Press Release

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RUFORUM Expands Its Mandate to now a 55 member Universities Network

28th August, 2015

Above: University of University of Abomey Calavi (Benin), receive their membership certificate

At its meeting held today 29th August 2015 in Windhoek, Namibia, RUFORUM Annual General Meeting formally approved the expansion of its membership to West Africa, thus ratifying the admission of University of Abomey Calavi (Benin), University of Cape Coast (Ghana) and University of Port Harcourt (Nigeria) to its membership.

The meeting further admitted seven Universities as full member universities of RUFORUM network, namely, University of Khartoum (Sudan), Jimma University (Ethiopia), Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (Kenya), University of Fort Hare (South Africa), University of KwaZulu Natal (South Africa), and Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) Uganda. Additionally Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST), Peace University (Sudan) and Uganda Technology and Management University (UTAMU) were admitted as Associate Member Universities, increasing the number of member universities from 42 to now 55 in 22 countries.
Prof. Levi Nyagura, former Chair of RUFORUM Board of Trustees stated that "this expansion in membership will enhance the network’s ability to carry out its core mission, which is “to strengthen the capacities of Universities to foster innovations responsive to the demands of smallholder farmers and value chains through the training of high quality researchers, the output of impact-oriented research, and the maintenance of collaborative working relations among researchers, farmers, market actors, national agricultural research and advocacy institutions, and governments” He added that this step responds to critical issues for network growth owing to the increased demand from Universities to be admitted into the RUFORUM club and the transition to a wider RUFORUM.

RUFORUM members overcome many of the supply constraints on delivering high-quality postgraduate education under the tenet of regionality. RUFORUM aims to attract superior postgraduate talent to agriculture in the region and achieve significant economies of scope and scale in rigorous and relevant training. RUFORUM’s vision, mission and goals will make a critical contribution to the ability of African Universities to improve the lives and livelihoods of millions of small-holder farmers in the continent. With its expanded membership, the network is now comprised of member Universities from Central Africa (Burundi and Democratic Republic of Congo ), Eastern Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda), Southern Africa (Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe), and West Africa (Benin, Nigeria and Ghana). The Network’s Secretariat is based at Makerere University Main Campus, Kampala, Uganda.
Notes to editors

Higher education for Africa*

- Africa needs to produce future leaders who will promote better governance and management in all sectors, and facilitate innovative solutions to society’s problems.
- Universities are best placed to provide the trained labour force needed as the drive for knowledge-based economies takes hold on the continent through producing more PhDs and more ‘industry-ready’ graduates.
- Postgraduate enrolment both in master’s and PhD programmes in Africa rose from 6.9 per cent of the total enrolment in 1997 to 9.3 per cent by 2014 as a result of educational reforms.

* Source: Sci Dev Net. Article: Making higher education work for Africa: Facts and figures by Irene Friesenahn.

RUFORUM
Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) is a dynamic regional network of 55 member universities operating in 22 countries that fosters collaboration, coordination, training and research amongst member universities. Its vision is to help build a vibrant agricultural sector. We help African universities produce high-performing graduates and high-quality research, responsive to the demands of African farmers for innovation to generate sustainable livelihoods and national economic development. To share our work, call +256-417-713-300, email communications@ruforum.org, or visit us online at www.ruforum.org or on our blog at http://blog.ruforum.org/

For additional information, photos and interviews with key delegates, contact Ms Joan Apio, Communications Publicity and Marketing Officer, below.

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