

About RUFORUM Webinar Series 2020

Prof Adipala Ekwamu, RUFORUM Executive Secretary

10 June 2020

The COVID 19 Pandemic (COVID-19), is unleashing a public health crises, with widespread consequences across all sectors, especially for economically vulnerable people not only in Africa, but globally. The Pandemic has dramatically changed the Global landscape affecting all facets of life- politics including global alliances, socio-economics, livelihoods, and operations of many institutions including governments and universities. It has significantly affected education as almost all institutions of learning have been forced to close and most students cannot have access to education given that most of them rely on face-to-face learning within the campuses offering education. This is the crisis facing higher education sector in Africa, and indeed the broad education value chain.

Many Institutions and Governments are responding not only to deal with the current crisis, but also post COVID-19. This requires us to learn from what has happened, make adjustments and reposition for the future, which invariably will include other crises. Moreover, we need to take advantage of the crisis to reposition the role of universities in preparing for the future. Accordingly, RUFORUM as a Network of 126 Universities operating in 38 African countries is convening a series of 10 Webinars (<https://www.ruforum.org/ruforum-webinar-series>) to foster cross learning, and dialogue to explore both the current and post-COVID 19 landscape with the aim of galvanising Africa-wide and international collaboration for needed interventions, including improvement in livelihoods of our people and the environment.

Today 10 June 2020 we hold our First Webinar (<https://www.ruforum.org/introductory-note-webinar-1>) under the theme **Learning from a Crisis: University Leaders' response to the COVID-**

19 Pandemic. This first dialogue is to help us learn from three Universities in Africa (Makerere University in Uganda; University of Mohamed the 6th Polytechnique in Morocco; and University of Free State in South Africa) and one from Europe (Wageningen University and Research) on how the Pandemic has affected their institutions and how their institutions are responding and repositioning themselves. I thank the leadership of these four universities for accepting to share their perspectives. This will be followed by a second Webinar where we will hear from Key Development Actors and Partners on needed actions to reposition Higher Education in Africa, during and Post COVID-19; followed by the third with African Policy makers focused on the wider education value chain.

Subsequently, we will then have seven follow up Webinars focused on Medical health issues, Agriculture and Food Security, Environment and Livelihoods, and finally one on Online learning and teaching. All the Webinars will be streamed in our social media platforms and will be recorded for future viewing.

I invite you to participate in these Webinar Series and we will be most grateful to receive your feedback and suggestions for moving forward. Feel free to contact me at e.adipala@ruforum.org or Dr Francis Otto at f.otto@ruforum.org