



## 2<sup>nd</sup> RUFORUM TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE

### CONCEPT NOTE

### HIGH LEVEL PARTNERSHIP ROUNDTABLE FOR LAST MILE DELIVERY

**Date:** 13<sup>th</sup> August 2024 **Time:** 14:00-17:30 CAT

**Venue:** Mercure Hotel, Brandberg Room

**Registration Link:** <https://bit.ly/3LQs32r>

**Contacts:** Dr Silim M Nahdy

Prof. Patrick Okori

### BACKGROUND

The 2024 economic outlook<sup>1</sup> of Sub-Saharan Africa's (SSA), shows that its economy is resilient with growth projected to increase to 3.7 % in 2024 and 4.3 % in 2025. This positive growth notwithstanding, is tapered by several local and external challenges. Low agricultural productivity is one of key factors contributing to the low performance of this key sector and affecting economic growth. is the low productivity of key sector such as agriculture. Yet Africa's agriculture sustains upto 70% of the population's livelihoods, and is up to 2.7 times more effective in moving people out of poverty than any other sector of the economy<sup>2</sup>. The vast majority of Africa's young population is locked out of the economy and are mostly stuck in rural areas, while those who attain tertiary education cannot find meaningful employment. For mass transition of populations from poverty, food insecurity and unemployment, SSA's agriculture must change from its predominantly subsistence form to an integrated, business-oriented farming. Increasing labour productivity on-farm, is a critical issue that can help such transition to occur. However, structural change is necessary to increase worker productivity. This change must include expanding access to innovative production inputs, services, knowledge and building the infrastructure needed to link farmers to profitable markets, among others. Access to productivity enhancing knowledge is critical for increasing labour productivity, and importantly farmers must access rewarding input and output markets. Increasing access to agricultural extension and consulting services has a direct impact on agricultural productivity; however, this depends on the timeliness, quality and relevance of extended services.

Given the diversity and complexities of SSA farming systems<sup>3</sup>, coupled with increased internet band width, and telephony penetration across the continent; as well as the presence of financial technologies (FINTECs) and other digital information innovations, the potential for the continent to increase access to knowledge to the s majority of farmers, is a realistic optimism. Leveraging all these opportunities requires new ways of doing business, including among others shifting to market-driven, business oriented and integrated systems. This is necessary, among other things, to reengage Africa's women and young population in agriculture. Of particular

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.afdb.org/en/knowledge/publications/african-economic-outlook>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.afdb.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/aeb\\_volume\\_8\\_issue\\_3.pdf](https://www.afdb.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/aeb_volume_8_issue_3.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://apps.worldagroforestry.org/downloads/Publications/PDFS/BC20010.pdf>



interest is the need to create an ecosystem harnessing knowledge, innovations and other requisite service providers, who leverage digital tools and each other's capacities to unlock new opportunities for communities.

Adopting and or adapting new advisory services, approaches and tools to local contexts is necessary to address Africa's increasingly limited reach and knowledge capacity of public extension services. To address contemporary farmers' information needs, a shift towards bundled services anchored on digitalized platforms is necessary. These services include finance, insurance, market information, input supply and livestock and crop husbandry among others. A transition to modern technology especially digitally AI enabled systems<sup>4</sup> is likely a high attractant of young people to agriculture. With several entities active in SSA agriculture's extension advisory and agribusiness sectors, a move towards an inclusive and comprehensive framework, such as sustainable agrifood systems<sup>5</sup>, for planning-to-execution of actions is required. This meeting brings together different actors to create shared vision for increasing last mile delivery of science and technology products and services as well as other allied requisites for transforming Africa's agrifood systems. A major objective being the intensification of young people in Africa's emerging USD 1 trillion<sup>6</sup> agrifood systems market.

## PURPOSE

To engage in dialogue with key stakeholders in SSA agricultural sector to identify opportunities for collaboration that can improve the effectiveness and efficiency of last-mile delivery to rural and agricultural communities. The focus institutions include academia, agricultural and extension advisory services, research, development actors and partners operating at national to subregional and regional levels. These actors will identify convergence areas of investment as well as new opportunity action areas required to underpin sustainable agrifood systems transformation on the continent.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Review trends and opportunities in SSA last mile delivery systems to identify opportunities for convergence and or engagement.
2. Explore opportunities on how to enhance work transitions by university and tertiary graduates as well as out-of-school young people to move them into rewarding agricultural enterprises and youth-led enterprises.

## DATE AND VENUE

This event will take place on the 13<sup>th</sup> August, 2024 starting at 14:00 am in Namibia.

## EXPECTED PARTICIPANTS

<sup>4</sup> [https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_Future\\_of\\_Jobs\\_2023.pdf](https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs_2023.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> A sustainable agrifood system is one that delivers food security and nutrition for all in such a way that the economic, social and environmental bases to generate food security and nutrition for future generation is not compromised. <https://www.fao.org/food-systems/en/>.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2024/04/unlocking-africas-1-trillion-food-economy/>



This participants in this event will include leaders of the key stakeholder organisations that are part of the SSA agricultural ecosystem such as :

1. African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services
2. Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
3. East African Farmers Federation
4. ASARECA, CCADESSA, CORAF
5. CGIAR-Africa Director
6. Ministry of Agriculture Namibia
7. NARO
8. Selected RUFORUM member Universities
9. Master Card Foundation
10. BMG Foundation
11. AGRA

## PROGRAMME

**Rapporteurs:** Dr. Lilian Lihasi and David Ekepu

Time	Activity	Responsible Institution
<b>Session One: Official Opening Ceremony</b>		
<b>Session Chair:</b> Prof. Patrick Okori		
14:00 - 14:10	Arrival and registration of participants	
14:10 – 14:20	Remarks: <b>Dr. Paul Fatch</b> Remarks: <b>Dr Aggrey Agumya, Executive Director, FARA.</b> Remarks: <b>Dr Simeon Ehui, Director General the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture and Regional Director for Africa, CGIAR</b>	RUFORUM+ AFAAS
14:20 – 14:30	Introductions	Facilitator
14:30-14:50	Last mile delivery: What we have learnt and the transformations needed to engage unlock opportunity for agrifood systems transformation <b>Dr Silim M Nahdy Executive Director, AFAAS</b>	AFAAS
14:50-15:20	Respondent East African Farmers Federation	EAFF
<b>Session Two: Making agriculture attractive for youth</b>		
15:20-15:40	Engaging young people into the monetized economy: What we have learnt. <b>Prof. Anthony Egeru, Skilling and Engagement Manager, RUFORUM Secretariat.</b>	RUFORUM
<b>15:40-16:00 Health Break</b>		
16:00 –16:30	Experiences from the sub-regional organisation- CCARDESA, ASARECA and CORAF	Facilitator
16:20-16:40	Development partner perspectives: What is the agenda and what have we learnt?	MCF



16:40-17:10	Roundtable discussions: Other opportunities for agrifood systems transformation Wrap-up and meeting closure	Facilitator
17:10-17:30	<b>Plenary:</b> Discussions on areas of convergence	Facilitator
<b>17:30</b>	<b>Closure</b>	

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

At the end of the high-level round table meeting will achieve the following:

1. Opportunity for shared actions for increasing access to science solutions and utilization by farming communities and young people to unlock opportunity for better livelihoods.
2. Strategic partnership opportunities for last mile delivery and a general consensus on a way forward post the round table generated.
3. Opportunities on how enhance work transitions by university and tertiary graduates as well as out-of-school young people to move them into rewarding agricultural enterprises and youth-led enterprises identified among the partners present