

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) Summary Report on implementation of STISA 2024 –August 2019

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) is a consortium of 114 Universities in 38 countries spanning the African continent with a vision to create *‘vibrant, transformative universities to catalyse sustainable, inclusive agricultural development to feed and create prosperity for Africa’*. RUFORUM Operations are guided by the [RUFORUM Vision 2030](#) and the [operational plan 2018-2022](#) that articulates the business case and rationale for investment in Africa’s Agricultural Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (AHESI). Its mandate of providing a platform for networking, resource mobilization and advocacy; rationalizing resource use; and, promoting integration of member universities into Africa’s development processes is underpinned by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the African Union Commission signed in 2014 to support the implementation of the African Union Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024 (STISA -2024), Priority One **“Eradication of hunger and achieving food and nutrition security”**. This report summarises key achievements for the year 2018/2019;

1. To foster agribusiness and entrepreneurship to address and respond to African socio-economic challenges, RUFORUM awarded eleven (11) additional RUFORUM Entrepreneurship Challenge Program (RECAP) projects under the support from Mastercard Foundation (7); African Development Bank (2); and Arab Bank for Economic Development (2) to eleven universities in Burundi (1), Ethiopia (1), Kenya (1), Senegal (1), South Sudan (1), Swaziland (1), Uganda (4) and Zimbabwe (1). The **nine** previously awarded RECAPs have engaged 339 incubatees (122 female; 217 Male) in [business development](#), [value addition](#), development of [innovations](#), securing [financing](#) from the private sector, and enabled implementing universities [collaborate](#) with the private sector.
2. As part of knowledge co-creation, RUFORUM continued to implement the framework for collaboration between universities and technical, vocational education and training institutions (TVET) by awarding three Community Action Research Programme Plus (CARP+)¹ projects to University of Free State, South Africa (wool value chain); Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Botswana (safflower value chain); and, University of Namibia, Namibia (encroacher bushes value chain). [On-going CARP+ projects](#) have to-date engaged 253 TVET students (98 females, 155 males) from nine TVET institutions in **Benin** (4); **Kenya** (1); **Uganda** (3); and, **Zimbabwe** (1).
3. RUFORUM supported Science Technology and Innovation (STI) policy reforms by facilitating the first Extra-Ordinary [Summit](#) of the Committee of Ten Heads of State and Government (C10) Championing Education, Science and Technology in Africa, held on 2nd -3rd November, 2018 in Lilongwe, Malawi. The C10 summit developed a [declaration](#) and [action plan](#) where RUFORUM in collaboration with other partners was [mandated](#) to oversee the implementation of specific activities.
4. Held Development Partners’ meetings in [Nairobi, Kenya](#), and in [Marrakesh, Morocco](#) to explore potential for stronger collaboration in support of human capital development for transforming agri-food systems in Africa.
5. RUFORUM undertook country level consultations for the Strengthening Higher Agricultural Education in Africa ([SHAEA](#)) initiative in Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi and Mozambique, and established key issues driving national agriculture transformation processes.
6. To enhance professional capabilities to manage and govern Science Technology and innovation, awarded 22 additional PhDs with support from Social and Environmental Trade-offs in African Agriculture (SENTINEL Project) (19 PhDs); and Mastercard Foundation (3 PhDs). Further supported ninety (90) University staff (24 female; 66 male) from twenty nine (29) African Universities undertake PhD studies through the Graduate Teaching Assistantship programme.
7. RUFORUM strengthened institutional leadership capacities by retooling nineteen (19) Post-doc fellows and nineteen (19) other participants in leadership and management training (16–20 October, 2018). The training provided participants with skills in navigating difficult conversations, working in their sphere of influence, brainstorming and negotiation.
8. RUFORUM enhanced the understanding of staffing and student capacities in the African higher education sector in selected RUFORUM Member Universities by developing 40 institutional [fact sheets](#) detailing capacities in agricultural higher education and various demographic characteristics of teaching staff and student populations.
9. To support agribusiness and entrepreneurship development in Africa, competitively [awarded](#) a seed grant of \$2000 to twenty three (23) Youth under the [RUFORUM Young African Entrepreneurs Competition \(RUYAEC\)](#).

An emerging issue is the increasing demand for RUFORUM to facilitate resource mobilization for Member Universities. This may require universities to co-fund resource mobilisation efforts.

¹ The CARP program aims to encourage universities to develop and invest in more comprehensive and sustained action research into a particular geographical area or in a selected commodity along the full value chain. The CARP+ is defined by inclusion of the TVET