

Terms of Reference for Developing and Curating Case Studies Demonstrating Impact and Learnings from TAGDev 1.0 Program

Commissioned by Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture

1. Background

The Mastercard Foundation in partnership with Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) entered into a collaborative partnership (2016-2024) to implement the Transforming African Agricultural Universities to meaningfully contribute to Africa's growth and development (TAGDev). The program was implemented in partnership with two focus universities (early adopter universities); Egerton University (Kenya) and Gulu University (Uganda).

The overall objective of this eight-year TAGDev Program was 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 program was designed around four objective areas:

1. Pilot a new model of agricultural education at early adopter universities that connects tertiary agricultural education to rural communities, with an emphasis on smallholder farmers
2. Strengthen agribusiness/entrepreneurship at two universities and selected TVET institutions
3. Scale the new model for agricultural education to other agricultural universities and TVET institutions
4. Increase collaboration and mutual learning among institutions and agencies implementing and influencing innovative tertiary agricultural education for rural transformation in Africa.

Central to the program was the training of 220 students (110 undergraduate and 110 graduate) students in the two early adopter universities, currently Egerton University and Gulu University. The program was envisaged to activate transformative activities in the universities leading to the training of entrepreneurial graduates who have leadership skills and strong potential to create impact in the rural communities.

2. Transformative elements of the TAGDev program

The TAGDev program was envisioned with transformative elements at three levels: (i) transformation at individual level; (ii) transformation at institutional level; and (iii) transformation at community level. It was anticipated that institutional transformation in this case the universities would occur that would lead to the training of transformational individuals who in turn transform the communities where they come from and/or they get placed. This led to the popular adage in the program "*Training Agricultural Leaders for Africa*".

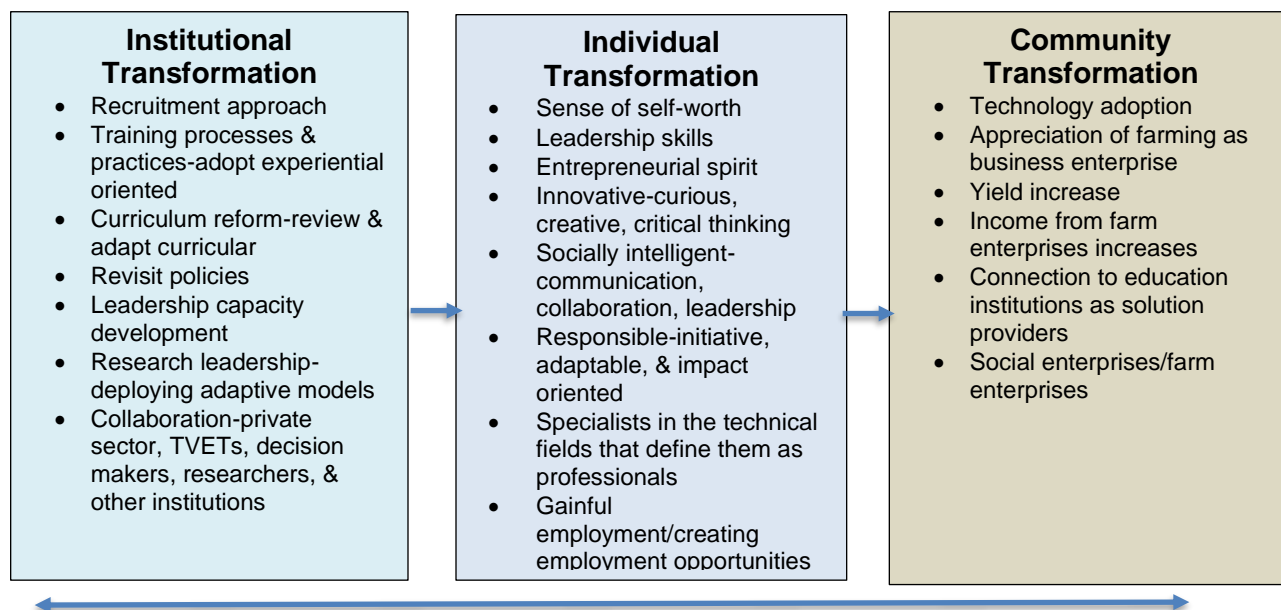


Figure 1: Envisaged transformations in TAGDev program

3. TAGDev Theory of Change

The TAGDev Theory of Change was developed on the following key outputs: Output 1: new agricultural education models promoted and utilized by early adopter RUFORUM member universities; Output 2: agribusiness/ entrepreneurship & experiential learning activities strengthened at two universities and selected TVETs; Output 3: innovative approaches agricultural and tertiary education scaled out among RUFORUM member Universities; and Output 4: Innovative tertiary agricultural education systems support Africa's rural transformation through enhanced collaboration and mutual learning. These outputs were expected to result to six intermediate results and collectively to the program outcome (Figure 2).

The intermediate results espoused included the following: (1) Reformed training programmes produce proactive and entrepreneurial graduates who have leadership business skills and proactively engagement in inclusive economic transformation of society; (2) Program graduates establish own business and or join wage employment, growing into agribusiness leaders driving positive change in society through agriprenueurship; (3) Gulu University and Egerton University develop and implement transformed education programmes that are then scaled to other universities and TVET institutions; (4) Scaling-out of new educational approaches to other RUFORUM members and TVETs enhanced by staff training in entrepreneurship; (5) Strategic University/TVET partnerships with diverse agri-food systems actors increase learning, adoption and adaptation of agri-innovation by youth; and (6) Informed policy reform among TAEs education agencies, learning from TAGDEV and through staff and student engagement. These were collectively expected to the lead to strengthened agricultural universities and TVET institutions producing a critical mass of innovative, entrepreneurial, and socially committed graduates, and

relevant research as the overarching program outcome.

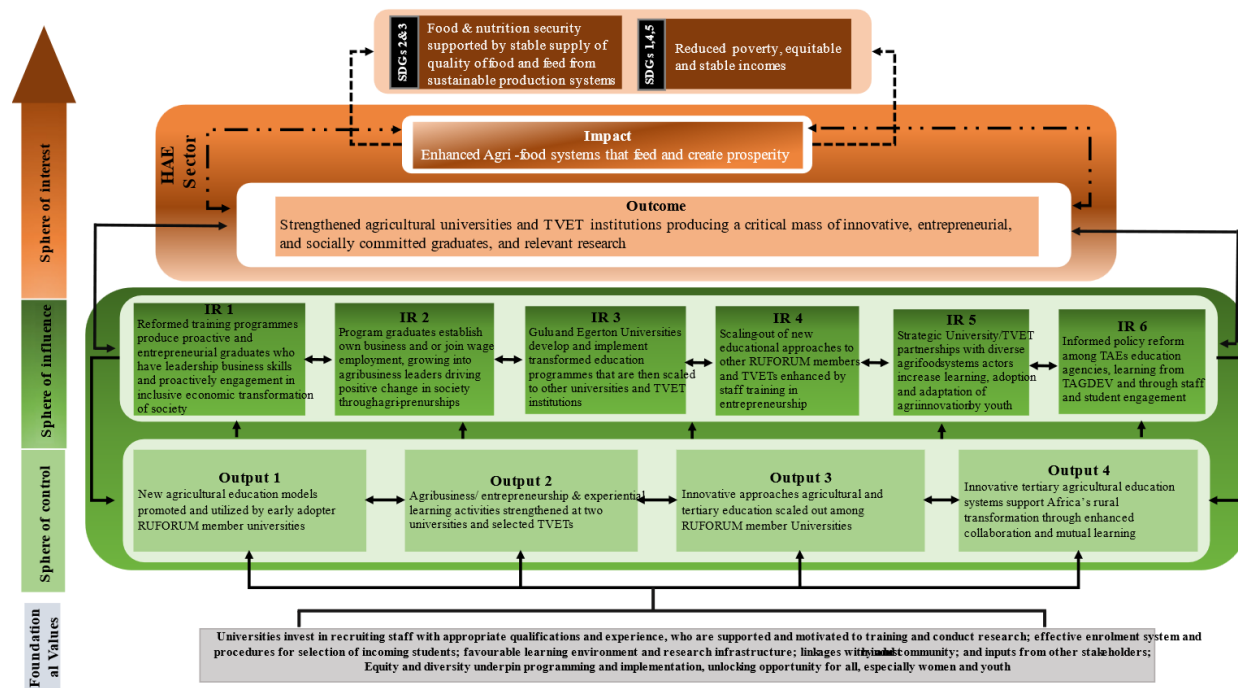


Figure 2: TAGDev program Theory of Change

4. TAGDev program delivery mechanisms

The program adopted two self-reinforcing approaches; (i) focused investment in two institutions and (ii) a sentinel scaling approach involving the utilisation of blended competitive and commissioned grants. These are briefly highlighted below:

4.1 Early adopter universities focused investment

Egerton University and Gulu University served as the early adopter universities that were the pilot universities that tested approaches that were later-on scaled to other universities in the RUFORUM network. The two universities received similar investment portfolios around similar activities. However, the universities may have varied individual delivery pathways to achieve the different activities and to ensure that specific desired changes were realised. The investments focused on:

- Comprehensive competitive scholarships that involved a specialised recruitment process, orientation & placement, training, and transition support through specialised short courses in soft skills among others.
- Curriculum reform through curriculum review and development in the faculties of agriculture.

- iii. Experiential learning: this was facilitated through directions; (i) experiential entrepreneurship, and (ii) community engagement;
- iv. Community Action Research Projects focusing on specific value chains; Potato value chain & Cassava value chain at Egerton University; and Rice value chain and Piggery value chain at Gulu University. These were intended to support community engagement activities and experiential learning for the recruited students under the scholarship component;
- v. Collaboration and mutual learning involving; documentation and lesson sharing, exposure visits, leadership trainings, and engagement with policy and decision makers through national forums.

4.2 Competitive and commissioned grants approach for scaling out

The TAGDev program adopted a blended competitive and commissioned grants as a pathway to scaling and further piloting of initiatives recognising differentiated strengths in the RUFORUM network universities. Accordingly, the following sets of sub-grants were issued to the universities:

- i. *Community Action Research Projects Plus (CARP+)*. These sub-grants focused on the universities competitively apply for sub-grants focusing on the specific value chains. The scale out universities and the value chains included: University of Abomey Calavi (Benin), University of Cape Coast (Ghana), University of Khartoum, University of Gezira, Kordofon University and Peace University (Sudan), Haramaya University (Ethiopia), Gulu University and Makerere University (Uganda), Egerton University, University of Nairobi and South Eastern Kenya University (Kenya), Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (Botswana), University of Namibia (Namibia) and University of Free State (South Africa). These universities were each required to work with TVET institutions, this is what led to the indication of Plus (+) in the CARP as an advancement to the traditional CARPs that RUFORUM had previously implemented that did not require university connectedness to the TVET institutions. Universities that implemented these CARP+ projects also recruited both MSc and PhD students as research fellows to support their implementation. Both, the CARP+ (US\$200,000-US\$350,000) in the pilot universities and scale-out universities served the need for universities to reach-out to the communities and provide opportunity for universities to generate and transfer technologies, innovations and management practices for development; thus, science solutions for development.
- ii. *RUFORUM Entrepreneurship Programme Challenge Programme (RECAP)*. The RECAPs were instruments used to scale the concept of agribusiness incubation hubs pilot initiatives. Recognising that universities had had limited experience in running entrepreneurship incubation programs, a decision was made to make small micro-grants of US\$50,000 that provided opportunities to universities to pilot experiential entrepreneurship model through a quasi-incubation hub. The universities that were involved in this initiative included: Université Catholique de Bukavu (DR. Congo), University of Burundi (Burundi), University of Juba (South Sudan), Ndejje University, Uganda Christian University, Busitema University, Uganda Martyrs University, Muni University, Makerere University, and Gulu University (Uganda), and Egerton University (Kenya);

- iii. *RUFORUM Technical Skills Development Programme (TESDEP)*. The TESDEP initiative followed learnings from engagement between the universities and TVETs. The key lesson was a deep division between Universities and TVETs where the TVETs felt the universities were controlling and operated differently and not adequately responding to the needs of the excluded populations; youth not education, not employment and not in training (NEET). This led to the development of a specialised initiative that focused on the Out of School Youth and in-training TVET students. The TVET institutions that piloted this initiative included; Baraka Agricultural College (Kenya), Northern Uganda Youth Development Center, and Bobi Polytechnique (Uganda).
- iv. *Institutional Strengthening Grants*: The Nurturing grants are also known as Nurturing Grants (NGs). These sub-grants awards were of two kinds; those focused on institutional strengthening through curriculum review, design and development and translation. These were awarded to institutions that were considered strategic because of being conflict areas; University of Bamenda (Cameroon), and Nugaal University (Somalia). These also represented RUFORUM's strategic action towards conflict and post-conflict agenda. Secondly. Nurturing grants that were issued to support students that were considered deserving but at the time of recruitment could not be absorbed based on the scholarship limitations. These were not given the same equal entitlements such as amount of stipend but received all other services within the available resources. These awards were made in strategic universities that accepted to support these kinds of unique students; thus; Ndejje University, Gulu University, Egerton University and Nugaal University.
- v. *Leadership Development for early career, mid-career and senior leaders*. This initiative focused on developing thought leadership through deliberate targeted sessions and workshops. This was particularly delivered in partnership the Partnership for African Social and Governance Research, an institution based in Nairobi. A curriculum involving six modules was developed and delivered but however did not strategically get completed through all the modules.

5. Observed success in the program

The program has observed a number of successes. By the end of the program, the following key outputs were reported as of 2023 (Figure 3). Further, in Figure 4, the self-reported tracer study of 178 alumni participants revealed the illustrated impact they have had in society and the economy.

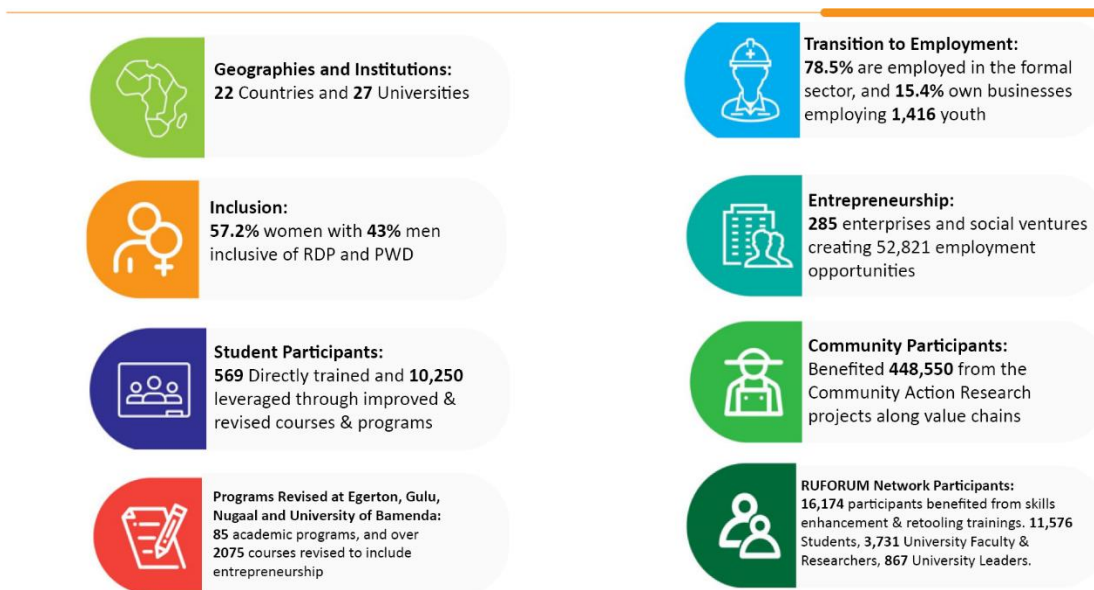


Figure 3: TAGDev successes in summary as of 2023.



Figure 4: TAGDev alumni impact on society and economy as of 2025

6. Purpose, Objectives and tasks of the assignment

The purpose of this assignment is to document evidence of success of the TAGDev 1.0 program to bring out authentic voices of impact of program delivery at various levels of individual, institution and community and further analyze reviews. The specific objectives of this task are:

1. Document evidence of transformational changes at the individual, institutional, and community level
2. Conduct program performance analysis. This analysis could focus on some of the following issues/areas:

- a. The level to which TAGDev 1.0 ToC informed the implementation of the activities/interventions.
- b. The extent to which transformational goals at different levels of participation; individual, institutions, and communities;
 - i. **Individual (students).** The extent to which a unique recruitment, placement, and learning processes at Egerton University and Gulu University, and other scale out universities¹ produced; (i) entrepreneurial graduates creating jobs and wealth; and (ii) change makers in society at various levels.
 - ii. **Institutions (universities²).** The text extent to which TAGDev led to positive individual changes among university academics/staff in terms for example individual pedagogy skills, partnerships and collaboration, and leadership including promotions; and in terms of changes in curricular, policies, practices and processes within the university.
 - iii. **Institutions (TVETs).** The extent to which TAGDev led to positive individual and institutional changes in the participating TVET institutions; MSC Business College (South Africa), Baraka Agriculture College (Kenya), Bobi Polytechnique & Northern Uganda Youth Development Center (Uganda).
 - iv. **Communities.** The extent to which TAGDev interventions through the CARPs led to dissemination and utilization of technologies, innovations, and management practices in participating farming communities involved in the CARP projects led by the selected universities³.
3. Document the extent to which two early adopter universities, Egerton and Gulu, have influenced other institutions (including TVET institutions) in terms of their transformative learning experience. The institutions of interest as based on;
 - a. **Piloting experiential learning and community.** Bugema University in Uganda implemented received a nurturing grant to pilot experiential learning and community engagement.
 - b. **Curriculum reform-development and review.** Nugaal University in Somalia received a nurturing grant intended to develop at least one transformative curriculum that integrates experiential entrepreneurship. **University of Bamenda**, received a grant to undertake a curriculum review to integrate entrepreneurship into its academic programs at the Faculty of agriculture.
 - c. **Nurturing excluded students.** Ndejje University, University of Abomey Calavi, & Gulu University received nurturing grants to support disadvantaged students to undertake their studies at undergraduate and masters levels, most of these students were those that could not be taken the competitive scholarships due to the limited slots for comprehensive-scholarship offers.
4. Key lessons learned to inform programming;
 - a. **Secretariat.** Document evidence of changes TAGDev has contributed at the RUFORUM

¹ Targeted scale out universities include; University of Free State, Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of Nairobi, University of Abomey Calavi those that implemented CARPs and University of Abomey Calavi, Catholic University of Bukavu, and University of Burundi.

² Egerton University and Gulu University; and universities that implemented nurturing grants such as Nugaal University (Somalia), Bugema University (Uganda), and University of Bamenda (Cameroon) that focused on stimulating curricular review and development and piloting experiential learning and community engagement.

³ Egerton University, Gulu University, University of Free State, Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of Nairobi, University of Abomey Calavi, and University of Namibia.

Secretariat. Further, document learnings and insights that the TAGDev intervention conferred to the RUFORUM Secretariat.

- b. **Network.** Document evidence of changes that TAGDev has contributed at RUFORUM network level. Further, synthesis learning and insights that the network garnered from either directly participating in the implementation and/or through participating in the conference events.
- c. **Projects design.** Document the key lessons that informed the design and roll-out of TAGDev 2.0 and other projects in RUFORUM.

7. Expected Deliverables

This assignment is focused on realizing a set of outputs. In this regards, the following deliverables will be expected:

1. Project inception report that clarifies the study design including;
 - a. Scope of analysis around issues raised in section 6 above.
 - b. Articulate a logical methodology for data collection and management.
 - c. Provide projected key results, proposed timeline.
 - d. Provide breadth of team composition attention to expertise in quantitative and qualitative data collection and management, development and impact communication expertise.
 - e. Provide cost of the assignment whilst noting that applicants from within Uganda have to pay withholding tax of 6%. Consultants from outside Uganda will be liable to pay both withholding tax (10% if Uganda has a standing agreement with the respective country, if not 15%) and imported Value Added Tax (18%).
2. Draft assignment report with the following key components
 - a. Evidence of transformational changes that occurred at individual, institutional, and community level. These materials/profiles need to be prepared in consultation with the RUFORUM Secretariat.
 - i. Individuals. At least 20 unique personal testimonies/profile life stories from alumni and parents/community
 - ii. Institutional (universities). At least 10 personal unique testimonies emerging from Egerton University and Gulu University as well as from the universities that participated as scale-out universities.
 - iii. Institutional (TVETs). At least 5 unique personal testimonies from the TVET institutions and their participants.
 - iv. Communities. At least 10 unique stories from each CARP/nurturing grants that were implemented.
 - v. RUFORUM Secretariat and network. At least 2 unique stories focused on the RUFORUM Secretariat and the network that demonstrate learning journey.
 - b. Quantitative analytical evidence from program delivery that can provide perspective into Return on Investment (ROI) of the TAGDev program.
3. A synthesis of learnings and Insights across board providing executive synthesis report for policy and decision makers.
4. Final assignment report with the above listed components completed.

8. Key roles

This task will be collaboratively coordinated by RUFORUM and the Mastercard Foundation. The consultant will be answerable to the core team⁴. Additionally, Universities especially, Gulu University and Egerton University as well as other universities that will be sample will be responsible for coordinating and liaising with the Mastercard Foundation and RUFORUM Secretariat. The following specific roles will apply to RUFORUM:

1. Role of RUFORUM:

- a) Identify and engage Key Stakeholders. RUFORUM will identify all relevant individuals and groups who were involved in TAGDev 1.0 where this includes:
 - Program implementers (e.g. university staff, faculty, administrators from Egerton University and Gulu University, and other initial TAGDev 1.0 partners).
 - Participants (e.g., students, alumni, farmers, community members).
- b) Perform all the contracting, supervision and payment of the consultant in accordance with the terms and conditions that will have been agreed upon.

2. Roles for the Mastercard Foundation:

- a. The Foundation will also provide additional support from the Research and Learning, plus the Knowledge Management team.
- b. Mastercard Foundation and RUFORUM will co-create the study process and methodology

9. Timelines

- a) Deadline for submission of Expression of Interests will be on **19th September, 2025 at 5:00 pm East Africa time.**
- b) The pre-start activities should be completed by September 2025 with documentation ready showing the detailed workplan for review by both RUFORUM and the Foundation.
- c) Preliminary results are targeted to be discussed at the Partnership Council during the AGM on November/December 2025 in Botswana.
- d) Final report of the work would be submitted in March 2026.

10. Contact information

Submission of the Expression of Interest (EOI) along with the detailed technical and financial proposals should be submitted to the following address in soft copy.
Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)
Plot 151/155 Garden Hill, Makerere University Main Campus
P.O Box 16811 Wandegaya | Kampala, Uganda
Tel: +256-417-713-300 (Office)
Email: secretariat@ruforum.org

⁴ The core team is constituted by; RUFORUM MEL team and the Programs team, Mastercard Foundation MEL team and Programs team. The core team shall be responsible for the following: 1) Provide overall guidance of the direction of the case study process; 2) Undertake review of all drafts generated; 3) Provide approvals and clearance of all work submitted by the consultant.