

## RUFORUM 4<sup>TH</sup> BIENNIAL CONFERENCE – 2014

### Deploying Interactive On-line Networking Platform for Improving Quality and Relevance of African University Graduates to Labour Markets



#### Concept Note for Sessions 13.2 During the 4<sup>th</sup> RUFORUM Biennial Conference

##### Background

Three Eastern African Universities (Egerton, Jomo Kenyatta and Makerere) and two networks of Agricultural Universities (RUFORUM - Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture based in Uganda and AGRINATURA - the Network of European Agricultural Universities) are partnering in the implementation of an action that will be ***Deploying Interactive On-line Networking Platform for Improving Quality and Relevance of African University Graduates to Labour Markets***. Together with four associate partners: African Biodiversity Conservation and Innovations Centre (ABCIC), Futuristic Inc, Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) and African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD), the partners will implement an action with the goal of strengthening the capacities in three universities towards reforming graduate curricula, graduate training and education with greater participation of the agricultural labour markets and a large pool of global expertise. Currently, graduates and their lecturers have limited interaction with the labour market due to a lack of effective administration and academic frameworks to open opportunities for graduates to learn practical lessons relevant to the needs of the labour market. This action targets closing this gap by deploying innovative interactive online technology networking platform to promote the institutional networking of Universities and a global pool of professionals and the labour market. The platforms will enable the participating Universities to efficiently and effectively supervise, mentor, track and network their graduates, graduate alumni and faculty staff within a community of researchers, academics, practicing professionals and the agricultural labour market.

The funding for implementation of this action is a grant of EUR 497,873.85 under the contract number FED/2013/335-687 with the ACP-EU EDULINK II approved in February 2014 and will run for next 42 months. The partners will hold action inception meeting as a side event on the 18 and 19<sup>th</sup> July during the RUFORUM 4<sup>th</sup> BIENNIAL CONFERENCE in Maputo, Mozambique, to accord partners a common visioning and to plan detailed action implementation framework and to prepare project implementation documents.

Holding the inception meeting during this RUFORUM 4<sup>th</sup> biennial conference will confer several gains to implementation of the action including cost-effectiveness in expenditure; high visibility impact taking advantage of the presence of a large pool of agricultural stakeholders from universities in Africa and Europe, development agencies and governments; a large population of postgraduate students for mentorship sessions; and exploiting opportunities for wider network building and recruitment of community of professionals into the platform to support attainment of the action objectives.

The activities to be undertaken and the objectives are outlined in the next paragraphs.

***i. Regional launch of the Project and Inception Meeting***

All the partners and associate partners in the action have been invited for the formal launching of the action which will be graced by **Alsacia Antoriason**, the Director Human Resource Science and Technology, Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of Mozambique on the 18<sup>th</sup> July. The launch will also be attended by other strategic stakeholders representing universities, civil society, private sector, graduate students and farmers' organizations. The objectives, action design and expected results will be explained during the session.

***ii. Development of M&E Framework***

Partners and associate partners will consultatively develop M&E plan and learning framework to guide systematic monitoring and evaluation of implementation process while assuring quality, effectiveness and continued relevance of the action. The objective will be to prepare M&E plan to clarify on:

- the action to be monitored and evaluated
- Relevant activities for carrying out M&E
- Specific responsibilities of the partners and team members for specific M&E activities
- Time frame for carrying out the various M&E activities
- Methods for carrying out M&E activities
- The resources required and whether have been committed to implement M&E in the action
- The relevant risks and assumptions in carrying out the M&E activities

***iii. Development of Knowledge Management and Communication Strategy***

Satisfying the communication needs of the various stakeholders will be pertinent to the success of the action. In participatory and consultative manner, partners and associate partners will work to elaborate knowledge management and communication strategy, specifically to:

- Identify and design communication strategies and knowledge products for production and application during and post implementation process of the action
- Determine knowledge products and communication strategies for sustaining on-line graduate supervision and mentorship platform responsive to the needs of the agriculture labour market
- Determine the key partners, target groups and beneficiaries for targeting with the knowledge products and communication strategies
- Plan consultative and visibility meetings in each partner university, annual EDULINK meeting and participation in international conferences
- Develop a framework for managing IPR issues

**iv. Refinement of Annual Work plan & budget, and preparing year II Work plan and budgets**

This session will be dedicated to refining and adopting for use the log-frame and budgets for both years 1 and year 2 and terms of reference for each partner. Partners will be taken through ACP-EU regulations on financial accountability and reporting guidelines and rules for better understanding of project contractual obligations. Each partner will report progress on establishment of an institutional project team,

**v. Regional meeting: Lesson learning and promoting visibility**

This activity is planned for delivering three milestones in the project. Firstly is for each partner university to share the lessons of the internal assessment of internal systems supporting mentoring, monitoring, tracking and networking graduates and the alumni through designated secretariat services and networking on-line platforms. Secondly is to share results of labour market survey by each partner university. Thirdly is for invited mentors to interact with graduate students to share motivational lessons on career development, networking and opening opportunities.

**vi. Meeting of the Project Steering Committee**

The steering committee shall meet to deliberate on governance structure, contractual procedures, accounting for partner contribution and establishment and staffing of the action coordination unit (CU) and reporting guidelines.

**Outputs**

The side event will generate the following outputs

- M&E framework
- Knowledge management and communication strategy
- Year II work plan'
- Year II budget

**Approach and Methodology**

The side event features a series of presentations by experts and round table buzz group discussions. The session will be moderated by a technical/expert facilitator (**Prof. Bockline Omedo Bebe**). At the end of the workshop, a synthesis report will be produced.

**Venue and Participants**

The side event will be convened at the main venue of the RUFORUM 4<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference, Maputo at the VIP Grand Maputo Hotel. This side event will take place in Save Hall, on Saturday and Sunday, 19 & 20, July 2014, from 08.30 AM to 17.30 PM.

**Side Event Organisers and Contact**

This event is organised by EDULINK On-line Platform and RUFORU secretariat  
Contact: **Prof. Bockline Omedo Bebe**  
E-mail: [obebeb@yahoo.com](mailto:obebeb@yahoo.com)

## Programme

DAY	SCHEDULE OF EVENTS					
	0800-1000	1000-1030	1030-1300	1300-1400	1400-1700	1800-2000
<b>SATURDAY</b> 19 July 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional launch of the Project and Inception Meeting</li> <li>Report of implementation progress by each partner</li> </ul>	<b>BREAK</b>	Refinement of Annual Work plan & budget, and preparing year II Work plan and budgets	<b>LUNCH</b>	Development of Knowledge Management and Communication Strategy	<b>Reporting</b>
	<b>Social Media Reporters Training</b>		<b>Social Media Reporters Training</b>		<b>Social Media Reporters Training</b>	
<b>SUNDAY</b> 20 July 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conceptualising Interactive online networking platform (N. Kimolo, J. Kihoro, D. Kiambi)</li> <li>Development of M&amp;E Framework</li> </ul>	<b>BREAK</b>	Labour market survey results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Egerton,</li> <li>Makerere</li> <li>Jomo Kenyatta</li> </ul>	<b>LUNCH</b>	Lesson sharing on Internal systems supporting graduate mentorship by partner universities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Egerton, Makerere</li> <li>Jomo Kenyatta</li> <li>AGRINATURA/BOKU</li> </ul>	Reporting Meeting of the Project Steering Committee
<b>MONDAY</b> 21 July 2014	Opening Ceremony <b>(RUFORUM@10)</b>	<b>BREAK</b>	Genesis & Chronicles of RUFORUM	<b>LUNCH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>PLENARY:</b> Horizon Searching: RUFORUM in the Next 10 Years</li> <li>RUFORUM@10: Viewing of Posters &amp; Exhibitions</li> </ul>	<b>RECEPTION Party</b> Host: Eduardo Mondlane University
<b>TUESDAY</b> 22 July 2014	<b>PLENARY:</b> Harnessing high end science for agricultural development in Africa	<b>BREAK</b>	VICE CHANCELLORS's Forum: Escalating Doctoral Training in Agric. & Life Sciences	<b>LUNCH</b>	EU Project Implementation Conditions	Edulink Partners and Associate Partners Follow up meeting
		<b>BREAK</b>	Enhancing publication and oral presentation skills of graduate students	<b>LUNCH</b>	Enhancing publication and oral presentation skills of graduate students	
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> 23 July 2014	<b>PLENARY:</b> Integration of HAE into CAADP & National Development Plans	<b>BREAK</b>	<b>Foresight:</b> Looking into the Future of Agriculture & Higher Education in Africa	<b>LUNCH</b>	Graduate Students & Alumni Meeting Mentorship talks by invited speakers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr Philip Kiriro</li> <li>Prof Nzula Kitaka</li> </ul>	
<b>THURSDAY</b> 24 July 2014	<b>PLENARY:</b> Transforming the Agricultural Sector	<b>BREAK</b>	Regional collaboration and Agricultural Science Partnership	<b>LUNCH</b>	Regional collaboration and Agricultural Science Partnership	<b>OPEN SPACE</b>

<b>FRIDAY</b> 25 July 2014	<b>PLENARY:</b> Moving forward the HAE Agenda	<b>BREAK</b>	Four Parallel Sessions	<b>LUNCH</b>	<b>PLENARY:</b> Feedback from the conference Prize Awards and Closing Session	<b>RECEPTION</b> Host: RUFORUM Sec
<b>SATURDAY</b> 26 July 2014	<b>DEPARTURE</b>					