



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

### CONCEPT NOTE

**Toward Operationalizing the Abidjan ii  
Communique Action Plan to support the CAADP  
Kampala Declaration: AARIEIs strategic**





## 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 Centre, Serondela B3, Botswana

**Date:** 5th December 2025

**Time:** 08:30-10:30 CAT SAT

Contact: Professor Patrick Okori ([p.okori@ruforum.org](mailto:p.okori@ruforum.org))

## Background

To create sustainably functioning African agricultural research and innovation ecosystems that produce products and services for transforming Africa's agrifood systems, the African Development Bank (AfDB), African Union Commission (AUC), One-CGIAR, Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS), the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), the Sub-Regional Research Organisations (SROs ) committed to collective actions under the framework of the Abidjan II Communiqué Action Plan .

In April this year, all the partners signed a Memorandum of Understanding to form the African Agricultural Research, Innovation and Education Institutions (AARIEIs) partnerships. The meeting also aligned the objectives of Abidjan II Action Plan, and the CGIAR Portfolio 25 to the CAADP-Kampala Declaration (2026 -2035). The CAADP-Kampala Declaration focuses on Building Resilient and Sustainable Agrifood Systems in Africa. This Side Event aims to provide a platform for the AARIEIs, the CGIAR, National Agricultural Research Organizations (NAROs), policymakers and development partners to discuss practical pathways for taking forward the momentum created so far for operationalizing their partnership through and the Abidjan II Action Plan to contribute to the CAADP Strategy Action Plan 2026-2035.

## Purpose

The side event aims to fast track the operationalization of the Abidjan II Action Plan to support the implementation of the refreshed CAADP Strategy Action Plan by reviewing and ageing on quick wins and actionable areas. It will also seek to engage key partners for buy-in.

## Objectives

1. Introduce the AARIEs as the vehicle for operationalizing Abidjan II Action Plan the Kampala CAADP declaration and the CGIAR Research Portfolio 2025.
2. Discuss the operationalization modalities of the AARIEs to implement the Abidjan II Action Plan in support of CAADP goals.
3. Discuss pathways to leverage expertise and resources to support operationalization of the AARIEs, the Abidjan II Action Plan.

## Conveners

AARIEs and CGIAR: FARA, CGIAR Africa Centers, AFAAS, ASARECA, CORAF, CCARDESA, and RUFORUM.

**Development Partners:** The Mastercard Foundation (MCF), the African Development Bank (AfDB), The Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

**Policymakers:** The African Union Commission, through its Departments of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy, and Sustainable Environment and the Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation.

**Botswana Government:** Through the National Agricultural Research and Development Institute (NARDI) of Botswana

## Expected Outcomes

1. Clarity and shared understanding of Abidjan II Action Plan and its implementation vehicle the AARIEs as a major R4D partnership for delivering science solutions for CAADP.
2. Operationalization modalities of the AARIEs to implement the Abidjan II Action Plan in support of CAADP goals discussed and identified.
3. Pathways to leverage expertise and resources to support operationalization of the AARIEs, and the Abidjan II Action Plan discussed and identified
4. Next Steps identified and agreed upon.

## Approach

This meeting will be held in plenary, in the sidelines of the RUFORUM 21st AGM as a closed session. Keynote presentations followed by panel discussions and plenary discussions will shed light on the focus issues of the meeting. A drafting team will meet prior to the meeting to generate the workshop discussion documents

## Expected participants

Participants will be drawn from among AARIEs and CGIAR ecosystems, development partners, governments and their agencies, subregional economic communities, among others.

**Venue:** GICC, Serondela B3, Gaborone

**Session Chair:** Professor Oluwole Fatumbi, Director of Research and Innovation, FARA

**Rapporteurs:** Dr Sokona Dagnoko- RUFORUM, Julian Barungi- ASARECA and Professor Florence Fonte

**Link:** <https://ruforum-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/z10ZRm4pQY2gbEG6WYal1g>

<b>Session Chair: Professor Oluwole Fatumbi, Director of Research and Innovation, FARA</b>		
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Time		FARA
08.30-08:35	Welcome Remarks from FARA	Professor Oluwole Fatumbi representing FARA the Co-Chair of AARIES
08.35-08:40	Welcome Remarks AFAAS	Dr. Lilian Lihasi, Executive Secretary, African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services
08.40-09:00	Lead paper 1: The Abidjan II Action Plan and the AARIEIs, the CGIAR Research: What its all about	Dr. Aggrey Aggumya, FARA Executive Secretary
09.00-09:20	Plenary discussions	
09.20-09:40	Lead paper 2: Operationalization modalities for the AARIEIs: Pathways to leveraging expertise and resources to implement the Abidjan II Action Plan in support of CAADP Goals	Dr. David Chikoye- IITA, representing the CGIAR Africa Director the the Co-Chair of AARIES
	Panel discussions	Professor Oluwole Fatumbi
09.40-09:50	Perspectives from regional agencies	Professor Tilahun Amede, Head, Resilience, Climate & Soil Fertility, AGRA
09.50-10:00	CGIAR	Dr Rebbie Harawa, Global Research Program Director (Resilient Farming Systems) & Director, ICRISAT Africa.
10.00-10:10	National Agricultural Research Systems- East Africa	Dr Sadik Kassim, Deputy Director General, National Agricultural Research Organization, Uganda
10.10-10:20	National Agricultural Research Systems- Southern Africa	Prof Julius R. Atlhopheng, Chief Executive Officer, National Agricultural Research and Development Institute, Botswana
10.20-10:30	Perspectives of a development bank	Lubna Dafalla, Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa, Badea
10.30-11:00	Presentation of the aide-mémoire	Secretariat