



## HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA PARTNERS CONSULTATIVE FORUM

20<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Marrakech, Morocco

*Theme: Building Africa's agricultural science, technology and innovation capacity for accelerated, sustainable and inclusive development*

### Summary of day one

Participants present

1. 62 participants from 39 institutions from 23 countries

### Messages from the introductions and expectations of participants

1. All partners expressed that the purpose of their coming was to seek partnerships and synergies in higher agricultural education for development
2. Thematic areas of interest as expressed by the participants included digital technologies for agricultural transformation, data science, policy advocacy, soil and plant nutrition and entrepreneurship
3. As a host OCP appreciated and believed in the commitment of RUFORUM, World Bank and other partners to support agricultural transformation in Africa, and to mobilize partnership for this noble cause
4. RUFORUM informed the meeting that African Ministers meeting held 23 October 2019 in Nairobi, Kenya endorsed Africa's Universities Agenda for Higher Agricultural Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (AHESTI) and urged Partners to work with African Governments and Universities to implement the AHESTI
5. African Ministers of Higher Education, Science and Technology meeting held in October 2016 in Cape Town South Africa called for a regional initiative to Build Africa's Science, Technology and Innovation Capacity (BASIC)

### Areas of Focus and Discussion [Partner Statements]

1. The Consultative meeting to generate strategic synergies and roadmap on how universities can contribute to Africa's development
2. RUFORUM seeks to see African universities which take leadership of its agenda and contributes to global development
3. The key parameters needed to transform African agriculture: skills for the youth, digital eco-system that gives farmers access to technology, entrepreneurship, precision



agriculture, transparency in markets, and human capital that is open to skills and partnership within and outside Africa including with the private sector

4. Initial steps for coalition of support for Strengthening Higher Agricultural Education in Africa (SHAHA) to catalyse change through regional anchor universities
5. Degree/ doctoral programs consider focus on quality of students trained in addition to quantity especially at both undergraduate and graduate- Masters and PhD levels
6. Skill development be considered as an integral part of enhancing agricultural development especially in Africa where the need is great
7. Funding is necessary, but insufficient condition, to achieve the sectorial changes needed in the higher education and constituent sectors
8. Sustainability of higher education interventions depends to a large extent on ownership, which in turn depends on congruence between university and funder priorities
9. Higher agricultural initiatives should be inclusive of all categories of young people such as girls, those from economically disadvantaged groups, disabled, refugees etc.
10. The development of action plans to move forward the deliberations beyond March 2019

### **Key issues for each AHESI flagship**

#### **TAGDev**

- Agricultural research should not be delinked from agricultural practice/community engagement
- Focus on capacity and practices that promote lifelong learning for the graduates as opposed to continuous curriculum review (dynamic Environment)

#### **RANCH**

- The RANCH model may need further review if it is to be adopted for the francophone countries
- Adopt regional standards setting councils borrowing from lessons from the Collaborative Masters in Agriculture and Applied Economics (CMAEE) and other similar initiatives
- Incentivise academic function and Include policy advocacy as a university function in addition to teaching, learning and outreach
- The Strengthening Higher Agricultural Education in Africa (SHAHA) is key to developing skills for agricultural transformation in Africa and should incorporate TVET, Agricultural Digital Technologies and developing resilience to climate change and variability



## CREATE

- Integrate soft skills training as part of academic training such as partnerships, development proposals
- Find new ways of incentivising excellence such as community engagement, entrepreneurship and innovation
- Give focus to strengthening staff capacities in African Universities
- Give focus to attracting female students to graduate training programmes especially in STEM

## K-HUB

- E-learning approaches should be supported by a community of practices and experiences
- Need to build capacity to collect, analysis and share data
- Harmonise policies for sharing both university research and data of farmers cognisant of Intellectual Property and data privacy issues

## **Commitments from RUFORUM partners for building Africa's agricultural science, technology and innovation capacity for accelerated, sustainable and inclusive development**

- BADEA willing to consider co-design and co-finance a pilot intervention in Higher Agriculture Education in the areas of innovations, youth entrepreneurship, women empowerment
- BADEA is willing to discuss the deliberations from the RUFORUM/OCP/UM6P meeting with the consortium of Arab funders such as Kuwait Foundation Fund, Arabian Fund
- BADEA is willing to discuss with OCP the Africa-Arab Export Programme
- BADEA is willing to link RUFORUM with IsDB to explore possibility of RUFORUM participating in the Reverse Skill development
- AOAD to advocate for RUFORUM and AUC to foster agricultural development and harness partnership with AUC on implementing Afro-Arab cooperation in agriculture and food systems
- AOAD committed to collaborate with and advocate for RUFORUM in Arab region
- Mastercard Foundation to committed to working with universities to reach out to communities
- OCP Committed to building digital platforms for knowledge sharing and learning across African universities
- OCP committed to Strengthening research and innovation initiatives in Africa including SHAEA, BASTIC, Regional Academic Mobility and research chairs



- UM6P to work with RUFORUM to implement the regional PhD programme which draws participation from the rest of Sub Saharan Africa.
- UM6P committed to collaborative arrangements for Internships, mentorships and guest lectures from TAGEMEO (Egerton), EPRC (Makerere), CARD (Lilongwe University) and other policy related institutions
- Support for increased exposure to students under RUFORUM through the Rutgers University annual community engagement conference

### **Recommendations**

1. Universities to mainstream soft skills and community outreach in their training programmes
2. Give greater attention to Digital Agriculture and Data Science
3. Scale up TAGDEV to more countries
4. World Bank to expand SHAEA to more countries
5. Develop Networked Centres of Excellence focussed on STI
6. RUFORUM to develop a regional initiative for Strengthening Staff capacities and infrastructure development in African Universities
7. RUFORUM to seek help from OCP, African Development Bank and other partners to organize Africa's Heads of State Summit on BASTIC
8. RUFORUM to follow up with Partners on their indicated areas of interest

### **Areas agreed for corporation between RUFORUM and OCP-UM6P**

1. Train and develop African visionary Next Generation of policy, science and technology leaders. Leverage on the current initiative by RUFORUM, OCP/UM6P, UNESCO including Graduate Teaching Assistantship to increase staff capacities in African universities
2. Build Digital Platforms for knowledge sharing and learning across African Universities for example Data Science, Foresight, E-learning
3. Strengthen Research and Innovation initiatives in Africa. Including SHAEA, BASTIC, Regional Academic Mobility and Research Chairs and build Foresight Capacity for Africa in link with public policy unit at UM6P
4. Leverage OCP/UM6P and RUFORUM Networks for partnership brokerage potential. For example ICABAR and international institutions and universities
5. Leverage technological and infrastructure capacity at OCP/UM6P and RUFORUM network: Living labs, Agriculture platforms, Data Center, Value chains to address country specific needs e.g. Alliance between Rwanda OCP and MIT