



The Fifth African Higher Education Week and RUFORUM Biennial Conference 2016

The Twelfth RUFORUM Annual General Meeting

Concept Note

Background & Introduction

Established in 2004, The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) is a Network of 60 African universities in 25 countries whose vision is ‘a vibrant agricultural sector linked to African universities which produce high performing graduates and high-quality research responsive to the demands of Africa’s farmers for innovations and able to generate sustainable livelihoods and national economic development’. The Network has several unique features for building Africa’s innovation capacity and for engaging universities in development process and practice; i) It is owned and managed by Africans; ii) It derives its agenda largely from the continent wide policy frameworks especially of the African Union Agenda 2063 and the New Partnership for African Development’s (NEPAD) Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP), the African Union Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA) 2024, Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-2025, the Sub regional Multi–Country Agricultural Productivity Programmes, National Strategy Papers of the member States and Governments and constant review of global trends and foresight planning to ensure Africa has the required capacity for global competitiveness; and iii) it allows for joint action by the member universities and stakeholders in higher education and agricultural sectors.

RUFORUM’s vibrancy emanates from its own character, which a) allows for ownership and direction of network activities by member universities, b) for identification of priorities from national level to inform regional thrusts, c) ensures broad consultation and consensus on regional level activities by members, and d) promotes sharing of resources, rather than competition, across the network for capacity building in agriculture and the broader Science and Technology Innovation (STI). The AGM is a key platform for achievement of the above. Each year, RUFORUM members

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and stakeholders meet at its (AGM) to discuss issues facing network members and strategies to overcome these challenges. The AGM is organised and hosted on a rotational arrangement amongst member universities /countries. The AGM is the supreme decision making organ of the RUFORUM Network; it oversees Network interventions and performs functions as deemed relevant for the achievement of RUFORUM objectives. Although a number of activities are associated with the AGM the actual AGM is a one day meeting which this year will be held on 18th October, 2016.

Focus of the RUFORUM AGM

The theme of the 5th Biennial conference “Linking Universities with private sector, government and other stakeholders in support for agricultural development in Africa” builds on the strategic objectives of RUFORUM Strategic and Business Plan for 2015-2020 that was approved in Windhoek, Namibia. The Plan envisages an enhanced **engagement of University actors along the whole value chain, including** sister organizations and the private sector in mutually beneficial research and training to accelerate delivery of agricultural science-based innovations. The 2016 RUFORUM Biennial Conference, the fifth in the series, aims to provide a platform for sharing experiences and lessons among Higher Agricultural Education actors in Africa and the globe at large towards strengthening higher agricultural education in Africa through partnerships with the private sector and industry. Each other year, a specific thematic area is selected towards achieving the mission of RUFORUM. The 2016 Biennial Conference will purposely strive to enhance the linkages among universities (leadership, lecturers and students), governments, the private sector, civil society and policy makers for increased investments and partnership to enhance contribution of the Higher Education sector to development. The Conference will provide opportunity to hear directly from the Private Sector on their demands related to how the Higher Education Sector can better contribute towards their business processes. The private sector will also be engaged to share how they can direct portion of their social responsibility towards higher education. Universities will solicit for feedback from the private sector on training initiatives and across universities on best practices to engage other stakeholders.

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Objectives of the RUFORUM 12th AGM

The 12th RUFORUM AGM will have the following objectives:

1. Review and approve Minutes of the 11th AGM, held August 2015 in Windhoek, Namibia;
2. Receive and approve Reports for the Activity Year July 2015 – June 2016 and Annual Work plan and Budget for the Activity Year July 2016 – June 2017;
3. Receive an update of RUFORUM international policy engagements in support of Higher Education in Africa;
4. Consider requests for membership from universities that wish to be part of the RUFORUM network;
5. Recognise outstanding university achievers;
6. Recognise Young African Innovators.

Approach and Methodology

The AGM will be held on Tuesday, 18th October, 2016 at Crystal Towers under the Chair of the current Board Chair Prof. Mabel Imbuga. It is organised in collaboration with the Agricultural Research Council and will be opened by the South African Minister of Agriculture. The meeting will review minutes of the previous AGM held in Windhoek, Namibia in August 2015, review reports from the Secretariat for the year ended June 30, 2016, and Secretariat work plans for the subsequent year (2016/17). The AGM will receive and consider External Auditor’s report for 2015/16 and appoint Auditor for 2016/17. The 12th AGM will also provide guidance on the next AGM and 2018 Biennial Conference.

Venue and Participants

The 12th RUFORUM AGM will be held on Tuesday 18th October, 2016 at Crystal Towers, Cape Town, South Africa. Approximately 200 participants are expected to attend the AGM 2016. Participants will include Vice-Chancellors/ Presidents/ Rectors and University Principals/ Deans (from both full member universities and associate member universities) and other key invited stakeholders.

Time: 0830-1300

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Side Event Organizers and Contact

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