

Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)

Terms of Reference to Undertake Development of Community Engagement Strategy for the RUFORUM Network Universities

Background

Universities in Africa and elsewhere are under immense pressure to provide evidence of their contribution to society and respond to the demand to change¹. This requires universities to innovate and develop models of engaging with the communities at various levels. In doing so, universities have had to transition from the 'two role model' functions to 'three role model' functions i.e. from merely teaching and research to include direct relations with society. Universities have continued to evolve this third role reducing intermediaries between the results produced and their end users². This third role of the universities introduces intricate discussions as to when and how universities operationalise extension, facilitation and integration and what role they ought to play directly and/or indirectly in the development space. It is also a common consensus today that the global knowledge economy has fundamentally grown and it is the functional role of universities to facilitate this process through processing information. Consequently, the quality, effectiveness and relevance of the university system becomes paramount and will proportionately relate to the ability of people, society and institutions to develop³.

In that regard, for universities to increase their contribution to development through the production and distribution of knowledge, universities in developing countries need to transform themselves into 'developmental universities'. Achieving this perspective depends on the extent to which universities position themselves as agents of community development and they exude different community engagement strategies that are appropriate and work to the benefit of both the communities and the universities is pivotal. For example, how do universities focus as facilitators of partnerships that enhance the achievement of societal impact with diverse attribution of impact to arrange of actors working on the rural transformation space. Depending on the level of implementation, universities operate at different points on the continuum of community, industry or national engagement and development space. The strategies adopted may fall within one or more of the transactional, transitional and transformational engagement strategies⁴ but should always be adapted to suit university local conditions and their specific vision, mission and institutional system.

There is growing enthusiasm among universities and other institutions of higher learning to address these emerging issues in order help them work outside their traditional 'silos' of exclusion⁵. Given the dynamics of the current issues around community engagement that are less defined by political boundaries but

¹ Jarvis, P. (2013). Universities and corporate universities: The higher learning industry in global society. Routledge.

² Sutz, J. (1997). The new role of the university in the productive sector. Universities and the global knowledge economy, 11-20

³ Manuel Castells, 2009. <http://www.chet.org.za/papers/role-universities-development-economy-and-society>

⁴ Bowen, F., Newenham-Kahindi, A., & Herremans, I. (2010). When suits meet roots: The antecedents and consequences of community engagement strategy. Journal of Business Ethics, 95(2), 297-318.

⁵ Inman, P., & Schütze, H. G. (Eds.). (2010). The community engagement and service mission of universities. Leicester: NIACE

more by place requirements, a new type of engagement needs to be thoroughly thought through for efficiency, effectiveness, valorization and sustainability. It is within this context that the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM; see: www.ruforum.org) in partnership with Egerton University and Gulu University launched the community engagement program that was meant to facilitate greater university engagement with smallholder farming communities in Uganda and Kenya. Each of these universities developed a model relevant and applicable to its circumstances. Each of these universities developed a model of community outreach relevant and applicable to its circumstances i.e. the Farm Attachment at Egerton University and the Student Centered Outreach (S-C-O)⁶ model at Gulu University. These outreach model that facilitates students' linkages with the community through an innovative engagement where students who are non-residents and/or resident facilitate community development processes and extension services. Over the years of implementation, these models have as shown commendable progress in increasing universities' visibility at community level, training of high quality graduates and generation of appropriate technologies, transformation of farming practices and smallholder farmer livelihoods diversification. A significant momentum for institutionalizing and scaling out the community engagement with smallholder farming communities has been created. Doing this more widely requires a strategy to guide the process at RUFORUM network level.

Introduction to the assignment

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) in partnership with The MasterCard Foundation (MCF), Egerton University and Gulu University are implementing a project ***“Transforming African Agricultural Universities to meaningfully contribute to Africa’s growth and development (TAGDev)”***. The TAGDev project seeks to transform African agricultural universities and their graduates to better respond to developmental challenges through enhanced application of science, technology, business and innovation for rural agricultural transformation. The project will pilot a new model of agricultural education at Egerton University and Gulu University that connects tertiary agricultural education to rural communities, with an emphasis on smallholder farmers and small and medium scale enterprises. Central to this new model of agricultural education is the Community Action Research Program (CARP+) and the Students Community Engagement Program (CEP). These two programs emphasize engaging universities with smallholder farmers in knowledge co-creation and co-generation and generation of appropriate innovations relevant to strengthening smallholder entrepreneurship capacity. They increase the university-community interaction as well as provide university students and academics opportunity for experiential learning. This action builds on the pilot CARPs and Students' community engagement initiatives supported by RUFORUM that have been implemented in the RUFORUM member universities with documented success stories. RUFORUM will scale up support for institutionalizing community engagement as part of a unique model of agricultural tertiary education that not only supports technical fits but enhances the delivery of high quality extension services to smallholder farmers through the universities. In this regard, a comprehensive community engagement strategy to guide this new thinking is a necessary requirement. Accordingly, RUFORUM seeks the services of a competent consultant to design a community engagement framework that Egerton

⁶ Details are well described in Kalule, W. S., Odongo W., Kule E., Ndyomugenyi, K. E., Omara, P., & Ongeng, D. (2016). Conceptualizing the Student-Centered Outreach Model for Experiential Learning and Community Transformation. *African Journal of Rural Development*, 1 (3): 219 - 227.

University and Gulu University as well as other RUFORUM member universities will use as a guiding framework in operationalizing the community engagement model in student training and university-community interaction in rural development processes. The framework developed by the consultant shall among others articulate the key elements needed for a successful community engagement that would underpin the CARP+ and CEP programmes, and other related initiatives.

Objective of the assignment

The objective of this consultancy assignment is to develop a community engagement framework that will guide design, articulation and implementation of an innovative community engagement model at Egerton University, Gulu University and the RUFORUM network universities as the universities seek to increase their contribution to rural development and transformation. Through this consultancy assignment RUFORUM through the consultant seeks to:

1. Review the current CARP operations in Uganda, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Malawi, the two pilot community engagement projects (CEPs) at Gulu and Egerton and the Community engagement programme at University of Venda
2. Explore possibility of integrating TVETS into the CARP+ and CEP Operations
3. Explore possibility of expanding the CARP and CEP programmes to West Africa
4. Define meaningful university-community engagement within smallholder farming systems context
5. Describe different university-community engagement strategies and models building on the Egerton and Gulu Universities CEP models
6. Develop a community engagement strategy framework to guide its implementation by universities
7. Develop a systematic approach to community engagement for different stakeholders and actors within the smallholder farming systems
8. Identify ingredients for successful implementation of community engagement
9. Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework and indicators for community engagement

Tasks of the assignment

In the execution of this assignment, the consultant shall undertake the following tasks:

- A situational analysis of community engagement among selected universities in eastern, Southern and West Africa
- Stakeholder analysis of actors and spheres of influence in the university-community engagement framework
- Analysis of university-community needs before, during and after the community engagement interface
- Examination of existing university-community engagement models contrasting these with the current approaches/models being implemented by Gulu University and Egerton University
- Consultation with key stakeholders including smallholder farmers, small and medium scale enterprises, Egerton University, Gulu University, current and former students, and partner

organisations such as non-governmental organisations, and community based organisations and other RUFORUM network universities that are implementing community engagement initiatives such as University of Venda in South Africa, University of Abomey Calavi and University of Cape Coast/ Ashesi University in West Africa.

- Develop a comprehensive university-community engagement strategy document
- Present the findings to RUFORUM Secretariat in a one day workshop

Plan of work

As part of the inception report, provide a detailed mode of work, methodology, key information sources to be used, and institutions / organizations to be consulted besides Egerton, Gulu Universities, Venda University, University of Abomey Calavi and University of Cape Coast/or Ashesi University.

Required Expertise

The following qualifications are required to successfully execute this assignment:

- PhD or equivalent qualification in agricultural sciences or related rural development disciplines and/or social sciences
- Experience in participatory research processes especially community action research and research in development
- Experience in developing strategies and frameworks for institutional operations
- Proven experience in institutional engagement and transformation analysis
- Documented experience of working in different regions of Africa especially in terms of universities and agricultural research for development

Deliverables

The consultant is expected to provide the following deliverables:

- An Inception report, detailing implementation process, timelines and deliverables
- A Draft Report on the Assignment for review by the Secretariat
- A draft electronic copy of a comprehensive framework for the development of a University-Community Engagement strategy written in English in both PDF and Word version files for review by the Secretariat
- Final Electronic copy of the Report of the Assignment
- Final Electronic copy of the Comprehensive Framework for a University- Community engagement strategy

RUFORUM Role

RUFORUM will assign a dedicated staff to work with the consultant, and will provide necessary background documents to support work of the consultant. As needed RUFORUM will also facilitate linkage with institutions and where possible individuals to be consulted.

Timeframe and location of the assignment

The duration of this assignment is 30 man days spread through a period of two months. The assignment is expected to commence on **10th March 2017**. RUFORUM is a regional organisation and this assignment will be coordinated by the RUFORUM Secretariat based in Kampala. The assignment will be implemented at Egerton University and Gulu University as the focal universities of engagement but the consultant will also be expected to undertake consultations beyond the two universities to other selected institutions in Eastern, Southern and West Africa as outlined in this document.

How to apply

Interested persons should submit online their expression of interest with detailed proposal detailing how they plan to execute the assignment to the Executive Secretary, RUFORUM Secretariat (secretariat@ruforum.org). The Deadline for receipt of the applications is **15 February, 2017** (17:00 GMT+3).