



19th RUFORUM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

ACCELERATING ECONOMIC GROWTH: TRENDS, YOUTH, POLICY AND FUTURES

Date and Time: 31st October, 2023 (14:30-16:00 GMT+1)

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

Registration link: <https://bit.ly/44dDk3B>

Concept Note for the Scientific Session

Contact:

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BACKGROUND

Sub-Saharan Africa, home to more than 1 billion people, half of whom will be under 25 years old by 2050, is a diverse continent offering human and natural resources that have the potential to yield inclusive growth and eradicate poverty in the region. The region is dominated by low and low-middle income countries, half of them are fragile or conflict-affected. Africa's economy has continued to grow even after the COVID-19 pandemic by 6.9% and 4.1% in 2022 to 2023 (African Development Bank). However, the Bank's economic outlook warns of headwinds facing Africa's economies, many of which directly impact on agriculture among other sectors. These include tightening global financial conditions and soaring food and energy prices. This is likely to increase the domestic debt service costs as well as climate change damaging impact on the domestic food supply¹. This calls for bold policy actions to help African economies remain resilient despite the risks.

The theme of the 19th RUFORUM AGM, "**Transforming Higher Education to Sustainably Feed and Create Prosperity for Africa**", is mindful of these risks. RUFORUM recognizes that agricultural contributions to the national and continental GDPs is a key in wealth and prosperity creation. RUFORUM transformative programmes have induced changes leading to high-performing African universities that produce skilled, proactive graduates, demand-driven research outputs and innovation in response to national and continental development priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The RUFORUM AGM, as a supreme decision-making organ of the Network, brings together universities' researchers, policymakers and partners to prioritise, seek guidance, and share lessons and experiences on building Africa's human capital, generation of STIs and relevant policy information to underpin economic growth and development on the continent.





It is against this background that RUFORUM holds scientific sessions to present, showcase and draw lessons from ongoing scientific endeavours in African Universities during its AGM. The scientific sessions will include oral and poster presentations as well as exhibitions. They provide an opportunity for academia and development practitioners to deliberate on their research findings and the policy implications, among others. Policy implications informed by evidence improve prospects for faster and justifiable growth and poverty reduction and, at the same time, have broad public support to ensure sustainability. Among the topical issues of discussion is **“Accelerating economic growth: Trends, Youth, Policy Practice and Futures.”** This session four will discuss the following:

- Aspects of smallholder agriculture: feeding and growing Africa (Case studies across the continent);
- Enhancing value chain functionality: methods, approaches and inclusive policy design and experiences from ongoing initiatives;
- The economic status of the region, contribution of the youth to the economic growth
- Policy to enhance economic growth and future practices

African Universities and development partners will inform policy and investments through research and policy engagements.

OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the RUFORUM Scientific Sessions is to create a platform for researchers, opinion leaders, and development experts to exchange knowledge, share best practices, and discuss innovative approaches to address the challenges and opportunities that will contribute to the enhancement of economic growth in Africa.

Specific Objectives

1. Provide an interdisciplinary and multi-stakeholder platform to present and discuss the most recent scientific knowledge, technological innovations, emerging trends, concerns, practical challenges encountered, and solutions adopted to enhance economic growth in Africa.
2. Provide informed evidence to policymakers for economic growth and sustainability

Approach

The session will begin with a plenary session addressed by a Key Note speaker in the plenary session. After the plenary session, the participants will break into three parallel sessions where different topics will be presented and discussed. Finally, the participants will return to the plenary session to receive feedback from the rapporteurs of the three parallel sessions.





Expected Outcomes

- Strengthened networking among members of the scientific community working in agriculture and related fields;
- Focus given to accelerating economic growth in Africa;
- Increased visibility of research and development outputs from Africa; and
- Improved methods for increasing the uptake of research results by other stakeholders

Expected Participants

Researchers, Policymakers, and Development Partners

Programme

TUESDAY 31 ST October, 2023	
PLENNARY SESSION 3	
CHAIR: Prof. Xavier Poshiwa, Great Zimbabwe University, Zimbabwe	
RAPPORTEUR: Waswa ¹ Moses, Emmanuel Okalany, Napoleon Kajunju, Selma Ndapewa Nghituwamhata and Cameroon-TBC	
Time	
14:00-14:05	WELCOME REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR Prof. Xavier Poshiwa, Great Zimbabwe University, Zimbabwe
14:05-14:20	Key Note Address Title: Accelerating economic growth: Trends, Youth, Policy and Futures Mr. Sofian Ben Mouaddeb, Advisor to the Cabinet of Director General, Islamic Organisation for Food Security
14:20-14:30	Respondent Prof. Johnny Mugisha, Makerere University, Uganda
14:30-16:00 BREAKOUT SESSIONS	
Session 1: SMALLHOLDER AGRICULTURE: FEEDING AND GROWING AFRICA? CASE STUDIES ACROSS THE CONTINENT	
BLENDED SESSION: https://bit.ly/3QJzDPQ	
VENUE: The Tripartite Room	
CHAIR: Prof. Leroy W. Cegbe, Dean, William R. Tolbert, Jr. College of Agriculture and Forestry University of Liberia, Liberia	
RAPPORTEUR: Waswa ² Moses, Napoleon Kajunju and Cameroon-TBC	
14:30-14:45	Key Note paper: The role of smallholder agriculture in feeding and growing Africa Dr. Tshilidzi Madzivhandila, CEO and Head of Mission, FANR PAN

¹ All issues regarding rapporteuring should be address to Waswa and Okalany

² All issues regarding rapporteuring should be address to Waswa and Okalany





14:45- 15:00	Panelist 1: ASARECA: Eastern and Central Africa Experiences	
15:00-15:20	Panelist 2: CORAF: West and Central Africa Experience Prof. Florence Fonteh, Member of the Scientific Committee of CORAF	
15:20-15:40	Panelist 3: CARDESSA: Southern Africa experience	
15:40-16:00	Discussion and take home message	
16:00-16:05	Closing remarks	
Session 2: ENHANCING VALUE CHAIN FUNCTIONALITY; METHODS, APPROACHES AND INCLUSIVE POLICY DESIGN BLENDED SESSION: https://bit.ly/3OZwuKG VENUE: Complex A CHAIR: Prof. Irene Susana Egyir, University of Ghana, Legon RAPPORTEUR: Waswa ³ Moses, Napoleon Kajunju and Cameroon-TBC		
14:30- 14:45	Key Note Paper: Enhancing Value Chain Functionality: Methods, Approaches And Inclusive Policy Design Dr. Frederic Lancon, Scientific Director, Value Chain Analysis for Development (VCA4D), AGRINATURA	
14:45-15:00	Panelist 1: Dr. Moses Siambi, CIMMYT: Experiences from value chain strengthening for smallholders in Eastern and Southern Africa	
15:00-15:20	Panelist 2: Dr. Arega Alene, Principal Scientist, IITA	
15:20-15:40	Panelist 3: Christophe Eken, President, Cameroon Chamber of Commerce	
15:40-16:00	Discussion	
16:00-16:05	Closing remarks and take home message	
Session 3: Policy to enhance economic growth and future practices BLENDED SESSION: https://bit.ly/3DV5WDY VENUE: Meeting Room E CHAIR: Dr. Irene Frempong, Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa, Ghana RAPPORTEUR: Waswa ⁴ Moses, Selma Ndapewa Nghituwamhata and Cameroon-TBC		
14:30-14:45	Key Note paper: Policy to enhance economic growth and future practices Dr. Silim Nahdy, Executive Director, African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS)	
14:45-15:00	Panelist 1: Dr. Ephraim Nkonya, Non-Resident Fellow, IFPRI	
15:00-15:20	Panelist 2: Bouchaib Boulanouar, Senior Officer, Africa Initiative, Mohamed VI Polytechnic University, Morocco	
15:20-15:40	Panelist 3: EU representative	

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15:40-16:00	Discussion	
16:00-16:05	Closing remarks	

Co-organized by:

