post-graduate education in ECSA using a simple organisational structure with regional governance mechanisms. There are new demands on RUFORUM which imply different thematic and service emphases which could become part of an expanded core and offering products and services. The four most likely scenarios for RUFORUM are compared and contrasted in Table 3. Each of the scenarios builds on the core competencies established by RUFORUM but reaches out to different customers, and requires an expansion of core competences to support new roles. The resulting RUFORUM would be different but could probably be sustainable with appropriate resource mobilisation strategies targeted to the primary customers.

The four scenarios are summarised briefly as follows:

1. **Focus on ECSA Niche:** This scenario focuses on the core activities and countries currently members of RUFORUM. Growth could focus on adding services to existing members or adding new members within the region where RUFORUM has credibility, legitimacy and relevant knowledge.
2. **Organisational Development Advisory Services for Agricultural Higher Education:** RUFORUM would develop subject matter specialisation in organisational development of universities in Africa. The specialisation would base its credibility and ability to work more widely on its subject matter skills across regional but it would lose some “legitimacy” as it moves further from grounding in a broader set of action-oriented services in ECSA.
3. **Continental Forum on Agricultural Higher Education Policy and Action:** RUFORUM could play an immediate role and generate resources by taking on a forum, broker and continent-wide spanning role. Its credibility would come from the experience of its staff and ability to bring organisations together.
4. **Balanced Growth Strategy:** RUFORUM would try to build on experience and capture the benefits of a mixed strategy. This would necessarily require judicious trade-offs among activities to avoid energy wasting dispersion of effort while investing in learning and integrating the experiences gained.

Table 3: Alternative Scenarios for RUFORUM Compared: rationale and Requirements

Area of Comparison	"Focus on Niche"	Organisational Development Advisory Services	"Continental Forum"	"Balanced Growth"
Description	Focus on ECSA	Offer formal expertise on organisational development experiential and formal	RUFORUM fills an immediate need for boundary spanning human capital development organisations	Build on demonstrated strengths: credibility, salience and legitimacy in ECSA
	Core Areas: Flagship CGS, regional MSc and PhD, institutional strengthening grants, CARP	Subject matter specialists work with local experts across geographical barriers	Focus on providing a 'platform' for continent wide higher education initiatives	Deliver on commitments in core areas: training and institution strengthening
	Support M&E and ICT	Cross-cutting core support common to all strategies	M&E and ICT are critical to performance of this function	M&E and ICT are critical to RUFORUM learning and synthesis as well as to delivery.
	Organisation and governance strongly linked to region: gives strong "legitimacy"	Subject matter expertise brings "credibility" when complemented by local knowledge	A broader reach usually sacrifices some degree of credibility, legitimacy and salience, but offers a wider platform for leveraging agricultural tertiary education	Internal management structure may differentiate; new skills required; composition of advisory and technical committees may adjust
Advantage	Ownership by region	Credibility of subject matter specialist	Responds to immediate demand	Region owns expansion plan
	Proximity lowers cost of supervision	Requires excellent ICT and support to "nodes"	Offers a development path similar to FARA: from "framework" to "content"	Validation of ECSA on wider scale may bring new learning
	Good local knowledge	Good subject matter knowledge	Would scale-up RUFORUM current capacity	Participation in continental action is a learning opportunity if cost is not prohibitive
Disadvantages	Risk of diminishing returns in saturated market	Higher follow up costs due to distance	Requires rapid development of knowledge (subject matter, regional, linguistic)	Expectations of three customer segments are hard to satisfy
	Bottleneck in supervision	Variable strength in different subjects	Danger of mission creep	Opportunity costs of taking new initiatives may require large upfront investment

Area of Comparison	"Focus on Niche"	Organisational Development Advisory Services	"Continental Forum"	"Balanced Growth"
Growth options and requirements	Increase breadth, depth, and intensity of service to original members	Requires specialists across policy, organisation and management	Key is identification of most critical factors for university success and evidence base for strengthening	RUFORUM needs to chart expansion pathway looking at opportunity costs in foregone core areas
	Expand membership to new universities within member countries	Dispersion of customers; harder to bring synthesis	Build legitimacy with university and donor agencies for sustained funding	New initiatives may bring new resources and options for alternative expansion; explorations and pilots can be sequenced and matched with available resources
	Integrate Core Programmes in service delivery mode ("re-engineering universities")	Follow-up requires good ICT and materials	Scale and breadth beyond current capacity	Carefully chosen initiatives reinforce core learning and ability to follow different expansion paths

RUFORUM is putting forward a Business Plan that takes a **balanced growth strategy: 80% concentration on consolidation around its core; 10% focus on investment in learning from experience and subject matter research; 5% focus on participation in continental framework activities, and 5% remaining open to new initiatives that satisfy criteria endorsed by the Board.** The balanced growth strategy is based on a careful review of an impact pathway and tradeoffs with, within and among the set of current core areas. Since some of the activities are scalable up and down, RUFORUM has some capacity to deal with financial uncertainty.

6 Funding Streams and Financial Requirements: From Niche to Balanced Growth

Understanding the Niche

It was determined in Section (4) that RUFORUM had to respond to the demands of three types of clients: 1) member universities, 2) users of the outputs of RUFORUM programs, and 3) global and regional demands for public goods. Its starting point is its core commitment to strengthening its member universities. However, the knowledge it accumulates in doing so is a potential public good of interest across the continent that leads to new demands on it. Learning from M&E, synthesis of lessons and ability to disseminate findings prepare RUFORUM for new roles in strengthening African universities.

RUFORUM faces three classical problems: 1) public goods are always underfunded because everyone can have access to them without paying ("free-riding"); 2) the users of graduates from RUFORUM programmes do not have to finance the fellowships of students because they can hire the products on the market, and 3) member universities would seldom have independent resources to fund a RUFORUM

(although governments and private sector may commit themselves to reciprocal fellowships in the spirit of collective action).

The plan for bringing the preferred growth scenario and funding into line starts with a recognition of several salient points about current funding:

1. RUFORUM is highly dependent on a primary donor (BMGF) to cover its essential core activities while other donors including IDRC and the Rockefeller Foundation are supporting key core activities;
2. Currently RUFORUM member universities pay annual membership subscription of \$5,000 and also pay for participation of their Vice Chancellors at RUFORUM Board meetings;
3. Funding is not secured beyond two years;
4. Investments should be made to help RUFORUM grow into roles that will secure its existence by meeting the needs of funding sources consistent with its mission;
5. Complementary activities that contribute to RUFORUM's mission, core strengths and balance need to recover full cost and applicable overhead;
6. RUFORUM must design a differentiated resource mobilisation strategy for each market segment. However, RUFORUM recognises that its outputs are largely of a regional public good nature that will require continued investment by governments and donors that do not have to internalize the benefits from their contributions. This issue is discussed further in Section 7: resource mobilisation strategy.

Phased Implementation of Balanced Growth Strategy

The Business Plan is a transition to a balanced growth strategy built on a strong base that integrates learning, product development and responses to its many customer segments. At this stage of development, the Business Plan has taken guidance from the Board that it should explore new initiatives beyond ECSA in the interest of sharing and gaining experience that feeds back into its products and services. The Plan suggests certain guiding principles for seizing opportunities:

1. Financial integrity: cover full costs and applicable overhead;
2. Building on core capacity and not exceeding 20% of RUFORUM portfolio so as to strengthen RUFORUM but not distort its mission or total portfolio;
3. Board approval and assistance in finding resources for any trade-off of core activities in favour of new initiatives.

The organisational implications of a mixed strategy for balanced growth are discussed later under "governance and management": new core competencies, location of "new initiatives in the organisational structure" and governance implications of a wider geographic or thematic mandate. The types of trade-off that may need to be made include:

1. A reduction in the growth of CARP, PhD or even MSc fellowships in favour of recruiting staff to manage RUFORUM's participation in a large-scale exploratory project currently being designed by CAADP, FARA or donor agencies;
2. Use of more extensive forms of contact with members (e.g. web-based services versus face-to-face);
3. Seeking country-level funding for reciprocal fellowships formerly provided by the core grant from BMGF.

In looking ahead, RUFORUM envisions engagement in the CAADP Pillar 4⁶ process (although not yet fully designed or costed) but with emphasis on reinforcement of RUFORUM's core activities in ECSA. In other words, what RUFORUM can best bring to the table of any continent-wide agricultural higher education development initiative is its own strengths and experiences, while in turn feeding back a continental perspective to fortify its mainstay endeavors. RUFORUM will also consider provision of advisory services in specialised content areas with which it is now familiar, such as research methods or its various PhD curricula, but only through fee-for- service arrangements or workshop sessions "piggybacking" on larger planned conferences arrangements such as the November 2010 Ministerial Conference on Higher Education in Agriculture in Africa (CHEA) in Kampala, Uganda. RUFORUM will allow space for exploring the development of one or more country "nodes" in West Africa. However, prior to doing so, it will need to document the "RUFORUM model" in order to validate, replicate, pilot, and scale-up in non-ECSA regions.

For the immediate future, RUFORUM will invest in building a stronger data bank and collection of case studies on member universities or a member subset (4-6 universities) for which data are available and can be readily provided. Such an initiative is necessary to fortifying RUFORUM's major programmes and will enable more synthesis and dissemination within and beyond current university membership. RUFORUM will also strengthen its membership base by shifting greater responsibility for hosting/sponsoring some RUFORUM activities (such as the regional PhD programmes) to individual universities or university clusters. In this way, RUFORUM will take advantage of the network nature of the organisation rather than placing increasingly heavy demands on the Secretariat. This adjustment in emphasis and format will rely on boosting university nodes of excellence in specialized areas, such a biotechnology, dryland agriculture, or soils; beefing up ICT to facilitate e-learning, digital libraries and on-line forums; and placing focused communal responsibilities, such as quality assurance, on the Secretariat.

In the light of such considerations, RUFORUM puts forward a five year indicative budget that is consciously projecting no more than a 10% rate of growth to remain within funding prospects and digestible rates of growth.

Budget for Phased Implementation⁷

Applying the above principles and starting from budget figures for 2010/2011, the growth of RUFORUM will be covered through two alternatives: cover the cost of new initiatives by trade-offs with other core activities, or have a robust resource mobilisation that covers full costs. Table 4 indicates expansion of the current set of core activities in which RUFORUM concentrates on its products and services on member-universities and consolidates its institutional core.

⁶ The Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) has been adopted by African leaders as the blueprint for agricultural development on the continent. CAADP is designed into four mutually reinforcing Pillars. Pillar 4 focus is on improving agricultural research, technology dissemination and adoption. Its implementation is guided by principles in the Framework on African Agricultural Productivity (FAAP) with coordination being led by the Forum on Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA).

⁷Based on unit costs and numbers in Appendix C.

Table 4: Estimated 5-year budget

Main Budget Line	2011/12 Jul-Jun US\$	2012/13 Jul-Jun US\$	2013/14 Jul-Jun US\$	2014/15 Jul-Jun US\$	2015/16 Jul-Jun US\$	Total 2011-2016 US\$
Core Activities	4,759,304	5,096,979	5,401,229	4,888,069	7,807,805	27,953,386
Core Area 1: Demand-driven research, community action, and institutional strengthening grants	2,693,824	2,612,000	2,805,800	2,771,020	5,675,022	16,557,666
Core Area 2: Activities to guide and support research and institutional grants	511,880	439,100	451,850	439,920	430,652	2,273,402
Core Area 3: Monitoring and Evaluation	485,000	565,000	660,000	460,150	540,150	2,710,300
Core Area 4: Harnessing ICT for improved Performance at the Secretariat and Universities	666,000	722,400	757,500	607,500	547,500	3,300,900
Core Area 5: Tightening and Enhancing RUFORUM Governance Management	402,600	758,479	726,079	609,479	614,481	3,111,118
New Initiatives to Balance Growth and Expansion	Pm	Pm	Pm	Pm	Pm	Pm
Secretariat Operating Costs	1,347,173	1,398,571	1,403,565	1,472,755	1,502,111	7,124,175
Regional Recruited Staff	656,338	663,220	670,241	706,643	713,946	3,410,388
Locally Recruited Staff	298,384	307,522	313,612	319,842	326,218	1,565,578
Finance and Administration	67,500	74,250	81,675	89,843	98,827	412,095
Other Operating and Running Costs	324,951	353,579	338,037	356,427	363,120	1,736,114
GRAND TOTAL	6,106,477	6,495,550	6,804,794	6,360,824	9,309,916	35,077,561

This budget for the Business Plan 2011-2016 has the following characteristics;

1. It is based on “ideal” numbers of research grants, fellowships, CARPs, field attachments, and a reasonable number of institutional grants at unit costs that are known. In the event of resource shortfalls, the number of award can be reduced and the size of the RUFORUM “core” staff can be adjusted to maintain an appropriate support ratio. Longer term in-house research, synthesis and methodology development may be spread over longer time and intensity of services reduced;
2. The line item “new initiatives” is not assigned a specific budget. The designation “pm” (pro memoria) is a placeholder. Fully funded activities meeting Board criteria may be net increases to the Plan. They may also represent transfers from other line items as conscious investments in the repositioning of RUFORUM. It would be expected that they would not exceed 20% of total expenditure in order to ensure they remain non-distorting while building the depth, breadth, and intensity of services associated with other growth scenarios with sustainable funding.
3. In the event of a serious funding shortfall a balanced reduction that protects the core of RUFORUM to rebuild in alternative directions would be prepared with the guidance of the Board.

RUFORUM estimates the sources of funding for this Basic Scenario to change little over the course of the Business Plan. It is difficult to forecast the level of support that RUFORUM will receive from each of its potential customer segments. The relative percentages provided by members, users, and core sustainers of RUFORUM's public good role (are/are not) expected to change. With targeted resource mobilization, RUFORUM expects the relative shares in 2011 and 2016 to be roughly as shown in Table 5. The hypothesis is that members and their governments will assume an increasing share of the cost of RUFORUM activities: as activities prove their effectiveness they will become institutionalised in the budgets of the Ministries and universities.

Table 5: Estimated relative shares of the main funding streams

Sources	Indicative Elements Supported	Percent of 2011/12 Budget	Ideal Situation
Member Universities	Fellowships, attendance at meetings	1.5%	5.0%
Private Sector and NGO	Internships for staff; research expenses	1.5%	5.0%
Governments	Global public goods; research and syntheses, boundary spanning activities	0.0%	15.0%
African Regional and Sub-regional Organisations	Boundary spanning services, interaction with regional organisations	5.0%	10.0%
International Funding Organisations	Fellowships for trainees in aid programs, institutional support, global public goods, research and synthesis of experience	92.0%	65.0%

RUFORUM will explore multiple streams to fund this Business Plan and increase the willingness to pay of the various customer segments:

1. Member University Contributions through annual subscriptions (currently \$5,000 per university), in kind contributions, meetings attendance /convenings (all Vice Chancellors cover their costs of travel) as well as direct contributions to collaborative projects and programmes;
2. Government Contribution/Support: through core contributions to RUFORUM; through regional mechanisms such as the AAU;
3. International Funding Community: for clearly designed international public goods and "boundary spanning" activities that are of importance to those donors;
4. Payment/In-kind Contributions for Services to Private Sector/NGOs.

One of RUFORUM's management improvements will be to establish an audited overhead rate that will ensure that new projects contribute their fair share to the maintenance of RUFORUM's core capacity as the platform on which they build. This is discussed in the following section on Resource Mobilization.

The Business Plan articulates the RUFORUM desire to ensure achievement of full cost recovery for all projects during 2011-16 and the various management implications of substantial increases in RUFORUM client numbers and geographical expansion. A robust resource mobilisation framework and strategy has been developed and the Business Plan summarises its focus and opportunities for achieving institutional

funding. Also summarised is the strategic partnership approach with other institutions in order to reduce reputational and financial risks. A communication and marketing strategy is designed for targeting a broad audience in order to support RUFORUM vision and operations. The aim of the communication and marketing strategy of this plan is to increase stakeholder engagement, strengthen network membership, donor support and funding, as well as to sensitize about opportunities for investment in African agricultural tertiary education through the RUFORUM model.

7. Resource Mobilisation Strategy

Specific Fund Raising Targets

RUFORUM has recognised that both the agriculture and higher education have attracted new attention from donors albeit in a constrained funding environment. It has identified a number of key principles and good practices. Among the principles RUFORUM notes: 1) Having established the confidence of donors, RUFORUM will ensure proper monitoring and evaluation is in place to retain that confidence; 2) the key to sustainability is the commitment of the host country governments to the regional role of their universities; and 3) resource management specialists in partner organisations can be helpful. While resource mobilisation specialists bring needed skills, the professor, scientist or principal investigator has a primary responsibility to engage in resource mobilization. Table 6 below highlights some of the key actions that can be taken to strengthen resource mobilization. RUFORUM has a number of technical oversight committees, external panels and Board subcommittees. Evaluation of their performance should include their activities in support of fund raising for RUFORUM or its programmes.

Several actions may be taken to increase “willingness to pay” for graduate (MSc) education. For many students, MSc training is a “private good” that increases the income of graduates and therefore their willingness to pay. Various NGOs engaged in implementation of donor projects, may have access to training funds. Finally, internships, field attachments, and CARPs may be funded by NARIs, other public research agencies or the private sector.

If RUFORUM is to take on a significant role in enhancing research quality, development of tools, and synthesis of lessons and dissemination of global public goods, it will need to refine a strategy to attract necessary funding. This would include collaboration with regional and continental policy research programmes or with research units with Regional Economic Commissions (RECs) and Sub-regional Organisations (SROs) so that meetings, presentations and facilitation of network are costed and reimbursed.

Key to this strategy will be on-going perfection of RUFORUM’s performance that helps to build funders’ and customers’ confidence. Effective monitoring and evaluation, building and maintaining strong systems of accounting and financial control, and support to the operational costs of the RUFORUM Secretariat will remain essential. RUFORUM recognises that different customer segments have different incentives (and means) of supporting its work. Where direct support is difficult, indirect support, partnerships and advocacy on RUFORUM’s behalf may be solicited.

Table 6: Strengthening resource mobilisation

<i>Strategies for Strengthening Core Funding</i>	<i>Strategies for Strengthening Complementary Funding</i>
<p><i>Information sourcing mechanisms</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating network of resource mobilisation specialists to identify opportunities for funding (i.e. “donor intelligence”) • Seeking advice from International Advisory Panel • Networking, marketing and advocacy meetings- Biennial meetings, individuals, other networks • Robust marketing strategy targeted to customer segments • Providing strategic documents as inlets for donor funding (topical issues and successes related to the core) • Developing web based communication streams/packages <p><i>Strengthen and mobilize the resource base</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing capacity of Secretariat in funds raising • Developing Joint proposals with individual universities or university cluster using the RUFORUM platform for mobilising resources • Bring research proposals in line with, say, country-level World Bank or DFID agriculture supported initiatives to tap existing programmes • Requesting matching funds for fellowships, e.g., a percentage contribution from universities • Creating “Friends of RUFORUM” club • Establishing new fund-raising sub-committee of the Board with proposals for core funding signed by all members • Engaging local philanthropists • Nominating Ministers of Agriculture, Education, or Finance to serve on the Board as champions of the network • Recruiting resource mobilisation expert(s) 	<p><i>Harness capacity resident in the network and other partnerships</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing capacity of member universities to raise resources • Building strategic partnership with other networks and organisations e.g. AGRI-NATURA, CTA, APLU • Ensuring that complementary activities are fully consistent with core and full cost of overhead • Ear-marking funds for complementary activities in line with donor focus (thematic, geographical location) • Creating an Innovation fund – exploring bold new ideas • Establishing an endowment fund (from member and alumni contributions, overheads); explore various forms of endowments (ht-forward endowment, chairs, wasting endowment) • Using a fee/levy arrangement for services that are complementary to core • Raising funds through booksales and marketing other publications • Programmes developed jointly with universities to pay a percent of tuition fees to RUFORUM • Creating short courses for NGO personnel and run by universities on behalf of RUFORUM <p><i>Protection from revenue streams that terminate:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universities taking over such activities • Strategic exit preparation for handing over • Strategic investments to even-out/leverage resources for sustainability • Guidelines for phasing out projects and institutionalisation in hosting universities • Alternative resource mobilisation (funding mechanisms) strategies • Sustainability plans to be in-built early in the implementation e.g. advertise for fee paying students early in the programme

This will primarily focus on mobilising local African resources to support the RUFORUM agenda, and ensuring timely and quality of RUFORUM processes and products. As discussed in the section on funding streams, RUFORUM will rely on the member universities payment of their annual subscription fee and other in kind contributions, support from regional governments to make annual budgetary provision, building strategic partnerships with AU (including NPCA), AAU, FARA, COMESA, ECA, IGADD and other regional and sub-regional organisations, This is in addition to strategic donor partnerships. A more robust Resource Mobilisation Strategy has been developed and funding will be needed for an expert consultant to take on this work on an “as needed” basis.

8. Partnerships, Communications and Marketing

Partnership Strategy

RUFORUM's extensive network brings together over 15,000 faculty and non-academic experts from which it can draw for expertise and guidance and a pool of over 500 alumni that are involved in national events and are provided with relevant information by the regional Secretariat. RUFORUM success is in part due to its ability to leverage strategic partnerships across the globe to enhance training at African universities in the ECSA. RUFORUM will continue to build strategic alliances with key partners such as the African Union (AU), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), the Association of African Universities (AAU); at the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) level with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC), the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD), at the sub- regional level with the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education (ANAFE), the Inter-University Council of East Africa (IUCEA), and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). Links with university networks and partners such as AgriNatura, the Association of Public Land Grant Universities (APLU) and Indian Agricultural Universities Association (IAUA) will be strengthened to enhance quality of RUFORUM's programmes. RUFORUM will continue strengthening its strong partnership with the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), International Foundation for Science (IFS), African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS) and Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN).

RUFORUM will be strategic in engaging in partnerships with other institutions. It will only enter into partnership with credible institutions that will assist RUFORUM in its role of strengthening the quality of post-graduate training and research, and policy advocacy for higher education in agriculture. It will carefully assess the risks associated with new partnerships. These risks include possible distractions from its vision, and the effects on the reputation of the programme where a new partner does not implement its component to the required standard. Another important risk is the extra staff resources required to manage any partnership.

With the move towards more programme-based funding, RUFORUM will aspire to have core support to its operations. In this manner RUFORUM will drive its own agenda and be able to implement a single programme, a single financial system and a single monitoring and evaluation system. RUFORUM recognises that a major part of resource mobilisation is strengthening networking and ensuring that it takes advantage of all forthcoming opportunities. These include international meetings where the most influential decisions are made. Central to this resource mobilisation strategy will be a resolute mindset change in the member universities to ensure university assumed enough responsibility in resource mobilisation and greater collaboration between the RUFORUM Secretariat and member universities to strengthen their level of donor intelligence. The RUFORUM platform will function to advocate for this and broker information and intelligence on emerging opportunities.

Communications and Marketing Strategy

The Business Plan is targeted to a broad audience in order to support RUFORUM vision and operations. The aim of the communication and marketing strategy of this plan is to increase stakeholder

engagement strengthen network membership, donor support and funding, as well as to sensitize about opportunities for investment in African Agricultural tertiary Education through the RUFORUM model. The strategy borrows heavily from the RUFORUM overall organisation communication and advocacy strategy in order to effectively achieve publicity, advocacy marketing with partners and key stakeholders in the region and globally;

- Use of existing website to promote RUFORUM through features, news, opportunities;
- Use the new social media;
- Segment website to target RUFORUM's diverse audiences;
- Multimedia reports about the work of partner institutions;
- Use of major on-line science journals, such as SciDev;
- On-line forums for topical interest groups;
- Publication of African postgraduate research briefs online;
- Presentations of RUFORUM at high exposure conferences;
- Local funding representatives and leading private sector figures attendance at RUFORUM events;
- Credible monitoring and evaluation system.

The overall objectives of the communication strategy are being achieved through the following specific strategies:

- (a) **Internal communication** to increase information sharing and build support for RUFORUM and its activities among its member universities;
- (b) **External communication** to enhance the positive image of RUFORUM, programmatic focus among the external audience in order to attract support from the donors, private sector, governments and publics as well as increase the profile of agricultural tertiary education and university research for development in Africa;
- (c) **Establishing dynamic stakeholder participation mechanisms** which are targeted at providing the stakeholders with a platform to contribute to the RUFORUM dream; and
- (d) **Promotion of accurate knowledge about RUFORUM services and sustenance** of RUFORUM knowledge management framework through its technology and operations advocacy and sharing.

At every stage of implementation and communication, RUFORUM clearly outlines: customer segmentation as target audience; marketing and communications channels and tools to be used to reach each target group; strategies to be used to achieve objectives and specified budget for each strategy. This is done in order to maximize support for resource mobilisation and support to this Business Plan. This is bolstered by the monitoring and evaluation strategy and framework which have been developed to assess RUFORUM's capacity for or performance, essential to communications practices.

9. Governance and Institutional Arrangements

RUFORUM success has been underpinned by its governance structures and mechanism that include a Board of Directors, composed of the 25 RUFORUM member-university Vice Chancellors, and five member representatives chosen from the private sector, NGOs, NARS or other regional research organisations. Currently, this includes representation from New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and the Global Forum on Agricultural Advisory Services.

Governance has been characterised by strong ownership of RUFORUM programmes. It has enabled sharing of lessons across the 25 member universities and strategic change at faculties of agriculture. One lesson is that RUFORUM provides a rare platform for African Vice Chancellors to focus particularly on agricultural higher education issues in Africa.

RUFORUM operates through a lean Secretariat in Kampala that provides coordination and programme support to the network. RUFORUM governance organs currently include, in addition to the Board:

- Annual General Assembly/Meeting (AGA/AGM) that brings together the Vice Chancellors of the member universities and other key stakeholders;
- The International Advisory Panel (IAP) that brings together eight eminent personalities- 4 from Africa and 4 from outside, who provide strategic global and regional foresight for RUFORUM;
- The Technical Committee (TC), which comprises seven members (four with specific skills mix, and three from RUFORUM member universities),(1) sets the research and training policies and programmes of the consortium, (2) reviews and approves research proposals submitted to the RUFORUM for funding, and (3) is responsible for monitoring the progress of research and training programmes and policies.,
- Other key committees of the Board are the Audit and Finance Committee and the Deans committee;
- National Forums serve as the key anchor of RUFORUM.

Over the past two years, RUFORUM has been strengthening its governance and management in order to maintain its lead role in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa for capacity building and engaging universities in the development process. RUFORUM will continue to enhance governance within five strategic thrust areas:

- Strengthening and ensuring functionality of the RUFORUM governance structures;
- Strengthen the demand-side of the RUFORUM programmes;
- Strengthen RUFORUM Secretariat's management capacity;
- Strengthen national, regional and international networking and partnership;
- Strengthen the Secretariat capacity for resource mobilization

In organisational development terms, RUFORUM's current structure is characteristic of a simple start up that functions well because of the strong working relationships, shared knowledge and commitment of its staff. The Business Plan puts forward an option for balanced growth that will require some internal structures to serve RUFORUM's various customers and organize internal processes. These structures will evolve naturally but will be guided by a transition plan compatible with the growth expected.

The choice of an internal management structure will be the decision of the Executive Secretary who is best able to understand the coordination and division of labour among the key collaborators. The current and proposed phased changes in the Secretariat organisational structure is presented in Appendix D. The configuration provides for appropriate delegation of authority, creates lines of reporting and responsibility, and focuses programme managers on their principal tasks.

A senior management team will consist of the Executive Secretary, the Deputy Executive Secretary and 2 or more programme managers. This team will be charged to ensure coordination among the leaders of key functions: RUFORUM direction, programme management, new initiatives and administration and

finance. Through regular review, RUFORUM will rationalize the structure and functions of its organs to ensure effectiveness and efficiency.

10. Overview of Risks and Risk Mitigation Strategy

RUFORUM is cognizant of the fact that realising this Business Plan would be fraught with a number of risks, for which a practical management plan has been put in place. These risks relate to uncertainties and external influence from the capacity building “market place” and related investment scenarios; operational risks; staffing risks including retention and attrition; financing risks including liabilities, donor interest and financial flows; and managerial risks including uncertain board or investor dynamics and other venture risks.

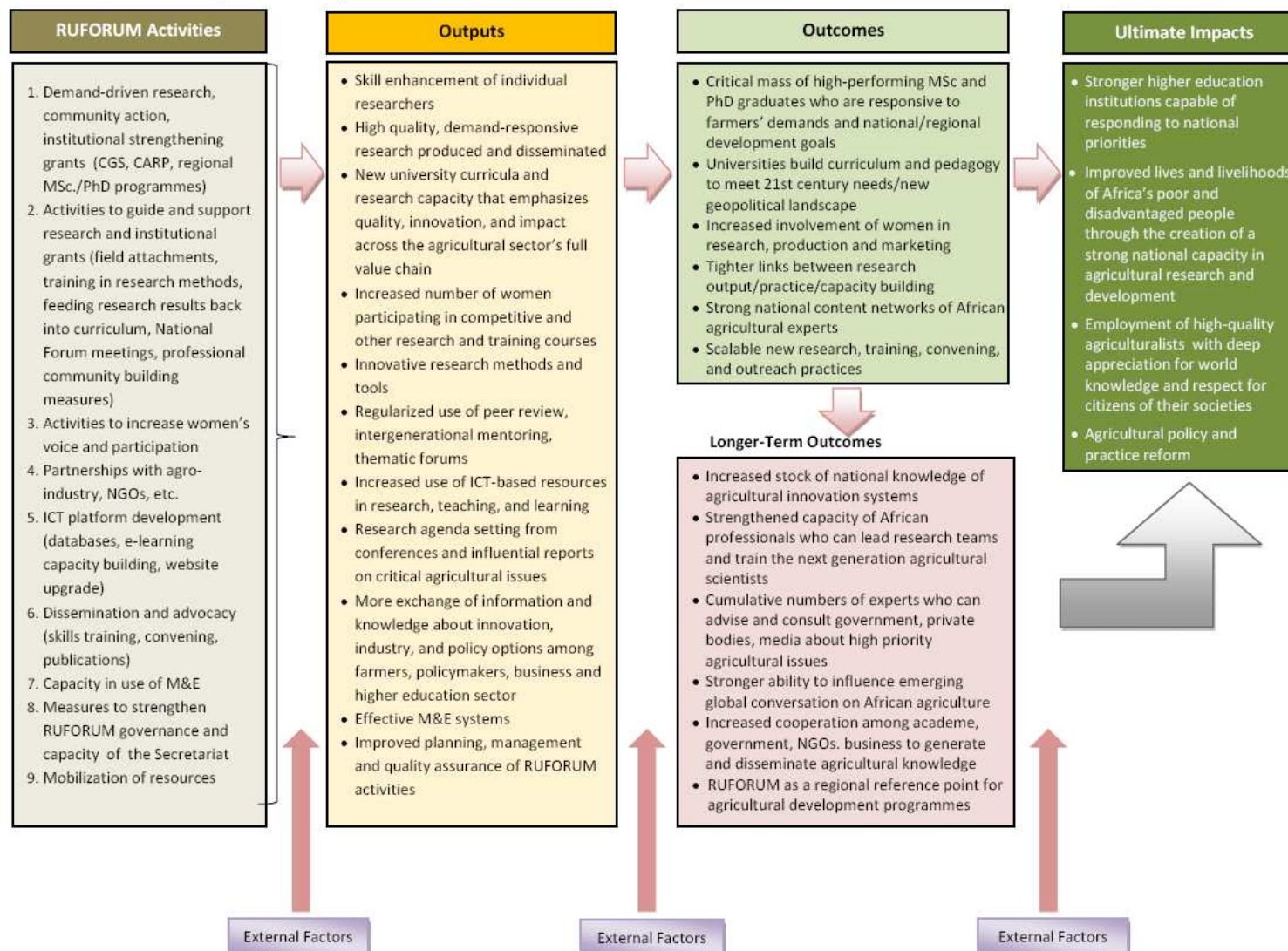
As part of RUFORUM internal plans, detailed risk management plans have been put in place to inform risk identification, assessment and control. The plans, as detailed in the financial management manual and M&E strategy also include methods and procedures to limit liabilities; building reserve funds (e.g. use of overheads and start up of an endowment fund) as well as strategies for continuity of operations plan. Some of these risks, their level and mitigation strategies are summarised in Table 7.

Table 7: Selected risks and mitigation strategies key to the business plan

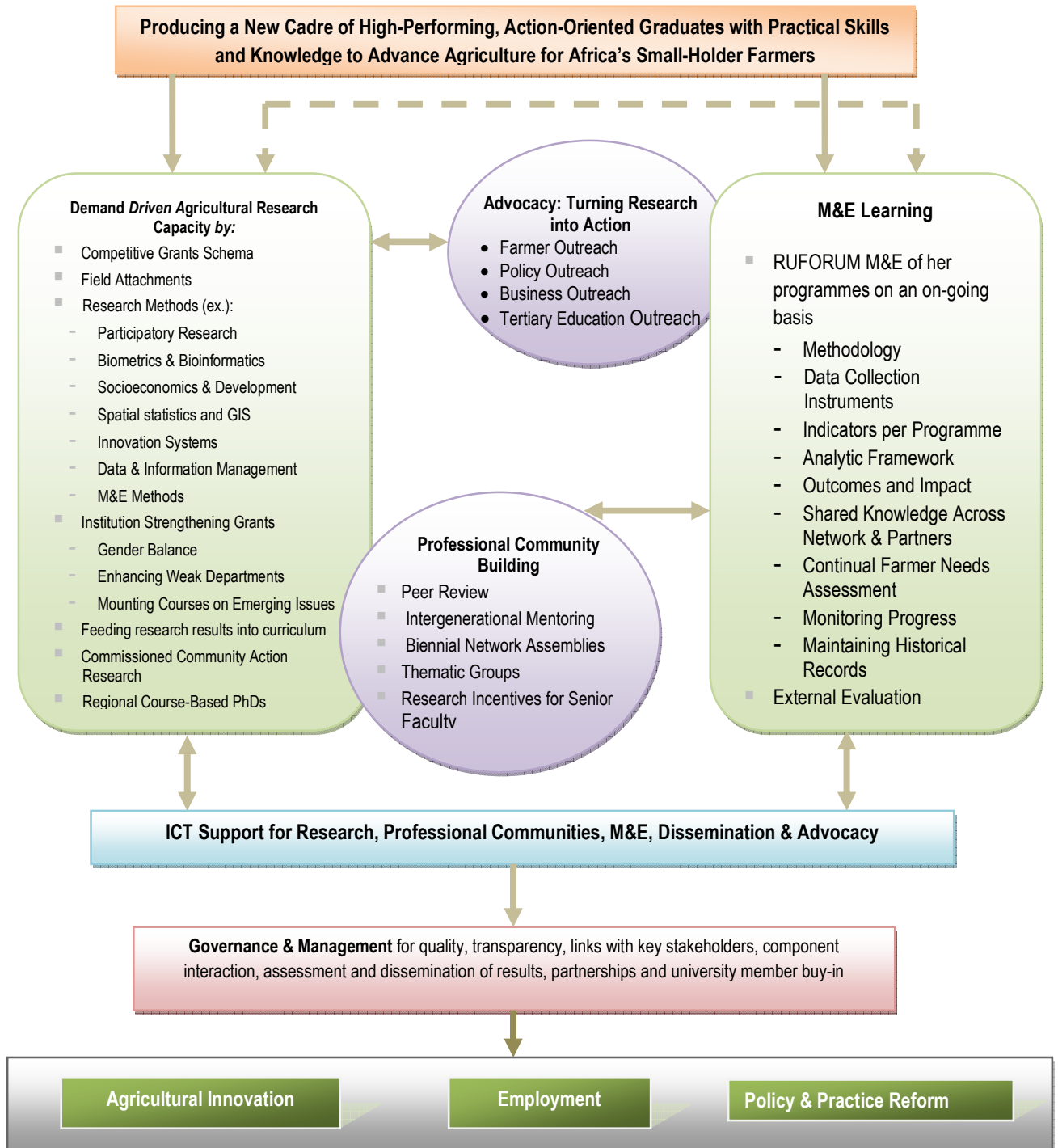
Risk & Consequence	Level & Description of Risk	Mitigation Strategy
Quality: Universities are unable to attract sufficiently qualified candidates; supervisors	Medium probability as key universities have ample candidates, growing # of supervisors; new universities rely on RUFORUM mainly to build curriculum strength	Programmatic efforts are underway to strengthen new universities and address issues of gender and other inequities
Fund Raising: Cannot raise sufficient core funds to support new business model	High probability with serious impact for RUFORUM's growth and sustainability	Core and complementary activities need to be compatible. Complementary funding opportunities need to support core mission or be redesigned to do so.
Management Efficiency: Inability to achieve a level of management capacity that ensures financial sustainability	Medium probability with grave consequences for RUFORUM's health and well-being	Internal management structure and senior management team to be created to implement balanced growth. Exploratory programmes outside of core that overstretch staff and for which RUFORUM has no comparative advantage will be phased out or delegated to designated universities
Strategic Focus: Unclear strategy leads to inefficient opportunism and loss of brand value	Medium probability if Business Plan is not carefully monitored to avoid snowballing, inefficiency and missed opportunities for maximising growth and impacts	Strategy and Business Plan lay out balanced growth paths with structural mechanisms to deal with major new initiatives
Delays and “Red Tape”: Various consortium universities have different guidelines or regulations that can result in delays	Low Probability	To date, institutional good-will has prevailed.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Impact Pathways



Appendix B: RUFORUM Conceptual Programme Diagram



Appendix C: Extra Financial Information

	2011/12 Jul-Jun US\$	2012/13 Jul-Jun US\$	2013/14 Jul-Jun US\$	2014/15 Jul-Jun US\$	2015/16 Jul-Jun US\$	Total 2011-2016 US\$
Networking and Grants	2,832,921	2,761,786	2,950,754	2,917,106	5,823,084	17,285,650
<i>Operating Costs</i>	139,097	149,786	144,954	146,086	148,062	727,984
Regionally Recruited Staff	75,704	76,620	77,555	78,508	79,480	387,866
Nationally Recruited Staff	35,063	35,614	36,519	37,448	38,402	183,046
Other Operating Costs	28,330	37,552	30,880	30,130	30,180	157,072
<i>Programme Activities</i>	2,693,824	2,612,000	2,805,800	2,771,020	5,675,022	16,557,666
Graduate Research Grants	1,200,000	1,320,000	1,452,000	1,597,200	1,756,920	7,326,120
Field Attachment	30,000	33,000	36,300	39,930	43,923	183,153
Research Methods	415,000	415,000	415,000	340,000	350,000	1,935,000
Institutional Strengthening Grants	160,000	176,000	193,600	212,960	234,256	976,816
Promoting Women Participation	30,000	33,000	36,300	39,930	43,923	183,153
Commissioned Action Research Programme	511,224	300,000	400,000	300,000	3,000,000	4,511,224
Professional Community Building	200,000	190,000	125,000	125,000	125,000	765,000
Dissemination and advocacy	95,000	70,000	70,000	40,000	40,000	315,000
Meeting of Technical Committee	20,000	45,000	45,000	45,000	45,000	200,000
Monitoring and Evaluation	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	125,000
Programme Docs and reports	2,000	2,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	16,000
<i>Capital Costs</i>	5,600	3,000	3,600	2,000	7,000	21,200
Monitoring and Evaluation	649,995	739,508	832,476	638,315	720,454	3,580,747
<i>Operating Costs</i>	164,995	174,508	172,476	178,164	180,303	870,447
Regional Staff Salaries	73,655	74,800	75,968	77,160	78,375	379,958
National Staff Salaries	43,240	47,907	48,749	49,616	50,509	240,021
Other Operating/running Costs	48,100	51,801	47,759	51,389	51,420	250,468
<i>Programme Activities</i>	485,000	565,000	660,000	460,150	540,150	2,710,300

RUFORUM BUSINESS PLAN

2011 -2016

Maintain M&E System and Conduct Various M&E Activities	135,000	165,000	225,000	175,000	225,000	925,000
Dissemination and Advocacy	140,000	140,000	175,000	175,000	205,000	835,000
Develop M&E Capacity	210,000	260,000	260,000	110,150	110,150	950,300
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	820,309	882,129	914,941	770,360	712,215	4,099,953
<i>Operating Costs</i>	154,309	159,729	157,441	162,860	164,715	799,053
Regional Staff Salaries	73,655	74,800	75,968	77,160	78,375	379,958
National Staff Salaries	32,554	33,128	33,714	34,311	34,920	168,627
Other Operating/running Costs	48,100	51,801	47,759	51,389	51,420	250,468
<i>Programme Activities</i>	666,000	722,400	757,500	607,500	547,500	3,300,900
Implement technology-mediated learning, teaching, and research	86,000	132,500	132,500	132,500	132,500	616,000
Develop RUFORUM network's capacity to create and use open educational resources	250,000	264,900	225,000	225,000	225,000	1,189,900
Improve the dissemination of African agricultural research information	290,000	240,000	290,000	190,000	150,000	1,160,000
Build Secretariat capacity to manage the information needs of RUFORUM	40,000	85,000	110,000	60,000	40,000	335,000
Training and Quality Assurance	663,594	598,560	611,324	621,711	616,552	3,111,741
<i>Operating Costs</i>	151,714	159,460	159,474	181,791	185,900	838,339
Regionally Recruited Staff	74,360	74,360	74,360	88,980	88,980	401,040
Nationally Recruited Staff	32,554	33,128	33,714	34,311	34,920	168,627
Other Operating Costs	44,800	51,972	51,400	58,500	62,000	268,672
<i>Programme Activities</i>	511,880	439,100	451,850	439,920	430,652	2,273,402
MSC students in regional programmes	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	50,000
PhD students in regional programmes	171,880	77,100	115,650	77,100	38,550	480,280
Institutional capacity strengthening to provide quality postgraduate training	140,000	154,000	169,400	186,340	204,974	854,714
Skills enhancement for staff	100,000	100,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	350,000
Quality assurance for graduate training in universities	80,000	88,000	96,800	106,480	117,128	488,408
Institutionalisation of regional postgraduate programmes	0	0	0	0	0	0
Monitoring and Evaluation of training programmes	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	50,000

RUFORUM BUSINESS PLAN

2011 -2016

Finance and Administration	287,720	300,191	313,882	343,481	357,822	1,603,096
<i>Operating Costs</i>	220,220	225,941	232,207	253,638	258,995	1,191,001
Regional Staff Salaries	74,360	74,360	74,360	88,980	88,980	401,040
National Staff Salaries	116,060	118,281	120,547	122,858	125,215	602,961
Other Operating/running Costs	29,800	33,300	37,300	41,800	44,800	187,000
<i>Programme Activities</i>	67,500	74,250	81,675	89,843	98,827	412,095
Annual Audit	10,000	11,000	12,100	13,310	14,641	61,051
Purchase and maintenance of Financial Management System	25,000	27,500	30,250	33,275	36,603	152,628
Staff Professional development and training	20,000	22,000	24,200	26,620	29,282	122,102
Hiring of casuals	2,500	2,750	3,025	3,328	3,660	15,263
Capacity building for other units	10,000	11,000	12,100	13,310	14,641	61,051
Deputy Executive Secretary	261,697	693,265	696,033	595,565	602,543	2,849,102
<i>Operating Costs</i>	139,097	149,786	144,954	146,086	148,062	727,984
Regionally Recruited Staff	75,704	76,620	77,555	78,508	79,480	387,866
Nationally Recruited Staff	35,063	35,614	36,519	37,448	38,402	183,046
Other Operating Costs	28,330	37,552	30,880	30,130	30,180	157,072
<i>Programme Activities</i>	117,000	540,479	547,479	447,479	447,481	2,099,918
Africa-wide Capacity Strengthening Initiative	0	0	0	0	0	0
PAEPARD Activities	100,000	100,000	100,000	0	0	300,000
New Core initiatives	0	418,479	418,479	418,479	418,481	1,673,918
Meeting of Procurement Committee	15,000	20,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	110,000
Programme Docs and reports	2,000	2,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	16,000
<i>Capital Costs</i>	5,600	3,000	3,600	2,000	7,000	21,200
Executive Secretary Office	587,250	520,111	485,384	474,286	477,246	2,544,276
<i>Operating Costs</i>	307,250	305,111	310,384	314,286	317,246	1,554,276
Regional Staff	208,900	211,660	214,475	217,347	220,276	1,072,658

RUFORUM BUSINESS PLAN

2011 -2016

National Staff Salaries and Technical Assistants	3,850	3,850	3,850	3,850	3,850	19,250
Other Operating/running Costs	94,500	89,601	92,059	93,089	93,120	462,368
<i>Secretariat Governance Activities</i>	<i>280,000</i>	<i>215,000</i>	<i>175,000</i>	<i>160,000</i>	<i>160,000</i>	<i>990,000</i>
Support Functioning of the RUFORUM Board	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	50,000
Annual meetings of RUFORUM Technical Committee	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	100,000
Support Operations and meetings of the International Advisory Panel	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	175,000
Support operations and meetings of audit and finance sub-committee of the Board	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	50,000
Operational Planning for expansion to West Africa	50,000	0	0	0	0	50,000
Travel by Secretariat Staff	70,000	55,000	15,000	0	0	140,000
Resource Mobilization	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	375,000
Advocacy Costs	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	50,000
GRAND TOTAL	6,106,486	6,495,550	6,804,796	6,360,821	9,606,890	35,077,561

Appendix D: RUFORUM Organisational Structure

