

# Press Release



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## RUFORUM Convenes stakeholders to develop an Implementation Plan for the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa

21<sup>st</sup> September, 2015



Right to left : H.E Dr. Martial De Paul Ikounga, the African Union Commissioner for Human Resource, Science and Technology, handing over the STISTA Booklet to Honourable Prof. Emmanuel Fabiano, Minister of Education, Science and Technology in Malawi during the opening ceremony

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) on 15-16 September, 2015 convened a stakeholders meeting in Lilongwe, Malawi to develop an Implementation Plan for the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa Priority One. This was a follow up of the earlier meeting in March, 2015, where the African Union Commission (AUC) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development Coordinating

Agency (NPCA) met with key stakeholders in South Africa to agree on a roadmap and framework for implementing the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024 (STISA 2024).

During his opening remarks, Honourable Dr. Emmanuel Fabiano, the Malawi Minister of Education, Science and Technology emphasised the need to enhance cooperation and coordination of sectors of education, science, technology and agriculture within Malawi and other countries for STISA 2024 to flourish. He noted the importance of strengthening linkages between universities and agricultural institutions.

RUFORUM's focus under the STISA 2024 mechanism is on Priority One of eradication of hunger and achieving food security. This is as part of its commitment under the MoU between RUFORUM and Africa Union Commission (AUC) signed in Mozambique during the RUFORUM Biennial Conference in July 2014. RUFORUM is also keen to ensure that human capital development, particularly at postgraduate level, is strengthened to support operations of all the six STISA Priority areas. STISA 2024 provides an important mechanism

for RUFORUM and African universities to contribute towards the Agenda 2063 “The Africa We Want”.

The two day meeting was concluded with commitment from the Government of Malawi to support and champion the implementation of STISTA 2024. The meeting was organised by the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR) and hosted by RUFORUM, African Union Commission and the Government of Malawi.

#### *Higher education for Africa\**

- Africa needs to produce future leaders who will promote better governance and management in all sectors, and facilitate innovative solutions to society’s problems.
- Universities are best placed to provide the trained labour force needed as the drive for knowledge-based economies takes hold on the continent through producing more PhDs and more ‘industry-ready’ graduates
- Postgraduate enrolment both in master’s and PhD programmes in Africa rose from 6.9 per cent of the total enrolment in 1997 to 9.3 per cent by 2014 as a result of educational reforms.

\* Source: Sci Dev Net. Article: *Making higher education work for Africa: Facts and figures* by Irene Friesenhahn.

## **RUFORUM**

Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) is a dynamic regional network of 55 member universities operating in 22 African countries that fosters collaboration, coordination, training and research amongst member universities. Its vision is to help build a vibrant agricultural sector in Africa. RUFORUM helps African universities produce high-performing graduates and high-quality research, responsive to the demands of African farmers for innovation to generate sustainable livelihoods and national economic development. To share our work, call +256-417-713-300, email [communications@ruforum.org](mailto:communications@ruforum.org), or visit us online at [www.ruforum.org](http://www.ruforum.org) or on our blog at <http://blog.ruforum.org/>

For additional information, photos and interviews with key delegates, contact Ms Joan Apio, Communications Publicity and Marketing Officer, below.

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