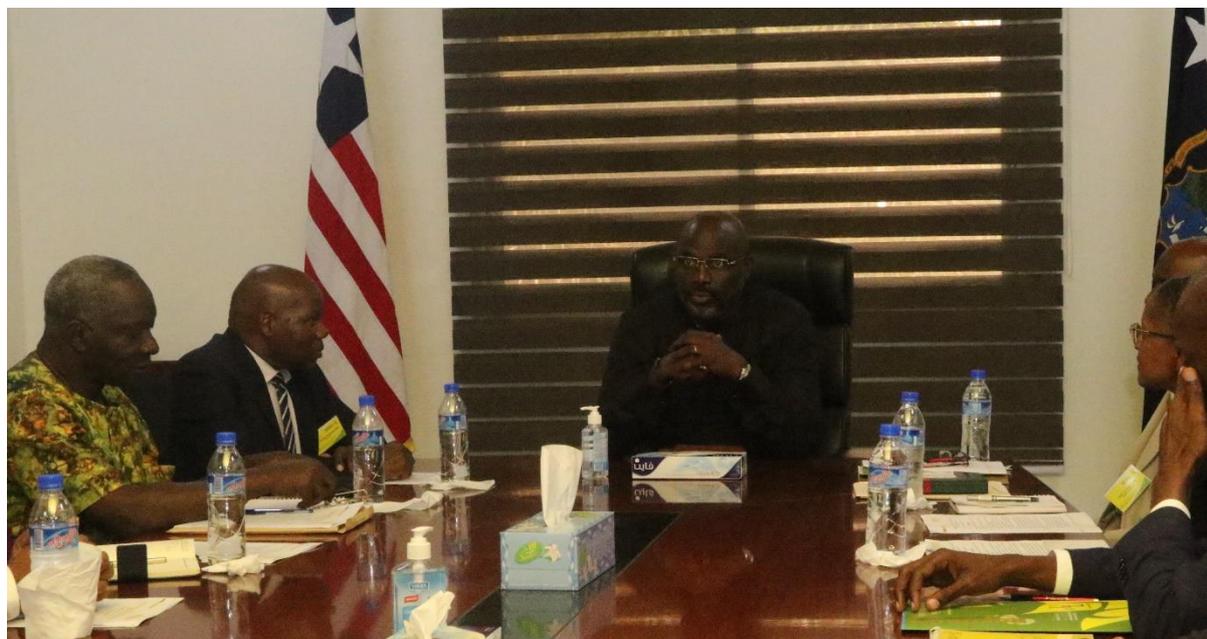


Press Release



For immediate release | 25 April, 2019

His Excellency George Manneh Weah the President of the Republic of Liberia Meets RUFORUM Delegation in Monrovia



Monrovia 25 April 2019 A delegation from the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) has today paid a courtesy call to His Excellency George Manneh Weah the President of the Republic of Liberia at his Capitol Hill residence in Monrovia. This meeting comes ahead of the preparations for a symposium on higher education in Liberia scheduled to take place on 26th April 2019 Organised in partnership with the University of Liberia with focus on *Promoting Higher Education in Liberia*.

While responding to the delegation, President George M. Weah applauded RUFORUM for being a Pan-African organisation that is working tirelessly to solve African challenges such as food and nutritional Security through investment in higher education, research and Innovation in Africa. He pledged his support to initiatives that support the education of youth in Liberia. He acknowledged the value of formal education in transforming economies and said it was the reason he went back to study despite being a professional footballer with international accolade.

"After 18 years of playing football professionally, I went back to school. Not to prove anything, but to prepare myself for the future" President George M. Weah

Since 2018, as part of aligning operations for delivery of the [Vision 2030](#) to create a Pan African Network, RUFORUM strategically intensified on advocacy with African Governments to support its initiatives with the member universities in the 37 countries in Africa. The Liberia meeting is part of the move by RUFORUM to anchor the West African outreach. The delegation led by Prof. Adipala Ekwamu, the Executive Secretary, congratulated the President for his election as

the Head of State of the Republic of Liberia and for particularly maintaining and strengthening good governance and institutional processes in Liberia while focusing on strengthening agriculture and promoting Science, Technology and Innovation for economic development in Liberia. He commended His Excellency President Weah for the Government's effort to re-build Liberia human capital base and efforts to strengthen Higher Education in Liberia as a fulcrum for economic development of the country. Professor Adipala thanked the Ministry of Education and the President of University of Liberia for organizing a Liberia Higher Education Day to galvanise support and action for the development of the Higher Education Sector in Liberia. The RUFORUM delegation included Vice Chancellors from 10 Universities in Africa and RUFORUM Secretariat staff.

Liberia is one of the post-conflict countries in Africa that joined RUFORUM in 2017. The RUFORUM mission to Liberia and the higher education symposium comes at the backdrop of years of civil unrest that affected the higher education sector in the country. Liberia is in dire need of rebuilding its higher education sector and the broader education value chain. Understanding the depth of these needs as well as mobilizing key actors including the Government of Liberia and its private sector is an important undertaking that RUFORUM in partnership with the University of Liberia is committed to. Key areas of focus for the symposium include 1) Deliberation on advancing Africa's response to higher education disparities and support to disadvantaged students; 2) Mobilize the private sector to take active role and investment in agricultural education and transformation efforts; 3) Take stock of higher education and agricultural priorities and development needs of Liberia as a post-conflict country; and 4) Foster linkages between Liberian Higher Education sector and the RUFORUM network of universities.

Africa is confronted by a number of challenges but the biggest gap is the limited human capital to overcome those challenges. We have young scholars who are starting to know their continent. For Liberia in particular, we have a group of about ten students from Liberia that are being trained in other African Countries through RUFORUM program" said Prof. Adipala Ekwamu

Notes to Editors:

Established by 10 African university Vice Chancellors in 2004, the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) is a consortium of 105 African universities operating in 37 countries on the continent with a vision to create vibrant transformative universities catalysing sustainable inclusive agricultural development to feed and create prosperity for Africa . RUFORUM Secretariat is hosted by the Ministry of Education and Sports in Uganda with Secretariat at Makerere University in Kampala. In 2014, RUFORUM signed an MoU with the African Union Commission to support implementation of the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA 2024) Priority One on reducing poverty and ensuring food and nutrition security. As of August 2017, RUFORUM has supported the training of 60 Under graduates, 1,883 MSc and 503 PhD graduates of whom 94% work in their home countries or region, generated over 300 agricultural technologies and mobilized over US\$201 million for strengthening postgraduate education in Africa. Please visit www.ruforum.org for more information.

For additional information, photos and interviews, contact the RUFORUM Corporate Communications & Advocacy Officer below;

Name: Maureen
Agena

Corporate
Communications, &
Advocacy Officer

Email:
communications@ruforum.org
