

# Press Release



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## The MasterCard Foundation and RUFORUM Invest in Innovative Agricultural Training in Africa

25<sup>th</sup> July, 2016  
Kampala, Uganda



The MasterCard Foundation and the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) will collaborate to test new models of agricultural education in Africa. The eight year commitment of US\$ 27.1 Million from MasterCard will focus on smallholder farmers, connecting university education to the needs of rural communities to meaningfully contribute to Africa's growth and development. Gulu University (Uganda) and Egerton University (Kenya), both early adopters of the RUFORUM approach, will be the key implementers of the program.

This eight year project will support the training of 220 (110 undergraduate and 110 post graduate) economically disadvantaged students from across Africa. Students will benefit from leadership training to ensure that they become Africa's next generation of agricultural leaders. The Program will further provide opportunities for transformative action research using the expanded RUFORUM Community Action Research Program (CARP+) to enhance university-led community impact. The CARP+ will include supplemental focus on Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions to enhance gains through greater collaboration and joint action between universities and TVET institutions. The Program will be scaled out through a series of competitive challenge programs and policy to other universities in Africa.

This funding supports RUFORUM's broader objective to train the next generation of agricultural scientists within Africa. It also strengthens RUFORUM's vision of achieving 'a vibrant agricultural sector linked to African universities that can produce high-performing graduates and high-quality research, responsive to the demands of Africa's farmers for innovations, and able to generate sustainable livelihoods and national economic development'. The partnership between RUFORUM and MasterCard Foundation will help fast track the achievement of this vision.



#### Notes to Editors:

**The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)** is a network of 60 African Universities with mission to 'strengthen the capacities of Universities to foster innovations responsive to demands of small-holder farmers through the training of high quality researchers, the output of impact oriented research and the maintenance of collaborative working relations among researchers, farmers, national agricultural research institutions'. RUFORUM was established in 2004, with Secretariat hosted by Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. RUFORUM signed MoU with the African Union and has mandate to support capacity building for science, research and technology development in Africa. RUFORUM has supported the training of over 1500 postgraduate students, the generation of over 300 agricultural technologies and mobilized over US\$70 million for strengthening postgraduate education in Africa. Please visit [www.ruforum.org](http://www.ruforum.org) for more information.

**The MasterCard Foundation:** The MasterCard Foundation seeks a world where everyone has the opportunity to learn and prosper. All people, no matter their starting point in life, should have an equal chance to succeed. We believe that with access to education, financial services, and skills training, people can have that chance. Our focus is helping economically disadvantaged young people in Africa find opportunities to move themselves, their families and their communities out of poverty to a better life. Please visit <http://www.mastercardfdn.org/> for more information.



#### Contacts:

**Name:** Joan Apio

Program Officer -  
Communications, Publicity &  
Marketing

**Email:** [communications@ruforum.org](mailto:communications@ruforum.org)

**Name:** Dr. Moses Osiru

Deputy Executive Secretary,  
RUFORUM

**Email:** [biennial@ruforum.org](mailto:biennial@ruforum.org)

#### **Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)**

Plot 151/155 Garden Hill, Makerere University Main Campus

P.O. Box 16811 Kampala, Uganda

Tel: +256-417-713-300 (office) | Direct Line: +256-417-713-317

Twitter: **#RUFORUM** | [@ruforumsec](https://twitter.com/ruforumsec)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ruforumnetwork>

Blog: <http://blog.ruforum.org/>

Website: [www.ruforum.org](http://www.ruforum.org)