



## RUFORUM 21<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025

### CONCEPT NOTE: FORUM IV

ACCESS, INCLUSION, AND COMPETITIVENESS  
TO PROMOTE EQUITY AMONG UNDERSERVED  
POPULATIONS



## THEME

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**Positioning Africa's Universities and the Higher Education Sector to effectively impact development processes on the continent**

**Hosts:**

The Government of Botswana and  
RUFORUM member Universities in Botswana led by Botswana University of  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

**Venue:**

Gaborone International Conference Center, Moremi 1, Gaborone, Botswana

**Date:** 3<sup>RD</sup> December 2025

**Time:** 08.30-12.30 SAT

**Contact:** Professor Majaliwa Mwanjalolo ([m.majaliwa@ruforum.org](mailto:m.majaliwa@ruforum.org))



## Background

According to the United Nations, adoption of the 2030 Agenda that places people and the planet at the centre of global development presents new challenges and opportunities for development processes and practice. Agenda 2030 emphasises the deliberate allocation of development investments and actions towards social policies that promote inclusive, people-centered sustainable development. For Africa, the world's youngest continent, whose rural population while declining to about 60% according to various estimates, remains high at about 803 million in 2023. This young population faces unprecedented challenges, including limited access to key factors of production such as land and other capital assets. Furthermore, only 1 in 6 young people are engaged in wage employment, with approximately 72 million neither in employment, education, nor training. Overall, one-third of young Africans aged 15-35 are unemployed according to the African Development Bank. Data from UNICEF and other agencies show that over 31 million Africans live outside a country of their birth, the majority migrating within and between Africa's eight sub-regional economic communities, and only about 25 % migrating to Europe. The levels of migration from the highest to the lowest are: 80 % in the West Africa, 65 % in the south Africa, 50 % in central Africa and 47 % in eastern Africa. With over 50% of Africa's 31 million people being young, there must be efforts to secure their future via inclusive agenda.

The African Union's Second Ten- Year Implementation Plan (STYIP) for Agenda2063 has seven high level targets called moonshots, one of them being to deliver a people driven agenda. RUFORUM and its partners aim to contribute to accelerating implementation of inclusive agenda that address the questions of access to education and other factors of production, agency and empowerment as well as work transitions for various demographics of young people. This session of the conference aims to explore these issues focusing on:

1. **Inclusive community research actions:** This aims to highlight lessons learnt from community action research in addressing inclusion, access to and the adoption of agri-innovations especially by rural small holder communities. Implemented by the RUFORUM network.
2. **Improving youth work transitions:** It aims to provide opportunity to discuss, lesson learn and map out, strategies for inclusive actions that unlock opportunities for excluded demographics, especially young people.
3. **Empowering out-of-school youth:** This topic aims to explore opportunities for Universities and TVETs to contribute to addressing work and wealth creation opportunities of Africa's large excluded youth demographics who are not in education, employment, or training.
4. **Differently abled persons.** Actions to enhance inclusion and engagement of differently abled persons in education and development practice
5. **Transformative education for developmental impact:** The 21st century university's mission must address the contemporary requirement of being a critical actor in knowledge generation, skilling and economic growth. This topic will examine the insights gained from RUFORUM's transformative education agenda as executed through TAGDev to reshape universities in alignment with their 21st-century aspirations.

## OBJECTIVES

This forum will serve as a platform to discuss the critical topic of achieving inclusion, gender parity and diversity in agriculture and allied sectors to unlock opportunity for the vast majority of Africa's young people. This session will specifically examine strategies and opportunities for closing the gender gap and other exclusion impediments that impede

attainment of SDGs: Goal 5 Gender equality and its association with the SDGs 1: no poverty, 2: zero hunger, 3: good health and well-being, 4: quality education, and 8: decent work and economic growth. This session will facilitate connections among researchers, professionals, and practitioners to foster new collaborations. It will also facilitate thorough discussions on policy implications, societal impacts, and ethical considerations arising from research, while also examining strategies for translating findings into actionable policies for educational reform and developmental impact.

## APPROACH

The Forum will have a key note paper that will subsequently be discussed by selected research leaders. A facilitated panel discussion will be help to engage the wider audience and draw lessons from them, generating the forum message.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

1. Lesson shared on strategies, cutting-edge insights and best practices in inclusion and diversity in education and agri-food system transformation.
2. Foster connections for collaborations for co-creation and implementation of gender, inclusion, diversity and its integration in education and agri-food system transformation.
3. Inform regulations and guide actions based on research findings for implementation of gender, inclusion, diversity in agrifood systems transformation wealth and job creation.
4. Facilitate interactions between academic, policy and non-state actors on inclusion for displaced young.
5. Provide a platform for dialogues on policy implications, societal impacts, and ethical considerations related to gender, inclusion, diversity.

PARTICIPANTS

Participants will include researchers, scientists, academics, development partners, policy makers and Government Officials, industry representatives, Non-Profit Organizations, professionals, and graduate students.

ORGANIZERS

The event is organized by RUFORUM, with support from the Government of Botswana and RUFORUM member universities in Botswana.

TUESDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2025  
Venue: GICC, Moremi 1, Gaborone  
Registration Link: [https://ruforum-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/LTzF4\\_uOQQumyv9PQBOLw](https://ruforum-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/LTzF4_uOQQumyv9PQBOLw)  
**Session Chair:** Professor Peter Mageto  
**Rapporteurs:** Dr Irene Akite, Professor Walter Manyangariwa, Professor Duncan Ongeng

Time	Welcome Remarks from the Chair	
14:00-14:20	<b>Key note paper:</b> Enhancing inclusion and competitiveness in education, employment, wealth generation, and agrifood system transformation for equitable development and benefit sharing.	Marieme Esther Dassanou, Mastercard Foundation
	Lead Discussants	
14:20-14:30	Inclusive community action research: Insights and lessons learnt for promoting inclusion, access to, and the adoption of agricultural innovations.	Prof. Vallantino Emongor, Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Botswana
14:30-14:40	Improving youth work transitions: Strategies for inclusive actions that unlock opportunities for excluded demographics, especially young people.	Dianne Dusaidi, Mastercard Foundation
14:40-1:50	Empowering out-of-school youth: Work and wealth creation opportunities of Africa’s “Not in not in education, employment, or training.	Kato Adilu Omia, (Omia Agribusiness), Uganda
14:50-15:00	Differently abled persons. Enhance inclusion and engagement of differently abled persons in education and development practice,	Amuda Chigozi, Port Harcourt, Nigeria
15:00-15:10	Transformative education for developmental impact: Insights from RUFORUM's transformative education agenda as executed through TAGDev to reshape university missions in the 21st-century	Prof Nancy Mungai, Egerton University, Kenya
15:10-15:25	Plenary discussions	