

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

### Revamping Agricultural Education and Training in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges for Transformative Change in African Universities



#### Concept Note for side event 8 and 12 During the 4<sup>th</sup> RUFORUM Biennial Conference

##### Background

The innovATE project has a mandate to help AET institutions around the world in cultivating the human and institutional capacity necessary for developing countries to promote rural innovation, achieve sustainable food security, reduce poverty, conserve natural resources and address other rural problems. As a part of the Higher Education Solutions Network, GCFSI's goal is to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of USAID programs through innovative and cost-effective partnerships with scientists and practitioners from academia, the private sector, and strategically chosen research and development laboratories, thereby building a sustainable consortium of global problem solvers. The GCFSI Skills and Workforce Development team seeks to identify what will be needed by food system professionals, to address the rapidly evolving threats to the global food system.

In the February 2014 publication "African Higher Education: Opportunities for transformative change for sustainable development," (APLU, 2014) the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) identified seven challenges for higher education on the African continent. The seven challenges identified included:

1. Access to higher education services
2. Broader government issues
3. Institutional leadership and management
4. Finance of higher education
5. Limited research investment and output
6. Quality and relevance in learning, discovery, and public engagement
7. Information and communication technology

Similar challenges have been identified by others engaged with higher education institutions across Africa. In the recently released publication, "Changing agricultural education from within; Lessons and challenges from the GO4IT programme," (RUFORUM, 2013) the authors call for meeting challenges of higher education systems in Africa through innovation capacity building in higher education institutions.

In a nutshell, transforming agriculture in Africa requires innovative scientific research, educational and training approaches. The education sector needs to be more connected to the new challenges facing rural communities and needs to build capacity of young people to be part of the transformation of the agricultural sector.

**Aims and Objectives of the side Event**

The session is design to gain a deeper understanding of the seven challenges, and begins to address the challenges by building innovation capacity for institutions represented at the conference.

**Outputs**

The session will generate the following outputs of a deeper understanding of the seven challenges for Higher Education on the African continent.

**Approach and Methodology**

To begin, the innovATE/GCFSI team will develop a quantitative instrument around the seven challenges identified in the African higher education document. The purpose of this survey is to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by RUFORUM member institutions. The survey will be completed and analyzed pre-conference through the AET Community of Practice (an online learning community for education and training).

During the first session of the RUFORUM workshop, the innovATE/GCFSI team will present the results of the survey to participants and a panel of university stake-holders in attendance. We will engage the participants in a discussion about the results and explore the challenges in greater detail. We will also be purposive in identifying other challenges brought forth by higher education officials and stakeholders. During the second session of the workshop, participants will be engaged to identify challenges and solutions at their institution/program.

Finally, we will lead an interactive session with participants to identify best practices at individual institutions that can be adopted by others to build innovation capacity. These ideas will be shared and recorded for publishing as an outcome of the workshop. Each participant will generate an action plan for his/her institution/program.

**Venue and Participants**

The session 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 Licungo Hall, on Tuesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2014, from 10.30 AM to 5.00 PM.

**Side Event Organizers and Contact**

This session will be jointly led by the USAID-funded *Innovation for Agricultural Training and Education* (innovATE) project and the *Global Center for Food System Innovation* (GCFSI) and RUFORUM Secretariat. Contacts: Dr. A. L. (Tom) Hammett, Director, InnovATE Program; Dr. Kurt Richter, Associate Director, Technical Assistance and Special Initiatives; Dr. Rick Rudd, Community Viability Chair of Excellence, Professor and Department Head, Department of Agriculture, Leadership and Community Education; Dr. John Dirx, Professor and Mildred B. Erickson Distinguished Chair in Higher, Adult and Lifelong Education; and, Thomas Smith, Associate Director of the Institute of Agricultural Technology (IAT). Contact: Dr. Kurt Richter

E-mail: [richter@vt.edu](mailto:richter@vt.edu)

## Programme

<b>SESSION 8.7: Thursday 24 July 2014 Hall: LICUNGO</b>		
<b>MAIN THEME</b>	<b>Revamping Agricultural Education and Training in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges for Transformative Change in African Universities</b>	
<b>Time</b>	<b>Sub Theme</b>	<b>Responsible</b>
10.30 -10.45	Welcoming remarks and introductions	InnovATE and GCFSI
<b>Session I: What are the the Key Issues and Opportunities for AET Capacity Development In Our Institutions</b> (Moderators: Dr. John Dirkx and Dr. Rick Rudd )		
10.45 -11.00	Context Framing – Presentation of the Seven Issues	Fran Swanepoel
11.00 - 11.45	Focus Groups and Learning Teams	
11.45 - 12.00	Health Break	
12.00 - 12.30	Focus Groups and Learning Teams (continued)	
12.30 - 13.00	Report Out & Discussion	
13.00 - 14.00	Lunch	
<b>Session II: Reflecting on the Assessment and Identifying/Prioritizing Transformative Pathways in AET</b> (Moderators: Thomas Smith and Dr. Kurt Richter)		
14.00 - 14.10	Context Framing: Where Are African AET Institutions?	David Kraybill and Isaac Minde
14.10 - 14.50	Group Work by Learning Teams	
14.50 - 15.10	Report Out	
<b>Session III : Building Action Plans to Transform AET</b> (Moderator: Dr. A. L. (Tom) Hammett )		
15.10 - 15.20	Context Framing: Multi-Sector Collaboration	InnovATE and GCFSI
15.20 - 16.15	Group Work by Learning Teams	
16.15 - 16.30	Closing remarks –	Malcolm Blackie & Susan Owen

### **Session I: What are the Key Issues and Opportunities for AET Capacity Development In Our Institutions**

Speaker: Dr. Fran Swanepoel

Topic: Presentation of the seven challenges

1. Access to higher education services
2. Broader government issues
3. Institutional leadership and management
4. Finance of higher education
5. Limited research investment and output
6. Quality and relevance in learning, discovery, and public engagement
7. Information and communication technology

Activity: Participants will be organized into groups to discuss strategic issues involved in AET transformation. The first session will be initiate the peer-to-peer learning process and start the sharing of local solutions that may be adaptable to other institutions.

### **Session II: Reflecting on the Assessment and Identifying/Prioritizing Transformative Pathways in AET**

Speaker: Dr. David Kreybill or Isaac Minde

Topic: What is the current state of African AET institutions

Activity: The goal of this session will be for the group to come to agreement on the issues identified at the first session. At the same time, each participant will begin the process of identifying how each of the issues impact their institutions. The session will conclude with an exercise that will link issues to transformation pathways.

### **Session III : Action Plans to Transform AET**

Speaker: GCFSI and InnovATE

Topic: The benefits of Multi-Sector collaboration

Activity: The goal of this session will be for each participant to develop an action plan for transformative change at their institution. The process of transformative change will be the focus of the change and not the scale of the change. Participants will be encouraged to adapt transformative change processes from their peer institutions who are also participating in the session. Participants will leave the session with a unique action plan for transformative change for their institution.