

Press Release



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Universities in the RUFORUM Network showcase their work to Honorable Monica Masanza Musenero, Uganda Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation



From waste to products - a farmer / entrepreneur from Kabale explaining how Makerere University community research has helped farmers to make money through products from small potato tubers they normally discard in their gardens and composts.



A farmer explaining how Gulu University has helped to strengthen their rice value chain and tripled their production and incomes

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) Secretariat hosted the Honorable Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation of the Government of Uganda on Friday 8th July 2022. The visit was for the Minister to have a glimpse of RUFORUM work in action. The visit provided an opportunity for Hon Musenero to familiarize herself with the university- community engagement program under RUFORUM. The Minister's visit followed on the backdrop of the Exhibition put up as part of the activities for Mastercard Foundation team visit to the RUFORUM Secretariat. RUFORUM in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation is implementing the Transforming African Agricultural Universities to meaningfully contribute to Africa's Growth and Development (TAGDev). Program activities which include the Community Action Research Program that aligns research and innovations to community advancement through increased productivity and product development to improve incomes and livelihoods. It targets especially youth entrepreneurship in practice, through student product development and enterprises.

Universities participating at the exhibition were able to showcase their potential to harness available resources to produce context specific products that can be sold on both the local and the international market. The enterprises initiated and nurtured at the universities have created jobs for the students and other youths, for the small holder farmers and the communities most especially in the rural areas, and a host of other actors along the value chains have benefited. Universities participating in the exhibition included Bishop Stuart University based at Mbarara, Makerere University in Kampala, Gulu University in Northern Uganda and Uganda Martyr's University Nkozi in Masaka, Central Uganda. Focus value chains at the exhibition included, hibiscus, potatoes, banana fiber, piggery, rice, sun flower, and black soldier larvae for livestock feeding, among others. The community-university enterprise development and youth empowerment demonstrates proof of concept for a model that can be adopted and or taken to scale in Uganda and other countries in Africa, including under

the newly adopted Parish Development Model in Uganda. The Minister affirmed the need for continued engagement between academia, policy, private sector and community to come up with workable solutions for development, including import substitution.

Note to Editors

About RUFORUM:

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) is a consortium of 150 African universities operating in 38 countries on the continent with a mission to ‘strengthen the capacities of Universities to foster innovations responsive to demands of smallholder farmers through the training of high quality researchers, the output of impact oriented research and the maintenance of collaborative working relations among researchers, farmers, national agricultural research institutions’. RUFORUM was established by Vice Chancellors in 2004 with a Secretariat hosted at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. In 2014 RUFORUM signed a 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. RUFORUM has supported the training of 2053 MSc, 627 PhD graduates and 229 BSc, of whom 98% work in their countries or region, the generation of over 300 agricultural technologies and mobilized over US\$236.3 million for strengthening postgraduate education in Africa. Please visit www.ruforum.org for more information

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