

Press Release



27th July 2023

RUFORUM Executive Assistant and Head of Partnerships paid a courtesy visit to Benin's Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research



RUFORUM Executive Assistant (Right) with the Benin's Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research

In a significant step towards strengthening education and research in Benin and the broader West Africa region, the Executive Assistant to the Executive Secretary (EAES), Dr. Sokona Dagnako, held a crucial meeting with the esteemed Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research (HESR), Prof Eléonore YAYI LADEKAN. The meeting served as a platform to discuss the establishment of the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) regional node for West Africa in Benin.

The primary focus of the meeting revolved around the establishment of the RUFORUM regional node for West Africa in Benin, approved by the Government of Benin during its Session of May 11, 2022. Deliberations were held on various aspects, including legal matters, political and diplomatic considerations, and administrative procedures required to set up the node effectively. To ensure comprehensive insights and input, technical and practical aspects were also discussed. The meeting also recorded the participation of the Minister's Director of Cabinet and technical advisor, rectors, and vice-rectors from all universities in Benin, who were specially invited to attend the session.

The Honorable Minister expressed her gratitude to EAES for her dedication and efforts in advancing education and research in the region. She also entrusted EAES with the task of conveying her sincere salutations and messages of thanks to Prof Patrick Okori and Prof Adipala Ekwamu, acknowledging their invaluable contributions to academic and research endeavors.

The future prospects of establishing the RUFORUM regional node in Benin appear highly promising. Currently, an internal technical session is underway at the Ministry of HESR to conduct a final review of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for establishing the RUFORUM node covering the West Africa Region in Benin. RUFORUM plays a pivotal role in enhancing the capabilities of universities in agriculture, science, and technology across Africa. By establishing the West Africa regional node, the country and region is in a better position to become a hub of academic excellence and research collaboration. The node's presence is expected to foster greater regional cooperation, attract research funding, and facilitate the exchange of knowledge and expertise among institutions.



Group photo with the Minister's Director of Cabinet and technical advisor, rectors, and vice-rectors from all universities in Benin

As Benin embarks on this journey towards establishing the RUFORUM regional node, it reiterates its commitment to nurturing talent, fostering innovation, and creating an enabling environment for academic growth. The unwavering support from Prof Patrick Okori, Prof Adipala, and the entire Secretariat, combined with the Minister's endorsement, underscores the collective vision of advancing education and research for the betterment of society.

Notes to Editors:

About RUFORUM:

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), is a consortium of 163 African universities operating in 40 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 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. 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.

For additional information, see contact below.

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