



## 2<sup>nd</sup> RUFORUM TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE

### CONCEPT NOTE

#### PRINCIPALS AND DEANS MEETING

**Date:** 11<sup>th</sup> August 2024 **Time:** 08.30 –12.30 CAT

**Venue:** Hilton Hotel Windhoek, Namibia

**Registration Link:** <https://bit.ly/4dZoHXl>

**Contact:** Prof Majaliwa Mwanjalolo ([m.majaliwa@ruforum.org](mailto:m.majaliwa@ruforum.org))

### BACKGROUND

The Principals and Deans Committee is one of the governance organs of RUFORUM. This Committee is the critical link between the operational side of RUFORUM Member Universities and the policy-making side. It is the committee most familiar with issues arising from RUFORUM programmes. The Committee is constituted by Principals and Deans of Faculties of Agriculture and related sciences, Science, Technology and Innovation of universities participating in RUFORUM's activities. The committee is expected to:

1. Advise the RUFORUM Secretariat on activity progress and issues emerging at individual university and Country levels
2. Review of issues from the National Fora and Regional Thematic Groups and feedback of information to the Secretariat and Technical Committee;

The National Forums (or RUFORUM Chapters) are established at Country level, according to the specificity of each Country. National Forums provide a platform for stakeholders to articulate demands for university services, advocate for change, and provide feedback on the utility of RUFORUM's activities. It is expected to:

- a) be chaired by a distinguished person outside the university system and has a Secretariat based in a member university. Each National Forum meets at least once a year (face to face or virtually) and has the following functions:
  - formulate the National Agriculture and related sciences, Science, Technology, Innovation Training and Research priorities for the Universities in the member Countries;
  - ensure that financial and other resources are mobilized and effectively deployed to carry out RUFORUM activities at National level;
  - disseminate the Agriculture and related sciences, Science, Technology, Innovation Training and Research products produced by the Universities in the member Country;
  - Hold Annual National Forum events to foster collaboration linked to University research, training, outreach and wider policy, and stakeholder engagement.



In fulfilling these functions of the Principals and Deans Committee meeting be held on 11<sup>th</sup> August in Windhoek, Namibia will discuss progress from the RUFORUM member universities including GTA and how to revitalize the national forums.

Further, RUFORUM Principals and Deans Committee being the technical advisory Committee and key implementers of RUFORUM's interventions at national and university level, engaging them to co-create the network's transformative education and research and innovation Agenda is a prerequisite. The first consultative meeting with the Principals and Deans will be held on 11<sup>th</sup> August in Windhoek, Namibia.

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) stands at the forefront of agricultural development in Africa, nurturing the next generation of agricultural leaders, and driving innovation in the sector. Agricultural education and research are central to RUFORUM's mission of promoting sustainable agricultural development in Africa. However, traditional approaches to education and research may no longer suffice in the face of evolving challenges such as climate change, food insecurity, and rapid technological advancements. Transformative approaches are therefore needed to equip students and researchers with the skills, knowledge, and mindset required to tackle these challenges and drive positive change in African agriculture.

As the challenges facing African agriculture become increasingly complex, there is an urgent need for a research and transformative education agenda to empower RUFORUM member universities to address these challenges effectively. A Research Agenda is key for the network to provide a strategic framework in terms of research activities by identifying priority thematic areas of focus. This will allow RUFORUM Secretariat to allocate resources more effectively, ensuring that research efforts are aligned with the most pressing needs of African agriculture. It will also facilitate collaboration and networking among RUFORUM member universities, research institutions, and other stakeholders. By establishing common research priorities, RUFORUM Secretariat can foster partnerships that leverage diverse expertise and resources to tackle complex agricultural challenges more comprehensively, enhance its capacity to influence policy and build the necessary capacity to implement the agenda.

The meeting will further elect new office bearers of the Principals and Deans Sub-Committee.

## OBJECTIVES

1. To deliberate and discuss way forward on higher agricultural education and research issues emerging from member universities
2. Validate and refine:
  - a. The higher education transformative agenda that reshapes agricultural education and prepares students to become effective leaders, innovators, and change-makers in a rapidly evolving global development landscape.



- b. Research and innovation agenda that facilitates universities to be at the forefront of addressing the most critical challenges facing agriculture and natural resources while ensuring relevance, impact, and sustainability.

3.

## APPROACH

The event will start with keynote presentations on the draft Transformative Education Agenda and Research and Innovation Agenda. This will be followed by short discussions and then group work. The participants will come back to the plenary to make presentations on the group work. The participants will be invited to the general discussion planned immediately after the group work presentations. The event will provide key recommendations on the two agenda and provide actions for their smooth implementation.

## OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES OF MEETING

Two key outputs are envisioned; i) RUFORUM's Transformative Education Agenda; and ii) RUFORUM's Research and Innovation Agenda. These two should reflect a collective agreement on the higher/tertiary agricultural education needs, and agricultural and natural resource management challenges and opportunities that can be addressed and how they will be addressed by quality education, science, technology, and innovation. The two outputs will be presented in the forms of;

1. White papers on;
  - a. RUFORUM's Transformative Education Agenda,
  - b. RUFORUM's Research and Innovation Agenda.
2. Recommendation for improving the two draft Agenda.
3. Action plan outlining specific activities, timelines, and responsibilities for implementing the Transformative Education and Research Agenda.
4. Partnerships leveraging diverse expertise, resources, and networks to support the implementation of the agenda and promote collective impact.



## PARTICIPANTS

Principals and Deans of Member universities and the RUFORUM Secretariat.

## ORGANIZERS

The event is organized by RUFORUM with support of the Committee of Principals and Deans, the Government of Namibia, and RUFORUM member universities in Namibia.

## PROGRAMME

### SUNDAY 11<sup>th</sup> August, 2024

**Venue:** Hilton Hotel

**Registration Link:** <https://bit.ly/4dZoHXl>

**Chair:** Prof Mathias Fonteh, Chair of the Principals and Deans Committee

**Rapporteur:** Waswa Moses, Emmanuel Okalany, Selma Ndapewa Nghituwamhata, Yamungu

Time	
09:00-09:10	<b>Welcome Remarks from the Chair</b> <b>Prof Mathias Fonteh, Chair of the Principals and Deans Committee</b>
09:10-09:30	<b>Report from the Principals and Deans Sub-Committee</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GTA framework</li> <li>• National Forum revitalization</li> <li>• RUFORUM AICCRA materials</li> </ul>
	<b>Discussion</b>
09:30-10:30	<b>Emerging issues from the universities</b>
10:30-11:00	<b>Health Break</b>
11:00-11:10	
11:10-11:20	
11:20-12:00	<b>Presentation</b> <b>Title: <i>Transformative Education Agenda (draft)</i></b> Prof Anthony Egeru, RUFORUM
12:00-12:20	<b>Presentation</b> <b>Title: <i>Research Agenda (Draft)</i></b> Prof. Majaliwa JGM, RUFORUM
12:20-12:30	Way Forward and Closing
12:30-	Lunch and departures