

RUFORUM Quarterly Report for the Period January-March 2018 Summary

This report presents key highlights of progress and achievements made in the period 1 January-31 March 2018. During the period:

1. RUFORUM finalized the costed Operational Plan (OP) 2018-2022 for implementation of the RUFORUM Vision 2030 Strategy. The Operational Plan (2018-2022) puts forward the business case and rationale for investment in RUFORUM's proposition for Africa's Higher Agricultural Education, Science, Technology and Innovation. It articulates the processes and actions that RUFORUM, with partners, will take to achieve the Vision 2030.
2. Following the recommendations of the Board of Trustees in October 2017, RUFORUM commissioned a Functional Analysis of the existing structure to align and refocus the Secretariat's functions to deliver on the organisation Vision 2030 Strategy taking into considerations organization's effectiveness and efficiency in reflection of the expanded scope of operations.
3. Following the development and subsequent implementation of the strategy for scaling-out the expanded Community Action Research Programme (CARP+) beyond the two pioneering Universities - Gulu and Egerton, the Secretariat awarded five CARP+ projects after evaluation and following the recommendation of the Technical Committee to Makerere University (Uganda); University of Abomey Calavi (Benin); University of Nairobi (Kenya); Bindura University of Science Education (Zimbabwe); and Gulu University (Uganda).
<http://www.ruforum.org/MCF/call-proposal>
4. The Secretariat further awarded nine RUFORUM Entrepreneurship Challenge Programme (RECAP) grants to strengthen Agri-entrepreneurship training, support faculty and students to test innovative business ideas and meaningfully engage industry/ Private sector to take viable business models to scale. This was in response to the call for proposals for strengthening/ establishing Agri-business incubation hubs at member universities.
5. RUFORUM also awarded 10 community Field Attachment Programme Awards (CFAPA) with support from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. The CFAPA are intended to provide opportunity to graduate students who have completed their studies to engage with communities and disseminate their study findings as part of promoting uptake of research outputs.
6. RUFORUM together with the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) and other partners and the Government of Malawi, organised the fourth planning meeting for the First Extra-Ordinary Summit of the Committee of Ten African Heads of State championing Education, Science and Technology (C10) development; this was in preparation for the C10 Summit to be held in Malawi. The meeting brought together a core technical team and key stakeholders to discuss and propose key issues to be brought to the attention of the C10 through the Governments of Malawi, Senegal and the African Union Commission. The meeting reviewed case studies on higher education and STI in selected African countries (Ghana, Malawi, Senegal and South Africa). These case studies built on 13 earlier case studies done by ACBF and RUFORUM
7. In the effort to bolster the Secretariat's function to effectively service the network, RUFORUM recruited three new staff: Manager Information and Technology (IT), Systems Administrator, and Programme Officer Corporate Communication and Advocacy

Below are the details of activities and report on the progress made and aligned to each of the programmatic strategic action areas.

Introduction:

The narrative below provides details of RUFORUM Secretariat's progress on activities and achievements made during the third quarter-January-March 2018 of the financial year 2017/18 under each of the Strategic Action Areas as approved by the Board of Trustees in October 2018.

STRATEGIC ACTION AREA 1: TRAINING, RESEARCH AND VOCATIONALIZATION

1.1 *Provide strategic oversight and technical backstopping support for implementation of RUFORUM sub-awards including FAPA, GRGs, CARPs and CARP+;*

During the quarter, RUFORUM Technical Committee (TC) convened as part of the mandatory periodic provision of strategic oversight support on implementation of on-going grants within the different sub-awards categories. During the TC mission, 10 community Field Attachment Programme Awards (CFAPA) were awarded with support from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. The CFAPA are intended to provide opportunity to graduate students who have completed their studies to engage with communities and disseminate their study findings as part of promoting uptake research outputs <https://blog.ruforum.org/2018/02/12/press-release-announcing-32-ruforum-grant-recipients/>.

All on-going grants awarded in the period 2014 and 2015 are coming to the end of their respective implementation time frame and project close out actions have been initiated. Most importantly, the projects have achieved over and above their intended outcomes in terms of training the next generation of scientists for Africa; strengthening the capacity of university research teams to manage multi-disciplinary action research; increasing universities' visibility and relevance in Africa's agriculture space as a result of community engagement and applicable research; increased adoption of university-led innovations along pilot agricultural commodity value chains and spearheading translation of new agricultural knowledge into practice. Below are some of the emerging stories and lessons,

<https://ruforum.files.wordpress.com/2018/04/fapa-report-rasekoele.pdf>

<https://ruforum.files.wordpress.com/2018/04/fapa-report.pdf>

<https://ruforum.files.wordpress.com/2018/04/final-of-final-timps-template-2015-grg-135-for-quarterly-reporting.pdf>

<https://ruforum.files.wordpress.com/2018/04/final-of-final-timps-ru-2015-grg125-for-quarterly-reporting-march2018.pdf>

<https://ruforum.files.wordpress.com/2018/04/gilbert-koskey-six-months-narrative-fapa-report-2018.pdf>

<https://ruforum.files.wordpress.com/2018/04/1-ruforum-livestock-carp-detailed-report-30-months-1-dec-2017.pdf>

1.2 Develop and implement a scaling strategy for the CARP+ to the wider RUFORUM network and award six new CARP+ Projects

With support from the MasterCard Foundation (MCF), during the reporting period, RUFORUM awarded six (6) grants out of the 38 proposals received in the solicitation phase that was open to all member universities to support the scale-out of expanded Community Action Research Programme (CARP+). A call for proposal was issued in the first quarter of the FY 2017-18. The awardees included Makerere University; University of Abomey Calavi; University of Nairobi; Bindura University of Science Education; and Gulu University. The CARP+ is intended to support projects that innovatively enhance university-led community action research on important commodity value chains in collaboration with technical/vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions as well as key actors in the commodity sub-sector. As part of implementation oversight, field visits and support to research teams implementing the earlier awarded Community Action Research Programme PLUS (CARP+) potato and the cassava value chain projects at Egerton University were undertaken to enhance compliance and quality of implementation. The teams were guided in financial reporting procedures and acceptable financial standards under the Mastercard Foundation financial reporting guidelines.

1.3. Place 120 academic staff for PhD training through the Graduate Teaching Assistantships at Member Universities

During the reporting period, 25 additional Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTA) were facilitated to train under the World Bank African Higher Education Centre of Excellence in Oilfield Chemicals Research (ACE-CEFOR) at the University of Port Harcourt in Nigeria. This brings to a total of 163¹ of the 325 GTAs earmarked for placement by 2021. The RUFORUM GTA continues to provide an effective mechanism for escalating and upgrading capacities of faculty through facilitated academic mobility across RUFORUM member Universities. The GTA-ACE partnership provides a win-win arrangement by leveraging funding gaps from member universities and the World Bank IDA funding.

Further, as part of its efforts to strengthen regional collaboration and integration among universities in Africa, RUFORUM facilitated 22 staff exchanges from Eastern, Western and Central Africa to selected member Universities in the region. Of these, 10 staff exchanges were implemented in collaboration with the AQUAFISH Centre of Excellence at the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources in Malawi. The main outcomes included joint draft proposals for funding submitted to DAAD and “BioInnovate”; joint course module delivery, students’ supervision and sharing of teaching and research experiences across the Network. Additional stories can be accessed through the links below:

<https://blog.ruforum.org/2017/06/17/enhancing-regional-collaboration-among-ruforum-member-universities-through-staff-exchanges/>

¹ A total of 100 GTAs were previously placed at various host Universities

<https://blog.ruforum.org/2018/01/30/aquafish-center-of-excellence-and-ruforum-implement-staff-exchange-program-9-professors-visit/>

<https://blog.ruforum.org/2017/10/13/ruforum-in-collaboration-with-luanar-aquafish-ace-coordinates-10-academic-staff-exchanges-within-the-region/>

1.4. Implement Post-Doctoral programme

RUFORUM with support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York officially commenced the implementation of its Post-Doctoral programme in January 2018. The programme 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. During the reporting period, a call for the Post-Doctoral Programme fellowships was issued and attracted 42 applicants from nine African countries. Of these, the Technical Committee awarded 19 fellowships based on the merits of the research focus, provision of mentorship to graduate students and strength in fostering collaboration among faculty. Related stories can be found through the links below:

<http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20180314115227550>

[https://blog.ruforum.org/2018/03/01/press-release-ruforum-awards-19-post-doctoral-fellowships/?utm_source=RUFORUM+Mailing+List&utm_campaign=258c10e768-RUFORUM+Weekly+-+Vol.3+No.25&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1fcfb8a0b-258c10e768-307041069&ct=t\(\)\)&goal=0_1fcfb8a0b-258c10e768-307041069&mc_cid=258c10e768&mc_eid=0c1b575897](https://blog.ruforum.org/2018/03/01/press-release-ruforum-awards-19-post-doctoral-fellowships/?utm_source=RUFORUM+Mailing+List&utm_campaign=258c10e768-RUFORUM+Weekly+-+Vol.3+No.25&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1fcfb8a0b-258c10e768-307041069&ct=t())&goal=0_1fcfb8a0b-258c10e768-307041069&mc_cid=258c10e768&mc_eid=0c1b575897)

STRATEGIC ACTION AREA 2: SERVICING THE NETWORK

2.1 Develop a RUFORUM Strategic Vision 2030 that outlines strategies for higher education's contribution to agricultural transformation by 2030 and RUFORUM's role;

Following the approval and adoption of the RUFORUM Vision 2030 Strategy (<https://repository.ruforum.org/documents/ruforum-vision-2030-african-universities-agenda-agricultural-higher-education-science>) during the Annual General Meeting held in October 2017 in Lilongwe, Malawi, the medium term Operational Plan (2018-2022) of the RUFORUM Vision 2030 Strategy was finalized and recommended for endorsement by a special sitting of the Finance and administration Committee of the RUFORUM Board. The committee made recommendations to the Board of Trustees to approve and adopt the Operational Plan to guide the Organisation operations. The Operational Plan elaborates the business case and rationale for investment in Africa's higher agricultural education and training. The plan further articulates the processes and actions that RUFORUM, with partners, will take to achieve the Vision, and specifically the key interventions under each of the flagship programmes, the financing requirements, implementation strategy, measuring and evaluating activities, and risks and risk management strategies. Each of the key interventions/activities embedded under each of the Flagship programmes of the RUFORUM Vision 2030 was costed resulting into a five-year budget (2018-2022) for

operationalizing the RUFORUM Vision 2030 Strategy. The Operation Plan is expected to be endorsed by the RUFORUM Board Executive Committee during its sitting in mid May 2018.

2.2. Strengthen ICT platforms to facilitate programme monitoring and evaluation, information access and knowledge management functions

RUFORUM has continued to strengthen its ICT platforms to facilitate monitoring and evaluation, knowledge access and information dissemination across the network. The following platforms have been developed or upgraded;

- *The RUFORUM Website:* The RUFORUM website (www.ruforum.org) has been made more responsive and final tests are being done to ensure access on mobile devices. This is expected to have multiplier effects of enabling more users on the move to easily access the website, widen the user-base of the website and, further enhance higher content visibility across the globe.
- *Biennial Application:* To facilitate information access during the upcoming 22-26 October 2018 African Higher Education week in Nairobi, Kenya, a mobile Biennial Conference Application was developed and a *beta* version made available for download and pretesting on both Play store and Apple store, for android and iOS users, respectively.
- *Biennial website:* to complement the mobile app highlighted above, the website for the conference has also been developed. See <http://ruforum.org/Biennial2018/>
- The RUFORUM Information Management System (RIMS), an ICT platform that supports RUFORUM's core business functions is currently undergoing upgrade to incorporate the monitoring and evaluation modules and students tracking.

RUFORUM is continuously enhancing its IT Security for data protection and systems stability at the Secretariat through provision of basic cyber security trainings to staff. To further enhance the visibility of the content in the RUFORUM's Institutional Repository (www.repository.ruforum.org), the organisation repository was indexed by Google Scholar. Other activities aimed at enhancing visibility and awareness of RUFORUM included:

<https://blog.ruforum.org/2018/03/01/press-release-ruforum-awards-19-post-doctoral-fellowships/>

<https://blog.ruforum.org/2018/02/20/press-releasepartnering-to-effectively-strengthen-whole-value-chains/>

<https://blog.ruforum.org/2018/02/12/press-release-announcing-32-ruforum-grant-recipients/>

<https://blog.ruforum.org/2018/02/06/ruforum-network-universities-improve-in-ranking-among-top-100-ranked-african-universities-in-2017-2018/>

<https://blog.ruforum.org/2018/02/05/ruforum-announces-a-new-technical-committee/>

<https://blog.ruforum.org/2018/01/29/press-release-six-ruforum-member-universities-among-top-17-ranked-african-universities/>

<https://blog.ruforum.org/2018/01/17/press-release-16-ruforum-funded-students-conferred-with-doctoral-degrees/>

Further, the number of online followers continued to increase as follows: Mailing list – from 10,981 to 13,436, Twitter – from 5,456 to 5,655 followers, Facebook – from 21,592 to 21,721 followers, and the Blog news portal from 8,190 to 8,577 subscribers. Top subscriber locations include Uganda at 40.0%, USA at 16.2% and Kenya at 8.6%. Social Media engagement, Weekly digest and Networking meetings have played a critical role in this increase. Countries that lead in accessing our news portal (<http://blog.ruforum.org/>) include Uganda, United States, Ghana, Sudan, Nigeria, Tanzania, South Africa, Japan and Benin.

To keep Network members informed of developments and opportunities relevant to agricultural higher education in Africa, eleven (11) editions of RUFORUM Weekly digest were released during the reporting period and the following 11 stories and nine (9) opportunities shared through the blog at <http://blog.ruforum.org/>.

<https://blog.ruforum.org/2018/03/20/goodwill-message-from-ruforumto-the-association-of-african-universities-aau/>

[RUFORUM Participates in the African Development Bank Third Africa Forum on Science, Technology, and Innovation \(STI\)](#)

<https://blog.ruforum.org/2018/01/30/ruforum-phd-graduate-starts-cowpea-breeding-program-at-university-of-cape-coast/>

<https://blog.ruforum.org/2018/01/19/persistence-helped-me-achieve-my-dream-my-postgraduate-training-journey/>

<https://blog.ruforum.org/2017/10/13/ruforum-in-collaboration-with-luanar-aquafish-ace-coordinates-10-academic-staff-exchanges-within-the-region/>

<https://blog.ruforum.org/2018/03/13/makerere-university-and-partners-receive-african-union-grant-to-facilitate-african-swine-fever-research/>

<https://blog.ruforum.org/2018/03/13/africa-centre-of-excellence-in-phytochemicals-textile-and-renewable-energy-at-moi-university-takes-off/>

[Former RUFORUM Principal Investigator \(PI\) now Full Professor at Makerere University](#)

<https://blog.ruforum.org/2018/02/22/strengthening-capacity-of-end-users-to-support-university-training-and-research-programs/>

<https://blog.ruforum.org/2018/02/06/staff-and-students-trained-in-scientific-data-management-at-uganda-martyrs-university/>

<https://blog.ruforum.org/2018/01/30/aquafish-center-of-excellence-and-ruforum-implement-staff-exchange-program-9-professors-visit/>

2.3. Populate and launch the RUFORUM Higher Education Indicator Platform

During the quarter, RUFORUM continued to liaise with member universities to facilitate the collection of data for the Higher Agricultural Education Capacity Indicator (HAECI) platform. Data from the member universities have been validated. The HAECI platform will be launched in October 2018 during the Sixth RUFORUM Biennial Conference and Higher Education Week in Nairobi, Kenya.

STRATEGIC ACTION AREA 3: NEW PARTNERSHIPS AND POLICY OUTREACH

3.1. Hold at least one Development Partners' meeting to explore funding for RUFORUM

A Development Partners' meeting will be held in May 2018 in Nairobi, Kenya in partnership with the World Bank, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and NUFFIC. Other partners will be invited to the meeting.

3.2. Prepare at least 20 university teams to respond to calls for proposals to support research, education and training at member universities:

RUFORUM mobilized 24 teams to develop and submit proposals under the IDRC and ACIAR Cultivate Africa's Future - Phase 2 (CultiAF-2) Call for proposals. A Proposal development Write-shop was convened to develop and finalise the proposals, peer review and offer a platform for networking among researchers. Currently under development are over 15 proposals for submission to the African Union Research Grant II – 2018 Edition Open Call for Proposals. Eight teams are also being supported to develop proposals for submission to upcoming DAAD In country/In region Scholarships for training MSc and PhD students. The DAAD call is expected to be released during the second half of 2018.

3.3. Develop and submit at least 5 proposals to support RUFORUM activities

During the period, five (5) proposals were developed and submitted for direct support to RUFORUM Secretariat; i) to the World Bank to Host the PASET Regional Higher Education Data Hub; ii) the German Exchange Service for In region/In country scholarship; iii) to the NIPPON Foundation; iv) to the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) to strengthen gender responsive research to connect university knowledge to practice in rural communities, and v) to the Islamic Development Bank. Other proposals are also being developed. The Secretariat is still to receive feedback on the submitted proposals/Concepts.

3.4. Together with the World Bank facilitate the development of the Bank's Strengthening Higher Agricultural Education in Africa (SHAEA) Project

RUFORUM participated in the review of the World Bank Strengthening Higher Agricultural Education in Africa initiative which is under final technical review by the World Bank's Agriculture and Global Practice. As part of the process, a draft proposal for the Project Preparatory Advance, Terms of Reference for the Regional Steering Committee and the Regional Facilitating Unit were developed and submitted to the World Bank for review.

3.5. Jointly with the African Union Commission and Government of Malawi hold consultations, develop background papers for the Summit for the Committee of 10 Heads of State championing Education, Science and Technology development in Africa

In partnership with the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) and the Government of Malawi, RUFORUM co-organized a meeting 26-27 March 2018 to discuss key issues to be brought to the attention

of the Committee of Ten Heads of State and Government (C-10) for their consideration. The meeting was intended to capture the wide experience and expertise of African STI stakeholders to inform the dialogue by the C10; and, to support the Government of Malawi in its organisation of the first C10 meeting in Malawi. The meeting attracted 36 participants who received background presentations on the C10. The meeting discussed strategies to support the C10 in advancing the cause of Education, Science and Technology development in Africa, and recommended several key actions (including identifying existing STI gaps and challenges to be addressed by the C10), to be undertaken by the high-level advocacy platform to strengthen the role of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation in enhancing economic growth on the African continent.

STRATEGIC ACTION AREA 4: STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

4.1. Convene statutory meetings of the RUFORUM Governance organs including the 13th RUFORUM Annual General Meeting in Kenya

An extraordinary meeting of the Finance and Administration Committee meeting was held on 23rd and 24th February, 2018. The Committee recommended the approval of the RUFORUM Draft Operational Plan 2018-2022 and adoption of the realigned Secretariat organisational structure to the Vision 2030 Strategy. Also, following the appointment of new members of the Technical Committee by the Board of Trustees in October 2017 the new RUFORUM Technical Committee was officially inaugurated and constituted during the 12th RUFORUM Technical Committee meeting which took place at the RUFORUM Secretariat from 2nd to 3rd February 2018. The new Technical Committee is composed of the following: Prof. Sam L. K. Amoah, (University of Cape Coast, Ghana), Prof. Frans Swanepoel, (University of Pretoria, South Africa), Prof. Emmanuel Tanyimbu (University of Buea, Cameroon), Prof. Pinky Zwane (University of Swaziland, Swaziland); retired Prof. Luisa Santos (Mozambique), Dr. Sokona Dagnoko (Sasakawa Global 2000 Regional Representative, Mali), and Dr. Joseph Methu, formerly with the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa -ASARECA (Kenya). Prof. Emmanuel Tanyimbu was elected as Chair of the Technical Committee, replacing Professor Kay Muir-Leresche (from Zimbabwe), who had served two terms. The Technical Committee selected and awarded several grants including 10 cFAPAs, 9 RUFORUM Entrepreneurship Challenge Programme (RECAP) grants, 5 CARP + grants, 7 SENTINEL project awards and 19 Post-doctoral fellowships. Additionally, the RUFORUM internal audit was undertaken by Backhouse in March 2018.

4.3. Undertake Functional analysis of the RUFORUM Secretariat to align to the Vision 2030 Strategy implementation

During the quarter, as per the recommendations of the Board of Trustees in October 2017, a Functional Analysis of the existing RUFORUM Secretariat structure was commissioned to align and refocus the Secretariat's functions to the RUFORUM Vision 2030 taking into considerations organization's effectiveness and efficiency in servicing the expanded scope of operations. The draft Functional analysis

report was reviewed by the RUFORUM Board Finance and Administration Committee and will be submitted for approval by the Board Executive Committee which will meet in mid May 2018. Further, to bolster the Secretariat's function to effectively service the network, RUFORUM recruited three new staff to fill the vacant positions. The positions are; Manager Information and Technology (IT), Systems Administrator, and Programme Officer Corporate Communication and Advocacy.

4.6. Plan for the 2018 Sixth African Higher Education Week and RUFORUM Biennial Conference slated for 22-26 October 2018 in Nairobi, Kenya

The Conference will be held at the Kenyatta International Conference Centre. The calls for exhibitions (<http://www.ruforum.org/Biennial2018/sites/ruforum.dd/files/Exhibitions/Call-for-expression-for-Biennial-2018-Exhibition.pdf>), side events (<http://www.ruforum.org/Biennial2018/content/parallel-side-events>) and conference abstracts (<http://www.ruforum.org/Biennial2018/content/abstract>) were finalised and shared online on the conference website and other RUFORUM communication channels. Preparations for online registration are underway and registration will commence in May 2018.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR THE NEXT QUARTER APRIL-JUNE 2018

1. Implement recommendations of the RUFORUM Functional Analysis
2. Engage in broad activities for the purposes of mobilising resources for RUFORUM
3. Plan for the 2018 AGM and Biennial meetings
4. Undertake an ICT survey on member universities for purposes of ascertaining the ICT readiness of universities.
5. Undertake studies to support the preparation of a book on the status of Agricultural Tertiary Education in Africa
6. In partnership with the World Bank continue to facilitate the development of the SHAEA Project
7. Continue to update RUFORUM Policy and legal documents
8. Hold one National Forum event for linking universities to key stakeholders including policy, private sector, civil society and Development Partners
9. Hold meetings of the Technical Committee, Finance and Administration Committee and Board Executive Committee