

18th RUFORUM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2022

CREATING CONVERGENCE OF INVESTMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA FOR GREATER IMPACT

**Ministers of Agriculture, Education, Science Technology and Innovations
Round Table Dialogue**

Date: Wednesday 14th December, 2022

Time: 08:30-13:30 CAT

Venue: Jarakanda Hall, Harare International Conference Centre (HICC)

Focus: Review Progress since Ghana and explore avenues for strengthening cross country collaboration in the field of Higher Agricultural Education and agricultural development

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Background

RUFORUM was established by Vice Chancellors in 2004 to meet three basic objectives:

1. Provide a platform for **networking, resource mobilization and advocacy** to transform universities for relevance towards inclusive sustainable development
2. **Rationalize resource** use and enhance economies of scale and scope
3. Provide a **platform for training quality graduates** to support development processes in Africa

In 2018, Universities under the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Africa (RUFORUM) network, adopted the African Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy (AHESTI)/ [Vision 2030](#) as a guiding framework for strengthening universities' contribution to Africa's development. This was premised on the realisation that universities and their constituents have a significant role towards sustainable development to meet *Agenda 2063* and the SDG targets. Knowledge brokerage, science, technology and innovations will drive these Agenda if Africa is to realise any tangible benefits.

Concurrently, the [2018 Ministerial meeting](#) held during the Sixth Africa Higher Education Week and RUFORUM Biennial Conference in Nairobi challenged African Universities to develop regional investment programmes for enhancing human capital development and strengthen cross country collaboration in the field of Higher Agricultural Education and agricultural development.

CO-ORGANISERS:



Subsequently, five continental initiatives were endorsed by the 2019 [Ministerial Round table during the 15th Annual General Meeting](#) in Cape Coast Ghana. The follow on Ministerial round table during the 17th RUFORUM AGM and Triennial Conference hosted in Benin 2021, in addition to endorsement of the RUFORUM Charter, identified three core areas of focus to move the process forward

1. Strengthen Linkages Within And Across The Education Sector and other sectors
2. Partnerships For Strengthening Higher Agricultural Education And Food And Nutrition Security
3. High level policy commitment by African Ministers, Heads of State and Government to Strengthen Agri-Food Systems

This meeting is coming on the backdrop of the UNFSS where the Vice Chancellors made a statement to *Mobilise resources for continental initiatives that support human capital development that increase Africa's capability in research, innovation and entrepreneurship* and the [Lilongwe Declaration](#) of the United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) as outlined by the Summit hosted by His Excellence Dr Lazarus Chakwera, President of the Republic of Malawi. In all these convenings the need to nurture and facilitate active collaboration of universities, and national governments to promote ST&I for the benefit of community growth and development stands out.

The main objective of the 2022 Ministerial Round Table therefore is to Review Progress since Ghana and explore avenues for strengthening cross country collaboration in the field of Higher Agricultural Education and agricultural development

- a) Several milestones have been made since the 2021 Benin round table. Support towards the Strengthening Higher Agricultural Education in Africa Programme (SHA EA) was revived. The USD70 million World Bank Supported programme now reconfigured to focus on strengthen linkages between universities in participating countries and regional agricultural sector needs under the Eastern and Southern Africa Higher Education Centers of Excellence Additional Financing Project -Additional Financing (ACE II AF) is at an advanced stage in Malawi and Mozambique. Six African Centres of Excellence have been identified, five (5) in Malawi and one (1) in Mozambique. These centres are designed to promote collaboration within the countries and across the African region. We hope that additional countries will make arrangements to participate in this initiative.
- b) RUFORUM continues with its collaborative Graduate Teaching Assistant programme, that provides a framework for Africa/ Network based human capital development.
- c) New Government backed programmes have come on board, the BRIDGIN Foundation signed a USD 500 million agreement for supporting high-tech centres of Excellence in Uganda. It has further committed to support establishment of High Tech Higher Education centres in a Malawi based programme that will promote regional collaboration in the Eastern and Southern Africa region.

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- d) The RUFORUM e-learning resource platform to promote online teaching across the network was initiated. This programme is supported by the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), and the support is enabling the sharing of teaching resources across the network
- e) BADEA has also offered to provide bilateral support to 3-5 Sub-Saharan African countries to strengthen their agricultural productivity, post-harvest management and value addition
- f) Two Climate Smart Agriculture initiatives were operationalised. These are collaborative programmes with a diverse array of partners from the research sector specifically the CGAIRs, the private sector, community and public sectors.

While these stand out as islands of success, they are still fragmented and focus on a few countries. Notably, Malawi, Mozambique and to a limited extent Uganda. It is important to have a more intentional and structured approach to ensure that the higher agricultural education sector is more collaborative and connected across the continent. It is important for policy makers to explore, identify and operationalise pathways that bring together different actors but most especially convene higher agricultural education players and ST&I actors to make a meaningful contribution towards Africa’s economic development. Specifically, deliberate on areas of focus to Mobilise support from African Governments, the African Union Commission, and other stakeholders for:

1. Commitment towards long-term funding for higher agricultural education, science technology and innovations
2. Investment in youth programs that advance requisite technical skills, entrepreneurship and uptake of digital solutions to expand innovation and employability
3. Explore possibility of more countries accessing support from the World Bank through the ACE II AF funding window
4. EXPLORE FOR IMPLEMENTATION: Strategic interventions and partnerships to catalyse graduate and postdoctoral training to bolster the capacity of universities to generate the requisite knowledge, skills and innovations for the development of sustainable agri-food systems in Africa.

Approach

1. A representative of the technical experts will make a presentation on the progress, status and agreed actions to take the policy, university and other stakeholder process forward.
2. Development Partners will make statements on existing opportunities for operationalisation of the initiatives.
3. Ministers present will be expected to make brief statements on the status of commitment and provide insight on how to address the challenges affecting operationalisation of the different initiatives.
4. The Ministers round table will draw participants from Ministries of Agriculture, Higher Education, Science and Technology in dialogue with Development Partners for the realisation of the efforts to build Africa’s Science, Technology and Innovation capacity.

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Other participants expected include BADEA, World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organisation and the Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development (AOAD)

- The final output will a revised action plan and endorsement of identified areas of engagement for collaboration to promote ST&I.

Meeting Venue

The meeting will be held on **Wednesday, 14th December, 2022**, from 8:30 am to 13: 30 at **HICC**. The Session Chair will be the Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Development, Government of Zimbabwe.

A draft programme of the Round Table is attached below:

Programme

Master of Ceremonies: Dr. Emmanuel Tendai Nyhangare

Session Rapporteurs: Dr. Florence Nakayiwa, Dr. Sylvanus Mensah, Dr Hatim Elamin, Mr Arthur Fernando Inacio and Mr. Moses Waswa

| Time | Agenda item | Responsible party |
|---|--|--|
| 08:30-09:00 | Arrival and registration | Zimbabwe Local Organizing Committee (LOC) |
| Session Chair: Hon. Prof. Amon Murwira, Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development, Zimbabwe | | |
| 09:00-09:10 | Welcome Remarks | Prof. Paul Mapfumo, Vice Chancellor, University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe |
| 09:10-09:20 | Setting the Scene | Prof. Adipala Ekwamu, Executive Secretary, RUFORUM |
| 09:20-09:30 | Statement on behalf of Government of Zimbabwe | Hon. Prof. Amon Murwira, Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development, Zimbabwe |
| 09:30-10:00 | Statements by Partners (05 minutes for each partner) | H.E. Prof. Abebe Haile-Gabriel, FAO Assistant Director General and Regional Representative for Africa |
| | | H.E. Prof. Ibrahim El-Dukheri, Director General, Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development (AOAD) |
| | | Prof Gaspard Banyankimbona, Executive Secretary of the Inter-University Council of East Africa (IUCEA) |
| | | Ms. Lubna Dafaalla Ahmed Dafaalla, Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) |
| | | Dr. Roberta Malee Bassett, Global Lead for Tertiary Education, Education Global Practice |

CO-ORGANISERS:



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| | | The World Bank |
| 10:00-10:20 | Reactions to the Statements by the Partners | All |
| 10:20-10:30 | Investing in Africa's future through research and innovations: what are the key issues and needed actions? | Dr Patrick Okori, RUFORUM incoming Executive Secretary |
| 10:30-10:40 | Open discussion | All |
| 10:40-11:10 | Health Break | LOC to Guide |
| 11:10-12:10 | Country Statements by Ministers (5 Minutes per country): Status of Agriculture, Tertiary & Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation and key areas for cross-country cooperation | |
| 12:10-12:40 | General Discussions | All |
| 12:40-13:00 | Report from Technical Experts Meeting of 13 rd December 2022 and Consideration of Draft Ministerial Communique | Prof. Fanuel Tagwira, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development, Zimbabwe |
| 13:00-13:20 | Reactions to the draft report and communique | All |
| 13:20-13:30 | Closing Remarks | Hon. Dr. Anxious Jongwe Masuka, Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water, Climate and Rural Development, Zimbabwe |
| 13:30-14:30 | LUNCH | |

* Participants are invited to attend the Ministerial Dinner hosted by the Government of Zimbabwe (Time: **18:00 – 21:30**; Venue to be confirmed)

CO-ORGANISERS:

