





Baseline Survey Terms of Reference (ToR)

RUF/CONSULTANCY/2025-2026/003

Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)

Transforming African Agricultural Universities to Meaningfully Contribute to Africa's Growth and Development (TAGDev 2.0) Program

July 2025







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1.0 Introduction

The Terms of Reference (ToR) describe the plans, objectives, deliverables, and expectations for a baseline study for the "Transforming African Agricultural Universities to Meaningfully Contribute to Africa's Growth and Development" (TAGDev 2.0) program. The program is implemented in fifteen (15) universities across thirteen (13) African countries. TAGDev 2.0 program will conduct a baseline study to establish benchmarks for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and to provide information to inform program planning and adaptation, and provide a basis for assessing progress and impact over time.

The baseline study will collect and analyze data from the targeted participants (students, university staff, smallholder farmers, e.t.c.) and their representative subsets. A Mixed-Methods design will be adopted and will include a participant-based survey, key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), observations, and document reviews. The baseline survey will be conducted by an external consultant.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 Activity Information

Name of activity	TAGDev 2.0 Baseline Survey		
Implementer(s)	RUFORUM Secretariat in partnership with implementing universities		
	in the target countries		
Period of performance	150 person days spread throughout the course of the assignment		
Geographic coverage	Uganda, Kenya, Malawi, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Nigeria, Ghana,		
	Cameroon, Benin, Morocco, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Senegal		

2.2 Background and Context

TAGDev 2.0 program is a collaborative between RUFORUM, Mastercard Foundation, fifteen (15¹) African universities, and the Global Confederation of Higher Education Associations for Agricultural and Life Sciences (GCHERA). The main objective is to strengthen universities and Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions to better serve communities by skilling and empowering Africa's young people and their institutions to drive inclusive, equitable and climate resilient transformation of agriculture and agri-food systems.

The program's desired impact and reach include: review of 1600 courses in 80 academic programs²; reach 1,200,000 participants; train 1,157 graduates at PhD, masters and bachelors levels; graduate 4,000 youth through TVETs and train 30,060 out-of-school youth³; create 255,000

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¹ Guru University, Uganda Martyrs University, Egerton University, University of Eldoret, Malawi University of Science and Technology, Africa University, University of Free State, University of Port Harcourt, University of Cape Coast, University of Bamenda, Université Nationale d'Agriculture, Université Mohammed VI Polytechnique, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Haramaya University, and Université du Sine Saloum El-Hâdj Ibrahima NIASS.

² Academic programs refer to the complete set of courses that lead to the award of a degree or academic qualification.

³ Out of school refers to young persons who have either not completed and or completed a full cycle of education and are not productively engaged in the economy.









employment opportunities in agricultural value chains; benefit 90,000 other students outside of

TAGDev 2.0 through the revised curricula; and capacitate of 820,000 smallholder farmers and other producers.

2.3 Description of Program Activities

TAGDev 2.0's goal is "Africa's Young People and their Institutions drive inclusive, equitable and resilient socio-economic development in their societies". This goal is anchored by three strategic outcomes: (i) expanded equal work opportunities for young women and men in the agricultural sector; (ii) improved climate adaptive agricultural production and productivity; and (iii) strengthened quality of higher agricultural education outcomes in training, research and innovation. The program's theory of change hinges on the argument that "transformed higher and tertiary agricultural education systems are good vehicles to produce the 21st century required workforce". It posits that if agricultural universities and TVETs are strengthened, learners are enrolled and skilled appropriately in different industry-relevant areas (e.g., entrepreneurship, leadership, climate change, soft skills, e.t.c.), then graduates with requisite skills will be produced and absorbed in the economy either on wage employment or self-employed as entrepreneurs. This will, in turn, enhance innovation, diffusion of technologies and entrepreneurship leading to expanded work and livelihood opportunities for young women and men, and improved climateadaptive production and productivity in target countries. Over time, Africa's young people and their institution will significantly contribute to inclusive, equitable and climate-resilient socioeconomic development in their communities.

To strengthen curricula and teaching in agricultural universities and TVETs, the program will support universities, TVETs and private sector collaborations to review policies and curricula and retrain teaching staff to deliver inclusive market relevant entrepreneurial/professional training to young women and men leveraging technology (Activity 1.1); support universities and TVETs to recruit, place and train young women and men in prioritized agricultural (Activity 1.2); and engage TVETs to deliver inclusive competence-based education that skills out-of-school-youth to become agri-preneurs (Activity 1.3). To promote entrepreneurship and job creation among the youths, the program will establish/strengthen business incubation and innovation hubs in universities to train and nurture young people to translate research and innovation into bundled agricultural services and products across value chains (Activity 1.4); and establish an entrepreneurship seed grant and leverage other funding opportunities to support young people to develop and scale business ideas, services, products and innovations (Activity 1.5). Together, these activities will contribute to increased and diversified employment opportunities for young women and men in the agribusiness sector.

To enhance the functioning of input markets and promote resilient, climate adaptive agricultural production and productivity of focus value chains in target countries, TAGDev 2.0 will strengthen collaboration between universities, TVETs and private sector (e.g., seed companies) to provide appropriate and affordable inputs and technologies to smallholder farmers to boost agricultural









production and productivity (Activity 2.1); strengthen universities and other Research Institutions to co-create and incubate climate smart technologies, innovations and management practices (TIMPs) (Activity 2.2); collaborate with National and Regional Climate Support Organizations to build the capacity of young women and men to champion climate mitigation and adaptation efforts to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from agriculture (Activity 2.3); strengthen the capacity of extension services and leverage technology to engage young women and men to undertake last mile delivery of climate smart production and productivity enhancing practices, technologies, and innovations (Activity 2.4); and equip smallholder farmers, young women and men to undertake post-harvest management and value addition to increase on and off farm income (Activity 2.5).

Complementary interventions are necessary to ensure that the strategic outcomes can be achieved. For instance, to strengthened quality of higher agricultural education outcomes in training, research and innovation as well as partnerships within the broad agriculture sector and its allied education ecosystem, the program will create a platform for ecosystem actors (e.g., Universities, TVETs, Policy, Research institutions, Regulators e.t.c.) to engage in improving higher agricultural education ecosystem (*Activity 3.1*); and support enhanced collaboration and mutual learning between universities, TVETs, private sector, policy and entrepreneurship ecosystem stakeholders (*Activity 3.2*).

3.0 Baseline Study Objectives

The purpose of the TAGDev 2.0 baseline survey is to establish benchmarks for program performance indicators against which program's success will be measured. The baseline measurements will be used to calculate change in these indicators and undertake a statistical test of differences in the indicators at completion of the program. The focus will be on changes in the indicators pre- and post- implementation but no conclusions about attribution or causation of change.

Specifically, the baseline will serve the following purposes:

- Determine the baseline values for the program outcome and impact indicators;
- Validate and strengthen program targeting and implementation approach;
- Describe the vulnerability context of the targeted communities in relation to socioeconomic, natural/environmental, climatic shocks trends and seasonality;
- Determine the barriers/challenges for agri-food food systems transformation including barriers to value addition/agro-processing at local level, agri-preneuership among others;
- Generate key recommendations to guide the program implementation process in terms:
 - Role of higher education institutions (universities and TVETs) in developing skills and capacities relevant for development outcomes;
 - Transformative education required for universities to function as development facilitators;
 - Framework necessary for enhancing youth employment and agricultural education in African food-systems; and







- Partnerships and collaborations essential for a functional agri-good systems, education ecosystem, entrepreneurial ecosystem and policy ecosystem.
- Gather non-indicator data to describe the prevailing conditions of the target communities or population; and
- Gather relevant information about the target population that can be used to improve targeting and sub-activity design.

4.0 Study Methods and Limitations

The baseline study will use a **Mixed-Methods design** and will include a participant-based survey or questionnaire, KIIs, FGDs, and observations as outlined in the Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (PMEP), and document reviews where possible. The consultant is expected to propose a robust Mixed-Methods approach that also includes: (i) sampling strategy, (ii) data collection tools, (iii) data quality assurance procedures, and (iv) ethical considerations.

The consultant also has to pay special attention to sampling in both quantitative and qualitative data collection processes ensuring that:

- 1. All groups and individuals sampled are representative of the different target population groups in the target districts.
- 2. Qualitative sampling reflects the different sectors (e.g., agriculture; health and nutrition; education e.t.c.) within the integrated TAGDev 2.0 program.
- 3. Sampling is reflective of the contextual realities in the target's local administrative structures (e.g., provinces and/or districts).

The consultant shall ensure that qualitative data adequately complement quantitative findings by providing detailed information on the perceptions of participants and explaining the values produced by the collection of quantitative data.

TAGDev 2.0 implementing teams at RUFORUM secretariat and partner universities will support in getting a list of contacts to be interviewed in the KIIs. Likewise, the consultant will receive support for the call for participants already registered for the program in the FGDs.

4.1 Indicators

Program's indicators (included in the PMEP) systems strengthening, employment opportunities, entrepreneurship, resilient climate smart agricultural production, and agency will be measured to establish baseline values. The Consultant will be provided with relevant documents after signing a non-disclosure agreement (NDA).

4.2 Limitations and Mitigation Methods

The following are related to the challenges in the monitoring process and the proposed mitigation measures:

1. Limitation 1: University staff and students' absenteeism in schools during data







collection.

Mitigation Measure 1: RUFORUM and TAGDev 2.0 program team at implementing universities will actively reach out to the targeted staff and students with the data collection schedule to ensure active participation and collaboration during the process.

2. **Limitation 2:** Access to communities is disrupted due to force majeure (e.g., severe weather such as rains and bad road conditions).

Mitigation Measure 2: If RUFORUM/Partner University staff or enumerators are unable to access target communities, virtual mechanisms to continue communication with program participants will be considered. If feasible, RUFORUM and its partner universities will also communicate with local authorities or other organizations working in the field to coordinate actions that ensure monitoring activities can be developed.

3. **Limitation 3:** Respondent may face challenges understanding survey question due to language difference or low literacy levels.

Mitigation Measure 3: Enumerators who are fluent in local language and can explain questions clearly will be selected.

5.0 Data Sources

Primary data will be collected among the direct participants of the intervention. In addition, local authorities will be included in the KII to better understand the context. The Consultant should indicate the secondary data sources that will be used to identify trends, and useful for decision making.

Overall, the proposed data collection methods should at least include the following:

- 1) Review of literature and analysis of relevant documents;
- 2) Participant-based surveys for targeted program participants; and
- 3) KIIs/FGDs.

Questionnaire Development: Structured questionnaires and qualitative guides will be developed in a participatory manner with input from key stakeholders. All data collection instruments will be translated to English, back translated into other relevant languages (e.g., French), and field-tested. Data collection instruments with the general community will be translated to the relevant local languages.







In partnership with

6.0 Analysis Plan

The consultant is expected to develop the baseline data analysis plan as part of the inception report. Furthermore, the interpretation of the data, and consequently the formulation of conclusions and recommendations, will be carried out by the program consultant and key stakeholders.

A well-elaborated data analysis plan should at least address the following:

- How quantitative data will be gathered in a geo-referenced manner;
- Data quality checks and edits (data cleaning) planned to ensure logical consistency and coherence across records, as well as an indication of the software to be used for the data analysis;
- How qualitative data such as key informant, stakeholder, and beneficiary interviews and/or FGDs will be transcribed and analyzed; (whenever possible, data will be disaggregated and analyzed by gender, disability status, or refugee status);
- Indicator tabulation plan. Estimates should be produced for each country and for the overall level; and
- Sub-groups (e.g., age, sex or other geographic breakdowns), if any, for which the consultant will produce estimators (provided the associated precision levels are sufficient).

Note: Ability to demonstrate a robust/comprehensive methodology is a key consideration for selection.

To facilitate the validation of the data collected, a cross-check by the triangulation technique will be used. This will better support the conclusions through a combination of quantitative and qualitative information and has merit of helping in the rapid understanding of the situation while facilitating timely decisions.

7.0 Findings Dissemination

Given the importance of findings from the Baseline study to support the strengthening of the TAGDev 2.0 program, special efforts will be made to broadly share findings with partners and stakeholders Along with the *final report*, the Consultant is expected to produce a summarized *fact sheet* that will be shared with all the relevant stakeholders to get their reactions to findings. Finalized reports will be made available in hard copy and summary reports will be produced in English and French to provide to local government partners.

8.0 Timeline and Deliverables

The consultant is expected to conduct the Baseline Survey from **August 2025** — **March 2026**. Below is an illustrative timeline of the activities to be completed.







Key Baseline Survey Activities	Month/Year
Develop TOR for consultancy	21 st July 2025
Advertisement	31 st July 2025
Deadline for the call for Expression of Interests	25 th August, 2025
Submission of Inception Report	15 th September 2025
Evaluation design & tools finalized (including detailed methodology,	30 th September 2025
analysis plan and budget submitted for review by RUFORUM)	
Enumerator & supervisors training and field pilot	5 th October 2025
Data collection, entry and analysis	15 th October 2025
Preliminary Results with insights	20 th November 2025
Refining and submission of revised preliminary results with insights	28 th November 2025
Dissemination of preliminary insights and further data gathering from	4 th December 2025
the RUFORUM AGM	
Official first draft Report	30 th January, 2026
Final Report	30 th March, 2026

8.1 Required Deliverables

- 1. A **Work Plan** according to each committed product, agreed with the Manager for SE4CD and the RUFORUM TAGDev 2.0 MEL team.
- 2. **Inception Report** including methodology for the collection, processing, and analysis of the information of the baseline (include data dictionary).
- 3. **Databases** with the indicators calculated according to thresholds oriented and defined by RUFORUM and expansion factors of the sample assigned to each microdata.
- 4. **Output tables and graphs** of the processed baseline data captured by the service provider.
- 5. **DRAFT Baseline Report** including executive summary, data analysis, findings, and recommendations/conclusions as well as the following:
 - 5.1 Data collection instruments (English and all translations)
 - 5.2 Lists of sites visited with types and numbers of informants at each site
 - 5.3 Limitations to the study
 - 5.4 Quantitative and qualitative datasets.
- 6. **Presentation** of the survey findings, conclusions and recommendations to RUFORUM and the Mastercard Foundation.
- 7. A stand-alone **Brief in English**, 2-3 pages, describing the evaluation design, key findings and other relevant considerations.
- 8. **FINAL Baseline Report in English** approved by RUFORUM and Mastercard Foundation.

Revised: 21 July 2025

8.2 Deadline for Submission of Proposals

The deadline for delivery is 25th August, 2025. Proposals submitted after the stipulated date and







time will not be evaluated. Application documents should be submitted to secretariat@ruforum.org with a copy to p.mkandawire@ruforum.org

8.3 Expression of Interest

Interested consultants must send a Proposal (15 pages maximum, including appendix) highlighting information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services.

The proposal shall include the following documents:

- 1. Expression of interest letter that describes the applicants' capabilities and relevant experience with three examples of the most recently concluded tasks.
- 2. Consultants' profile and CVs.
- 3. **Relevant Experience**, including past performance, project review reports, and three (3) references for work performed by the key personnel like the Final Evaluation Report.
- 4. **Baseline Evaluation Proposal:** please include the process, methodology and timeline your organization proposes to use in addressing the baseline requirements. Please include a description of the study design including sampling, data collection, and data analysis methods to be used as well as address management considerations for producing the required deliverables on schedule.
- 5. **Propose a detailed budget**, include a breakout of the level of effort, daily rate(s), other direct costs and all applicable indirect cost rates. Daily rates and indirect cost rates not included in your proposal cannot be accepted after the fact.

A consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in RUFORUM's Procurement guidelines on selection and employment of consultants. Applications are invited from those applicants who meet the requirements provided in the Terms of Reference.

9.0 Study Team Composition

Criteria used for selection of independent consultants will include:

- 1. Financially and legally separate from implementing partners;
- 2. Have staff with demonstrated knowledge, analytical capability, language skills (English and French) and experience in conducting evaluations of development programs involving agriculture, education, and nutrition in Africa;
- 3. Use acceptable analytical frameworks, involvement of stakeholders in the evaluation, and statistical analyses;
- 4. Use of local consultants as partners in the delivery of the task is acceptable and appropriate considering the spread of the task across countries; and
- 5. Provide a detailed outline of the evaluation, major tasks, and specific schedules prior to initiating the evaluation.

Revised: 21 July 2025

Roles and Responsibilities









Evaluator/Contractor Responsibilities

The contractor will be responsible for logistics and support of the evaluation, including hiring of the evaluation staff, vehicle hire and transportation, translation services, printing, etc. The TAGDev 2.0 program will provide working space as requested in evaluation target areas. RUFORUM and its TAGDev 2.0 partner universities will NOT be available for use in data collection or transport of evaluation personnel. TAGDev 2.0 program will provide the venue and associated costs for briefing and debriefing meetings and the presentation of evaluation results.

Baseline Evaluation Team Composition and Qualification

The Baseline Evaluation team should consist of a team leader plus technical specialists in education, entrepreneurship, climate, policy, food security, and nutrition. No member of the Baseline Evaluation team will have had any responsibility in the design or implementation of the TAGDev 2.0 program under evaluation. The team leader must be external to the TAGDev 2.0 program and all agencies involved in the program implementation. To ensure independence as a third-party and avoid disruption in program implementation that could affect the evaluation results, the Baseline Evaluation team must not use TAGDev 2.0 staff as translators, enumerators or supervisors. During data collection and analysis, the primary role of TAGDev 2.0 staff members is as informants and observers. They may review and provide comments on data collection tools and instruments before they are finalized. They may observe some of the Baseline Evaluation process, but they will not collect primary data, or participate in translation, analysis or interpretation of this data.

Team leader qualifications:

- Must possess a post-graduate degree (economics, program evaluation, statistics, education, anthropology, applied research, organizational development, sociology and/or organizational change)
- Must possess extensive evaluation experience using mixed methods in developing countries.
- Must be knowledgeable in conceptual frameworks.
- Must be experienced in evaluation of education, entrepreneurship, food security or nutrition programs.
- Must be bilingual in English and French, with high writing proficiency in English.

Team Leader responsibilities:

- Organize and lead the overall evaluation
- Ensure a thorough review and analysis of project and secondary data
- Lead the sample selection and outputs for primary data collection
- Ensure adequate triangulation and validation of evidence collected
- Evaluate the program's M&E processes and the integration of program sectors and interventions
- Ensure that (i) final report presentation is logical, well-written, and presented in a way that
 clearly separates the evidence collected, conclusions, and recommendations in different
 sections of the report, and (ii) all evidence, conclusions and recommendations are based







on the evidence presented in the report.

- Liaise with RUFORUM and the Mastercard Foundation at the inception
- It would be preferable and advantageous for the Team Leader to also serve as one of the technical sector team members.

Team member qualifications:

- Must possess substantial application of quantitative and qualitative research skills and analysis in one of the following areas (with all areas covered by the collective team) economics, program evaluation, statistics, education, anthropology, applied research, organizational development, sociology and/or organizational change, entrepreneurship, and gender in developing countries.
- Must have extensive practical experience in one of the following areas (with all areas needing to be covered by the collective team) education, vocational skills, food security, nutrition, and gender.
- A postgraduate degree related to one or more of the program's technical sectors is preferable.

Team member responsibilities:

- Lead the collection and analysis of primary and secondary data related to their field(s) of expertise.
- Document findings, draw conclusions and form recommendations for the sector(s).
- Evaluate the general aspects of the implementation of all interventions related to his/her sector(s).

RUFORUM's responsibilities:

- Conduct a review of and provide timely feedback and approval of all draft deliverables listed above under contractor responsibilities.
- Provide an illustrative list of secondary data, made available to the evaluators at least one month before the start of the qualitative data collection activity.
- Logistical and administrative guidance and support:
 - a. Arrange meetings between the evaluation team and the Mastercard Foundation
 at the beginning and end of the evaluation process;
 - b. Advise about local protocols and permissions to gain entry to operational areas;
 - c. Provide advice related to travel (international travel, local vehicles and drivers for hire);
 - d. Where possible, assist in identifying local firms with potential to provide technical expertise including translation.
- Provide working space in the TAGDev 2.0 program areas as needed for meetings, desk work, and presentations.
- RUFORUM will provide a liaison/contact person who will be in close communication with the consulting team leader to coordinate the development and implementation of the evaluation process.









Note: RUFORUM and its TAGDev 2.0 implementing partners will NOT arrange enumerators and logistics (travel documents, health insurance, laptops, flights, and ground transport) for the evaluation team. Furthermore, RUFORUM and its TAGDev 2.0 implementing partners' vehicles are not permitted for use in any evaluation activities. This is to ensure the highest level of independence for the consultant in the evaluation.

10.0 Budget and Payment Method

The consultant will present their reimbursement / payment proposal, which will be subject to negotiation with the contracting party. Consulting fees should include any expense related to mobilization, food, workshops costs, logistical support and any expense derived from the consultancy process itself.

The proposed payment method is detailed as follows:

- 30% upon approval of the work plan and signing of the contract,
- 40% on submission of the first draft evaluation report,
- 30% upon submission of the final report as approved by the donor.

11.0 Data Collection Ethics

11.1 Informed Consent

Participants in both quantitative and qualitative primary data collection will be asked to provide their informed consent before proceeding with data collection. They will be offered an explanation of the data collection exercise, its purpose, the length of time expected to complete it, their ability to opt out of questions, how their data will be used, and how their personally identifiable information (PII) will be protected. They will be provided with an opportunity to ask questions.

11.2 Data Security & Personally Identifiable Information

RUFORUM will ensure and safeguard program participant confidentiality and protect PII, both of hardcopy and digital files. Original hardcopy data files and program records will be stored in a secured and protected place with access control. The hardcopy data files will be preserved after 5 years of program closing. The MEL team will develop a standard data management and safeguard system that will include access control, backup system, version control, virus protection and other security measures.

11.3 Ethics Training

All MEL staff and enumerators will be trained in data ethics, including informed consent, data management and security, to mitigate child protection risks, and processes for maintaining participant privacy and confidentiality of PII. RUFORUM will establish and follow credible ethical study principles, including:

Voluntarism, confidentially and anonymity of participants: All participants in interviews
will be voluntary to not create harm to participants during or after the data gathering,
and their anonymity and confidentiality will be protected. Voluntary involvement will be









assured by a scripted verbal explanation of the study being conducted. The script will inform respondents that they may choose to not respond to a certain question and may end the survey/study at any time.

- Do No Harm: Program and study themes will be screened for topics and questions that
 may cause distress to some participants and considerations about the possibility that
 participating in the survey will be.
- Integrity: Data from participants will be presented honestly and appropriately, such as the
 authoritativeness, extent-shared and intensity of opinions across the target population,
 groups, and organization, and aligning quotes with the study themes intended by the
 informant. Unexpected or contentious findings should be triangulated with other forms
 of data to validate findings.
- **Confidentiality:** The Consultant undertakes to preserve the confidentiality of any document, information or other material directly related to this assessment and duly classified as confidential and not to share the findings of this assessment without prior written agreement of RUFORUM.









Annex 1: TAGDev 2.0 program Theory of Change

