

## Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture Secretariat Quarterly Report

1<sup>st</sup> January- 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019

### Summary

This report presents key achievements and progress made during the period 1<sup>st</sup> January- 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 (third quarter of the Financial Year 2018/19, and year-one implementation of the operational plan-2018-2022 of RUFORUM [Vision 2030](#)). The Operational Plan is designed around four (4) flagship programmes underpinned by activities to support regional collective action and learning to give impetus to achieving the RUFORUM vision for *vibrant transformative universities catalyzing inclusive agricultural development to feed and create prosperity for Africa*. The four flagship programmes include:

- Transforming African Agricultural Universities for Africa's Growth and Development (TAGDev), flagship mainly implemented with support from the Mastercard Foundation focused on attracting and supporting youth into agricultural education to acquire skills for employability and entrepreneurship.
- Cultivating Research and Teaching Excellence (CREATE) mainly supported by DAAD, Carnegie Corporation of New York, and the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) focused on enhancing the capacity of the entire university academic practice and outreach system.
- Regional Anchor Universities for Higher Agricultural Education (RANCH) focused on Strengthening Higher Agricultural Education in Africa (SHAEA), an initiative of the World Bank in partnership with African Governments and RUFORUM in the nascent stages of development.
- Knowledge Hub for University Networking, Partnership and Advocacy (K-Hub), consolidates and documents the outputs and outcomes from Vision 2030 flagships, mostly supported by contributions from the Member Universities.

Below are the highlights of progress made:

1. To provide a platform for dialogue between the African tertiary education sector (Technical and Vocational Education and Training-TVET; Higher Education, Science and Technology-HEST; and, research and development-R&D) and the global and African development partners to devise strategies for transforming African agricultural higher education, science, technology and innovation (AHESTI); RUFORUM co-convened a development partners meeting in Marrakesh, Morocco (20-22 March 2019) in collaboration with the OCP Group, African Development Bank, World Bank, MasterCard Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The meeting involved 62 participants from 39 institutions and 23 countries.

2. RUFORUM is engaging the Government of the Republic of Uganda in high level policy dialogues to follow-up commitments made to RUFORUM at inception with the Government bid to host the RUFORUM Secretariat. These include, Diplomatic status to RUFORUM; endorsing the RUFORUM Charter for the establishment of RUFORUM as an African governments' owned institution; Annual budget subvention to RUFORUM; participation of Uganda in the World Bank IDA funded Strengthening Higher Agricultural Education in Africa (SHAEA) project; and, leadership of Uganda on the implementation of the regional initiative –Building Africa's Science, Technology and Innovation Capacity (BASTIC). Further, the meeting with the First Lady and Minister of Education also involved exploring a stronger partnership between the Government of Uganda and Mastercard Foundation in responding to the Mastercard Foundation 'Young Africa Works' strategy focusing on the future of work. The Government of Uganda provided strong commitment to partner and support the Mastercard Foundation in the implementation of its strategy in Uganda.
3. With support from the Mastercard Foundation, RUFORUM has scaled-up the implementation of the Community Action Research Programme (CARP+) beyond the two pioneering Universities - Gulu University in Uganda and Egerton University in Kenya. The CARP+ projects are now operational at University of Khartoum, University of Gezira, University of Kordofan and Peace University (Sudan) Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural Resource (Botswana), University of the Free State (South Africa) University of Namibia (Namibia), Makerere University (Uganda), Abomey Calavi University (Benin), University of Cape Coast (Ghana), Bindura University (Zimbabwe), and University of Nairobi (Kenya). These universities are now at the forefront of sustained delivery of technologies, innovations and management practices to smallholder farmers through community action research based on priority commodity value chains at national level.
4. Increased RUFORUM's participation in the training of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) students in Uganda and Kenya through the Technical Skills Development Programme (TESDEP) with support from the Mastercard Foundation. The National Occupation Standards for Piggery in Kenya has been developed and a process for a fully-fledged curriculum has commenced. Training of about 400 TVET students in agribusiness has commenced in Uganda over the next two year period.
5. As part of efforts to reinforce the Secretariat's function to effectively deliver on the Vision 2030 strategy, four new staff were recruited; Technical Specialist responsible for Staff Development and Academic Mobility (Ms Wivine Matabaro Adidja from DR Congo); Systems Accountant (Mr Donkor Doodu Reginald from Ghana); Internal Auditor (Ms Siaka Meri from Ghana); and, Technical Specialist responsible for Youth Development and Community Engagement (Dr Hatim Mohamed Ahmed Elamin from Sudan).

## INTRODUCTION:

The narrative below gives details of RUFORUM Secretariat's progress and achievements made during the period 1 January- 31 March 2019, the third quarter of the financial year 2018/19. The Report is arranged by Flagship Programmes of the RUFORUM [Vision 2030](#).

### Flagship programme: TAGDev-Transforming African Agricultural Universities for Africa's Growth and Development

#### a) Support Community Action Research Teams at each university to engage with communities and strengthen commodity value chains for smallholder farmers and agribusinesses

The Community Action Research Projects (CARP+) in West Africa through monitoring visits to Université d'Abomey-Calavi (Benin) and University of Cape Coast (Ghana) (17-22 February, 2019). The visit to the Baobab CARP+ at Université d'Abomey-Calavi established that the project is on track with a strong appreciation for a stakeholder driven approach to research and for working together with the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges to support their curricula, and at the same time to provide engagement between the CARP+ students and the College Faculty and students. Emerging from the visit is the need to link the Baobab and other CARP+ programs to organizations that provide **Intellectual Property** support to strengthen their appreciation to reconcile intellectual property safeguards, and the need for open access to research, without risking infringement of the commercial potential.

The Pineapple CARP+ at the University of Cape Coast (Ghana) demonstrated good progress with students' academic progress with strong collaborations with the private sector and Farmer Training Institutes. Future engagements will reorient project interventions to more clearly reflect the role of the small-scale farmers; the potential for small-scale businesses; and, the potential of institutionalization of some of the links developed through the platform. This will ensure sustainability of the close links between the university, the farmers and other stakeholders after project closure.

Following a [call](#) for proposals targeting RUFORUM member universities in Angola, Namibia, South Africa, Eswatini, Lesotho, Botswana and Zambia, RUFORUM competitively [awarded](#) three Community Action Research Programme (CARP+) to the University of Free State (South Africa); Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (Botswana); and, University of Namibia (Namibia) from a pool of 10 proposals. The CARP+ is intended to support projects that innovatively enhance university-led community action research on important commodity value chains in collaboration with Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions as well as key actors in the commodity sub-sector.

Ninety (90) students including 60 at undergraduate and 30 at Masters level were supported for study at Gulu and Egerton Universities with support from the Mastercard Foundation. These students are attached to research projects under the CARP+ in the respective value chains.

**b) Develop and pilot an agricultural business/entrepreneurship incubator program at selected universities to advance the adoption of new models of agricultural education**

During the quarter, RUFORUM continued to support the implementation of ongoing RUFORUM Agricultural Enterprises Challenge Program (RECAP) projects through monitoring visits to RECAP projects at the University of Cape Coast (Ghana) and Université d'Abomey-Calavi (Benin) (17-22 February, 2019). The Université d'Abomey-Calavi RECAP project is on track with a strong appreciation of the stakeholder driven approach to research and working together with the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions to support their curricula and provide engagement between the CARP+ students and the College Faculty and students. Emerging out of the filed visits is the need for formal engagement with World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

The visit to the Startup Villa RECAP at the University of Cape Coast established that the project is on track with all students (41 students in 4 group enterprises) under the project successfully accomplishing their enterprise projects. The project has established various infrastructure which will be useful both in teaching practical skills in a range of courses, and as well provide opportunity for future students to carry out their entrepreneurial projects. The visit recommended that the project develops an active ICT plan that helps establish linkages between students that have completed their projects with technical, business and marketing actors and to disseminate information. Overall, nine RECAP projects are undergoing implementation and are engaging **339** students (122 female; 217 male) in **14** higher education institutions in Africa.

Gulu University, under the Student Enterprises Scheme RECAP trained 35 staff form TVET in business plan development and entrepreneurship. In addition, sixty five (65) youths at Northern Uganda Youth Development Centre-(a TVET institution) received business canvass model training. RUFORUM in partnership with Bobi Polytechnique and Institute of Agricultural Knowledge for Practice have initiated the process for the training of 400 TVET youth in Uganda. Further engagement with TVET institutions in gradually being catalysed with support from the Mastercard Foundation.

RUFORUM Secretariat issued a restricted [call](#) for proposals under the RUFORUM Agricultural Enterprises Challenge Program (RECAP), targeting to support and promote innovation and entrepreneurship in selected RUFORUM member universities in southern, eastern and west Africa. The RECAP seeks to develop a supporting environment where startups, innovations and disruptive ideas are nurtured to grow with focus on agriculture. The selection process is ongoing and the results will be announced in June 2019.

***Emerging Lessons***

1. CARP implementation is a stepwise process, as such exercising patience with Principal Investigators (PIs) and research teams is critical as one seeks for success in implementation. Additionally, some of the PIs are learning to transition from the disciplinary implementation to community engagement as they further build their skills in operating in transdisciplinary teams.

2. Intellectual Property is a critical aspect that requires to be embedded in the innovation training and space in many African universities. This is currently receiving limited attention and leaves many young researchers and senior scientists vulnerable to exploitation.
3. African Universities are demonstrating innate potential in the delivery of new models of training through entrepreneurship training. Graduates have capacity to develop viable products but they require a supportive ecosystem for post-incubation phase informed of acceleration support to translate these into operational enterprises with large outputs and products beyond the pilots in the incubator programmes. This requires investment that the young entrepreneurs are currently not predisposed to yet urgently required.
4. University linkage with the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions is an important reality with high impact potential. However, building this partnership requires a transformation of actors' perspectives on the role each one of them plays and arriving at a common understanding with mutual trust. Currently, there is a lot of mistrust between Universities and TVET institutions which has kept the education value chain disjointed. Thus, facilitating partnership evolution of stronger partnerships along common areas of interest and complementarity is a good entry point for engagement.

### **Flagship programme: RANCH: Regional Anchor Universities for Higher Agricultural Education**

- a) *Organize visibility events for RUFORUM-inspired training and skilling programs for generating the next generation of science leaders for Africa's agriculture*

During the reporting period, RUFORUM co-convened a regional partnerships meeting involving 62 participants from 39 institutions and 23 countries in Marrakesh, Morocco (20-22 March 2019) to discuss human capacity development, research and innovation. Amongst several aspects discussed at the meeting was RUFORUM [Vision 2030](#) Agriculture Higher Education Science Technology and Innovation (AHESTI) flagship programmes. The meeting recommended specific areas of focus to advance the aspirations of the flagships as well as scaling up successful initiatives to more African countries under the AHESTI.

### **Flagship programme: CREATE-Cultivating Research and Teaching Excellence**

- a) *Escalate doctoral training to increase the pool of science leaders in Africa*

Capacity development for member universities is majorly through PhD and Masters training. For the program year 2018/19, Two hundred and sixty nine (269) staff from the member universities are pursuing PhD programs, and 375 students are undertaking Masters studies. These are supported under, different programs including Social and Environmental Trade-offs in African Agriculture (SENTINEL); Carnegie Corporation of New York, Mastercard Foundation(CARP+), DAAD German Academic Exchange Service and ICRSAT

**b) Support the advancement of quality training and Basic and Applied research through Post- Doctoral Fellowships**

RUFORUM Secretariat continued to support the implementation of the Post-Doctoral programme by providing mentorship to the supported 134 students (BSc (25); MSc (63) and PhD (46) in different member universities. The Carnegie Corporation of New York Supported programme commenced in January 2018 and aims at increasing and ensuring retention of qualified and skilled graduates in Africa to support the strengthening of African universities and research institutions to meet the growing demand for creating knowledge and prosperity in the continent.

**c) Facilitate Academic Staff Development (ASD) through Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA) approach and other fellowships**

During the reporting period, RUFORUM awarded 11 Graduate Teaching Assistantships bringing to total 174 out of the 325 GTA earmarked for placement by 2022. RUFORUM further received 121 nominations (38 female) for the Graduate Teaching Assistantship to pursue PhD studies in other RUFORUM Member Universities. RUFORUM further launched the 2019 GTA [call](#) with the objective of improving the quality of higher education at African Universities through increasing the proportion of academic staff with PhD qualifications, contributing to locally relevant research and reducing the time away from the home institution. A total of 239 teaching staff have been nominated by their respective universities to pursue PhD training in other RUFORUM Member universities. The RUFORUM GTA continues to provide an effective mechanism to leverage resources for improving the quality of higher education at African Universities by increasing the proportion of academic staff with PhD qualifications. The training of 325 PhD faculty staff by 2022 represent an investment of close to \$24 million by the Member universities.

**d) Support Academic Mobility Scheme (RAMS) to promote access to quality academic programmes, strengthen inter-regional, inter-cultural exchange and collaboration in the field of higher education**

As part of efforts to increase access to quality education while strengthening the competitiveness and attractiveness of African Universities, RUFORUM Secretariat mobilized 19 teams from 35 member universities to respond to the Intra-Africa Mobility Scheme [call](#) 2019. The call is aimed at enhancing human capital development in Africa, while strengthening intra-African collaboration as called for by Agenda 2063 and RUFORUM Vision 2030.

**e) Strengthen inter-regional, inter-cultural exchange and collaboration in the field of higher agricultural and STI education and research**

Following the award of African Union Research Grants to 10 institutions including three RUFORUM member Universities (Eduardo Mondlane University; University of Zambia; and, Makerere University), amounting to US\$ 4, 328,468.38 m, RUFORUM supported the convening of the joint inception planning meeting (6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2019) for the three research teams.

#### ***Emerging lessons***

1. There is immense demand for doctoral training and human capital development in African Universities. This demand is far higher in post-conflict countries such as Liberia, Mozambique, DR. Congo, Mali, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Burundi, among whose higher education sector has been affected by years of conflict and brain drain of the few qualified

personnel. Targeted support by RUFORUM and others to these countries will constitute a strong element of rebuilding African institutions.

2. Partnership remains a key delivery mechanism for catalysing and increasing impact within the development context in Africa. The African Universities have demonstrated they can be in position to support each other through the Graduate Teaching Assistantship programme. Despite a fully operation GTA programme, it still requires strengthening in particular, research funding support, to be in better position to deliver high quality and impact oriented research.

#### **Flagship programme: Knowledge Hub (K-Hub) for university networking, partnership and advocacy**

- a) **Widen and enhance online and offline Information Technology platforms to facilitate and enhance systematic access to information through continuous analysis of Platform requirements**

RUFORUM Secretariat continued to leverage Information Technology platforms (ICT's) to keep RUFORUM Network stakeholders updated on news and events in agriculture, higher education and related sectors in Africa. During the quarter, RUFORUM Secretariat developed project websites for two of the three teams that were awarded the African Union Research Grants, i.e., University of Eduardo Mondlane and University of Zambia. RUFORUM Secretariat further published nine editions of regular media monitoring extracts and six editions of the RUFORUM Weekly news digest which currently reaches 16,199 subscribers through the RUFORUM mailing list. Overall 1028 pages of the RUFORUM website were viewed during the reporting period with the top countries accessing the website including United States – 416 users ( 56.3%); Uganda - 62 users (8.83%); China-55 users ( 7.83%); United Kingdom – 33 users ( 4.7%); Canada-28 users (3.99%); and, Japan- 19 users (2.7%).

Other storylines published during the period included;

1. The MasterCard scholarship has given me opportunity for professional development, my teaching experience at Gulu University;
2. Uganda's Minister of Education and Sports hails Mastercard Foundation for their support to Uganda;
3. RUFORUM honours former Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, African Union Commission, Her Excellency Rhoda Peace Tumusiime; and,
4. FAO and RUFORUM link students and local communities for enhancing sustainable agriculture and reducing rural poverty in Africa

- b) **Improve the functionality of the RUFORUM Repository, linking it to google scholar and working on indexing RUFORUM papers**

As part of efforts to increase accessibility to resources that make RUFORUM a leader in postgraduate training and research in the agricultural sciences in Africa, the following interventions were undertaken during the reporting period;

- i. RUFORUM Secretariat provided access to over 2,239 publications from both academia and practice through the RUFORUM institutional repository by publishing 46 additional articles. Further, as part of efforts to expand the scope and include publications from other institutions

- in the repository, discussions were held with Elsevier and the Agri-Knowledge Consortium for a collaboration on how to enhance the RUFORUM Institutional Repository.
- ii. RUFORUM Secretariat convened a two-day meeting with representatives of the AgriKnowledge Consortium in January 2019 at the RUFORUM Secretariat to explore how the content in the RUFORUM repository and AgriKnowledge can be merged, the collection expanded and the functionality enhanced. A concept note to guide preparation of a funding proposal for the activity was prepared.
  - iii. RUFORUM Secretariat held discussions with Elsevier on how the Digital Commons software could be used as an alternative platform for the RUFORUM Institutional Repository to support open publishing within the network as well as showcase and track impact of publications on a national, regional and global scale. A proposal for moving the discussion forward is under consideration by the RUFORUM Secretariat management.

**c) Promote publication of Africa's research outputs in the African Journal of Rural Development and other related publications**

As part of efforts to increase the visibility of research innovations emerging from the African continent and as well document best practices, two issues (Volume 3, Issues 3 & 4) of the African Journal of Rural Development (AfJRD) were prepared and will be released in the next reporting period. The articles focus on a wide range of themes across the African continent including aflatoxin contamination, land management systems, and prediction of water level fluctuations in Lake Malawi and the Nile Basin. The Secretariat also finalized preparation of Part 1 of Volume 17 of the RUFORUM Working Document Series focusing on papers submitted for the RUFORUM Biennial Conference 2018. This will be published in the next reporting period. RUFORUM Secretariat further prepared a call for a special edition of the AfJRD focusing on African indigenous chicken and other animal resources, which will be released during the next reporting period.

Other published articles included;

- i. Past, present and future climate trends under varied representative concentration pathways
- ii. Factsheets on agricultural higher education capacities in RUFORUM member universities
- iii. Agriculture for improved nutrition: seizing the momentum
- iv. Emerging opportunities for the application of blockchain in the agri-food industry
- v. Education system alignment for 21st century skills: focus on assessment
- vi. Adoption of technologies and crop productivity in Ethiopia: the role of agricultural information

**d) Design and develop at least one customized RUFORUM e-learning platform based on open source technologies**

RUFORUM held discussions with Mohammed VI Polytechnic University (UM6P) (20-22 March 2019) to collaboratively develop an e-learning platform through the proposed Africa Digital Agriculture Programme (AfriDAP) under the support (both financially and in-kind) of UM6P. One of the pillars of AfriDAP is digital learning and sharing technologies to support teaching and learning within the agriculture domain. The meeting recommended that OCP, World Bank and other Development Partners support the AfriDAP initiative being championed by UM6P and RUFORUM and to mobilize other partners to support the initiative. The meeting further recommended that RUFORUM includes the AfriDAP initiative as one of its Pillars in the Higher Agricultural Education Indicator Platform

### ***Emerging lessons***

1. African Universities need to respond dynamically to emerging agricultural needs and in particular explore the adoption of artificial intelligence and platforms to catalyse agricultural transformation through innovative support to the last mile delivery of innovations, technologies and management practices.
2. Strengthening African based knowledge dissemination and publication channels remains a key issue of concern that requires concerted effort; through various means; firstly making African people believe in their own publication institutions, secondly, raising the quality of these publishing houses/journals and platforms, and increasing the utilisation of African based produced materials and research as reference materials in decision support as well as in training processes.
3. Universities in Africa are considerably doing significant transformations at community level and at individual level. However, little is shared about these success stories. The culture of branding and sharing the success stories and challenges in development is still limited in the continent. Focused attention to building this leadership capacity is required.
4. The RUFORUM Secretariat still needs to strengthen its data capture and dissemination portfolios, and to document its footprint in each of the 38 Member States

### **Flagship programme: PROGRAM SUPPORT – Technical, administrative and logistical support**

- a) *Recruit Staff for the Secretariat in line with the approved functional analysis to support delivery of the Vision 2030 Strategy*

As part of efforts to bolster the capacity of RUFORUM Secretariat to effectively deliver on the RUFORUM Vision 2030 strategy, four new staff were recruited including; Technical Specialist-Staff Development and Academic Mobility; Systems Accountant; Internal Auditor; and, Technical Specialist-Youth Development and Community Engagement. RUFORUM Secretariat further advertised the positions of [Deputy Executive Secretary Programme Development & Implementation](#); [Manager, Program Results Measurement & Learning \(PRML\)](#); and [Technical Specialist, Graduate Training](#).

- b) *Broker alliances and partnerships to assist universities establish delivery networks for scaling-up research outputs, knowledge products and innovations*

During the quarter, RUFORUM brokered alliances between Mastercard Foundation and the Government of Uganda to offer quality skills development through training instructors in technical institutions (see [Here](#)). The meeting convened by the First Lady of the Republic of Uganda and Minister of Education and Sports was in synchrony with the Government's strategic plan of Skilling Uganda and the Mastercard Foundation's "Young Africa Works" strategy which was launched in Kigali, Rwanda in 2018.

Further, RUFORUM in collaboration with the OCP Group and Mohammed VI Polytechnic University convened a Development Partners meeting in Morocco from 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2019 to provide a platform for dialogue between the African tertiary education sector (TVET, HEST, R&D)

and the global and African development partners to chart a way forward for transforming African agricultural higher agricultural education, science, technology and innovation (AHESTI). The meeting was attended by 62 participants from 39 institutions and 23 countries as well as several partners including The World Bank, Carnegie Cooperation of New York, Mastercard Foundation, Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa, Arab Organization for Agricultural Development and Green Climate Fund (See [Link](#)). Several other partners including universities, research institutions and policy institutions from North America and Europe with expertise in digital agriculture, soil science and plant nutrition, agri-entrepreneurship and policy studies for agriculture and rural development were represented. The meeting recommended that RUFORUM seeks high level policy support for AHESTI (Africa's Universities Agenda for Higher Education in Agriculture, Science, Technology and Innovation ), BASTIC (Building Africa's Science, Technology and Innovation Capacity) and SHAEA (Strengthening Higher Agricultural Education in Africa) as these are key strategies for supporting implementation of CAADP and STISA-2024 and for actualizing recommendations of the November 2018 Summit of the Committee of 10 African Heads of State championing Education, Science, Technology and Innovation development in Africa (C10) (See [link](#)).

c) *Prepare and submit at least 20 proposals for university-based research teams and five for the Secretariat*

During the quarter, the following achievements were registered as part of efforts to support partnerships, networking and resource mobilization.

- i. RUFORUM was awarded US\$ 526, 560 by the African Development Bank for Sharing Innovations and experiences from Korea for Higher Education Transformation in Africa (SIKET).
- ii. Under the consortium of Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Makerere University, Uganda Martyrs University and the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture, secured NOK 5,000,000 from the Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education under the NORPART 2018 - Call for applications. The grant is aimed at strengthening partnerships between African Higher Education Institutions and Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) to provide quality and internationalized academic training and to implement joint training and research activities between Norway and Ugandan Universities.
- iii. RUFORUM Secretariat supported six research teams from 34 Institutions in 17 countries to respond to the 2019 ERASMUS PLUS [call](#) for proposals. This process resulted into submission of six proposals, including one to support RUFORUM Secretariat operations. The Call was aimed at supporting eligible Partner Countries to address the challenges facing their higher education institutions and systems, including those of quality, relevance, equity of access, planning, delivery, management, and governance.
- iv. RUFORUM Secretariat submitted several Concept Notes and proposals to source for funding from various agencies including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa; and, Government of Uganda for Annual Budget Subvention, amongst others

***d) Undertake a Second tracer study of RUFORUM alumni***

During the quarter, RUFORUM continued to engage the consultant assigned to undertake the tracer study of RUFORUM Alumni. The study was finalized and data processing is currently ongoing to establish key RUFORUM statistics including percentage (%) of alumni that; live and work in their country of origin; are on permanent or long-term contracts; found employment within 6 months of completion; produced at least one paper in a referenced journal; are in a position of influence at regional, national or local government levels, as well as alumni placements.

***e) Engage Member Governments to establish a Charter for legitimization of RUFORUM as an Implementation Agency for Higher Education training in Agriculture and STI in the member countries***

As part of continued efforts to engage Member Governments to endorse the RUFORUM Charter as an implementation Agency for Higher Education training in Agriculture and STI in the member countries, RUFORUM Secretariat followed up with the Government of the Republic of Uganda through iterative interactions with the different Government ministries. These efforts resulted into more appreciation and a clear pathway for the endorsement of the RUFORUM Charter by The Government of the Republic of Uganda as well as the other commitments made at the bidding to host RUFORUM in 2004. Similar interactions were held with the Government of Liberia, and engagement with other Member States is planned for the subsequent periods.

## **PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR THE NEXT QUARTER APR-JUN 2019**

### **Flagship programme: TAGDev-Transforming African Agricultural Universities for Africa's Growth and Development**

- a. Recruit BSc and MSc students and train a pool of early career scientists and development practitioners (TVETs) TAGDev
- b. Support Community Action Research Teams at each university to engage with communities and strengthen commodity value chains for smallholder farmers and agribusinesses
- c. Finalize a book on agricultural tertiary education in Africa

### **Flagship programme: RANCH: Regional Anchor Universities for Higher Agricultural Education**

- a. Organize visibility events for RUFORUM-inspired training and skilling programs for generating the next generation of science leaders for Africa's agriculture
- b. Facilitate universities to strategically pursue support and partnerships to scale out research innovations, technology transfer and commercialization
- c. Build a platform of complementary partners to facilitate the transformation of universities into world class universities

### Flagship programme: CREATE-Cultivating Research and Teaching Excellence

- a. Award the second and last round of 20 PhD research scholarships under the Social and Environmental Trade-offs in African Agriculture or Sentinel Project
- b. Facilitate Academic Staff Development (ASD) through Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA) approach and other fellowships
- c. Support Academic Mobility Scheme (RAMS) to promote access to quality academic programmes, strengthen inter-regional, inter-cultural exchange and collaboration in the field of higher education
- d. Increase the participation of scholars from small and/or fragile states in agricultural, science and technology-related training
- e. Increase the participation of women in science and technology-related training and research activities in all institutions benefiting from RUFORUM schemes
- f. Strengthen inter-regional, inter-cultural exchange and collaboration in the field of higher agricultural and STI education and research

### Flagship programme: Knowledge Hub (K-Hub) for university networking, partnership and advocacy

- a. Widen and enhance online and offline Information Technology platforms<sup>1</sup> to facilitate and enhance systematic access to information through continuous analysis of Platform requirements
- b. Improve the functionality of the RUFORUM Repository, linking it to google scholar and working on indexing RUFORUM papers
- c. Promote publication of Africa's research outputs in the African Journal of Rural Development and other related publications

### Flagship programme: PROGRAM SUPPORT – Technical, administrative and logistical support

- a. Recruit Staff for the Secretariat in line with the approved functional analysis to support delivery of the Vision 2030 Strategy
- b. Undertake Annual internal and external audits
- c. Engage Member Governments to endorse a Charter for legitimization of RUFORUM as an Implementation Agency for Higher Education training in Agriculture and STI in the member countries

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<sup>1</sup> The platforms are; RUFORUM Information Management System (RIMS); RUFORUM Knowledge Repository;

RUFORUM-ASTI Higher Agricultural Education Capacity Indicators (HAECI) portal; RUFORUM Online Impact Portal (OIP); and, RUFORUM websites, email and blog

- d. Convene a writeshop for member universities to respond to the Intra Africa Academic Mobility Call for Proposals
- e. Develop and submit a proposal to the BRIDGIN Foundation
- f. Participate in SADC Joint Meeting of Ministers responsible for Education, Training, Science, Technology and Innovation, 17-22 June 2019 in Namibia.
- g. Plan for the 15<sup>th</sup> RUFORUM Annual General meeting scheduled to take place in Cape Coast, Ghana, 2-6 December 2019
- h. Follow-up on the commitments of the Government of the Republic of Uganda including endorsement of the RUFORUM Charter for legitimization of RUFORUM as an Implementation Agency for Higher Education training in Agriculture and STI in the member countries
- i. Hold meetings of the RUFORUM Governance organs (Finance & Administration Committee and Board Executive Committee)
- j. Prepare 2019/20 Annual Workplan and Budgets