



19th RUFORUM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

TRANSFORMATIVE HIGHER EDUCATION: EXPERIENCES FROM COLLABORATIVE ACTIONS

Date and Time: Monday, 30 October, 2023 (15:00-17:30 WAT, GMT+1)

Venue: The Tripartite Room, Palais des Congrès, Yaoundé, Cameroon

Register here to join the session: <https://bit.ly/3QGj9bb>

Plenary Session Concept Note

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Introduction

Education in the 21st century is an important pillar of development as espoused by country, [continental](#) and [global agencies](#). According to the [United Nations Populations Fund](#), 60 % of Africa's population is below 25 years, and is projected to reach 1.4 billion by 2063. Currently, millions of young Africans are engaged not integrated into the cash economy and therefore while young and could be the potential for the continent's future, the long-acclaimed demographic dividend¹ may be missed out after all. The potential for economic gains can be significant, if the appropriate policies are developed and considerable and deliberate investments in human capital, particularly among young people, are made. Demographic dividends have been realised in Asia and elsewhere when demographic transitions – “a shift from high fertility and mortality to low fertility and mortality happened. These transitions were accompanied, among other things, by programmes that increased educational inclusion, particularly of girls and women, [keeping them in school](#) and delaying the start of reproduction. For Africa, similar paths must be travelled. To be sure, according to the [African Development Bank](#), since 2015, about 12 millions young people enter the workforce annually and yet the continent can only produce about one third of the required jobs. Clearly therefore, Africa's education- industry sectors are not in synchrony because millions of young people are either underemployed or are in unfulfilling work conditions². Accordingly, learning institutions including universities can no longer ignore addressing the youth unemployment challenge as well as other challenges including new advances in technologies, globalization, the changing nature of work and citizenship, and the shifting dimensions of human subjectivity, identity and personality³.

Responding to the changes in the work economy as well as the urgent need for progress in society requires that young people acquire competencies that enable them to cope with the contemporary socio-economic

¹The demographic dividend is the economic growth potential that can result from shifts in a population's age structure, mainly when the share of the working-age population (15 to 64) is larger than the non-working-age share of the population (14 and younger, and 65 and older) (Source: UNFP).

² <https://www.vu.edu.au/sites/default/files/preparing-young-people-for-the-future-of-work-mitchell-institute.pdf>

³ <https://newlearningonline.com/new-learning/chapter-2/transformative-education-towards-new-learning>



realities around them. Universities and other learning institutions have been urged to deliver on three key sets of competencies that will enable young people to thrive in the world today and shape a better future for themselves and others. These three key competencies include:

1. Creating new value requires improved ability to innovate in order to shape better lives by establishing new employment, businesses, and services and applying them to both old and new challenges.
2. Reconciling tensions and dilemmas by appreciating the several interconnections and inter-relations between seemingly contradictory or incompatible ideas, logics and positions, and considering the results of actions from both short- and long-term perspectives.
3. Taking responsibility as a way of developing and evaluating one's own actions in light of one's experience and education, and by considering personal, ethical and societal goals and interests for a better world⁴.

The Transforming African Agricultural Universities to meaningfully contribute to Africa's growth and development (TAGDev), was designed to enable African agricultural universities and their graduates to respond to the above issues. TAGDev does so by implementing measures that enhance the application of science, technology, business and innovation in rural agricultural transformation actions. The program aims to delivering transformation in agricultural higher and tertiary education at individual, institutional and community levels, whilst creating a connection with the wider agricultural and education ecosystem. It has been implemented in two primary implementing universities ie., Egerton University and Gulu University, and scaled-out to 26 universities across 21 countries in Africa over the last seven years of implementation. The TAGDev program has demonstrated the ability of African universities to internally transform and produce entrepreneurial graduates who have personal dynamism and empathy for people and society. At Institutional level, the program has supported universities to re-orient themselves as development facilitators that create new value in the economy among others. Additionally, university leaders have been engaged to create and drive the education transformation agenda. Building on these successes, the program partners and implementers will be sharing lessons and best practices during the 19th RUFORUM Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Purpose and objectives of side event

The purpose of this meeting is to review and share lessons learned, as well as to identify new ways to accelerate the transformation of African agricultural higher and tertiary education in order to produce graduates, products, and services that meet future work requirements, and to support community transformation and development. The specific objectives of the meeting are

- a. Deliberate on institutional changes required to undertake for transformative changes and reimagining the TAGDev future;
- b. Review and agree on actionable resolutions to enable and integrate entrepreneurship in university education, research and outreach agenda and processes;
- c. Review and agree on new research for development thrusts including neglected yet important research areas

⁴ https://www.oecd.org/education/2030-project/teaching-and-learning/learning/transformational-competencies/Transformative_Competencies_for_2030_concept_note.pdf



d. Discuss sustainability of the development facilitation in communities.

Meeting approach

This session will be held in a blended manner (virtual and in person). Two keynote talks will be made. The first talk will provide a broad overview of requisite and ongoing actions and opportunities for engaging Africa’s Young people in the continents’ economic development. The second talk will share lessons learnt from investing in universities as carriers and catalysts of higher agricultural education transformation through TAGDev.

Subsequently, three sub sessions will follow that have been designed to enhance engagement of all the participants and stakeholders. Each session will have a panel discussion that who will share their view points and address questions from the wider public. Online participants will engage via a link that will be shared and available on the AGM and conference website. In order to achieve the objectives stated above, there will be three sub-sessions as indicated in the detailed program.

Programme

Time	Activity	Person in-charge
14:30-15:00	Arrival and short-overview of the outside hall exhibition	Ms. Evaline Acan/Emmanuel Okalany
15:00-15:10	Guests settling	Director of Ceremonies
15:10-15:15	Opening Remarks from RUFORUM Executive Secretary	Prof. Patrick Okori, Executive Secretary, RUFORUM
15:15-15:20	Opening Remarks from TAGDev Steering Committee Chairperson	Prof. Peter Mbat, Vice Chancellor, Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University
15:20-14:50	Key note address: “Young Africa Works is about our present and future: The Central place of Education in its Delivery”	Dr. Peter Materu, Chief Program Officer
15:50-16:00	TAGDev: From dreams to reality	Prof. Anthony Egeru, Manager Training and Community Development
16:00-16:10	TAGDev evidence video	Mr. David Amitu, Technical Specialist Systems Development, RUFORUM
16:10-16:30	Panel discussion 1: Young people creating value and taking responsibility of their and societies future <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ms. Lilian Onyango, TAGDev Alumnus: Climate Change adaptation and Mitigation action in Kenya 2. Mr. Gordon Akejo, TAGDev Alumnus: Seeds and rural finance for empowering 	Panel Moderator



	women farmers and entrepreneurs thrive in Uganda 3. Ms. Adong Immaculate, TAGDev Alumnus: Expanding access for small scale irrigation facilities among farmers	
16:30-16:45	Health Break	
16:45-17:05	Panel Two: University led programs create impact in society 1. Prof. Patience Mshenga, Dean Faculty of Agriculture, Egerton University: Enabling student led entrepreneurship integrate within university processes in Kenya 2. Prof. Agnes Mwangombe, Prof. Emeritus, University of Nairobi: Alternative pathways to food security from neglected crops of importance in Kenya. 3. Prof. Annor Festus Frempong, University of Cape Coast: Delivering with sustainability in sight for smallholder farmers in Ghana.	Panel Moderator
17:05-17:25	Panel Three: Institutional changes driving transformations at the University 1. Prof. George Openjuru, Vice Chancellor, Gulu University 2. Prof. Isaac Kibwage, Vice Chancellor, Egerton University 3. Prof. Mathias Fonteh, Director COLTECH, University of Bamenda	Panel Moderator
17:25-17:30	Wrap-up and in-person conversations in the Auditorium	All

Expected outputs

- a. **Insights and knowledge sharing:** Participants in the session will gain insights into the TAGDev operations and the imperatives for transformative higher agricultural and tertiary education in African University and TVETs.
- b. **Policy recommendations:** The session is expected to highlight policy recommendations and strategies starting with universities to inform scaling out of TAGDev. These recommendations may address issues



such as safeguards and inclusion, ethics, teaching and infrastructure investments, sustainability and cost leverage among others ethics.

- c. **Collaboration and networking opportunities:** The session will provide a platform for researchers, educators, policymakers, and entrepreneurship agencies to connect, network, and establish collaborations.
- d. **Research directions and agenda:** The session may identify research gaps and highlight future research directions.
- e. **Action plans and implementation strategies:** Participants may develop action plans and implementation strategies to implement transformative agricultural Higher and Tertiary Education..

Participants

In order for this session to be a success a number of stakeholders are invited. The following categories of participants will have different roles and expectations as outlined below:

- a. **Researchers and Academics:** Scholars and researchers who will provide insights on how best to deliver impact community oriented agricultural development.
- b. **Educators and academic staff:** Instructors, and educators who share their experiences and provide insights on transformative and inclusive education.
- c. **Industry actors:** Business development service providers and other agriculture and education ecosystem actors who will provide insights for improved entrepreneurial education, and cost leverage points for actions.
- d. **Policymakers and Government Representatives:** Policymakers, government officials, and education ministry representatives who will share their insights on costs leverage points for propose dand ongoing actions.
- e. **Development partners and international organizations:** Representatives from international organizations interested in improving education in Africa who will share insights into global trends, best practices, and collaborative projects.
- f. **Students:** Students and alumni who will share their past experiences and key lessons for improving future programming.

For more details visit <https://www.ruforum.org/AGM2023/>