

RUFORUM WEBINAR SERIES (2020)

Galvanizing Partnerships for Africa's Universities Response to Emerging Challenges and Opportunities

Synthesis Report

Introduction

The Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) devastation across the world has been phenomenal in the shortest time since its outbreak in December 2019 in China. COVID-19 impacts have been felt in all spheres of the economy and global operations. Tertiary education has seen significant interruptions and according to UNESCO, universities and other tertiary education institutions across 175 countries were closed affecting some 220 million learners globally. In the Sub-Saharan Africa region, COVID-19 affected an estimated 98% of all the tertiary education students as countries imposed measures aimed at containing the spread of the virus. The pandemic besides getting students off-campus caused universities to suffer significant revenue losses from tuition and other services offered by their respective campuses.

In order to galvanize our universities' responses to emerging challenges and opportunities brought about by the Corona Virus Disease of 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic, the RUFORUM Secretariat convened a multi-stakeholder online engagement from June-October 2020. Thirteen (13) Webinars were convened to galvanize dialogue and directions for African higher education actors, Governments and Private sector response to the COVID-19 Pandemic and in alignment to United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Recognizing the role of universities in responding to the Pandemic, the target audience for these virtual convenings included policy leaders, higher education leaders, staff, university students, technical experts, and researchers. The overall theme of the webinar series was ***Galvanizing Partnerships for Africa's Universities Response to Emerging Challenges and Opportunities***. The Webinars targeted participants from within and outside Africa to position the dialogue within the continental and global contexts and to build on earlier discussions during the Afro-Arab Partnership meeting in Kampala, the Global Partnership meeting for Higher Agricultural Education and Research, held during the 16th RUFORUM Annual General Meeting in Cape Coast, Ghana and the Ministerial Communique on Promoting Africa Wide Cooperation in Higher Agricultural Education, Science, Technology and Innovation. The webinars generated dialogue and action points that have implications for RUFORUM and other academic and research agencies as they engage with continental agencies such as African Union and European Union as well as National Governments and other regional bodies

This report summarizes emerging issues and recommendations for strengthening higher agricultural education, partnerships and responses to emerging challenges from the Webinar series.

RUFORUM Webinar Series Participation:

The thirteen (13) webinars attracted more than 100 speakers and moderators. These included among others, former Heads of State, AUC Commissioners and Directors, DEVCo-European Commission Director and other representations, FAO Directors and representatives, Government Ministers, Vice Chancellors and other University leaders, Directors and other representations of university and other associations, private sector actors, students, farmer organizations, Government agencies, international Non-Governmental Organizations, and funding agencies such as, the World Bank and BRIDGIN Foundation.

The audience was drawn from over 100 countries across all continents. Marked participation was registered from Uganda, Kenya, Sudan, Nigeria and the United States of America. The total registration for participation was 5,275 with an average attendance of 60% for each Webinar over a period of five (5) months (Figure 1). The gender distribution was 60% male and 39% female.

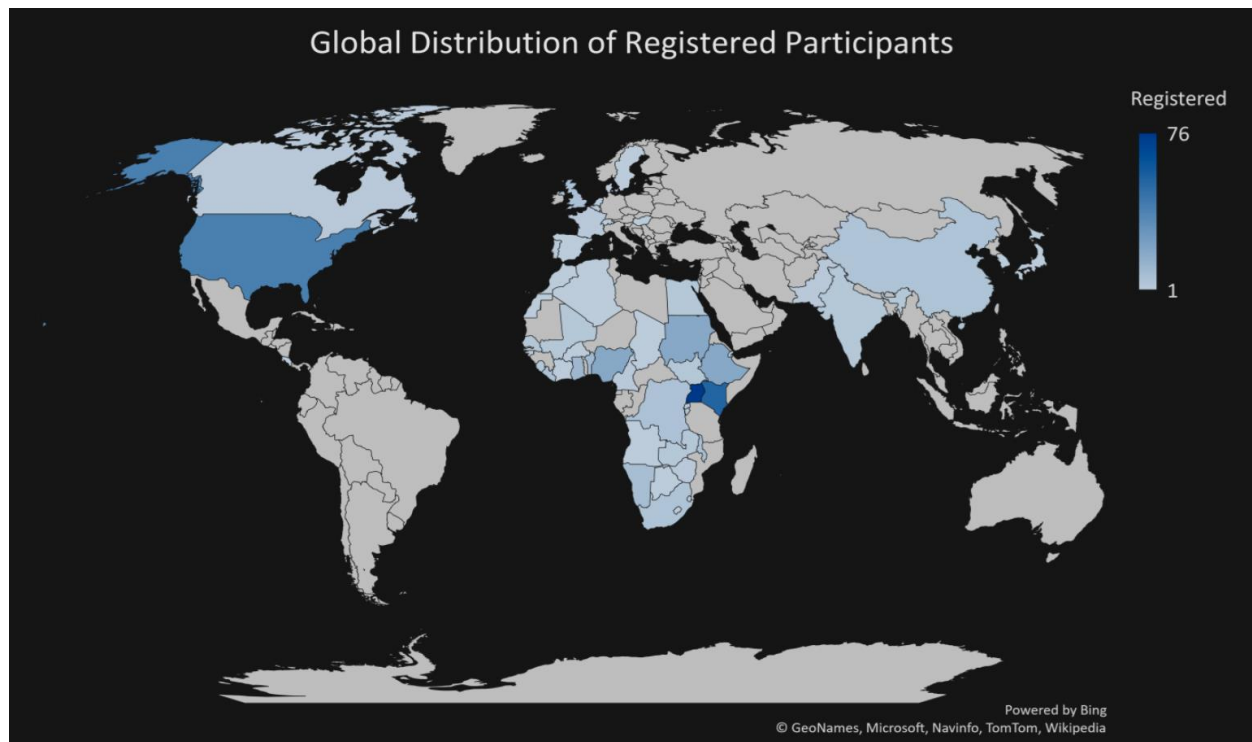


Figure 1: RUFORUM Webinar attendance and geographical distribution

RUFORUM Webinar Series Focus Areas:

The focus areas of the 13 Webinars can be clustered into four (4) as outlined below:

1. ***University preparedness and response to the COVID-19 Pandemic:*** This focus area highlighted how to address the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on institutions and academic processes through the sharing of lessons and experiences by university leaders. It brought to the fore the challenges, opportunities and the need to re-image higher education on the African continent in the Pandemic era. The focus area further articulated the need to develop the online learning potential to ensure progression of teaching, learning, research and outreach programmes even during crises such the COVID-19 Pandemic.
2. ***Transforming agri-food system in Africa in a period of crisis:*** This focus area articulated the continental agri-food systems' response to pandemics and other crises to ensure food and nutrition security. Specifically, building a regional collective response to invasive pests and transboundary crop-livestock diseases, strengthening Agricultural Advisory Services and supporting family farmers during a period of stress. The area highlighted the need for high-level policy dialogue on engaging Universities and research institutions in Africa to create resilience in agricultural and food security processes.
3. ***Education policy and relevance for national development:*** This focus area considered the role that universities and research institutions should play in supporting continental, regional and national response initiatives to the COVID-19 Pandemic and other crises. The focus area looked at the education value chain from foundations and skills to advancements in science, technology and innovation for Africa's development. Further, it highlighted entrepreneurship in a pandemic situation, specifically, seizing opportunities and realigning existing business to meet the needs of current and future clients.
4. ***Global universities partnerships for addressing emerging development challenges:*** This focus area looked at emerging global issues confronting the education sector and models of higher agricultural education and research for transforming societies and economies. The focus area also considered partnerships between universities in Africa and other networks to maximise impact in addressing agriculture and food systems related challenges.

Emerging issues by Thematic Area:

Based on the discussions and interactions during the Webinars, several issues emerged for consideration and action by policy makers, university leaders, technocrats, researchers, teachers, extensionists, development partners and students. For development partners such as the World Bank, BRIDGIN Foundation and European Commission, specific areas of engagement emerged. For the African Union Commission, Ministers responsible for education, agriculture, science, technology

and innovation, and university Vice Chancellors, and specific expectations and action points from stakeholders were evident. The summary of key issues are presented under the following five themes:

1. Universities as drivers of agriculture, education and policy

Knowledge driven societies rely on universities to generate solutions to societal challenges. From the COVID-19, there is need for structural engineering of the university-policy partnership to realize the development aspirations of countries in Africa. National Governments should actively engage existing research centers in the design and implementation of national and regional education and agro-food system policies. Universities should urgently update their curricula, build strong and synergistic linkages with communities to produce and transfer relevant technologies for farmers, integrate studies with industrial experience and strengthen university-industry partnerships to reduce the disconnect and support governments design policies and strategies to help countries build back better from the COVID-19 Pandemic. Students across the education value chains, especially those in institutions of higher education learning and universities, remain central to the research ecosystem for knowledge creation and innovation required to solve problems and support evidence-based policy-making. Emerging from the dialogue:

- a) Universities have a role in training practitioners and researchers for the transformation of Africa's agriculture and in guiding governments and development partners on policy choices;
- b) Universities and academic institutions are a gateway for changing the world faster because they raise most leaders in the world and provide the space for idea generation, testing and sharing. Universities impact the young population through teaching, research and community engagement and if positioned strategically, they have potential to influence agriculture and education on the continent;
- c) The African Union, through its partnership with the European Commission and other international agencies should prioritize investment in higher education and research to generate knowledge for policy formulation and implementation;
- d) African Governments should invest in universities and research institutions to establish facilities such as laboratories and ICT infrastructure (including building capacity for Data science and Foresight studies) that will enhance knowledge generation and capacity to utilise knowledge for development. Governments have a responsibility to invest in universities and research institutions and engage - them to generate knowledge to facilitate evidence based decision making and policies;
- e) Networks of universities in Africa, such as RUFORUM to speak to African Governments working in partnership with multi-lateral organisations such as World Bank and African Development Bank to invest in biotechnology, agribusiness and value chain development in Africa; and;

- f) Policy and financing modalities should enable the African higher education sector better respond to the current and emerging needs such as the COVID-19 Pandemic, transboundary livestock and crop pests and diseases and rebuilding capacity in frontlines sciences (epidemiology, virology, pathology, nematology, entomology, molecular genetics and soil science).

2. Partnerships as a pathway for response and resilience to crisis:

No country alone can successfully tackle the challenges associated with epidemics and pandemics because of their transboundary nature as well as the porous borders and interconnectedness of many African countries and ecosystems. African Governments should learn from each other on the development and implementation of value chain based and well-connected education systems that can build a formidable and skilled human resource to support the achievement of the aspirations of African Union Agenda 2063. Regional, national and institutional partnerships are a key mechanism to share experiences and facilitate cross learning and the formation of knowledge sharing platforms as highlighted in the following:

- a) There is need for engagement in higher agricultural education, research and innovation capacity across continents for the adaptation of emerging best practices and to maximize the positive outcomes of alliances and partnerships;
- b) Universities need to jointly approach policy makers, African Governments, continental entrepreneurship and business development initiatives, and respond to calls for proposals as networks and or associations. Universities in Africa should benchmark against their European counterparts and engage various policy makers in a collective manner;
- c) The COVID-19 Pandemic has created new possibilities for increased global collaborations for academic institutions in research, training and sharing of best practices. Examples of such collaborations include:
 - i. Universities in Africa have the opportunity to participate in initiatives such as the Green Deal through partnership with European universities and other institutions to address global challenges;
 - ii. Partnerships between American Universities and African partners for the training of trainers and doctoral sandwich programmes for training of scientists in their own countries have been emphasized. Such partnerships are cost effective and take advantage of online technology given the prevailing economic recession and budget cuts caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic;
 - iii. Partnerships between India and Africa supported through the Indian Ministry of External Affairs which provide fellowships for Masters and PhD students;
 - iv. Partnerships with Korea which function through initiatives such the World Bank Funded Partnership for Skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology

- (PASET) programme that support doctoral sandwich programmes and the use of high-tech facilities for research in various fields including food security and agribusiness; this could be expanded through regional networks such as RUFORUM to support staff development in African universities;
- v. The China-African Science and Technology Backyard (STB) Programme which addresses agricultural related problems using research data. STB is already involving 34 international students from Africa in community-based research;
 - vi. The academic mobility and diaspora engagement model which includes scholarships, small grants for student research, staff exchange, and linking with diaspora to strengthen the capacity of African universities; and,
 - vii. Partnership opportunities provided by the Association of African Universities (AAU) for joint advocacy, resource mobilisation, continental research, scaling up and replicating the RUFORUM Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA) programme.
 - viii. Partnerships opportunities for strengthening Higher Education in Agriculture, Science, Technology and Innovation capacity through the AUC-Arab League Partnership
- d) In order to foster information sharing globally among different higher education actors, inter-institutional network platforms need to be created; information related to webinars, scholarships, job opportunities to mention a few, can be made available through such platforms;
 - e) There is need to explore and strengthen university-private sector engagement and redefine university-community linkages to ensure relevant and impactful education to meet Agenda 2063 and SDG targets;
 - f) Collaboration among various actors, including students, in the extension systems will remain key for the success of agri-food systems. In this spirit, existing linkages between research and extension, and public-private sectors need to be strengthened further to support innovation, technology development and dissemination, and effective communication;
 - g) The formation of strong partnerships with non-traditional actors in Agricultural Extension Services needs some serious consideration. In this regard, Sub Regional Organizations such as ASARECA, CCARDESA and CORAF have key roles to play in fostering such linkages, building the capacity for information packaging, development of digital tools for the extension service and farmers, and spearheading joint planning between extension and research, and providing support for technology dissemination;
 - h) Strong partnerships between universities and Agricultural Advisory Services can support the updating of curricula especially in courses on digital tools and programmes on foresight.

3. Human capacity development

The outbreak of the novel Corona virus (COVID-19) has raised global awareness of the devastating effect that emerging infectious diseases have on human populations and economies. Africa's preparedness capacity remains limited towards infectious disease epidemics and other potential public health emergencies. Universities have a critical role to play in preparedness, response and monitoring of emerging and re-emerging pandemics, they need to quickly develop the much-needed capacities for the Continent. Emerging from the dialogue for human capacity development were the following:

- a) In order to harness the youth bulge, there is a need for basic and tertiary education, especially, focusing on science education, technology, engineering and mathematics commonly referred to as STEM, vocational skills development, and Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) revolution. Particular attention needs to be given to closing infrastructure gaps, taking advantage of local solutions by building high quality education systems, training of young people in STEM and related sciences,
- b) Universities should develop the requisite high-level skills and knowledge, and support training at the technical level. As a Network, RUFORUM should identify, inventorise and tap into the existing areas of excellence among its member universities and jump-start the required skills development in key gap areas.
- c) In the education value chain, there is need for a change in *how people learn, what people learn, when people learn and why people learn*, and re-thinking the students learning environment. Academic institutions should go beyond just providing knowledge about science, technology and society but also equip the graduates with ethics and leadership skills to improve the conditions of the world;
- d) African Governments should support the establishment and hosting of Centres of Excellence for training and research in their countries as part of strengthening higher education. Operationalization of such centres would not only enhance agricultural higher education but also strengthen and encourage training within the continent (thus curb brain drain), development of regional training programmes based on identified skills gaps, context-relevant student research, intra-Africa collaboration and mobility; and,
- e) African higher education institutions should take advantage of the African Union Commission support towards the advancement of higher education, science and technology. Development of a continental research framework, curriculum reform, harmonisation and quality assurance in education will strengthen human capacity development and innovation on the continent.
- f) African Governments and African Union Commission need to spearhead operationalisation of the five continental initiatives agreed upon by African Ministers of Agriculture, Education, Science, Technology and Innovation during their meeting in

Ghana in December 2019, that put emphasis on, amongst others, Strengthening Staff capacities and increasing the pool of women Scientists in African universities and research institutions ([link](#))

4. Application of technologies in education and research

Universities on the continent have varied digital and online capacity; several have to deal with issues of inequality, low connectivity and inadequate capacity of their staff and students to handle online learning amidst reduced finances. That notwithstanding, the COVID-19 Pandemic has generated outcomes and opportunities such as the accelerated establishment and acceptance of digital platforms in academia. This has resulted in increased flexibility and convenience for student learning, access to free online conferences, workshops and seminars, and opportunities for expanding international networks. Accordingly:

- a) There is need to review national and institutional ICT policies, increase investment in the development of required ICT infrastructure, establishment of eLearning platforms, enable free access to online learning resources, develop strategies for promoting remote teaching and learning, and reduce the digital divide;
- b) Through knowledge platforms and partnerships, there needs to be focus on identification, development and sharing of e-resources for teaching, learning and research;
- c) Multiple stakeholders to consider supporting the operationalization of African Digital Agriculture Programme (AfriDAP) initiative that promotes digital technologies in the agricultural value chain, higher agricultural education and for building data science capacity.

5. Inclusivity and empowerment of women and girls in higher education

Africa's greatest resource is its people and education is a transformative recognised human right that has the potential to equalize society with respect to health, gender, income, and notions of identity. In this regard, policies that foster inclusivity and equity need to be developed.

- a) Affirmative action is needed to increase girls' education and participation of women in leadership and academia;
- b) In order to achieve a better learning environment post COVID-19, there is a need for strong institutional policy reforms, increased ICT support to staff and students, promotion of equal learning opportunities for all students, and more staff and student virtual exchange programmes; and,
- c) There is need to rethink the concept of education and elaborate actions that turn education into a culture of learning. This will require a multi-stakeholder engagement to develop strategies, programmes and policies to guide the change process.
- d) There is need for African Governments to urgently address the education divide between rural and urban centres

Conclusions:

The RUFORUM Webinar series (2020) have generated several areas of focus and recommendations for strengthening higher education, partnerships and responses to emerging challenges especially the effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic, climate change and variability and emerging livestock and crop pests and diseases pandemics. Multi-stakeholder engagement is required for developing short and long-term actions to address the issues raised. Universities should not only advocate for support as they take advantage of the opportunities created by the Pandemic and the attendant dialogue that brought together policy makers, international agencies, regional and continental bodies, higher education leaders, private sector, SRO, students and community players, but should demonstrate their capacity through research and community engagement as drivers of change and the preparedness to be part of the solution.

Annex 1: Galvanizing Partnerships for Africa's Universities Response to Emerging Challenges and Opportunities

Webinar topic	Panelist	Discussion issues
Webinar 1: Learning from a crisis: University leaders' response to the COVID-19 Pandemic Moderator: Prof. Christine Dranzoa , Vice Chancellor, Muni University, Arua-Uganda Date: 10 June 2020 Time: 1300-1500 East African Standard Time	1. Hicham EL HABTI , Secretary General, Mohammed VI Polytechnique University (UM6P), Benguerir-Morocco 2. Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe , Vice Chancellor, Makerere University- Uganda 3. Prof. Francis Petersen , Vice Chancellor, University of Free State- South Africa 4. Prof. Arthur Mol , Rector Magnifus, Wageningen University and Research Centre (WUR), Netherlands	1. Responding to University immediate needs including; staff realignment 2. Dealing with digital divide in the student community 3. University finances for operations and innovations in a changing landscape 4. International students in a crisis moment
Webinar 2: Re-imagining higher education in Africa in the 'new normal' Moderator: Lucy Heady , Executive Director, Education Sub-Saharan Africa, London, UK Date: 19 June 2020 Time: 15.00-17.00 East African Standard Time	1. Mr. Albert Nsengiyumva , Executive Secretary, ADEA, Cote d'Ivoire- Ethiopia 2. Prof. Amon Murwira , Minister of Higher Education, Harare- Zimbabwe 3. Prof. Adam Habib , Vice Chancellor, WITS 4. Dr. Halil Dundar , Education Practice Manager, World Bank, Washington DC-USA 5. Prof. Tanko MOHAMADOU , President and CEO, BRIDGIN Foundation, Brussels-Belgium	1. Innovations for teaching and learning and closing digital divide 2. Resourcing higher education institutions-university finances 3. Innovations for engaged universities-redefining university-community and private sector engagement 4. Opportunities for universities; immediate and long-term opportunities (influencing national and regional development through innovation)
Webinar 3: Universities role in preparedness, response and monitoring of emerging and re-emerging pandemics	1. Dr. Raiji Tajudeen , Head NPHIs and Research Division, Africa Centre for Disease Control, Addis Ababa-Ethiopia 2. Prof. Professor Jan-Ingvar Jönsson , Vice Chancellor, Linköping University- Sweden 3. Prof. Willian Bazeyo , Deputy Vice Chancellor, Makerere University, Kampala- Uganda	1. Universities innovations in response to COVID-19 situation 2. Innovations for technical and policy response to public health emergencies 3. Capacity building needs for Africa's excellence in the new normal (diagnostics-laboratory infrastructure, molecular, clinical management, therapeutics, vaccines)

Webinar topic	Panelist	Discussion issues
<p>Moderator: Prof. Address Mauakowa Malata, Vice Chancellor, Malawi University of Science and Technology, Lumbe-Malawi</p> <p>Discussant: Prof. Johnan Dabrosin Söderholm, Dean Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Linköping University, Sweden</p> <p>Date: 03 July 2020</p> <p>Time: 14.00-16.00 East African Standard Time</p>	<p>4. Prof. Simeon Mining, Director of Research & Professor of Immunology, Moi University, Eldoret-Kenya</p>	<p>4. Africa's collaboration and financing for health innovations in the new normal</p>
<p>Webinar 4:</p> <p>Delivering food for Africa in a transforming agri-food system in the 'new normal'</p> <p>Moderator: Prof. Dora F. Edu-Buandoh, Pro-Vice Chancellor, University of Cape Coast, Ghana</p> <p>Discussant: Prof. Frans Swanepoel, University of Pretoria, South Africa</p> <p>Date: 15 July 2020</p> <p>Time: 15.00-17.30 East African Standard Time</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. Simeon Ehui, Regional Director for Sustainable Development for Africa, World Bank, Washington 2. Dr. Agnes Kalibata, President, AGRA, Nairobi-Kenya 3. Dr. Abebe Haile-Gabriel, FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa, Accra – Ghana 4. Dr. Owusu-Afriye Akoto, Minister for Food and Agriculture, Accra-Ghana 5. Dr. Godfrey Bahiigwa, Director, Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture (DREA), AUC-Addis Ababa 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Re-contextualising support for enhancing productivity and marketing systems for smallholder farmers 2. Innovations for delivering agricultural advisory services to farmers to enable them make smart decisions 3. Innovations for reducing logistical bottlenecks and enhancing e-commerce 4. Innovations for multiple agricultural and social protection interventions 5. Galvanizing partnerships and collaboration to strengthen African agricultural research and innovation capacity
<p>Webinar 5:</p> <p>Building a Regional Collective Response to Invasive pests and transboundary crop-livestock diseases</p> <p>Moderator: Ms. Diana Akullo Ogwal Oyena, AUC-DREA, Addis Ababa-Ethiopia</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prof. Jean Jacques Mbonigaba Muhinda, Executive Secretary ASARECA, Entebbe-Uganda 2. Dr. Wamalwa Kinyanjui, Animal Health Expert, IGAD Centre for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development (ICPALD), Djibouti 3. Prof. Ibrahim Adam El-Dukheri, Executive Secretary, Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development, Khartoum-Sudan 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Intensity, costs and further threats from invasive pests and diseases in Africa region: science basis and the impact so far 2. Regional policy interventions and institutional support mechanisms (AUC, DLO, RECs, SROs) 3. Building collective financing for regional level response 4. Africa's capacity for confronting invasive pests and diseases in the 21st Century

Webinar topic	Panelist	Discussion issues
<p>Discussants:</p> <p>Prof. John H. Nderitu, University of Nairobi, Nairobi-Kenya</p> <p>Prof. Lise Korsten, University of Pretoria, South Africa</p> <p>Date: 29 July 2020</p> <p>Time: 14.00-16.30 East African Standard Time</p>	<p>4. Prof. Hamadi Boga, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture & Livestock, Nairobi-Kenya</p>	
<p>Webinar 6:</p> <p>Universities and Research Institutions Supporting Family Farmers During and Post COVID-19 Pandemic in Africa</p> <p>Moderator: Dr. Abebe Haile-Gabriel, Assistant Director-General, FAO Accra, Ghana</p> <p>Lead Presenter: Dr. Marcela Villarreal, FAO-PSU Director, Rome, Italy</p> <p>Discussant Professor Brice Sinsin, University of Abomey Calavi, Cotonou-Benin</p> <p>Date: 31 July 2020</p> <p>Time: 14.00-16.30</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ms. Beth Bechdol, Deputy Director General, FAO, Rome Italy 2. H.E. Sacko Josefa Leonel Correa, Commissioner, Rural Economy and Agriculture, African Union Commission, Addis Ababa -Ethiopia 3. Hon. Michael Katambo, Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Lusaka- Zambia 4. Dr. Stephen Muchiri, CEO, East African Farmers Federation, Nairobi-Kenya 5. Dr. Vuyo Mahlati, President, African Farmers Association of South Africa, Pretoria-South Africa 6. Dr. Abdou TENKOUANO, Executive Director, CORAF, Dakar-Senegal 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promoting rural communities' initiatives, and development and transfer of technologies 2. Regional harmonisation of policies and strategies to support family farmers 3. Reinforcing the capacity and resilience of family farmers and their organizations for better service to their communities 4. Gender equality: improved access to resources, technology, and a greater women voice in decision-making 5. Stakeholder engagement to foster agriculture and rural transformation 6. How best could African Universities support rural transformation in Africa?
<p>Webinar 7:</p> <p>Education from foundations and skills to advancements in science, technology and</p>	<p>Panelists:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HE Prof. Sarah Anyang Agbor, Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology, African Union Commission, Addis Ababa-Ethiopia 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How does Africa eliminate the 'learning poverty' using homegrown approaches that are attuned to the political realities of each country, socio-cultural realities, national and regional growth disparities;

Webinar topic	Panelist	Discussion issues
<p>innovation: Considering fundamentals for transforming Africa</p> <p>Moderator: Prof. Theresia Nkuo-Akenji, Vice Chancellor, University of Bamenda, Cameroon & RUFORUM Vice Board Chairperson</p> <p>Discussant: Hon. Prof. Aiah Gbakima, Minister of Technical and Higher Education, Freetown-Sierra Leone</p> <p>Date: 13 August 2020</p> <p>Time: 1500-1730 East African (Nairobi) Standard Time</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Amit Dar, Regional Director, Africa Human Development Practice Group, World Bank, Washington DC-USA Hon. Dr. Itah Kandjii Murangi, Minister for Higher Education and Training, Windhoek-Namibia Hon. Prof. Dr. Eleonore Ladekan Yayi, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Cotonou-Benin Hon. Dr. Brian Mushimba, Minister of Higher Education, Lusaka-Zambia 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> How may Africa ensure a meaningful and seamless transition and throughput across the educational value chain-from primary school, secondary school, tertiary to university; Skills development including in Technical and Vocational Education requires a rethink: how may the continent approach this? How may Africa achieve greater efficiency and better outcomes in skills-building that delivers both productivity growth and skills for today's workforce and tomorrow's labour market How may African public and private education institutions play a key role in driving science, technology and innovation development & STI competitiveness? What policy and financing modalities are needed to enable the African education sector better respond to the current and emerging needs especially the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic?.
<p>Webinar 8:</p> <p>Entrepreneurship in a pandemic situation: taking opportunities and realigning for future</p> <p>Moderator: Dr. Maurice Bolo, CEO, Scinnovent, Kenya</p> <p>Discussant</p> <p>Mr. Tunde Adeyemi, Bookers International Schools, Nigeria</p> <p>Date: 21st August 2020</p> <p>Time: 14.00-16.00</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Charles Ocici, Executive Director, Enterprise Uganda Dr. Alaoui Soulimani Adnane, Director IMPULSE, University Mohammed the 6th Polytechnique (UM6P), Benguerir -Morocco Mr. Marcel Mballa-Ekobena, Managing Director, Tomagro, London-UK Prof. Patience Mshenga, Egerton University, Njoro-Kenya 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Building on the foundations of existing entrepreneurship to valorize COVID-19 opportunities Technology driven innovation and the role of incubators and accelerators as catalyzers of opportunity entrepreneurship Africa's Private Sector Response to COVID-19: Lessons for the future pandemics Financing SMEs and start-ups in a Post COVID-19
<p>Webinar 9:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Carl Larsen, Executive Secretary, Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services GFRAS- Switzerland 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Rural advisory services: challenges and opportunities in the pandemic era

Webinar topic	Panelist	Discussion issues
<p>Delivering Agricultural Advisory Services in Post COVID-19 era</p> <p>Moderator: Dr. Hlami Ngwenya, University of Free State, South Africa</p> <p>Discussant:</p> <p>Dr. Sokona Dagnoko Sissoko, Country Director, Sasakawa Global 2000, Bamako-Mali</p> <p>Date: 31 August 2020</p> <p>Time: 14.00-16.00</p>	<p>2. Dr. Silim M. Nahdy, Executive Secretary, African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS), Kampala-Uganda</p> <p>3. Ms. Irene Akidi, PhD Student, Egerton University, Njoro-Kenya</p> <p>4. Dr. Cliff Dlamini, Executive Director, Centre for Coordination of Agriculture Research for Southern Africa (CCARDESA), Gaborone- Botswana</p>	<p>2. Responding to extension smallholder farmers in the 'new normal'</p> <p>3. Extension and agricultural services innovate from within to ensure an effective and efficient response to COVID-19</p> <p>4. Building robust and effective extension and agricultural services programs and innovations responsive to pandemics crisis moments</p>
<p>Webinar 10:</p> <p>Engaging African Universities in Agricultural and Food Security processes in Africa</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <p>Dr. Godfrey Bahigwa, Director of Agriculture, African Union Commission, Addis Ababa-Ethiopia</p> <p>Discussants:</p> <p>Dr. Patrick Okori, Country Director, ICRISAT, Lilongwe-Malawi</p> <p>Date: 07 September 2020</p>	<p>1. H.E Ambassador Josefa LC Sacko, Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture (DREA), African Union Commission, Addis Ababa-Ethiopia</p> <p>2. H.E Thoko Didiza, Minister for Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Pretoria-South Africa</p> <p>3. Hon. Peter Gatirau Munya, Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives, Nairobi-Kenya</p> <p>4. Hon. Jeanine Milly Cooper, Minister of Agriculture, Monrovia-Liberia</p> <p>5. Dr. Leonard Miizzi, Head of Unit, European Commission, Directorate-General (DG) for International Cooperation and Development - Rural development, Food and Nutrition Security</p>	<p>1. What are key elements of the recent European Union and African Union policy documents on the Food Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA) Roadmap that African Governments and their institutions need to position to respond to?</p> <p>2. How best could African universities be integrated in the needed responses?</p> <p>3. What are the funding modalities for the implementation of the roadmap? Will AUC play a role or will this be up to the Member States (as with ERA-Africa and LEAP-AGRI programmes)?</p> <p>4. How best could African Universities (and their European counterparts-e.g. AGRINATURA) contribute to the development of the implementation protocols and needed joint actions? Would AUC accept input from African universities and Networks such as RUFORUM?</p> <p>5. What are emerging issues that need national and regional interventions?</p> <p>6. What are the critical research issues that need to be prioritised? We need good quality and up to date data</p>

Webinar topic	Panelist	Discussion issues
Time: 1400-1630 East African Standard Time		<p>to inform and guide policy planning: shouldn't this be incorporated into the roadmap actions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How best could African Universities be integrated into the needed responses including the CAADP and EU-AU processes? COVID-19 has affected all aspects of life: How best do we incorporate the aftermath of COVID-19 and other pandemics into our responses? Should these be part of the roadmap actions?
<p>Webinar 11:</p> <p>African Universities in Post-COVID 19: Assessing the Opportunities and Challenges of Online Learning</p> <p>Aim: <i>Promoting the uptake of on-line learning by the faculty and students</i></p> <p>Moderator: Mr. Rafiq EL ALAMI, Mohammed VI Polytechnic University, Morocco</p> <p>Discussant: Prof. Jude Lubega, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Nkumba University, Entebbe-Uganda</p> <p>Date: 16 September 2020</p> <p>Time: 14.00-16.30</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Mark Berthelemy, Digital Learning Manager, CABI-UK Prof Joseph Muliaro Wafula, Jomo Kenyatta Director ICT Centre, University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), Nairobi-Kenya Prof. Kay Muir-Leresche, Education Consultant, Cape Town-South Africa Mr. Chief Thesele Maseribane, Minister of Communication, Science and Technology, Kingdom of Lesotho 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities and challenges of learning online Value for money: Should universities charge same amount of fees for online courses? The issue of missing services to students Choosing the platform for implementing online learning: technical consideration The quality of online courses and other factors for integrating online learning Needed Policy support framework for widening use of ICTS to support delivery of services and address education divide
<p>Webinar 12:</p> <p>Students connecting globally to visualise and re-engineer universities for a better world post COVID-19</p> <p>Moderator:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Medard Kafoutchom, PhD student, University of Abomey Calavi, Cotonou-Benin Mrs. Chizoba Obianuju Oramu, Nigerian PhD student at Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Lilongwe-Malawi 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> How have you been affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic and other related crises? What key aspects of your studies have been affected? How do you think the Pandemic has changed your own, and your colleagues education with respect to study, internship and research over the next three years? How has your university responded to the crises and student needs?

Webinar topic	Panelist	Discussion issues
<p>Ms. Irene Akite, PhD Student, Gulu University, Gulu-Uganda</p> <p>Discussants: H.E. Prof. Mrs. Ameneeh Former President, Government of Mauritius, Reduit-Mauritius (TBC)</p> <p>Prof. Teresa Akenga, Vice Chancellor, University of Eldoret, Kenya</p> <p>Date: 30 September 2020</p> <p>Time: 15:00-17:30 East African Standard time</p>	<p>3. Ms. Larisa Van Der Zon, PhD student, Wageningen University and Research (WUR)- Netherlands</p> <p>4. Ms. Carmen Maria de Leone, Guatemala Fourth Year Student at EARTH University- Costa Rica</p> <p>5. Ms. Wu Yumengi, Undergraduate Student, North West Agriculture and Forest University, Shaanxi Province- China</p> <p>6. Ms. Nour Hammad, PhD Student, Arab University of Beirut, Beirut-Lebanon</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> What has been your experience so far with virtual and distant learning? What do you think the future of Higher education will be and how do you think your university, country and continent should invest and prepare for a different and rapidly changing world? How do you think universities should offer undergraduate and postgraduate training? In light of your experience during the COVID-19 pandemic, what key actions should be undertaken to improve the student learning and training? Who should undertake these actions? What other initiatives should be undertaken to promote equality and inclusiveness to enhance access to education in your country? What can students do to stay in touch with global peers and do you think that you could establish a series of exchanges with students across the globe on strengthening your universities to be more sustainable and equitable?
<p>Webinar 13: Global universities partnerships for addressing emerging development challenges</p> <p>Moderator: Dr. Lucy Heady, Executive Director Education Sub Saharan Africa (TBC)</p> <p>Discussant: Prof. José Zagul, President, Global Alliance for Higher Education and Research (GCHERA) (TBC)</p> <p>Date: 07 October 2020</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Prof. Etienne Ehouan, Secretary General, Association of African Universities (AAU), Accra-Ghana Prof. Ndeye Coumba Toure Kane, Rector, Université Sine Saloum El hadj Ibrahima NDIASS (USSEIN), Kaolack-Senegal, representing Association for Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), Abidjan-Cote d'Ivoire (TBC) Prof. Carolyn Glynn, European Alliance on Agricultural knowledge for Development (AGRINATURA), Uppsala-Sweden (TBC) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> What are emerging global issues confronting education sector, especially higher education that need to be considered moving forward? What are the emerging models of higher agricultural education and research that are transforming societies and economies? How could Africa through African universities benefit from such models? What programmes are proposed to be implemented between Africa and your network to maximise impact in addressing African agriculture and food systems related challenges?

Webinar topic	Panelist	Discussion issues
Time: 15:00-17:30 East African Standard Time	4. Mr. Bernie Burrola Vice President for International Programmes, Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU), USA 5. Prof. Tang Ying , Deputy Director of International Office, China Agricultural University, Beijing-China 6. Prof. R.P. Singh , Executive Secretary, Indian Agricultural Universities Association (IAUA) 7. Prof. Ki Hee Ryu , Institute of Green Bio Science and Technology, Seoul National University, Korea	5. What funding avenues are available to operationalise such funding modalities?