



The Fifth African Higher Education Week and RUFORUM Biennial Conference 2016

Training the Next Generation of Scientists: Lessons and Experience from the Carnegie supported Project

Concept note

Background

It is becoming increasingly well recognized that in Africa higher education has long been ignored and that investing in higher education in Africa is urgent, and agricultural higher education is particularly important to galvanize development in rural areas. In fact, human capital formation is the key to improving national productivity and growth. Africa’s agriculture and environment related faculties could play a key role in the transformation necessary to produce the leaders and graduates needed to achieve the targeted Africa Union’s 6% growth. However the universities need to radically transform as articulated in the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program (CAADP) Framework for African Agriculture Productivity (FAAP). Programs that develop highly skilled leaders within Africa, while they are still actively employed and that provide opportunities for high quality, internationally competitive doctoral course work and supervision of their research in the home base, will help to address the shortages.

RUFORUM is actively engaged in transforming African higher education to better serve demand and link more closely with smallholder farmers and national stakeholders to ensure curricula, pedagogy, and research that is relevant. RUFORUM facilitates innovative and responsive post-graduate degree programs and research. It promotes the training of high performing, proactive graduates, a dynamic platform for university networking, and carries out advocacy for agricultural higher education and broader S&T investment in Africa.

For the past four years, the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) has been collaborating with Carnegie Cooperation of New York in the implementation of a project aiming at

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supporting doctoral students, and in particular their research, in order to improve the capacity of universities to provide the human capital and leadership that is adaptable and able to meet the needs of the rural communities. Currently, RUFORUM has received a phase II of project funding which runs up to 2017. Accordingly, RUFORUM has organised a lesson learning meeting during the 5th Biennial Conference to take stock and reflect on the project’s implementation of activities. The project has remarkably contributed to the training of the critical mass of scientists whose research has contributed in solving some of the problems of the rural communities in various parts of the African continent. In addition to this, the project has helped RUFORUM to strengthen her collaboration with West African universities through staff exchange visits and PhD training.

Purpose of the side event

The purpose of the side event is to provide a platform for interaction with the funded students and to discuss the progress in the implementation of the project.

Objectives

- i) To review progress in the implementation of the Carnegie project – Phase I & II
- ii) To provide platform for interaction and networking among the beneficiaries of the project and the project facilitators (RUFORUM and Carnegie).
- iii) To develop recommendations, as well as to put forward strategies for effective implementation of the remaining activities of project
- iv) Explore possible avenues of linking the project with other available initiatives in Higher Agricultural Education Training, Research
- v) Initiate discussions on how to support the settling of the grantees who complete their studies

Approach and Methodology

A series of Power Presentations will be made by project partners and selected students on their experiences in the implementation of the

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project. Open discussions will follow to tease out issues for synthesis which will inform decisions for accelerating the project successes.

Outputs of the meeting

- A lesson sharing meeting report
- A clear understanding of the project objectives and design by the current grantees
- Suggestions to improve phase 2 implementation

Venue and Participants

Venue: Century City Conference Centre, Meeting Room 8 & 9.

Date & Time: Monday 17th October 2016 from 1730-2100

The participants of the meeting will include, RUFORUM Secretariat staff, Officials from the Carnegie Cooperation of New York, and selected students supported through the project.

Side Event Organizers and Contact

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)

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Side Event Programme

SESSION: Hall		
MAIN THEME		
Time	Sub Theme	Responsible
17.30-17.45	Welcoming remarks	Prof Adipala Ekwamu
17.45-18.00	Remarks from Carnegie Cooperation	Andrea Johnson
18.00-18.15	Self-Introductions & Setting the Scene	Sylvia Mkandawire
18.15-18.30	Project Overview - Presentation	Dr Solange Uwituze
18.30-18.45	Student Representative for 2 year Grants Beneficiaries– Experience Sharing	Sylvia Mkandawire
18.45-19.00	Student Representative for GTA grants category – Experience Sharing	Sylvia Mkandawire
19.00-19.15	Student representative for Doctoral finalization grants	Sylvia Mkandawire
19.15-20.40	Open Discussion	All
20.40-21.00	Way- forward	All

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