

**Joint Meeting of Permanent Secretaries Responsible for Agriculture,
Education & Training, Science, Technology and Innovation
(Technocrats Round Table Dialogue)**

Concept Note

Date: Wednesday 4th December, 2019

Time: 0830-1300

Venue: School of Graduate Studies Conference Room

Focus: Technical Review of Progress in Implementation of Ministerial Decisions of October 2016 and October 2018 Ministerial Meetings in Cape Town (South Africa) and Nairobi (Kenya), respectively, and Implementation of the Tasks assigned to RUFORUM. From the Committee of Ten Heads of State Summit held in November 2018 in Lilongwe, Malawi

Master of Ceremonies: Dr. Rofella Combey, University of Cape Coast, Ghana

Session Rapporteurs: Mr. Moses Waswa, Mr. Emmanuel Okalany and Dr. Sylvanus Mensah

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Background

In 2016, African Ministers of Agriculture, Higher Education and Training, and Science, Technology and Innovation met in Cape Town, South Africa and reviewed the Continent's landscape in terms of Agriculture and the role universities can play especially in terms of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), which is Africa's policy framework for agricultural transformation, wealth creation, food security and nutrition, economic growth and prosperity for all. They also considered the role African universities should play towards achieving the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2024), which is a strategy adopted by the African Heads of State and Government in June 2014 as a continental framework for accelerating Africa's transition to an innovation-led, knowledge-based economy within the overall framework of the AU Agenda 2063. They agreed that Member States should work together to address three issues:

1. Urgency to develop a regional initiative to strengthen the contribution of African universities to support agricultural transformation in the continent. They tasked the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) to develop a framework for the regional initiative, reach out to the Member States and funders. This was the origin of the *Strengthening Higher Agricultural Education in Africa (SHAEA)* regional

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concept. In 2017 in Malawi the World Bank announced a commitment of funding the initiative to the tune of \$250m through the International Development Association (IDA) window, which is the part of the World Bank that helps the world's poorest countries.

2. Concerted efforts to strengthen Science, Technology and Innovation in the continent for which RUFORUM was tasked to develop an initiative and reach out to the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB).
3. Urgency to escalate graduate training especially at Doctoral level to strengthen capacity of African universities for generation of knowledge and technology.

RUFORUM worked with different agencies, universities and Member States and developed a framework documents for implementation of the Ministerial Round Table meeting decisions in Cape Town, South Africa. These were then presented to the Ministerial Round Table meeting of 24th October 2018 in Nairobi, Kenya. The Ministers deliberated on them and agreed on the following:

- i. Endorsement of the RUFORUM Charter to provide a legal framework for operations of RUFORUM in the different Member States. The Endorsement to follow each Member State's procedures
- ii. Development of a framework programme for Building Africa's Science, Technology and Innovation Capacity for Economic Growth (BASTIC) initiative and that this be marketed to the Islamic Development Bank, African Development Bank and other agencies.
- iii. Development of a Framework support for strengthening staff capacities and increasing the pool of women scientists in African universities and research institutions. That these framework document be presented to the Member States for implementation at country and continental levels, and RUFORUM was tasked to reach out to funding agencies, especially the African Development Bank, for funding.
- iv. Endorsement of the SHAEA initiative and RUFORUM was tasked to pursue the issue with the World Bank

Accordingly, RUFORUM Secretariat has developed Regional Initiative to Strengthen Staff Capacity and Increase the Pool of Women Scientists in African Universities (RISSCAW), which is intended to create a critical mass of staff, increase the pool of women scientists, strengthen university-industry relations, and enhance research and development support.

RUFORUM was tasked to work with universities and other actors to develop a few regional/continental initiatives to be considered by Member States and funding agencies. Following this decision, RUFORUM in partnership with OCP Morocco, and Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development (AOAD), in collaboration with the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) convened a consultative forum to explore collaboration and possible funding arrangements to support implementation of some of these initiatives. The forum endorsed the proposed continental initiatives (5) and that some if not all of them will require endorsement by

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Member States for participation and to engage in dialogue with development partners for possible funding arrangements.

Accordingly in consultation with Member States and development partners, RUFORUM and Ghana Government is convening the Ministerial Round Table to receive and review the proposed regional initiatives for their individual country participation. The Ministerial Round Table meeting will be held on 5th December 2019 at University of Cape Coast. To guide the Ministerial Round Table deliberations, a meeting has been arranged for Technical Experts representing the Ministries of Agriculture; Higher Education and Training; Finance; and Science, technology and innovation to review the documents and advise their respective Ministers and country delegates accordingly.

Objectives of the Technocrats Round Table Dialogue

The main objective of the Technocrats Round Table Meeting is to review the progress in implementation of Ministerial Decisions of October 2016 and October 2018, and also receive update on progress in implementations of the tasks assigned to RUFORUM during the C10 Summit in Lilongwe, Malawi in November 2019.

Therefore, the specific objectives of the Joint Meeting of Permanent Secretaries Responsible for Agriculture, Education & Training, Science, Technology and Innovation are to:

1. Receive and review the relevant documents pertaining to the proposed continental initiatives developed in line with the Ministerial Meeting decisions in Cape Town (South Africa) and Nairobi (Kenya)
2. Receive and consider an update on implementations of the Tasks assigned to RUFORUM by C10
3. Agree on Key recommendations for actions to be presented to the Ministerial Round Table Policy Dialogue on 5th December 2019
4. Agree on the draft Ministerial Communique to be considered by the Ministerial meeting

Meeting approach

There will be two main sessions: The first one, is setting the scene, in which there will be a presentation from the RUFORUM Secretariat and two technical papers: One, on realizing Africa's unmet Science, Technology and Innovation priorities in the face of competitive knowledge and innovation led development; The other technical paper will be on building a critical mass of faculty to enhance Africa's diversity and competitiveness.. Session two will focus on progress updates whereby RUFORUM Secretariat will present the draft regional initiatives in line with the decisions of the previous Ministerial Meetings (October 2016 & 2018). There will be discussions on the various presentations from which key issues and needed actions will be distilled for consideration by the Ministerial Round Table Meeting the next day (Thursday 5th December 2019).

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Expected outputs

The expected outputs from the meeting are;

- Recommendations on the implementations of the proposed continental initiatives by the Member States
- A draft Ministerial Communiqué for consideration, review and adoption by the Ministers

Invited participants

Participants are mainly Permanent Secretaries, Chief Directors or Secretary Generals responsible for Agriculture, Education & Training, Finance, Science, Technology and Innovation. However, there will also be other technical experts from relevant bodies including other senior officials in the relevant ministries.

Proposed programme (Venue: School of Graduate Studies Conference Room)

Time	Agenda item	Responsible party
Session 1: Setting the Scene		
Session Chair: Mr. Benjamin Kofi Gyasi, Chief Director, Ministry of Education, Ghana		
0830-0845	Welcome and introductory remarks	Mr. Benjamin Kofi Gyasi , Chief Director, Ministry of Education, Ghana
0845-0900	Setting the Scene and Objectives of the Dialogue	Dr. Anthony Egeru , Programme Manager, Training and Community Engagement, RUFORUM
0900-0925	Technical Paper 1: Realising Africa's unmet Science, Technology and Innovation Priorities in the face of Competitive Knowledge and Innovation Led Development.	Prof. Frans Swanepoel , University of Pretoria, South Africa
0925-0950	Technical Paper 2: Building a Critical Mass of Faculty to Enhance Africa's Diversity and Competitiveness	Prof. Fanuel Tagwira , Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development
0950-1030	Reactions to the Technical Papers: ALL	
1030-1100	Break Tea	
Session Two: Progress updates		
1100-1120	Building Africa's Agriculture, Science, Technology and Innovation Capacity (BASTIC)	Mr. Emmanuel Okalany , Technical Specialist, Development and Partnership, RUFORUM Secretariat
1120-1140	Strengthening Africa's Innovation and Entrepreneurship Capacity for Economic Development (SASTIE)	Dr. Sylvanus Mensah , Technical Specialist, TVET & Undergraduate Training, RUFORUM
1140-1200	Proposal on a Joint Initiative to strengthen Staff capacities in African Universities and increase the pool of Women scientists	Dr. Alice Mutiti Mweetwa , Deputy Executive Secretary, RUFORUM
Reactions to Progress updates and Key Resolutions		

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	Moderator: Mr. Benjamin Kofi Gyasi, Chief Director, Ministry of Education, Ghana	
1200-1145	Review of the Draft Ministerial Communique	Mrs. Levina Owusu , Chief Director, Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation, Ghana
1245-1300	Closing Remarks	Mr. Benjamin Kofi Gyasi , Chief Director, Ministry of Education, Ghana
1300-1415	LUNCH	

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