

The 19th RUFORUM Annual General Meeting, Yaoundé, Cameroon



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A Daily Brief on the 19th RUFORUM AGM Week #RUFORUMAGM2023

Welcome to the 19th RUFORUM Annual General Meeting



**Prof. Patrick Okori, RUFORUM
Executive Secretary**

Welcome to the 19th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of RUFORUM. This year, we are hosted by the West and Central Africa region, for the first time, by Cameroon under the Distinguished Patronage of His Excellency Paul Biya, Head of State and President of the Republic of Cameroon. We deeply thank the Government and people of Cameroon as well as our hosts the five RUFORUM member universities in Cameroon, that is, University of Bamenda, University of Ngaoundere, University of Dschang, University of Buea and University of Maroua, for tirelessly working to host us all. Mercibeaucoup, thank you very much.

The theme of this year's AGM is "Transforming Higher Education to Sustainably Feed and Create Prosperity for Africa". This theme is informed by a number important mutually interacting factors that collectively, are affecting the growth and progress of the continent. The economic outlook for our continent in 2023 by the African Development Bank and other global apex development financial institutions was positive. However, Africa's economic growth has since then deaccelerated, and is now projected to be lower than the previously projected rate of 4.1%.

Agriculture a key sector, continues to be affected by both natural and human induced factors. However, compared to growth produced in other parts of the economy, growth in agriculture is two to three times more successful reducing poverty. Agriculture continues to face serious threats from climate. Studies by the United Nation's Convention to Combat Desertification show that Africa accounts for all 44% of severe droughts recorded globally in the last 50 years, causing economic losses of more than USD 70 billion. In 2022, an estimated loss of US\$ 8.5 billion in economic damages was experienced due to climate change. Clearly, climate change and weather variability, remains one of the grand challenges of the 21st century for Africa and the World, because it affects key livelihood and strategic areas of emerging economies. Unemployment facing Africa's dominant demographic the youth, raises questions about education, skilling and jobs creation.

While inclusion and diversity, the underpinning for an equal society, remains challenging. The question then to academia, researchers, development practitioners and policy is, "what step must we take right now to address the challenges to our current and future generations?" Our resounding response as RUFORUM is in line with what Malcolm X said many years ago, "education and research for development are the passports to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today." This AGM is therefore organized around four thematic areas that capture key actions needed to engage students, academics, scientists, policy makers, finance institutions, development practitioners, private sector, public and quasi-public institutions and other education ecosystem actors in generating solutions for our contemporary development challenges.

This year's AGM will consist of different convenings. These include pre-AGM events, side events, the Business Meeting, capacity building and mentoring sessions, scientific conference, poster sessions and exhibitions by member universities and other partners. Additionally high-level policy dialogues with Ministers, Senior Government Leaders and Development Partners will be held.

Unveiling the 19th RUFORUM AGM: Transforming Higher Education to Sustainably Foster Prosperity for Africa

Amidst an atmosphere brimming with innovation and purpose, the 19th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) was inaugurated at the Palais des Congrès in Yaoundè. With a keen focus on the overarching theme, **“Transforming Higher Education to Sustainably Feed and Create Prosperity for Africa,”** this grand event promised to unravel strategies and insights crucial for reshaping the educational landscape across the African continent.

The Palais des Congrès, adorned with colorful banners and brimming with enthusiastic delegates, welcomed leaders, educators, policymakers, and visionaries from across the globe. The grandeur of the occasion was matched by the profound significance of the agenda—redefining higher education in Africa to not just impart knowledge but to catalyze sustainable development and prosperity.

The ceremonious inauguration was a testament to the collaborative spirit driving RUFORUM’s mission. Prof. Patrick Okori, the Executive Secretary of RUFORUM, dialogues by underscoting the AGMs Key outcome. “Our goal is not merely academic excellence but the fusion of knowledge with practical, sustainable solutions,” he remarked. “Education in Africa must be a beacon, illuminating the path to prosperity and sustainable development for future generations.”

Distinguished speakers graced the stage, including policymakers, renowned academics, and industry leaders, each echoing the urgency of integrating sustainability into higher education. Their collective vision emphasized the need for educational institutions to become hubs of innovation, nurturing a new generation of leaders

equipped to tackle Africa’s most pressing challenges. The conference did not merely conclude as a ceremonial event; instead, it marked the commencement of a collective mission—a mission to reform education in Africa and, through it, to sow the seeds of a more sustainable, prosperous future.

Throughout the gathering, the emphasis was not just on identifying issues but on proposing actionable solutions. Participants engaged in deep discussions, dissecting the challenges faced by the education sector, and collectively envisioning transformative approaches that fuse academia with sustainable development. The importance of building curricula that integrate sustainability, technology, and practical skills was underlined as a cornerstone in nurturing graduates ready to drive change.

One of the most compelling aspects of the conference was the sense of commitment from all attendees. There was an unmistakable determination to actualize change on the continent.

As the curtains drew to a close on this enlightening gathering, the resounding sentiment echoed by attendees was one of optimism and determination. The 19th RUFORUM AGM had planted the seeds of transformation, nurturing the hope that African higher education would emerge as a driving force for sustainable progress and prosperity across the continent.

The official opening of the 19th RUFORUM AGM at the Palais des Congrès will be remembered as a pivotal moment in the quest to revolutionize higher education in Africa. The resounding message remains clear: to feed Africa’s future prosperity, we must cultivate a new breed of education—one that is sustainable, innovative, and poised to shape a brighter tomorrow.

The journey to transform higher education in Africa has just begun, and the RUFORUM AGM stands as the beacon lighting the path toward a promising future.

Journée de l'enseignement supérieur au Cameroun, Yaoundé, Cameroun

25 octobre 2023 – Yaoundé – Les universités membres du RUFORUM au Cameroun, avec le soutien du secrétariat du RUFORUM et du gouvernement de la République du Cameroun, se sont réunies pour accueillir la Journée de l'enseignement supérieur camerounais le 25 octobre 2023, à l'Université de Yaoundé, Yaoundé, Cameroun. L'événement a été lancé sur le thème « Exploiter et intensifier les efforts et les opportunités de l'Université et des partenaires pour le développement agricole et national » par le Ministre d'État et Ministre de l'Enseignement supérieur, Son Excellence le Professeur Jacques Fame Ndongo. Comme d'habitude avec RUFORUM, l'organisation d'un tel événement vise à faciliter les forums nationaux qui constituent un moyen d'aider les universités à s'intégrer dans les systèmes nationaux d'innovation agricole grâce à un engagement multipartite. La Journée de l'enseignement supérieur du Cameroun a été organisée dans le but de renforcer la pertinence des universités et autres programmes de formation de l'enseignement supérieur pour répondre aux besoins actuels et futurs du Cameroun en matière de capacités humaines. En outre, il cherchait à identifier les opportunités, en particulier les points d'entrée et de convergence, permettant aux universités et à leurs partenaires affiliés de s'engager dans la mise en œuvre du

programme de développement national, avec un accent particulier sur le système agroalimentaire du Cameroun.

Lors de son discours d'ouverture, Son Excellence le Professeur Jacques Fame Ndongo a félicité le RUFORUM pour ses efforts louables visant à faire progresser l'enseignement supérieur et agricole en Afrique. Il a en outre exhorté les universités à collaborer entre elles, car cela est essentiel à la création d'un écosystème complet pour le partage des connaissances, la recherche et la mise en commun des ressources.

Il a été noté que la diffusion des connaissances, les services de vulgarisation et les programmes de sensibilisation communautaire devraient être encouragés pour garantir que les résultats de la recherche soient mis en œuvre au profit de la société dans son ensemble. En outre, un partenariat transparent entre les universités et les établissements d'enseignement et de formation techniques et professionnels est impératif pour offrir une éducation complète et adaptée aux besoins de l'industrie.

La Journée nationale de l'enseignement supérieur a constitué une étape importante dans la redéfinition du rôle de l'enseignement supérieur dans le paysage agricole camerounais. En adoptant l'innovation et les technologies agricoles, la nation est sur le point de renforcer sa position de puissance agricole, promouvant le développement durable et la croissance économique



Journée de l'enseignement supérieur au Cameroun, Yaoundé, Cameroun

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RUFORUM @ruforumsec · 8h

Happening Now!
 Official Opening of the 19th RUFORUM AGM
 "Education is the cornerstone of progress. By transforming higher education in Africa to focus on sustainability, we're not just feeding minds, but also nurturing a prosperous future for the continent."
 #RUFORUMAGM2023



RUFORUM Network
 Published by Eva Acan · 8h

Imagine a higher education system in Africa that doesn't just teach, but empowers change-makers! By weaving sustainability into the fabric of learning, we're nurturing leaders who will feed innovation, cultivate prosperity, and create a brighter Africa. #RUFORUMAGM2023




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#Join us at the 19th RUFORUM AGM, where we bring together policymakers, researchers, and innovators to tackle Africa's challenges. Together, we can feed and create prosperity for Africa! #YoungAfricaWorks #RUFORUMAGM2023...

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@ngong_song Oct 30

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RUFORUM Member Country Flag Show session at the Official Opening Ceremony



Cameroon Member University Students entertaining the Guests



Group Photo with Technocrats



Presentations on Transformative Education: Experiences and Lessons from Gulu and Egerton University