



**Thematic area 3: Access, equity and quality of African Higher and Tertiary Education**

Africa’s working-age population is estimated to be growing at 3% per annum and will generate approximately 450 million young people ready to work by 2035<sup>1</sup>. Yet Africa’s economy can only employ 3 million annually, according to the African Development Bank. Work life transitions in Africa are also changing from formal to self-employment. Studies by the Brookings Institute show that three-quarters of new entrants into Africa’s labor market will be self-employed or in microenterprises and only 20 % will be wage-employed by the service sector, while about 4 to 5 % will be wage employed by industry. Overall, only 100 million of the 450 million young Africans expected to reach working age by 2035, will find decent work. African higher education sector must therefore develop the appropriate training/skilling programmes that produce workers for today and tomorrow. Agriculture being the largest sector where most of these youth are, and with a high potential to create wealth and self-employment, must invariably be the target for skilling tomorrow’s workforce. But in comparison to the rest of the globe, Africa has a small proportion of higher education institutions. There is need to rebalance the human resource pyramid that was distorted by transformation of many Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVETs) institutions into universities, locks out many youths from gaining the skills they need for self-employment. Further, gender and cultural biases, especially affect girls, increasing the employment inequity. Africa’s research output has also remained low contributing only 3.5% of scholarly publications, a sign of limited training and research. By utilizing these and other opportunities and challenges for its transformation, the higher agricultural education sector in Africa has a window of opportunity to efficiently educate the next generation workforce. Extended abstracts are being invited to cover the following areas:

- **Transformative education: Experiences across the continent**
  - University-industry-community engagement for skilling young people.
  - Inclusion and diversity by training programmes.
  - Reaching masses (Digital education).
  - Quality assurance (for graduate and undergraduate education, Credit accumulation and transfer (CATs), etc.)
- **Strengthening work transitions for Africa’s youth.**
  - Skilling for the market: University-TVET strategic partnerships
  - Internships and community engagement
  - Entrepreneurship (agripreneurs and other self-employers)
- **Leveraging local capacity for building capacity (case studies/updates)**
  - RUFORUM’s Graduate Teaching Assistantship Program
  - The Partnership for skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (PASET)
  - African Centers of Excellence (ACEI and ACEII)

<sup>1</sup> Harnessing Africa’s youth dividend: a new approach for large-scale job creation

