



2nd RUFORUM TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE

CONCEPT NOTE

ACADEMIC REGISTRARS DIALOGUE ON TRANSFORMATIVE HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA

Date: 13th August 2024 **Time:** 8:30-13:00 CAT

Venue: TBC

Registration Link: XXXX

Contact: Prof. Anthony Egeru, and Prof. Nancy Mungai

BACKGROUND

Education is one of the unmatched driver of socio-economic development and Africa requires quality education for its development aspirations to be met. Accordingly, there is significant effort being put on transforming the continent's education to deliver on development aspirations for the continent. This is being done through investing in the current and next generations in a number of ways including institutional strengthening as well as through diverse scholarship offerings. However, there is recognition that the continent's education sector and systems are not adequately producing competitive graduates with a strong mismatch between the current education and skills development systems and the needs and aspirations of African youth. Many young people feel that their education or vocational skill set do not equip them with the relevant competencies for the job market and needs of the 21st century. They also face challenges accessing quality education and skills development opportunities, especially in rural areas as well as settings of fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV). Moreover, they often lack voice and representation in education policy making and implementation processes¹.

As the education sector continues to rapidly evolve with the enumerated challenges pertaining, it calls intentionality of purpose to rethink, redesign and deliver a functional and responsive education systems in the continent that are relevant, inclusive, innovative and responsive to the needs and aspirations of the young people in Africa. The education systems ought to catalyse the contribution of young people in the economy by enhancing their value creation. Within the framework of the African Union, there is the African Union Youth Led Manifesto for transforming education in Africa. This manifesto points out four key recommendations for improving education and skills development in the continent; (i) implementing policies and programs that ensure access and equity for girls, refugees, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized groups; (ii) investing in teacher training and incentive programs to attract and retain qualified and motivated teachers; (iii) developing curricula that foster creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration

¹ Transforming education and skills development in Africa. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/education/transforming-education-and-skills-development-africa>



skills among learners; and (iv) digitizing learning materials and expanding access to digital devices and connectivity for learners and teachers in learning institutions².

Translating those recommendations into action requires that an actual shift in the approach to education and skills development happens with the continent so that there is active movement beyond traditional models and embrace innovative methods that harness technology, creativity, and experiential learning³. But, moving this forward requires champions within the education sector as well as in learning institutions. Within Universities, the academic registrars play an important role in shaping the quality of education in higher education institutions. This is primarily because the academic registrars are the ones in charge with the implementation of all academic policies and procedure approved by the governing councils.

Academic registrars roles have been rapidly evolving from the traditional focus on course catalogues, registration, curriculum management, degree audit, credit transfer, transcript fulfilment to new functions such as; 1) being leader in academic life and administrative life, 2) protecting student data and making student data actionable, and 3) supporting student-led pathways and scaffolding them⁴. Further, university registrars are have been found to be anchors and drivers of positive change in the university system. Mr. Michael Lorenz, Vice President of Strategy and Academic Operations at Purdue University has stressed that a registrar is in a position uniquely suited to both positive action and change in an institution. As such, the thoughtful registrar will observe broader patterns earlier than most, and the responsible registrar will seek to drive positive change based on that. So, the registrar's social mission begins with acknowledging their obligation to drive positive institutional change, not merely to protect long-held policy⁵. Thus, as shapers and drivers of positive change, academic registrars are in a position to be leaders of transformative higher education leadership in their respective universities.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING

The purpose of this dialogue is to bring together a critical leadership team from within African universities that are central to transformative education conceptualisation, delivery and monitoring of progress. This leadership team are the academic registrars/university registrars. This will be the first inaugural meeting of the RUFORUM member universities academic registrars/university registrars. Therefore the objectives of this dialogue meeting of academic registrars are:

1. Create a platform for university registrars/academic registrars to dialogue and share best practices for delivery of quality of education in Africa

² Transforming education and skills development in Africa. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/education/transforming-education-and-skills-development-africa>

³ Investing In Education for Transformative Learning. <https://mastercardfdn.org/all/centre-for-innovative-teaching-and-learning-in-ict/investing-in-education-for-transformative-learning/>

⁴ The Evolving Role of the University Registrar. <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2019/09/10/changing-role-registrar-could-increasingly-transform-higher-education-opinion>

⁵ How the Role of the Registrar Has Evolved: 5 Perspectives. <https://moderncampus.com/blog/how-the-role-of-the-registrar-has-evolved.html>



2. Co-create actionable meaning of transformative education within the context of participating African universities
3. Create a convergence of approaches, strategies and mechanisms for delivery of transformative education in Africa

DATE AND VENUE

This event will take place on the 13th August, 2024 starting at 08:30 am in Namibia.

EXPECTED PARTICIPANTS

This event will be attended by Academic Registrars/University Registrars of RUFORUM member universities and Transformative Higher Education

Rapporteurs:

1. Prof. Emmanuel Suh, University of Bamenda
2. Prof. Jan Swanepoel, University of Free State

PROGRAMME

Time	Activity	Responsible Institution
Official Opening Ceremony		
Session Chair: Dr. Jerry Bagaya, Academic Registrar, Gulu University		
08:00 - 8:30 AM	Arrival and registration of participants	
08.30 – 09:00 AM	<p>Welcome remarks: Dr. Florence Nakayiwa, Deputy Executive Secretary, RUFORUM Secretariat.</p> <p>Opening Remarks: Ms. Pauline Gangla, Lead Higher Education, Mastercard Foundation</p> <p>Participants' introductions. Prof. Anthony Egeru, Skilling and Engagement Manager, RUFORUM Secretariat</p>	
Session 1: Rethinking and Redesigning actionable transformative Education in Practice		
09:00-09:20	Paper 1: Investing in the Present and Future through Education in Measurable Ways ⁶ . Carol Nuga, Mastercard Foundation	
09:20 – 09:30	Plenary: Reactions to the Lead Paper	Facilitator

⁶ As the economies of today grapple with fitting the current generation into the world of work, the global trends and changes in the near future are getting more dramatic as industry 4.0 reconfigures the world. A vision for preparing young people the economies of tomorrow is critical for example, the World Economic Forum estimates that estimate that a global improvement in students' collaborative problem-solving capacity to the average level of today's top 10 scoring countries could add an additional \$2.54 trillion in increased productivity to the global economy.



09:30 – 09:40	Paper 2: Rethinking and Redesigning actionable transformative Education in Practice. Mr. Ranjit Majumdar - Global Leaders Consulting, UK	
09:40 - 10:05	Rejoinder from Experience: Elements of Transformative Higher Education. Prof. Jim French, Secretary General-GCHERA, Costa Rica.	
10:05 – 10:35	Plenary: Co-creating Actionable Elements for a Transformative University through a collaborative working session.	Facilitator
11:45 -11:10	Health/Tea/Coffee break	
Session 2: Institutional Readiness for Transformative Education		
11:10 - 11:30	Paper 3: Breaking through the Barriers for transforming higher education in African Universities. Dr. Saidi Mwanarusi, Academic Registrar, Egerton University	
11:30-12:30	Plenary: Co-creating workable solutions towards barriers for transformative education in Universities	Facilitator
12:30 - 13:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Registrars Common Agenda for transformative Education in African Universities Means of working together and convenors for continued partnership 	Prof. Emmanuel Suh, and Prof. Jan Swanepoel
13:10 – 14:00	Lunch/Health Break	

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

At the end of the Higher Education Regulators Dialogue:

1. Defined key areas for continued collaboration of among academic registrars/university registrars
2. Inaugural Academic Registrars/University Registrars Working Group (HAR-WG) for Africa with a defined Convenor
3. Common Appreciation of transformative education and implications and early actions for advancing transformative education in African Higher Education Institutions