

## Graduate Teaching Assistantship Programme

### BRIEFING NOTE

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### BACKGROUND

RUFORUM Vice Chancellors initiated the Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA) programme in 2014. It was envisaged that the GTA programme would increase the proportion of academic staff with PhD qualifications, contributing to locally relevant research and reducing the time away from the home institution. Additionally, the GTA programme would be a means to internationalize universities by training international students, a way of attracting more donors and an opportunity to increase the pool of women scientists across the continent. The Vice Chancellors committed to train 325 staff across the network at masters and doctorate level by 2022. The specific objectives of the GTA are to: i) Improve the quality of higher education and increase the pool of PhD-level trained academic staff in African universities; ii) Provide opportunities for the doctoral research to contribute more directly to African development; iii) Strengthen inter- university collaboration in the field of higher education in Africa; and iv) promote staff mobility among RUFORUM member universities, and across Africa.

### THE GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIP APPROACH

The GTA programme is governed by a MoU among participating universities which determines the following roles and responsibilities of the “Sending” and the “Receiving/Host universities (Fig. 1), RUFORUM Secretariat and Deans:



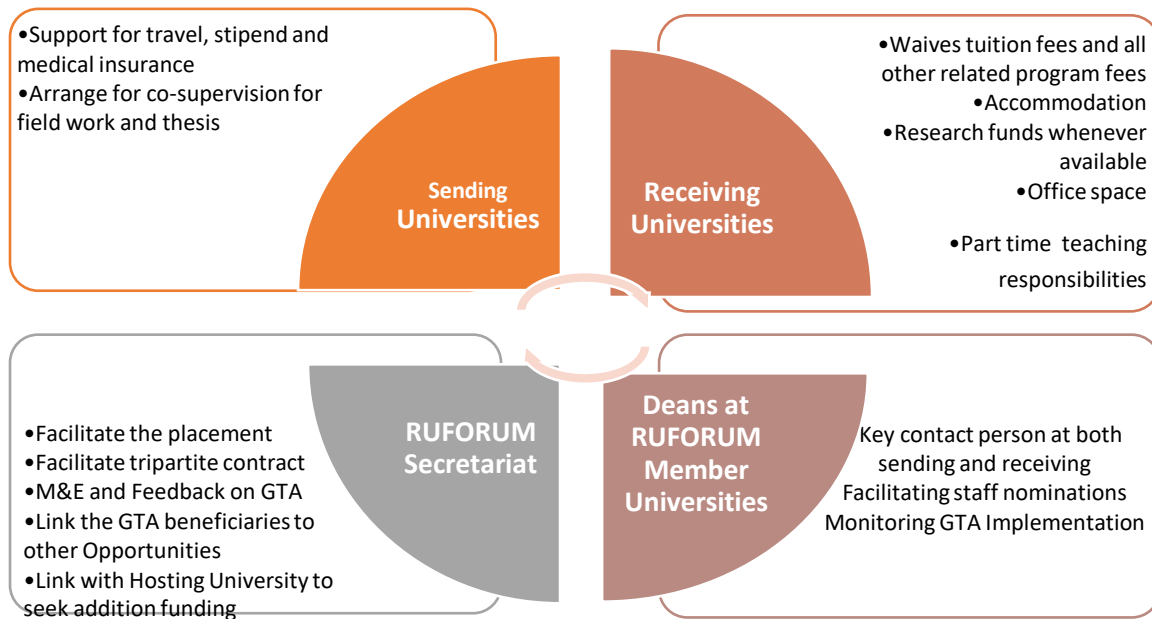


Figure 1: Key Actors and their Roles/ Responsibilities in GTA Implementation

## IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

1. As of December 2022, **87 out of 163** member universities have endorsed the MoU for implementation of student/staff mobility initiative
2. Since 2015, a total of 763 nominations have been received from over 48 member universities with 269 nominations received in the year of 2021 and 2022 only.
3. To date, 250 GTAs (64 female, 186 male) have been placed in 44 host universities from 54 sending universities across the RUFORUM network. 122 GTA still need resource funds.
4. In order to increase the number of placed GTA students undertraining, RUFORUM reached out to member universities pleading with them to train and host as well as nominate more students under the GTA arrangement.
5. A total of 25 RUFORUM Member universities expressed interest in hosting GTAs in over 92 agricultural related courses (see [link](#)).
6. Thirty nine percent (39%) and 27% are being hosted in Kenyan and Ugandan universities, respectively, while 14% and 25% have been sent for training by Malawian and Ugandan universities. RUFORUM would like to boost GTA for its west and central Africa members.
7. Forty Eight (48) out of the 250 placed GTA students have completed their studies and returned to their institutions. The remaining 202 GTAs are under training at various stages of course work, research, thesis preparation, thesis submission and thesis/ dissertation defense.
8. Amongst the 48 GTA graduates, Five (5) GTA graduates have been awarded postdoctoral fellowships in 2018 (2) and in 2022 (3). In addition, two (2) of them have been promoted to the level of Associate Professor in their respective university.
9. RUFORUM Secretariat has developed and introduced a dedicated webpage: <https://www.ruforum.org/gta> in order to promote sensitization and increase the visibility of the GTA programme.



10. RUFORUM Secretariat awarded additional 10 GTA Doctoral Research Grants in January this year from the received fund from the Carnegie Corporation of New York renewal grant funded in 2022.
11. RUFORUM Secretariat continues to support GTA awardees of the 2020 doctoral research grant with funding from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.
12. RUFORUM Secretariat is providing psychosocial support, various skill enhancement trainings and peer-to-peer review support to all the GTAs under training each year. In addition, continuous follow ups on the progress of these GTAs is being done frequently.

