



RUFORUM-UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY



Contents

Community Engagement	1
The Quest for Distinction	1
The Special Significance of Community Engagement for RUFORUM and its Member Universities	2
Listening and Reflecting	4
RUCES Vision	5
RUCES Mission	5
RUCES Operating Principles	5
RUCES Goal and Objectives.....	6
STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS.....	8
Goal 1: Institutionalise community engagement within the university ecosystem of institutional structures and regulatory frameworks	8
Goal 2: Develop, implement, research and disseminate high quality community engaged learning experiences.....	14
Goal 3: Support rigorous community engaged research that advances disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge and contributes to the well-being of communities.	18
Goal 4: Develop, demonstrate, research and disseminate high quality community engaged outreach programs.	21
Outcomes and Benefits of University Community Engagement	23
Indicators of Engagement	26
Monitoring and Evaluation	25
Implementation Arrangements	28
Conclusion: Helping Universities Shape Africa’s Future	29

The Quest for Distinction

The RUFORUM University-Community Engagement Strategy identifies current institutional goals and strategies for capitalizing on the exceptional assets and opportunities that form RUFORUM and its member Universities' experience. The strategy focuses on facilitating member universities to become national, continental and international models for community engagement and impact.

Through community-engaged teaching, training and learning; community-engaged research, innovation and scholarship; and community-engaged service, outreach and community development, university faculty, students, and staff collaborate with community partners to address critical social needs and to develop the engaged citizens of today.



Community Engagement



Community engagement is the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. The community is defined as a group of people external to the campus who are affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, similar situation or shared values and opportunities. The purpose of community engagement is to combine university knowledge and resources with those of the community in order to:

- Enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity
- Enhance curriculum, teaching and learning
- Prepare educated, engaged citizens
- Strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility
- Address critical societal issues
- Contribute to the public good

Community engagement describes activities that are undertaken with community members in reciprocal partnerships. Through these partnerships there are collaborative community-campus definitions of problems, solutions and measures of success. Community engagement requires processes in which the university recognizes, respects, and values the knowledge, perspectives, and resources of community partners; and that partnerships are designed to serve a public purpose, building the capacity of individuals, groups, and organizations involved to understand and collaboratively address issues of public concern.

The Special Significance of Community Engagement for RUFORUM and its Member Universities



Beyond traditional views of Universities as places where teaching and research occur, Africa's higher education sector must be recognised as a valuable intellectual resource that directly and intentionally contributes to national issues and priorities. Universities ought to be better known as knowledge hubs and catalysts for future prosperity, wellbeing and sustainable development. While universities have always interacted with their communities in a range of ways, community engagement specifically encourages knowledge-driven partnerships that yield mutually beneficial outcomes for university and community. Engagement is influenced by the alignment of university strengths and community contexts; thus, engagement is a positive force for enhancing the diversity of Africa's higher education institutions while increasing overall research productivity and student learning outcomes.

Engagement that is participatory often results in community and other stakeholders having ownership of a direction, course of action or decision, and its implementation; the

greater the degree of decision-making, the higher the level of ownership of the decision, and, consequently, the greater the likelihood of a positive engagement outcome. Therefore it is important to consider the implications of the proposed level of participation when designing university-community engagement approaches. The key message for designing engagement processes is to avoid promising a level of participation and power that is never intended to be given, or designing processes that claim to be empowering, but merely offer 'token' levels of participation. The core elements - the barriers and enablers - that promote or inhibit a shift toward engagement at universities include institutional mission, location, leadership, culture, structure, governance, and faculty roles and rewards.

The RUFORUM Community Engagement Strategy proposes large scale and on-going collaborative dialogue structures and models between community partners and universities as part of the way that universities do business. Specific organizational approaches are

essential for facilitating greater coordination and mutual support between industry and community partnerships by coordinating and managing formal mechanisms for expressing community priorities and negotiating the university response, attracting financial commitment by both the community and the university partners, and accountability of the university actors to the community and government.

A number of RUFORUM member universities embrace and excel in community engagement because it has been a central tenet of the universities' history and mission. Universities are not only physically, but socially and economically intertwined with the localities in which they are situated, and dynamic interaction has contributed to the growth and prosperity of the locations of operation as well as the universities. Community engagement at RUFORUM member universities is grounded in a number of realities, for example:

- a) The location of a university provides a special opportunity and responsibility to share its vast array of resources to address local issues. Conditions prevailing in rural areas and the African agricultural and agribusiness sector in particular, present many of our most critical national and local problems. However we may view the social, political or economic issues facing African nations today, we are aware that our future depends in large part upon the wisdom with which we attack and solve the dilemmas of our communities. Rarely has so challenging an opportunity to combine the free pursuit of knowledge in its own right with the ready availability of that knowledge for the enlightenment and enrichment of the larger community of which it is a part been presented to an institution of higher education.
- b) Higher agricultural education and learning provides unique opportunities to engage in transformational research and teaching. Community engagement fosters informed and relevant scholarship and engenders transformational learning opportunities.
- c) With large populations of students and staff, universities are integral parts of their locations and have had a significant physical and economic impact, and will continue to do so. This is where staff and students live, work and raise their families. Community engagement provides opportunities to improve the neighbourhoods and surrounding communities.
- d) Community engagement allows university employees to live their values in the workplace. Community engaged employees are more likely to feel rewarded by their work and less likely to leave for other jobs.

The practice of **University-Community Engagement** takes many forms, and is incorporated in the **regular curriculum of universities** in multiple ways:

- a) **Learning with the community/service-learning:** students and lecturers apply their knowledge and skills in a chosen community to improve the lives of people in that community. Often, this is achieved through 'adoption' of a specific village/community, and then providing engagement opportunities to students from various disciplines and courses to apply their knowledge to address the challenges of that specific community. The basic objective is to put to use the 'theoretical' knowledge gained by students in the lecture room in providing 'practical' service to the communities in the field.
- b) **Researching with the community:** faculty of universities devise joint research projects, in partnership with the community, whose own knowledge is integrated into the design and conduct of the research. New research by students and faculty gets conducted and students complete their theses/dissertations and research papers to complete their academic requirements (which can later be published), and at the same time the community's knowledge is systematized and integrated in the research.
- c) **Knowledge sharing with the community:** knowledge available with students and faculty in various disciplines is made available, through a diverse array of dissemination and engagement pathways, to the local community to realize its developmental aspirations, secure its entitlements and claim its rights from various public and private agencies. The idea behind such initiatives is to transport 'knowledge' out of the hallowed portals of academic institutions and disseminate it within communities, who can then use it for their well-being and other activities.
- d) **Devising new curriculum and courses:** This form of engagement provides for consultations with local communities, students, and community-based organizations, which are used by universities to design new curricula and courses that respond to specific needs of the community. They are meant for community members as well as university students. This enriches the curriculum of existing courses through locally-appropriate subject-matter, along with creating new, locally appropriate educational programs. Such courses augment the theoretical knowledge of learners with the help of practical experiences of community members and civic society organizations.
- e) **Including practitioners as teachers:** Local community elders, women leaders, indigenous peoples and civic society practitioners have enormous practical knowledge on a wide variety of issues. This expertise is tapped by inviting such practitioners inside the university to co-teach courses both in the lecture room and in the field. Such instructors are duly recognized, compensated and respected for their knowledge.
- f) **Social innovation by students:** In consultation with student unions, associations and clubs, student initiate learning projects which have a social impact. Such social innovation projects by students can also have meaningful links to curriculum and courses.

Listening and Reflecting

As a part of the RUCES development process a review was conducted of community engagement processes and initiatives amongst selected universities to ascertain the organisational structures and community engagement approaches that could be informative to the strategy formulation process. In addition, input from university staff, faculty, administrative leaders and outside partners was obtained through a series of input sessions and individual interviews on ways to strengthen community engagement activities and outcomes at African universities. The following provides a summary of the key messages that emerged, and care was taken to reflect them in the strategy:

Develop a Culture of Community Engagement: RUFORUM can help advocate on the mutual benefits of community-university partnerships. As key ad-vocates for community-university partnership development, RUFORUM can help member universities establish mechanisms that encourage the development of interdisciplinary teaching, scholarship, and service partnerships to address community, national and continental issues and linking the talents and resources of universities with those of the community. RUFORUM member universities will be viewed as the “go to” place for scholars interested in community engagement, and for employers looking for well-grounded graduates and advisers.

Maintain Focus on Community Engagement Priorities and Objectives: RUFORUM can help member universities communities deepen their understanding of community strengths, needs, and priorities across the continent and identify opportunities for meaningful community engagement.

Increase Community Outreach and Involvement: Universities can play a critical role locally, nationally and in the African region by actively engaging with community-based organizations, community residents, government officials, and the private sector to collaboratively identify needs and craft solutions. Organisational structures that can serve as the conduit for establishing the university-community partnerships that address identified needs and opportunities are essential.

Utilize Community Engagement structures as a Communication Hub for Community Engagement: One of the strengths of most universities also presents challenges - the number and scope of teaching, research and community engagement activities. A central clearinghouse for information on current and past university community engagement activities, best practices, and opportunities for staff, faculty, students and citizens to work together to address pressing is-sues is required. RUFORUM can serve in this capacity for collating all information and knowledge from members and partners.

Strengthen Community Engagement Evaluation and Scholarship: The lasting value of community engagement should be measured by sustained, positive change in the community, country and continent. Documenting and disseminating information about what works, and what doesn't work, will build a knowledge base of best practices that can be used to guide human and financial capital investments in the communities, and across the country and continent.

RUCES Vision

RUFORUM member universities are communities of engaged citizens, working together, changing lives and positively impacting society.

RUCES Mission

RUFORUM shall mobilise and facilitate member universities to engage in mutually beneficial university-community partnerships that generate innovative solutions to societal challenges, prepare the engaged citizens of tomorrow, and raise visibility and institutional rating of the institution.

RUCES Operating Principles

To support the RUFORUM Core Values and pursue the unique Mission for University-Community Engagement, RUFORUM has identified the following five key operating principles that shall guide member universities in the adoption and customization of the RUCES:

- a) To value and respect the knowledge and expertise that exists within communities.
- b) To support collaborative university-community partnerships built on trust and reciprocity.
- c) To seek out, engage, and value diverse perspectives and experiences that forge practical and innovative solutions.
- d) To advance and disseminate new knowledge and best practices through community engaged scholarship.
- e) To develop and adopt model of best practices in community engagement



RUCES Goal and Objectives

RUFORUM is a dynamic regional platform that fosters collaboration, coordination and learning amongst member universities to become high performing African universities that produce skilled, proactive graduates, demand driven research outputs and innovation in response to national, regional and continental agricultural development priorities. The RUFORUM vision of supporting engaged member universities defined by their dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting-edge research and far-reaching community engagement to build effective human capital to engage in research, policy and service provision as well as translating knowledge into innovations for sustained economic growth and food security provides a launch pad for this strategy and its unique vision stated above.

The primary objective of the RUCES is to enable member universities plan and deliver appropriate community engagement processes that will allow the university to achieve its desired outcomes. By adopting and customising the strategy, African universities shall transform into national, continental and global leaders in spurring and sustaining economic growth, meeting the job needs and employability of new graduates and integration into the knowledge economy.

Conceptually, universities deliver their services and products through research, education, outreach and practice. RUFORUM has identified six broad objectives that provide a framework for determining action priorities. Buttressed by a strong commitment to widening their

reach, integrating their actions and activities, and establishing respectful and mutually beneficial relationships, a strong community engagement focus shall provide knowledge, skills and technologies for enterprise development, lifelong learning and hubs for public discourse and debate of national issues of socio-economic importance (Figure 1).

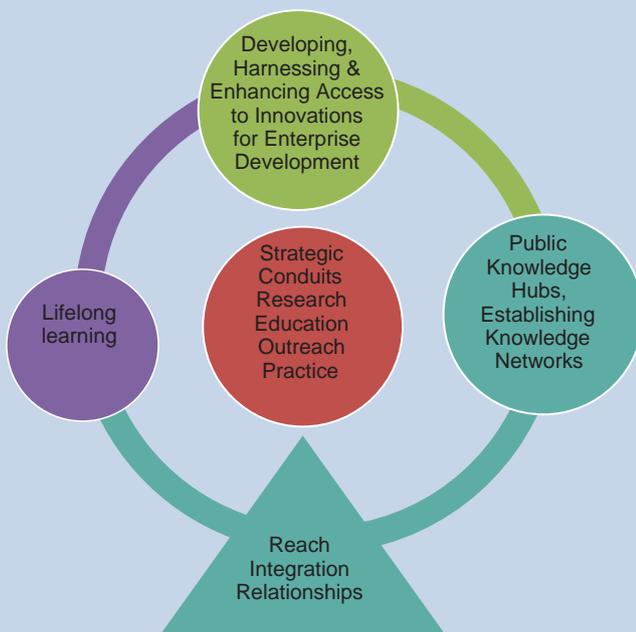
Objective 1

Integration: RUFORUM member universities will maintain and expand their community connections as an integral part of their academic mission; creating opportunities for practical high quality community-engaged experiential learning experiences; informing and inspiring rigorous community engaged research that advances disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge and contributes to the well-being of communities; and contributing to the relevance and success of the university through high quality community engaged outreach programs, model initiatives for university-community partnerships and aligned human/fiscal resources and large scale on-going collaborative dialogue structures that support innovative programmes and new initiatives that reflect an engaged university.

Figure 1: Linkage of RUCES Objectives

Objective 2

Reach: RUFORUM and its member universities will develop partnerships and maximize the capacities of their academic and support units to enhance the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities locally, nationally, continentally and globally.



Objective 3

Relationships: RUFORUM and its member universities will build respectful and mutually beneficial community relationships.

Objective 4

Lifelong Learning: RUFORUM member universities will meet the lifelong learning needs of students, alumni and the community, and respond with innovative programs and learning opportunities for academic, personal and professional development.

Objective 5

Universities as Public Knowledge Hubs:

RUFORUM member universities will be local, national, continental and global public squares for enlightenment and dialogue on key public issues, especially on higher (agricultural) education and research. They will be the institutions to which the community looks for education, discussion and solutions, and informed policy dialogue.

Objective 6

Universities as Centres of Excellence for Developing and Harnessing Innovations for Enterprise Development: RUFORUM member universities as scientific research centres will produce knowledge and make that knowledge available for economic and social progress and accelerate the growth and success of entrepreneurial ecosystems through an array of business support resources and services that could include physical space, capital, coaching, common services, networking connections, translating and nurturing ideas and innovations (knowledge-based and technology-driven) into marketable products or services and the creation of successful start-ups through scouting, supporting and scaling of innovations.

By attaining these goals and objectives, RUFORUM and its member universities will enhance their position as national and continental models for community engagement and impact, and advance additional priorities of teaching, research and outreach by enhancing student success with high quality learning experiences; generating and disseminating new knowledge and creative activity that will enhance the quality of life; and facilitating interdisciplinary research that contributes to Africa's agricultural transformation.



Strategies and Actions

RUFORUM has identified four broad goals that provide a framework for determining action priorities. The strategies for achieving each goal are closely linked to the objectives for instituting University-

Community Engagement and Partnerships at the university. The sections that follow outline the strategies and actions for each goal.

01

Goal 1:
Institutionalise community engagement within the university ecosystem of institutional structures and regulatory frameworks

02

Goal 2:
Develop, implement, research and disseminate high quality community engaged learning experiences.

03

Goal 3:
Support rigorous community engaged research that advances disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge and contributes to the well-being of communities.

04

Goal 4:
Develop, demonstrate, research and disseminate high quality community engaged outreach programs.



01

Goal 1: Institutionalise community engagement within the university ecosystem of institutional structures and regulatory frameworks

Institutionalizing university community engagement and partnerships refers to the formalization of collaboration models/UCE methodologies into the institutional arrangements of a university set-up in a way which is mutually beneficial and accommodates the variations in knowledge systems in both universities and communities. This incorporation is by the means of an effective support structure, which plays a crucial role in instituting policies and programs that deepen, broaden, improve and sustain UCE. These systemic organizational structures functioning within a university work to intentionally engage university and communities/community partners in teaching, research and service delivery for mutual benefit. Operating within HEIs, these structures function to streamline UCE within regular academic discourse, along with looking after other issues such as suitable policies, programs, funding, etc. They are meant to promote the growth of knowledge by collaboration, building collaborative networks and promoting 'technical and indigenous human capital'.

When it is recognized HEIs must do more than talk about engagement, they must make significant investments in the infrastructure that nurtures partnerships and optimizes benefits for all stakeholders, especially those in the community. For instance, universities can set up individual partnership projects with community partners, which are mutually beneficial and operated in a transparent and respectful manner. When these

projects are successful, they are frequently converted into more permanent partnership mechanisms, such as research centres, or service-learning, or field placement courses. Amongst these, some universities have further mobilized necessary leadership, will and resources to move from individual partnership projects to an institution-wide commitment to engaged and partnered research, teaching and operations.

It is not only universities which require institutional structures for effective UCE. A range of supportive policies, programs, infrastructure and funding is also needed inside and across community based, non-profit and other civil society organizations. A number of research intermediaries located outside the HEI are also structured as stand-alone non-profit organizations and/or private and social enterprises, while some operate their own research ethics mechanisms to assess and evaluate external research proposals to study their communities. In between HEIs and communities are intermediaries such as science shops, non-profit brokers and other partnership structures such as consortia, roundtables, networks that advance the theory and practice of engagement and partnership in the local, national and international spheres. Therefore, the architecture of institutional structures that support UCE is multi-level, complex and dynamic. As it consists of many moving parts, it is better to view all these parts as an ecosystem of organic interdependent components.

GOAL 1: INSTITUTIONALISE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY ECOSYSTEM OF INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS

Strategy	Actions
<p>Develop and implement a comprehensive Community Engagement Strategy and Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study national and local policies favourable of University Community Engagement (UCE), identify university policies that are facilitative of UCE institutionalisation process, consult with both the community and various university stakeholders and identify funding instruments or other incentives that would help the process get started and ensure its sustainability in the long run. • Embed and identify community engagement within goals and actions of strategic plans across commitment areas • Establish and operationalise structures for UCE, which includes aspects such as governance, staffing, leadership, clear demarcation of functions, guidelines for doing field work in association with the communities; and monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes. • Help Faculties and units of the university embed community engagement and partnerships in their program design, Restructure community engagement operations to reflect new strategic plan priorities. • Strengthen the capacity of community engagement coordination units to increase awareness of and participation in community engagement within university academic and support units. • Develop data collection systems for tracking community engagement and its impacts.
<p>Develop and align human and fiscal resources that support innovative programs and new initiatives that reflect commitment to community engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish hubs for networking, connecting with tools and resources, and a forum to curate an evolving community engagement strategy and partnerships • Develop guidelines and ensure proper use of the co-generated knowledge, along with sharing of good lessons and emerging best practices and also covering efforts aimed at scaling up the positive outcomes, so that the benefits accrued can be multiplied and replicated at different locations across the continent and the global world. • Develop staff training activities related to UCE and continue to create opportunities for staff, faculty and students to engage, connect, network and raise funds for community engaged university teaching and research programmes • Partner with other organizations to support knowledge exchange, knowledge translation and making research accessible • Create programs to support student mobility (local, regional, continental and international); increase faculty exchanges amongst member universities and with international organizations; and increase faculty exchanges with local community organizations • Establish a fund development plan to provide resources to support community engagement initiatives.

GOAL 1: INSTITUTIONALISE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY ECOSYSTEM OF INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS

Strategy	Actions
Expand educational opportunities and scope of career and personal education programs	<p>Identify and develop opportunities and integrated support for career and personal education that spans segments, faculties and programs to support and respond to learner, industry and community needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand activities that bring pre-university and non-conventional learners on University campus on programs for skills enhancement and reconsider admissions criteria to reach more participants/beneficiaries, facilitate non-credit adult participation in programs for skills enhancement and increase opportunities for alumni mentorship or teaching roles • Expand curriculum offerings focusing on community engagement issues and perspectives: content in curricula, and hiring initiatives that may result in attracting and retaining highly qualified faculty and staff. • Build and expand the professional development opportunities available to administrators, faculty, staff, and students in working productively with communities and encourage wider participation • Develop professional and career development programs for alumni, advisors and other service providers and leadership programs for students • Strengthen programs supporting the entry, academic success, social support and well-being of female and non-conventional students • Ensure continued integration of community engagement content and practices into orientation and transition programs, and development of first-year student orientation initiatives • Create and support programs that help prepare post-secondary pre-university and non-conventional students for entry into university education and skilling (business, technical, vocational) programmes: youth camps, boot camps and outreach programs, etc. <p>Increase engagement and strengthen mutually supportive and productive relationships with communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore and develop critical community partnerships centred on initiatives of high value and priority for communities, strengthen and expand student involvement in community-based research and service learning with local organizations and private sector and ensure that service-learning initiatives adequately prepare students for meaningful work that is of clear benefit to communities and community organizations • Demonstrate leading edge solutions and make the university an agent of change through innovation, integration, demonstration and inspiration by tracking, evaluating and sharing academic, operational and community efforts; provide students with knowledge, applied skills and experience that enable them to act as agents of change. • Support accessible public programming by creating structures and avenues for long-term on-going dialogue with communities, and the broader public, on issues of significance and engage communities to provide advice to the university on its programs, initiatives, and their relevance. • Provide faculty and staff with the means and professional development opportunities to effectively collaborate with private sector and communities • Review existing funding opportunities and determine further requirements

GOAL 1: INSTITUTIONALISE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY ECOSYSTEM OF INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS

Strategy	Actions
<p>Measure, communicate and celebrate community engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an effective approach to communications and consultations supporting the full engagement of universities with their communities • In collaboration with university and community partners, evaluate and research the effectiveness of, and disseminate community engagement models for developing university-community outreach, for developing high-quality community-engaged learning experiences, and for developing and conducting community engaged research to partners, practitioners and scholars. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve feedback mechanisms on teaching and learning through peer reviews and teaching evaluations • Develop a sustainable, university-wide capability to record and report on community engagement strategies, activities and initiatives (better systems for collecting, classifying and interpreting data), develop and adopt quantitative and qualitative targets and indicators that will assess the impact of community engagement and identify how best to collect this information while minimizing administrative burdens on staff, faculty and students • Track research and best practices relating to university-community engagement, including providing (more, broader and deeper) data collected through integrated assessment programs and consultations to faculties and units to assess progress and refine metrics on key aspects of student learnings, community engagement, and the overall student experience • Develop and implement benchmarks and key metrics related to the enhancement of teaching and learning, community engagement, and as part of the periodic academic reviews • Align and establish university feedback metrics, rewards and recognition systems with student learning goals and staff career progression • Encourage and facilitate nomination of faculty members for national and international teaching and research awards, increase submissions for community engagement awards • Make community engagement integral to the assessment criteria for promotion and career advancement • Establish flexible institutional structures and mechanisms (including monetary instruments) aimed at advocating, facilitating, encouraging and supporting community engaged research and teaching partnerships

GOAL 1: INSTITUTIONALISE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY ECOSYSTEM OF INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS

Strategy	Actions
Leverage signature initiatives and support select Flagship UCE projects	<p>Facilitate deliberative public dialogue on issues of public concern and actively invite community participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise profile and participation in existing public and policy dialogues and identify other opportunities for community participation on the university campus - Distinguished Speaker Series, Inaugural lectures, Topical Seminars, among others. • Provide seed funding to support faculty, student and staff initiatives and pilots that mobilize research findings and identify funding opportunities for graduate internships and public/private sector visiting lecturer opportunities • Increase dialogue and engagement opportunities between policy makers and university talent, coordinate university resources to facilitate public deliberation in response to priority issues identified by government and the community more broadly and continue to build academic capacity for public policy engagement and action based research <p>Promote entrepreneurship and enterprise development to develop and harness innovations, attract private sector and social impact investors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote new technology, knowledge, and innovation-based impact making enterprise and business start-ups by providing cost effective, value added services • Scale up existing and new activities targeted at seeding and supporting community and enterprise or business start-ups. • Provide a platform for speedy commercialization of technologies developed by the staff and students of the university or by a community or individual collaborating with the university • Build a vibrant start-up ecosystem, by establishing networks between academia, financial institutions, industry, private sector and other institutions to create jobs, wealth and business for the community and for university graduates, in alignment with national priorities. • Support novice entrepreneurs and students at the earliest stage of technological entrepreneurship and enable them to implement their ideas by turning them into commercial products • Form productive business ventures within the university and outside with communities. • Identify and leverage local, regional and international investors and financial institutions to fund the innovative ideas in the riskiest stage of their development • Provide entrepreneurs and students with physical premises, financial resources, tools, professional guidance, and administrative assistance. • Provide Business Incubator Services

GOAL 1: INSTITUTIONALISE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY ECOSYSTEM OF INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS

Strategy	Actions
<p>Alumni engagement in the life of the university</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrich the lives of graduates through a deeper connection to RUFORUM and host University: interactive communications, outreach and programming so that alumni, as core constituents, are well informed and have an influential voice and stake in the university; campaigns involving individual alumni in the life of RUFORUM and university, including opportunities for volunteering, mentoring, events. • Establish and support strong affiliation opportunities for alumni: programs that serve young alumni interest, such as a career strategy and dialogue programs featuring university experts; events focusing on personal and professional development topics for young alumni; identify and cultivate alumni interested in supporting RUFORUM/University; programming, events and meetings that project RUFORUM/University as a vibrant enabler of lifelong enrichment for alumni; and recognition of RUFORUM/University's positive societal impact and global standing. • Increase alumni commitment to RUFORUM and university through an expansion of opportunities for lifelong engagement: enable greater access to university's resident intellectual capacity to support graduates as they navigate into the job market, whether as individuals or through the communities in which they participate. • Alumni engagement campaigns that involve alumni in all parts of university life: student recruitment; enriched educational experiences for students; feedback on Faculty activities and degree program outcomes; building community and political support for RUFORUM, Universities and HAE in general; and growing philanthropy.
<p>Build gender and intercultural aptitudes and a strong sense of inclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deepen resources for faculty and staff to provide gender and intercultural learning and increased dialogue and debate: identify and promote promising community engagement practices that foster gender and intercultural learning, dynamic interaction between students and communities, and increased dialogue and debate • Establish and reward basic literacy and understanding around gender/ racial/intercultural equity as core leadership, administrative, teaching and research competencies; and make available and incentivise opportunities for faculty and staff to engage in the professional development of gender and intercultural skills, knowledge and relationship building for the benefit of enhanced student learning
<p>Strengthen presence and role in international development as a globally influential Forum(and University)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster and increase the capacity of students, faculty, staff, and alumni to engage internationally: staff/student mobility agreements; study abroad experience either in global seminars, coordinated international experience, faculty led research projects; internationally-focused programming • Increase participation of graduate students and other researchers in collaborative projects with international counterparts • Improve the level of information available to students, faculty and staff on the university's international connections • Dedicate professional resources to gather data, analyse information and provide inputs to the university leadership about international engagement and issues related to the internationalization of higher education and community engagement: become an information and reference hub for faculty and other units about internationalization and UCE processes and opportunities. • Increase the number of substantial strategic partnerships in regions of priority to the Forum/ University: strengthen the strategic relationship with Universities in other regions; offer strong support to faculties to develop partnerships in Europe, Asia and the Americas; host important University and official delegations; play a leadership role in North-South; South-South collaboration on HAE. • Support projects initiated by the Forum and university faculty members aimed at International development outcomes • Contribute to mitigate International crisis issues and mobilize and support the community initiatives within the Forum/University mandate and rules.

01

Goal 2: Develop, implement, research and disseminate high quality community engaged learning experiences.



Universities and HEIs are expected to serve three missions: teaching, training and learning; research, innovation and scholarship; outreach, service and community development. The mission of 'service' is often viewed as being independent of teaching (or education) and research (or knowledge). In operational terms, primacy is attached to teaching and research functions of HEIs, and 'service' is undertaken afterwards. However, in the emerging new architecture of knowledge, engagement is approached in ways that accept the multiple sites and epistemologies of knowledge, as well as the reciprocity and mutuality in learning and education through engagement. The question of a university's society function in the very broadest sense; includes not only the development of access to qualifications, but the production of knowledge and the social significance of that knowledge. It also involves a change in the sharing of responsibility for the development of knowledge and teaching. If the university is to be effectively integrated into the community, it must no longer concern only those who attend the university, namely the teachers and the students. It should be possible to pass on one's skills without being a teacher and to receive training without being a student.

African Universities and HAEIs provide the opportunity for transformative student learning through outstanding teaching and research, enriched educational experiences, and rewarding campus life. In recent decades, changes in the context of education have been focused on short-term instrumental performance within a socioeconomic system. There is a need to widen the scope of knowledge and move beyond creating socio-economic well-being towards a true knowledge-based society through engagement with citizenry at all levels to address day to day and global issues. Such creation and dissemination of knowledge can further contribute in transforming old paradigms and beliefs and help in moving forward and establishing creative and innovative ways of thinking and imagining new realities. In this way, knowledge can also help in developing ethical awareness and facilitate the civic commitment of citizens and professionals. Some of the practical way forward may include re-defining course structures, syllabi, books, reading materials, etc. The university education system must be aligned with facilitative learning environments in which students do not experience learning as a burden or perceive it as an avenue to becoming "good workers" but rather as a mechanism for gaining knowledge and skills to become good citizens and entrepreneurs.

GOAL 2: DEVELOP, IMPLEMENT, RESEARCH AND DISSEMINATE HIGH QUALITY COMMUNITY ENGAGED LEARNING EXPERIENCES.

Strategy	Actions
<p>Enhance the quality and impact of teaching for all students</p>	<p>Review and revise curricula and pedagogy to ensure that they are informed by leading edge research on how people learn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively engage in curricula renewal to provide an effective and efficient student learning environment, including course syllabi, transfer credits, etc. • Integrate external stakeholders into university engagement activities, allowing communities to contribute knowledge and a right to co-determine how universities make their knowledge available to society. • Include social criteria in education, teaching, training and learning targets, and stipulate the social dimension to be reflected in the teaching and learning processes, in research frameworks, as well as in the quality assurance standards. • Develop and implement strategies, including action plans, for the social dimension of degree programmes, determining the “musts” (elements that every student must fulfil) and the “wants” (elements that are desirable but not essential or even possible for everyone), involving where desirable (soft and hard) affirmative action programmes. • Ensure curriculum delivery is well planned for and executed appropriately including budgeting and financing.
	<p>Simplify and streamline program requirements and course prerequisites whenever possible to enhance flexibility, self-directed learning and community engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the curriculum re-design processes, review program requirements and course prerequisites to ensure greatest flexibility to students while maintaining the integrity of academic programs and a focus on community engagement • Support curriculum change, innovative teaching practices and learning environment enhancement • Institute and continue to enhance the operation of a Learning Management System • Strengthen efforts to promote student success: create integrated assessment programs for • Student experience to inform strategic and operational planning
	<p>Support the development and delivery of blended courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement blended transformation of high impact undergraduate and graduate courses (flipped classrooms, integration of open content) and ensure the availability of appropriate technology and physical infrastructure • Deliver Massively Open On-line Courses (MOOCs) as an experiential tool and as a means to increase access • Improve structural flexibility in degree program design and provide feedback to flexible learning projects - to enhance the concept of ‘rebel education’ - a training and learning process that allows for student self-experimentation and trying out of what is and what is not possible but still be able to graduate/complete studies and/or emerge as an entrepreneur within the system • Create a flexible continuum of lifelong learning between credit and non-credit offerings; review opportunities and develop a strategic path to operationalize

GOAL 2: DEVELOP, IMPLEMENT, RESEARCH AND DISSEMINATE HIGH QUALITY COMMUNITY ENGAGED LEARNING EXPERIENCES.

Strategy	Actions
Develop and implement initiatives that support staff and student engagement and achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and offer a variety of awareness-building learning opportunities about community-engaged learning that are tailored for faculty, staff, students and community partners • Develop community engaged teaching and learning materials and post these on the RUFORUM and universities' knowledge platforms. • Improve and expand the community-engaged learning best practice models, particularly to include community-engaged learning in core and co-curricular programs. • Provide faculty consultations to individual faculty members and to academic programs that want to teach service-learning and/or pursue research on service-learning • Develop, document and disseminate community-engaged learning experiences • Increase community engaged learning opportunities linked to university research, teaching outreach programs, e.g. internships, service-learning placements, development of specialized courses. • Expand educational enrichment opportunities, including research, small class experience, international learning, community service learning, and practicum/internship/volunteer opportunities • Provide support for the creation and dissemination of new knowledge about RUFORUM and universities' community-engaged learning impacts - Fellows programs in Service-Learning; support faculty, staff, community members and students in developing community-engaged learning research products • Support student orientation programs and assess the sustainability of desired outcomes, including expanding international student transition programs to provide academic and social support for new students • Improve career development and service provision for graduate students, including establishing continuing studies courses and programs that respond to workforce development needs. • Strengthen partnerships within the student portfolios on campuses (for universities with many campuses) to ensure synergies in programming • Provide appropriate infrastructure ranging from student housing, academic space, teaching laboratory, field facilities, etc. • Build and support communities of practice for advisors: identify key strategies, associated recruitment tactics and metrics to gauge effectiveness of student recruitment; review and enhance academic support services, including academic language support; improve student advising practices university-wide • Provide students with opportunities to pursue enriched educational experiences during their course of studies: review student financial aid and award programs; expand upon access to, and delivery and assessment of enriched educational experiences by increasing opportunities for capstones, field and industry attachments, international placements, research, interdisciplinary problem-based learning projects, student entrepreneurship schemes, etc.

GOAL 2: DEVELOP, IMPLEMENT, RESEARCH AND DISSEMINATE HIGH QUALITY COMMUNITY ENGAGED LEARNING EXPERIENCES.

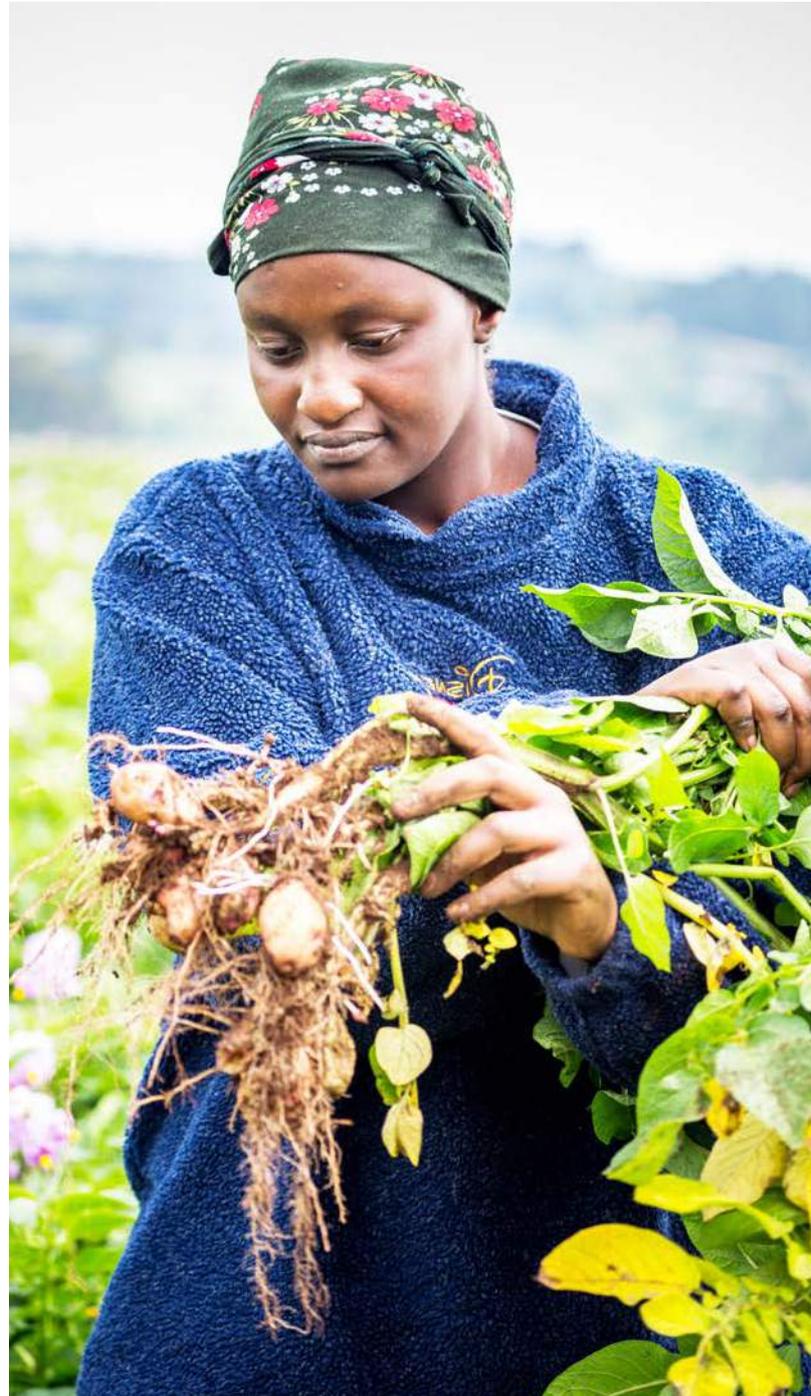
Strategy	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess impact of enriched educational experiences, and clarify faculty and departmental goals • Create structures to expand teaching and research opportunities, including supporting multidisciplinary research conferences to support student engagement in research • Identify and coordinate opportunities to embed experiential learning into flexible learning transformed courses • Expand informal learning spaces and on-campus work opportunities and volunteer placements. • Support student-led initiatives to create a campus culture of involvement: Student Leadership Training Programmes; participation and leadership in volunteer activities, competitive and recreational sports; create and facilitate structures for advising and supporting student organizations, etc. • Expand free and fee-based training for non-profits and individuals by adding events and courses • Build online self-assessment tools that allow users to build their own individualized learning programs • Launch versions of training curricula for access on mobile devices • Produce new editions of most popular training publications • Adopt teaching methods based on educational aims founded on critical reflection, values and knowledge including traditional wisdom and indigenous knowledge, not only skills and competences • Adopt a social dimension towards students (access in accordance with the ability to achieve equity) and staff (e.g. gender issues) • Include national and international dimensions, reflecting the entire education process, from early childhood education to lifelong learning. • Establish clear models, engagement principles and governance systems (especially on the trade-off between excellence and social responsibility or ability and social support)

03

Goal 3: Support rigorous community engaged research that advances disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge and contributes to the well-being of communities.

African Universities and HAEIs create and advance knowledge and understanding, and improve the quality of life through the discovery, dissemination, and application of research within and across disciplines. Knowledge is inclusive of facts, feelings or experiences of a person or a group of people, a state of knowing and awareness, and/or the consciousness or the familiarity gained by experience or learning. Knowledge can be created through the experience of the wise or through the act of surviving in the world. In acknowledgement of such diverse and multiple nodes of knowledge generation, academic monopoly on knowledge creation, if it ever existed, has ended. Communities are being increasingly involved both in the co-creation of knowledge through partnerships with HEIs and in independent creation of knowledge. Therefore, HEIs are required to collaborate with these multiple nodes of knowledge to co-create new knowledge which is mutually beneficial and socially relevant. Institutions that generate socially relevant knowledge have a fundamental role to play in the construction of society. Linking research agendas to collective challenges and the local, national and global development agendas make evident connections between academic activity and societal needs.

Profound changes taking place in communities and in universities are bringing new opportunities to researchers and community members for joint research endeavours to new problems that must be resolved. Communities and universities need to find ways how they will go forward in working together. A research partnership between the university and the community is ideally part of a larger collaboration that includes the interests of each partner and spans a wide range of activities.



04

Goal 4: Develop, demonstrate, research and disseminate high quality community engaged outreach programs.



Universities as agents of knowledge creation, exchange and dissemination need to become more conscious of their importance and responsibility towards society. In today's context, as accelerated changes pose challenges to them, they are obligated to address and redefine their traditional roles, to review their perspectives on social responsibility and to consider its implications. This cannot be accomplished with the help of an educational model which thrives on old ways of "ivory tower" thinking. Thus, the time is ripe for reviewing and reconsidering the interchange of value between university and society; that is to say, re-thinking on the lines of 'social relevance of universities' in serving and engaging society to enhance economic, social, and cultural well-being.

Traditional extension and outreach programs, though important and necessary, are not sufficient to heal the rift between higher education and public life. What is required is an approach that extends beyond service and outreach to actual 'engagement'. There is a need to move from a model of 'public service' where universities do things for a 'passive and needy public', to one of 'public work that taps, engages, and develops the civic agency, talents and capacities of everyone, inside and outside the university gates' – an engaged model of university outreach which is far more collaborative than the customary higher education, generally organized into highly specialized disciplines. It requires a paradigm shift towards a more systemic perspective, emphasizing collaboration, cooperation and partnership. Universities have to engage

communities in mutually supportive and productive relationships, and work to integrate understandings of local knowledge, cultures and histories into their curriculum, research and operations.

GOAL 4: DEVELOP, DEMONSTRATE, RESEARCH AND DISSEMINATE HIGH QUALITY COMMUNITY ENGAGED OUT-REACH PROGRAMS.

Strategy	Actions
<p>Improve community access to information, facilities and services</p>	<p>Develop and maintain community engagement spaces and platforms to improve University-Community interface, track and measure engagement initiatives, and facilitate community access to faculty, staff and students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities to learn about university-community outreach and engagement: develop and offer a variety of awareness-building learning opportunities about university-community outreach tailored to faculty, staff, students and community partners; convene and co-sponsor campus community engagement events of local and national interest; compile and maintain a comprehensive list of strategic community partners • Develop, expand, and promote online information and resources related to community engagement; and create/expand web platforms (Online Community Engagement Portals) that help university staff and students and CE practitioners build community around the RUFORUM/University and their own content • Establish/expand the network of community engagement/outreach teams and information centres • Monitor and provide staff assistance for existing strategic partnerships by working with the primary university liaison network to document ongoing relationships and initiatives, which often occur across a number of Faculties and Departments • Support Research, Faculties, and Units by identifying possible community organizations for experiential learning projects and research mobilization projects, including identifying new sources of external funding • Identify opportunities for university staff, faculty and students to serve on community boards and committees; identify community representatives to join university advisory groups and boards • Provide online community engagement resources, including tools and funding sources; and document best practices • Facilitate staff, student and faculty networks, roundtables and workshops to share community engagement experiences. • Produce more versions of existing training material and more original material in other (local) languages • Enable participants from under-resourced groups to attend fee-based courses offered by providing more scholarships • Deliver information and tools directly to mobile devices • Provide knowledge and tools to help RUFORUM/University be more transparent: a rich array of examples showing what their peers are doing to meet the growing demand for online transparency, self-diagnostic tools for self-assessment and improving own transparency

GOAL 4: DEVELOP, DEMONSTRATE, RESEARCH AND DISSEMINATE HIGH QUALITY COMMUNITY ENGAGED OUT-REACH PROGRAMS.

Strategy	Actions
	<p>Build an environment of support for excellence and make university facilities more accessible and welcoming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote activities that qualify for community service leave. • Expand and promote community service opportunities for students, integrate community engagement messaging in all hiring and orientation training for faculty and staff and operate annual calendar of community outreach opportunities • Celebrate and publically recognize exemplary university-community partnerships and their positive reciprocal impacts • Provide training and consultations that facilitate high-quality university-community outreach: identify best practices for outreach programming and integrate these practices into staff training for all university outreach programs, institute community advisory groups that facilitate university-community dialogue on critical issues facing the community, implement practices that facilitate positive university-neighbourhood relations. • Provide support for the creation and dissemination of new knowledge about university outreach program impacts: identify faculty and student collaborators with research interests that are aligned with university outreach programs; identify external grant funding to support university community outreach programs. • Assess community use of facilities and identify policy and practice improvements that increase community use of learning, cultural and outdoor venues on university campuses and sites • Continue to design and deliver community programs and events, and integrate new projects that leverage and enhance the university's public realm investments by animating and invigorating shared spaces • Facilitate and promote safe, accessible and inclusive use of outdoor public spaces by students, staff, faculty, residents and general public • Develop and execute communication and marketing programs for cultural and sport venues on university campus • Assist departments by identifying funding sources and helping with partnerships, proposals and presentations to government and donors for physical infrastructure projects • Enhance access into the university with services and supports to help external community partners connect with the university • Create a friendly front door into the university with the creation of a Welcome Centre • Increase the university's cultural, athletic, and academic links • University landscaping and vehicle parking services partnered with campus attractions • Sports and recreation identify opportunities to improve access to campus facilities

Outcomes and Benefits of University Community Engagement

Community engagement is an explicit and intentional institutional commitment to engage in partnerships with communities and constituencies, locally, regionally, and internationally, with the goal of enhancing the quality of life for all. This commitment is based on respect for the expertise, knowledge and needs of everyone involved. It includes partnerships and collaborations that are relational in an ethos of learning and working together to serve each other and to solve shared issues. It includes engagement connected to classes and independent of academic instruction, all of which deepens students' commitment to community, civic engagement and life-long active learning. It involves university and community in scholarship through knowledge exchange, discovery and implementation, recognizing and honouring the interdependency between university and community and community and university. It involves partnerships and collaborations in the broadest sense of the term community, locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

The assessment practices required by the Community Engagement Classification must meet a broad range of purposes: assessing community perceptions of institutional engagement; tracking and recording of institution-wide engagement data; assessment of the impact of community engagement on students, faculty, community, and institution; identification and assessment of student learning outcomes in curricular engagement; and ongoing feedback mechanisms for partnerships. That range of purposes calls for sophisticated understandings and approaches to achieve the respective assessment goals.

Community engagement pedagogies are ones that combine learning goals and community service in ways that can enhance both student growth and the common good. It is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. It is a form of experiential education where learning occurs



through a cycle of action and reflection as students seek to achieve real objectives for the community and deeper understanding and skills for themselves. In the process, students link personal and social development with academic and cognitive development. Experience enhances understanding and understanding leads to more effective action.

Effective community engagement seeks to better engage the community to achieve long-term and sustainable outcomes, processes, relationships, discourse, and decision-making in a community-context sensitive environment. Engagement is not generally driven by a 'model' so much as by a framework of guiding principles, strategies, and approaches. Such a framework is based on principles that respect the right of all community members to be informed, consulted, involved and empowered and employs a range of tools and strategies to ensure success. It particularly places a premium on fostering and enhancing trust as a critical element in long-term, sustainable engagement and effective governance. Indeed, when done well, teaching through community engagement benefits students, faculty, communities, and institutions of higher education.

STUDENT BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	UNIVERSITY, FACULTY AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS
<p>Learning outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive impact on students' academic learning • Improves students' ability to apply what they have learned in "the real world" • Positive impact on academic outcomes such as demonstrated complexity of understanding, problem analysis, problem-solving, critical thinking, and cognitive development • Improved ability to understand complexity and ambiguity 	<p>University benefits of community engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved institutional commitment to the curriculum • Improved access to community resources, knowledge and expertise • Improved student retention • Enhanced community relations, visibility and institutional profile/ rating and recognition/pride • Enhanced uptake and use of research and knowledge products, employability of graduates, and use of services • Increased material and financial support
<p>Personal outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater sense of personal efficacy, personal identity, spiritual growth, and moral development • Greater interpersonal development, particularly the ability to work well with others, and build leadership and communication skills <p>Social outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced stereotypes and greater inter-cultural understanding • Improved social responsibility and citizenship skills • Greater involvement in community service after graduation 	<p>Faculty benefits of community engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfaction with the quality of student learning • New avenues for research and publication via new relationships between faculty and community • Providing networking opportunities with engaged faculty in other disciplines or institutions • A stronger commitment to one's research

Career development

- Connections with professionals and community members for learning and career opportunities
- Greater academic learning, leadership skills, and personal efficacy can lead to greater opportunity

Relationship with the institution

- Stronger relationships with faculty
- Greater satisfaction with college/university
- Improved graduation rates

Community benefits of community engagement

- Satisfaction with student participation
- Valuable human resources needed to achieve community goals
- New energy, enthusiasm and perspectives applied to community work
- Enhanced community-university relations
- Improved access to university resources, knowledge, information, technologies and innovations, and services

Monitoring and Evaluation

A monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework (together with its indicators) involves “the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programs, for use by people to reduce uncertainties, improve effectiveness, and make decisions.” The M&E framework guides implementation toward evaluation that includes goals, concerns, and the perspectives of stakeholders, in this case focused on those specific to community engagement concerns. Community engagement efforts come in many shapes and sizes – and importantly to meet many goals. If monitoring and evaluation strategies are to be successful, they must be directly tied to the goals of the specific community engagement efforts. University community engagement efforts seek to employ community engagement strategies to build social capital and strengthen community relationships and trust. Others are designed to utilize community engagement processes to address specific challenges or issues. If the community engagement effort is designed to address a specific issue, then the evaluation goal will be to assess the issue-specific outcomes that have occurred as a result of the program efforts. There is a wide range of possible metrics we could consider for the engagement efforts and, of course, many will be derived directly from the specific goals and objectives of the strategy. Some of the most common metrics used in engagement evaluation studies include:



Process Metrics:

Representativeness, Interactions, Inclusivity, Comfort, Participation rate, Identification of common goals, Fairness, Satisfaction, Perceived openness, Effectiveness (process and methods), Transparency, Incorporation of values and beliefs into discussion, Trust, Communication, Process flexibility, Continuity, etc.

Outcome Metrics:

Policy/decision influence, Time to develop solutions or regulations, Reduction of legal challenges, Agency or organization responsiveness, Trust, Social-economic-environmental impact, Participants values/opinions, Conflict resolution, Volunteer time and effort, Effectiveness and cost effectiveness, Savings or resources generated, Effect on planning process, etc.

The tasks of monitoring and evaluating the objectives

that have been set aim to permanently oversee the planning, the degree of progress, the implementation and the results and impact of each of the proposed measures, as well as of the Strategy as a whole. Monitoring and evaluating the RUCES will use and analyse the results provided by indicators relating to:

Implementation and outcomes:

to measure the level of development and progress of the measures included in the strategy. Implementation indicators are intended to immediately measure the scope and level of development of each of the measures included in the strategy or any combination of them. Additionally, for each of the actions included in the strategy specific implementation and outcome indicators will be set in order to compare the results obtained against the expected results.

Impact: to determine the effectiveness of the measures on UCE.

The results of the strategy for correcting the imbalances and shortcomings in UCE are identified by means of impact indicators, so that evolution of the state of engagement can be properly monitored. In order to meet this objective, RUFORUM and engaging universities will release an annual report which will show the evolution of the main variables and acceptable criteria reflecting engagement. A framework for the annual tracking and assessment is proposed (see Annex 2).

For this purpose, control and monitoring a set of indicators are proposed. In order to properly follow up the progress of the strategy, each of the RUFORUM/University units responsible for a specific action should provide the necessary information, which will be subject to aggregation and statistical processing at the University's UCE Coordinating centre and/or RUFORUM Secretariat. They must also include information on the progress of the measures, and any incidents arising during implementation.

Finally, the unit responsible for each action or measure of the strategy must forward, on an annual basis, a monitoring report to the coordinating centre/RUFORUM Secretariat. The content of monitoring reports must be at the minimum include the following: Description and scope of the measure; Implementation dates and milestones of the measure; Person/Unit responsible for implementation of the measure and agencies involved; Degree of progress (state of the lifecycle) and implementation (expected completion date). These reports must be submitted to the designated units, which will review the progress of the various tasks that are being carried out and, where appropriate, any deviation. The designated units will present reports and results to the appropriate management and governance structures.

Indicators of Engagement

INDICATORS OF ENGAGEMENT	
<p>Mission and purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The institution’s mission statement explicitly articulates its commitment to the public purposes of higher education and is deliberate about educating students for lifelong participation in their communities. • This aspect of the mission is openly valued and is explicitly used to promote and to explain the civic engagement and community building activities on and off campus. • The institution demonstrates a genuine willingness to review, discuss, and strengthen its commitment to civic engagement and community building. • All members of the campus community demonstrate their familiarity with and ownership of the institution’s mission. 	<p>Support structures and resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty and students are kept well informed of the resources available to support community-based work. These resources are effectively included in all faculty and student orientation programs. • The institution has developed a full range of forms and procedures that allow it to organize and document community-based work. • The institution recognizes the unpredictable nature of work in the community and attempts to provide flexible scheduling options for faculty and students. • The institution maintains a centralized office or centre that is clearly aligned with academic affairs and is committed to community-based teaching and learning.
<p>Academic and administrative leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University governance and administration and the trustees visibly support the campus’s civic engagement and community building efforts, in both their words and their actions. • The University administration and the institution’s academic leaders have played a visible and committed role in helping the institution sustain and expand its community building efforts and evolve into a genuinely engaged institution. • The campus is publicly regarded as an important and reliable partner in local community development efforts. • High-level administrators include community-based and service-learning in their strategic plans for enhanced academic learning. 	<p>Internal budget and resource allocations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate funding is provided to support, enhance, and deepen involvement by faculty, students, and staff in community-based work. • The institution regularly draws upon already existing resources to strengthen community-based and civic engagement activities. Such activities are seen as priorities in the allocation of those resources. • The institution provides sufficient long-term staffing to support all core partnerships and community-based and civic activities. It also provides adequate office space for that staff to do its work.

INDICATORS OF ENGAGEMENT

Disciplines, departments, and interdisciplinary work

- Community-based learning opportunities can be found across the entire curriculum. It is as much the concern of the arts and humanities, the natural sciences, technical disciplines, pre-professional studies, and interdisciplinary programs as it is of the social sciences.
- Students have multiple opportunities to do community-based work in their disciplinary and general education curricula.
- Formal opportunities exist for capstone experiences (including group reflection meetings, forums, and variable credit courses) focused on community-based problems or issues in most disciplines.
- Academic units (i.e. departments and programs) rather than individual faculty members have assumed ownership of partnering activities.
- Course-based community initiatives are structured and/or coordinated across disciplines.

Teaching and learning

- The institution recognizes that course content can be delivered in many ways and allows faculty sufficient freedom to utilize community-based strategies.
- Multiple cultural and historical perspectives on the meanings of community-based work are integrated throughout the students' curricular and co-curricular experiences.
- Community-based work provides an opportunity for students to generate knowledge, develop critical thinking skills, and grapple with the ambiguity of social problems.
- Community knowledge and community expertise are valued as essential to the education of students for meaningful participation in their communities and are incorporated in various ways throughout the curriculum.
- Experiential learning is valued both by faculty and administrators as an academically credible method of creating meaning and understanding.
- Students are formally introduced to the concepts and skills necessary for civic engagement and community-based work early on in their academic careers.
- Curricula for educational opportunities that incorporate diversity and community engagement
- Attendance record of educational and training events
- Content developed and/or present in existing and new workforce, students and community trainings and orientations

Community voice

- Local knowledge and expertise are honoured through on-campus celebrations of and for the community. The keepers of local history and knowledge are invited to share their expertise with campus students, faculty, and staff.
- The community is deeply and regularly involved in determining its role in, and contribution, to community-based learning.
- The community plays a significant role in helping shape institutional involvement in the community.
- The community is well represented on all relevant institutional committees.
- The community provides feedback on the development and maintenance of engagement programs and community-based work and is involved in all relevant strategic planning.
- The institution allocates resources to compensate community partners for their participation in service-learning courses and other forms of teaching and research.

External resource allocation

- The institution helps the community create a richer learning environment for students working with it and assists it in accessing human, technical, and intellectual resources on campus.
- The institution makes resources available for community-building efforts in local neighbourhoods.
- Campus mechanisms have been designed and developed to serve both the campus and the local community (e.g. shared-use buildings).
- The institution has developed purchasing and hiring policies that intentionally favour local residents and businesses.

Coordination of community-based activities

- The institution effectively coordinates community-based activities across academic, co-curricular, and non-academic programs.
- The institution helps community partners understand, access, and navigate all of its community-based activities (practicals, service-learning and other community-based courses, volunteers, etc.).

Forums for fostering public dialogue

- The institution plays a visible and effective role in facilitating dialogue around important public issues.
- The institution helps to bring together stakeholders from all sectors of the community.

INDICATORS OF ENGAGEMENT

Faculty development

- The institution regularly provides faculty with campus-based opportunities to become familiar with teaching methods and practices related to service-learning and community-based education.
- Mechanisms have been developed to help faculty mentor and support each other in learning to design and implement service-learning and other community-based courses.
- To enhance their ability to offer quality community-based or service-learning courses, faculty have access to curriculum development grants, reductions in teaching loads, and/or travel grants to attend relevant international, regional and national conferences.

Student voice

- Students participate on major institutional committees, including those that make personnel decisions.
- The institution provides avenues for students to discuss and act upon issues important to them and their communities.
- The institution recruits and trains student leaders to work with faculty and community partners.
- Students are formally introduced to the concepts and skills necessary for community-based work early in their academic careers.
- The institution recognizes student-initiated advocacy campaigns as legitimate forms of civic engagement.

Faculty roles and rewards

- The institution's tenure, promotion, and/or retention guidelines reward a range of scholarly activities, including community-based teaching and scholarship.
- Faculty data forms, annual reports, and mandatory evaluations all include sections related to civic engagement, community-based teaching and research, professional service, and/or other forms of academically based public work.
- The institution explicitly encourages academic departments to include community-based interests and experience as criteria in their faculty recruiting efforts.

Implementation Arrangements

RUCES is premised on the belief that university-community partnerships and community engagement activities exist on a continuum along which participants develop deeper and more transformative relationships with each other. These participants include both individuals and groups from both inside and outside

the university. The continuum involves the development of partners' knowledge, skills, values and beliefs and ranges from exposure to expertise in community engagement for both students and staff and from mere provision of information to empowerment of communities.



University-community engagement and partnership is a sustained collaboration between institutions of higher education and communities for the mutually beneficial exchange, exploration, and application of knowledge, information, and resources. To develop and sustain high-quality university-community engagement and partnerships, RUFORUM and member universities shall work to build the capacity of individuals and organizations so that they move along the Exposure-Experience-Expertise Continuum. Excellence will be achieved when a critical mass of individuals on the university campus demonstrate expertise in, and are developing and sustaining university-community partnerships that effectively address critical community issues, thereby earning the university recognition as a national model. Empowered communities will share responsibility for making decisions and accountability for the outcomes of those decisions.

The RUCES model for implementation, therefore, is comprised of a series of interconnected and developmentally-sequenced training and support activities designed to successfully move faculty, staff, students and community members through exposure to identify community partners, gaining experience through facilitating high quality university-community partnerships, and expertise in sustaining and mutually benefiting from the engagement and partnership. Engagement shall apply to community-engaged outreach, learning, and research, and seek to develop a community of engaged citizens.

RUFORUM members are high-research activity universities. RUFORUM supports disciplinary and interdisciplinary multi-agency research that addresses critical social issues through university-community partnership activities. The mode of implementation supports the development of university faculty, staff, students, and community partners who operate at all levels of the exposure-experience-expertise continuum. New knowledge will be generated to solve social problems through transformative university-community partnership research projects. Additionally, RUFORUM will engage in research to evaluate UCE practices that are developed or being used by member universities to support community engaged outreach, teaching and research programs, and will disseminate the results of this research to insure that the models are continually improved and available for use by other communities and universities around the world.

The processes for implementation shall include but not limited to grant making and technical support and training; partnerships with governments, development partners, private sector and communities; learning and knowledge management; and most importantly – action research to build a knowledge base and provide pertinent solutions in support of Africa's agricultural transformation, a teaching agenda that incorporates community needs and supports campus mission and lifelong learning goals, and the application and provision of institutional resources for community use through outreach.

Conclusion: Helping Universities Shape Africa's Future

African Universities of today are preparing for the knowledge-driven world of tomorrow. RUFORUM member universities exist for the communities they serve: local, national, continental, and global. An integral part of those communities, the university enters into relationships where decisions about means and ends are made collaboratively, costs and benefits are shared, and learning is reciprocal. Beginning with interest and outreach and moving through engagement and empowerment, RUFORUM and its members recognize degrees of commitment and nurture relationships along the full spectrum. The RUCES is a commitment, providing the Forum community and others with the framework for action, the kinds of data-driven tools, research, and analysis that will help them maximize the allocation of their resources on the issues they and their communities care about the most.



The depth of community engagement differs substantially between and within member universities. Some have stronger community relationships than others. Some universities have long-established reputations and networks that connect them with national, regional, and international communities. Many have forged strategic alliances, partnerships, and consortia with other HEIs that enable them connect to networks and influence beyond their own potential outreach.

Communities and HEIs should actively seek ways in which to strengthen their relationship and partnership opportunities. There are almost endless possibilities for positive engagement between higher education and communities. Stakeholders from both sides ought to do everything they can in seeking mutual opportunities and benefits (in a synergistic or win-win fashion), and in advocating for equitable and sustainable partnerships in all of their collective endeavours. Mainstreaming the practice of community-based research in the teaching and research functions of higher education will require: supportive policies through government support, and higher education and research funding; trained professionals (researchers, scholars, students, practitioners); enhanced partnerships between civil society, private and social entrepreneurs, universities, and networks; and, supportive leadership: from academic councils, university administrations, vice chancellors and civil society leaders.



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