

# Co-certification mechanisms for short-term professional agricultural training programs in Africa

June 2025

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**DeSIRA**  
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The [DeSIRA Initiative](#)<sup>1</sup> (Development Smart Innovation through Research in Agriculture), funded by the European Commission, Directorate General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA), seeks to enhance an inclusive, sustainable and climate-relevant transformation of rural areas and of agri-food systems, by linking better agricultural innovation with research for more developmental impact. It supports actions in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) to strengthen the resilience of their agri-food systems, the relevance of the national and regional research and innovation systems, and the coherence and efficiency of their agricultural public research and extension services related to climate change challenges.

[DeSIRA-LIFT](#)<sup>2</sup> (Leveraging the DeSIRA Initiative for Agri-Food Systems Transformation) is a service project (June 2021 – May 2024) to the European Commission, DG INTPA with the main objective to enhance the impact of the DeSIRA Initiative by providing (ondemand) services to DeSIRA project holders and partners. DeSIRA-LIFT includes three service areas aligned to the three DeSIRA Pillars:

**Service Area 1** supports country-led DeSIRA projects to enhance their impacts on climate-oriented innovation systems in line with more sustainable food system transitions. **Service Area 2** supports the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) ex-pillar IV organizations in their Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) related roles. **Service Area 3** is providing support to policy makers on themes related to agricultural research for development (AR4D) and innovation policies and programming.

DeSIRA-LIFT is implemented by members of the Agrinatura and EFARD, in particular the members: Wageningen UR, CIRAD ISA (University of Lisbon), NRI (University of Greenwich), SLU and COLEAD. Agrinatura (<http://agrinatura-eu.eu>) is the European Alliance on agricultural knowledge for development. EFARD (<http://www.efard.org>) is an umbrella network of European research and non-research stakeholders from public and private European organisations and the European Commission.

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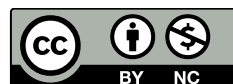
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## List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACQF	Africa Continental Qualification Framework
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
AI	Artificial Intelligence
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CAFA	African Institute for Agricultural Training
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CHE	Council on Higher Education (South Africa)
CIRAD	French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development
DeSIRA	Development Smart Innovation through Research in Agriculture
DeSIRA-LIFT	DeSIRA initiative's support program for boosting impact
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
EFARD	European Forum for Agricultural Research for Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
ISTA	International Seed Testing Association
KEFIS	Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service
KNQA	Kenya National Qualifications Authority
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIS	Management Information System
NCHE	National Council for Higher Education (Uganda)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NTA	Namibia Training Authority
NUC	National Universities Commission (Nigeria)
QCTO	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (South Africa)
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RUFORUM	Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SARUA	Southern African Regional Universities Association
SIFA	Skills Initiative for Africa
ToT	Training of Trainers
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UM6P	University Mohammed VI Polytechnic (Morocco)
WUR	Wageningen University & Research
ZIMCHE	Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education

## Executive Summary

This report outlines a scoping study on co-certification mechanisms for short-term professional training programs in agricultural innovation and similar agricultural domains across Africa, conducted in collaboration with RUFORUM, its partner universities and DeSIRA- LIFT. The study identifies existing certification models, challenges, and opportunities while proposing a scalable framework to enhance recognition, standardization, and portability of skills through co-certification. The initiative aims to ensure that agricultural short-term training certifications are widely accepted by different stakeholders, including academia, country governments, regional bodies, companies and employers and society as whole, addressing a critical gap in Africa's agricultural capacity-development ecosystem.

Currently, RUFORUM and some of its partner universities offer short-term courses, but certifications are primarily participation-based and issued solely by individual institutions, lacking co-certification and formal accreditation. As demand grows for standardized and specialized agricultural skills such as innovation facilitation, there is an urgent need for a structured co-certification model that integrates academic, policy, and industry recognition. This study assessed existing certification mechanisms, identified barriers to transferability, and explored opportunities for harmonization. Key challenges include low certificate recognition across Africa and worldwide, the absence of standardized frameworks, limited international institutional partnership and limited industry collaboration, difficulties in credit transfer, and regulatory misalignment across African countries.

To address these gaps, the study proposes a four-tier co-certification model, scaling in complexity and recognition. **Level-1** involves joint certification by RUFORUM, partner universities, and international organizations (e.g., FAO, CGIAR, UWR) without academic credits, which seems the only feasible co-certification model currently. **Level-2** introduces credit- based certification, enabling accumulation toward degree programs. **Level-3** aligns with National Qualification Frameworks (NQFs) for country-specific recognition, while **Level- 4** integrates with the emerging Africa Continental Qualification Framework (ACQF) for cross- border acceptance of co-certification.

The study recommends a phased implementation, starting with pilot programs in selected universities to test feasibility, gather stakeholder feedback, and refine the model. Key steps include developing digital certification and credentialing methods, strengthening partnerships with international institutions and national accreditation bodies as needed, and ensuring financial sustainability of the programs. RUFORUM is proposed to lead as a central co-certification agency, setting quality standards, fostering partnership for quality training content, setting processes and delivery methodologies, and negotiating regulatory recognition at national and continental level.

In conclusion, this co-certification framework presents a transformative opportunity to professionalize short-term agricultural training in Africa. By enhancing credibility, employability, and regional mobility, RUFORUM has the potential to drive systemic change in agricultural education, advancing Africa's goals for food security, innovation, and workforce development. A strategic, collaborative rollout will be essential to achieving long-term success of the co- certification model.



## Résumé exécutif

Ce rapport présente une étude exploratoire portant sur les mécanismes de co-certification pour les programmes de formation professionnelle de courte durée dans le domaine de l'innovation agricole et des domaines agricoles similaires en Afrique, menée en collaboration avec le RUFORUM, ses universités partenaires et DeSIRA- LIFT. L'étude identifie les modèles de certification existants, les défis et les opportunités, tout en proposant un cadre évolutif pour améliorer la reconnaissance, la normalisation et la portabilité des compétences grâce à la co-certification. L'initiative vise à garantir que les certifications de formation agricole de courte durée soient largement acceptées par les différentes parties prenantes, notamment les universités, les gouvernements nationaux, les organismes régionaux, les entreprises, les employeurs et la société dans son ensemble, comblant ainsi une lacune critique dans l'écosystème de développement des capacités agricoles de l'Afrique.

Actuellement, le RUFORUM et certaines de ses universités partenaires proposent des formations de courte durée, les certifications étant néanmoins principalement basées sur la participation et uniquement délivrées par les établissements individuels ne disposant pas de co-certification ni d'accréditation officielle. Face à la demande croissante de compétences agricoles normalisées et spécialisées, telles que la facilitation de l'innovation, il est urgent de mettre en œuvre un modèle de co-certification structuré qui intègre la reconnaissance académique, politique et industrielle. Cette étude a évalué les mécanismes de certification existants, identifié les obstacles à la transférabilité et exploré les possibilités d'harmonisation. Les principaux défis à relever sont la faible reconnaissance des certificats en Afrique et dans le monde, l'absence de cadres normalisés, le partenariat institutionnel international limité et la collaboration industrielle restreinte, les difficultés de transfert des crédits et le désalignement réglementaire entre les pays africains.

Pour combler ces lacunes, l'étude propose un modèle de co-certification à quatre niveaux, dont la complexité et la reconnaissance augmentent progressivement. **Le niveau 1** implique une certification conjointe par le RUFORUM, les universités partenaires et les organisations internationales (par exemple, la FAO, le CGIAR, l'UWR) sans crédits académiques, ce qui semble être le seul modèle de co-certification viable actuellement. **Le niveau 2** introduit une certification basée sur des crédits, permettant l'accumulation de crédits pour des programmes diplômants. **Le niveau 3** s'aligne sur les cadres nationaux de certifications (CNC) pour une reconnaissance spécifique à chaque pays, tandis que **le niveau 4** s'intègre au nouveau cadre continental africain des certifications (ACQF) afin de permettre la reconnaissance transfrontalière de la co-certification.

L'étude recommande une mise en œuvre progressive, en commençant par des programmes pilotes dans des universités sélectionnées afin de tester la faisabilité, de recueillir les commentaires des parties prenantes et d'affiner le modèle. Les principales étapes comprennent l'élaboration de méthodes de certification et d'attribution de titres numériques, le renforcement des partenariats avec des institutions internationales et des organismes nationaux d'accréditation, selon les besoins, ainsi que l'assurance de la viabilité financière des programmes. Il est proposé que le RUFORUM joue le rôle d'agence centrale de co-certification, définissant des normes de qualité, favorisant les partenariats pour un contenu de formation de qualité, définissant des processus et des méthodologies de mise en œuvre, et négociant une reconnaissance réglementaire aux niveaux national et continental.

Pour conclure, ce cadre de co-certification représente une opportunité de transformation pour professionnaliser la formation agricole de courte durée en Afrique. En améliorant la crédibilité, l'employabilité et la mobilité régionale, le RUFORUM a le potentiel de susciter un changement systémique dans l'enseignement agricole, contribuant ainsi à la réalisation des objectifs de l'Afrique en matière de sécurité alimentaire, d'innovation et de développement de la main-d'œuvre. Un

déploiement stratégique et collaboratif sera essentiel pour assurer le succès à long terme du modèle de co-certification.

## 1. Background & Context

Funded by the European Commission, the DeSIRA Initiative seeks to enhance an inclusive, sustainable and climate-relevant transformation of rural areas and agri-food systems, by bridging the gap between agricultural innovation, research, and education. It supports actions in low- and middle-income countries to strengthen food systems resilience, and improve national and regional innovation systems, including agricultural public research and extension services related to climate change adaptation.

Running from 2021 to 2025, DeSIRA-LIFT is a support facility designed to maximize the effectiveness of DeSIRA projects. It provides on-demand expertise across three key areas:

- **Strengthening research and innovation projects** – Helping DeSIRA projects enhance their impact on sustainable food systems.
- **Empowering African Agricultural Knowledge Systems** – Supporting CAADP-linked organizations in advancing agricultural innovation.
- **Informing Better Policies** – Assisting policymakers in shaping research and innovation strategies for development.

Implemented by Agrinatura (including CIRAD, WUR, and other leading institutions) and EFARD (COLEAD), DeSIRA-LIFT ensures that agricultural innovation reaches those who need it most.

Following a professional training offered by DeSIRA-LIFT, 67 innovation facilitators have been certified across 10 countries and certification. Furthermore, there is a growing demand from the innovation facilitators network within RUFORUM and its partner universities to professionalize the role of innovation facilitation. This is essential for supporting multi-stakeholder innovation processes, which lie at the heart of the DeSIRA initiatives and are increasingly recognized as a core philosophy by several donors.

The agricultural sector in Africa is a major economic driver, yet it faces knowledge and skill gaps that hinder innovation and development. Short-term professional trainings are increasingly being adopted to equip students, practitioners, researchers and other value chain stakeholders with relevant knowledge and skills. However, the lack of standardized certification mechanisms affects recognition and mobility of trained individuals across Africa and beyond.

This scoping study is carried out in partnership with RUFORUM (Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture), a network of 175 African universities across 40 countries dedicated to agricultural education and research. RUFORUM empowers universities to drive farmer-centered innovation by training skilled researchers, producing impactful science, and fostering collaboration between academia, farmers, and governments. Together, DeSIRA-LIFT and RUFORUM are working to build a more resilient and sustainable future for African agriculture.

### Objectives of the study

The key objectives of this scoping study include:

1. Identifying existing certification mechanisms used by African universities and RUFORUM partners.
2. Analysing challenges and opportunities in short-term agricultural training certification.
3. Developing a framework for co-certification that aligns with national and regional qualification systems.
4. Proposing an implementation and pilot mechanism for co-certification.

## 2. Study Approach and Methodology

The study was conducted in a consultative and collaborative manner and through a multi-phase research approach. This included the following:

- **Literature Review:** An analysis of grey literature, certification documents, current certification systems, and policies related to professional training certification in RUFORUM-member universities and institutes in select countries. These documents included European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), Africa Continental Qualification Framework (ACQF), National Qualification Framework (NQF) of countries, current certification frameworks of selected universities, and university training programs etc. The summary of review of literature are available as Appendix 1 of this document.
- **Survey of RUFORUM Partner Universities:** A short survey of RUFORUM's 175 university / institutional partners to gather inputs on existing certification mechanisms, gaps, and opportunities. 14 university / institutional partners from 11 countries responded. A synthesis of survey findings is available in Appendix 2 of this document.
- **Engagement with RUFORUM and its Partner Universities:**
  - Secondary Research of selected RUFORUM partner universities, who are involved in agricultural training programs with a focus on agriculture innovation facilitation programs. 20 RUFORUM partners in 15 countries. A summary of results is available in Appendix 2 of this documents.
  - One-to-One Consultation Meeting with RUFORUM and its Partner Universities: Conducted in-depth one-to-one meeting with 12 RUFORUM partner universities on current certification models used, challenges and opportunities and proposed co-certification models suggested by these universities. Summary report of these consultation meetings are available as Appendix 3 of this document.

### 3. Key Findings from Surveys and Stakeholder Meetings

#### 3.1 Current Certification Landscape

Based on the surveys and stakeholder meeting, the current agricultural short-term training certification models across different RUFORUM partner universities seems fragmented and lack a robust comparative and transferable system.

**University-Based Certification:** Around 60% of surveyed 36 universities (primary or secondary research offer some form of short-term agriculture professional trainings. Almost all short-term agricultural courses are offered and certified primarily at the university level, as certificate of participation. The university itself acts as the certifying body in such cases, with limited external accreditation.

**Varying Levels of Certification System Robustness:** Countries seem not to have a very robust certification system for short-term agricultural training programs when compared to systems like the EU with credit transfer facilities within university and beyond.

**Co-Certification Offered by Universities:** Few universities currently offer co-certification, where they partner with another organization (two universities informed that they offered co-certification along with local NGO and an industry body) to issue joint certificates.

**Focus and Target Audience:** Short-term courses target various groups, including students, working professionals, industry practitioners, government officials, NGOs, and farmers.

**Certificate as Proof of Attendance:** These certificates primarily serve as proof of attendance rather than formal qualifications with credit weight.

**Duration of Trainings:** Most of short-term training program are reported to be three days to three months long. Some cases were up to 12 months long with a diploma attached to it.

**Content of Trainings:** Mostly short-term courses around agriculture/ fish/ livestock pre- production, production and post-production phases offered to participants.

**Interest in Improvement:** There is a clear interest by universities in developing co-certification models that could enhance the recognition, usability, acceptance, transparency, trust, portability, and quality assurance of agricultural training certifications across Africa and potentially worldwide. The possibility of integrating these certifications with credit-based systems in universities to enhance mobility and transferability is also being explored.

In summary, current agricultural training certification models in Africa are diverse and primarily university-based for short-term courses. There is a recognized need by universities to move towards more standardized and widely accepted co-certification mechanisms to improve the quality, recognition, and portability of these programs across the continent.



Figure 1: Current Certification Model with RUFORUM Partner Universities in Africa

### 3.2 Challenges and Opportunities

**Challenges:** Several challenges exist in current agricultural short-term certification models across different African institutions:

- **Fragmented and University Based Certification:** The current certification mechanisms for short-term agricultural training programs in RUFORUM partner universities are highly fragmented and mostly university-offered certificates to the participants.
- **Absence of Overarching Standards and Harmonization:** There is a lack of overarching standards, agreed protocols, and agreed credit weight for short-term agricultural certifications across the Africa continent. This makes it difficult to ensure consistent quality, transferability and recognition of qualifications across different institutions and countries.
- **Limitation in the Acceptance of Short-Term Certifications:** The acceptance of short-term agricultural certifications are limited both within a country and, more significantly, outside the country of issue. While a certificate from a reputable university might hold some weight, its recognition by other educational institutions, employers, or across borders is not guaranteed.
- **No Integration with Credit-Based Systems:** The short-term professional agricultural certificates are not integrated with credit-based systems of universities.
- **Limited Mobility and Transferability:** Consequently, there are challenges in the mobility and transferability of certifications and credit qualifications across African universities and institutions. The Africa continental mobility and transferability is majorly due to misalignment of qualifications, policies and regulation.
- **Resource Constraints for Offering Short Courses:** Universities often face resource constraints, including the extra workload on faculty staff and the need for financial resources, to develop and deliver short-term agricultural courses.
- **Viability and Demand:** There is limited visibility and further demand for short-term courses to ensure their viability, exists.



- **Recognition from External Bodies:** Universities struggles to get their short-term course certifications recognized by professional bodies, industry stakeholders, or governmental agencies beyond their own institutional validation.

In summary, the current landscape of agricultural certification in Africa is characterized by fragmentation, a lack of unified standards, challenges in acceptance and transferability, and various institutional and resource-related hurdles. These challenges highlight the need for exploring and implementing more standardized and widely recognized co-certification models, to enhance the quality, relevance, and impact of agricultural training programs across Africa.

**Opportunities:** The scoping study research suggests that the co-certification in agricultural short-term professional training programs could offer several significant benefits. These benefits can be seen from the perspectives of the trainees, the training institutions, and the broader recognition of agricultural skills in Africa and worldwide.

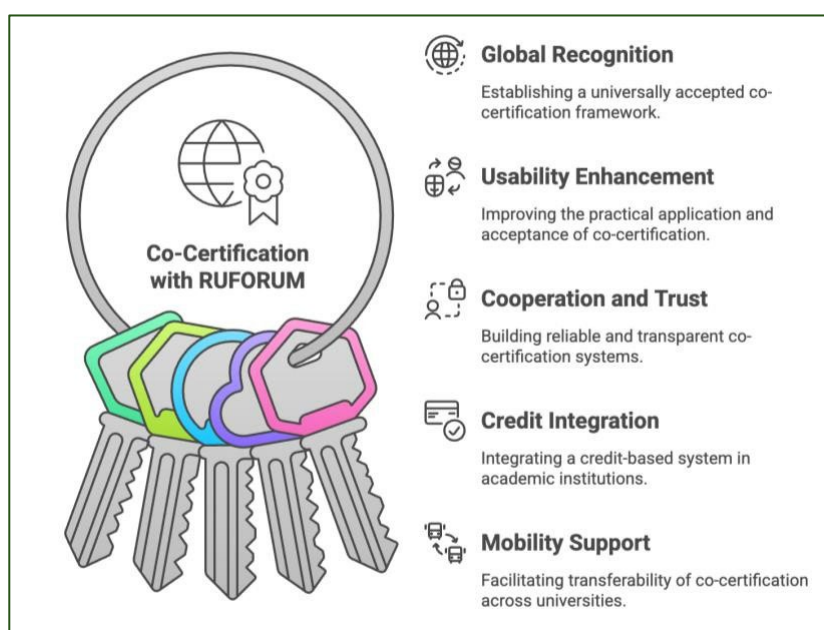
Here are some potential benefits of co-certification:

- **Increased Recognition and Acceptance:** Co-certification of short-term agricultural training programs with reputable international organizations, such as CGIAR, WUR, AGRINATURA, EFARD or FAO, along with regional bodies like RUFORUM and its university partner, can lead to greater recognition and acceptance of the offered co-certificate across Africa and worldwide. This enhanced recognition can increase the usability of the certificate for trainees.
- **Enhanced Quality and Standards:** Partnering with other international institutions or industry bodies can bring in diverse expertise and perspectives, potentially leading to an improvement in the curriculum and the quality of training programs. Co- certification can also facilitate the development of industry-relevant training by involving organizations that understand the specific skills needed in the agricultural sector. This collaboration can lead to the establishment of quality assurance mechanisms for the co-certification process.
- **Greater Portability and Transferability:** A key objective of exploring co-certification is to enhance the portability and transferability of qualifications and credits across African universities and institutions. If short-term professional agricultural certificates could be part of a credit-based system recognized by African universities and countries, it would allow participants to accumulate credits and potentially use them towards further academic pursuits across Africa.
- **Increased Visibility and Attractiveness:** Co-certification, especially with well-known organizations, can attract a larger number of students to the training programs. The involvement of multiple partners can also widen the net for marketing, branding and increase the visibility of the programs. Trainees may be more inclined to enroll in programs that offer a certificate recognized by more than one institution.
- **Access to Expertise and Resources:** Partnering with institutions, such as CGIAR centers, FAO, WUR etc could provide access to advanced labs, infrastructure, and practical training opportunities that may not be available at a single African university. This collaboration can enhance the practical and field-based aspects of the certification programs.
- **Alignment with National and Continental Frameworks:** Co-certification models could be designed to align with existing National Skills Qualification Frameworks (NSQF/ NQF) or potentially alignment with Africa Continental Qualification Framework (ACQF). This will enhance overall recognition and standardization of agricultural qualifications.
- **Sustainability of Programs:** While funding is a factor, co-certification can potentially contribute to the sustainability of training programs by making them more attractive to a wider

range of participants and by aligning them with recognized standards that employers and other institutions value.

- **Empowerment of Participants:** Participants may see co-certification as a way to gain skills that are more marketable beyond their local areas and countries, potentially leading to better employment opportunities or self-employment prospects.

In essence, most participating RUFORUM universities in the scoping study feel that an established co-certification led by RUFORUM may offer a pathway towards a more harmonized, recognized, and higher-quality system for agricultural training in Africa. This would benefit both individuals seeking to enhance their skills and institutions aiming to deliver impactful and widely accepted short-term professional agriculture training program.



*Figure 2: Potential Benefits of Co-certification with RUFORUM*

## 4. Proposed Co-Certification Models with RUFORUM

Drawing upon research including survey data from selected RUFORUM partner universities, in-depth one-to-one consultation meetings, systematic review of literature, analysis of global best practices, and inputs from RUFORUM and DeSIRA- LIFT teams, a progressive four-level certification mechanism has been proposed. This innovative framework, supposed to be led and coordinated by RUFORUM, establishes clear pathways for quality assurance and recognition of short-term professional agriculture training programs across Africa.

The four levels of certification:

- **Level 1:** RUFORUM + Partner University + International Organization without University Credit System (**Foundational Partnership Certification**)
- **Level 2:** RUFORUM + Partner University + International Organization with University Credit System (**Credit-Eligible Program Certification**)
- **Level 3:** RUFORUM + Partner University + International Organization + National Qualifications Framework alignment (**Nationally Aligned Qualification**)
- **Level 4:** RUFORUM + Partner University + International Organization + Africa Continental Qualifications Framework alignment (**Continently Aligned Qualification**)

This certification model offers multiple entry points for partner universities in a co-certification framework with RUFORUM, maintaining rigorous quality benchmarks. Each progressive level enhances the program's recognition, transferability, and potential labour market value, addressing key challenges identified in our research regarding certification fragmentation across Africa. The framework incorporates lessons from successful international models while remaining adaptable to diverse African national contexts within the RUFORUM network.

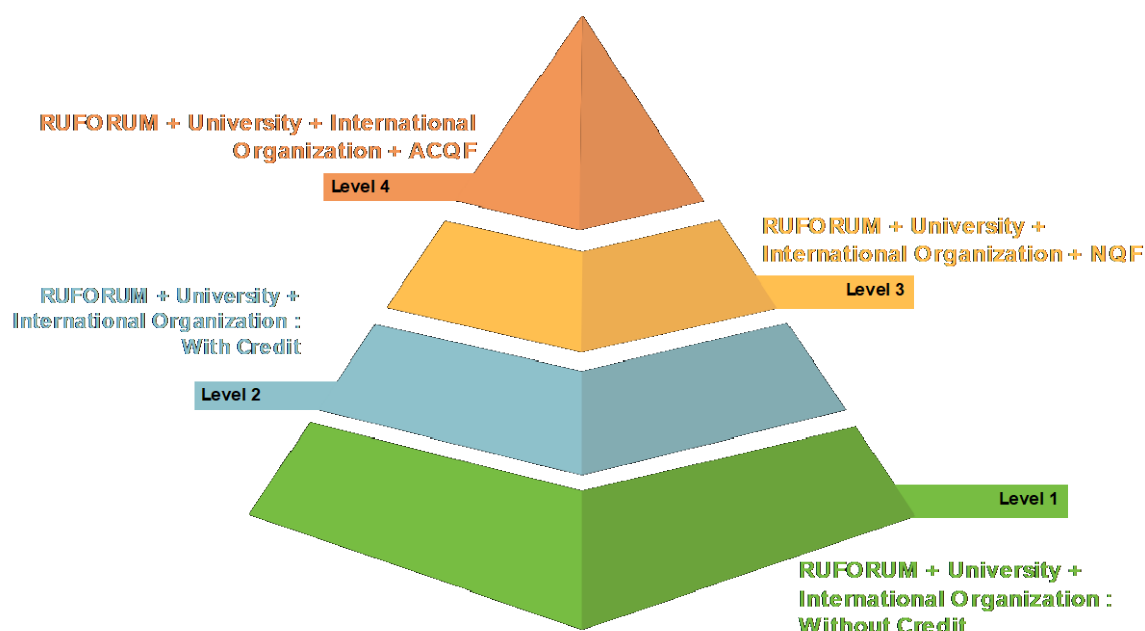
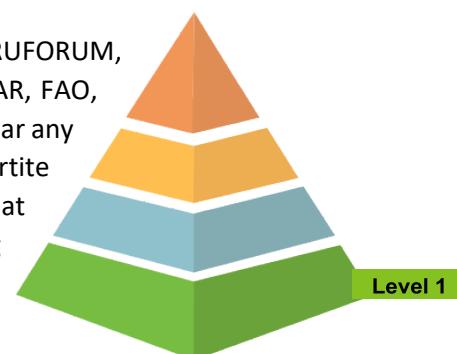


Figure 3: Proposed 4-Levels of Co-certification Framework with RUFORUM

## 4.1 Level 1: RUFORUM + Partner University + International Organization Without Credit Mechanism in University System

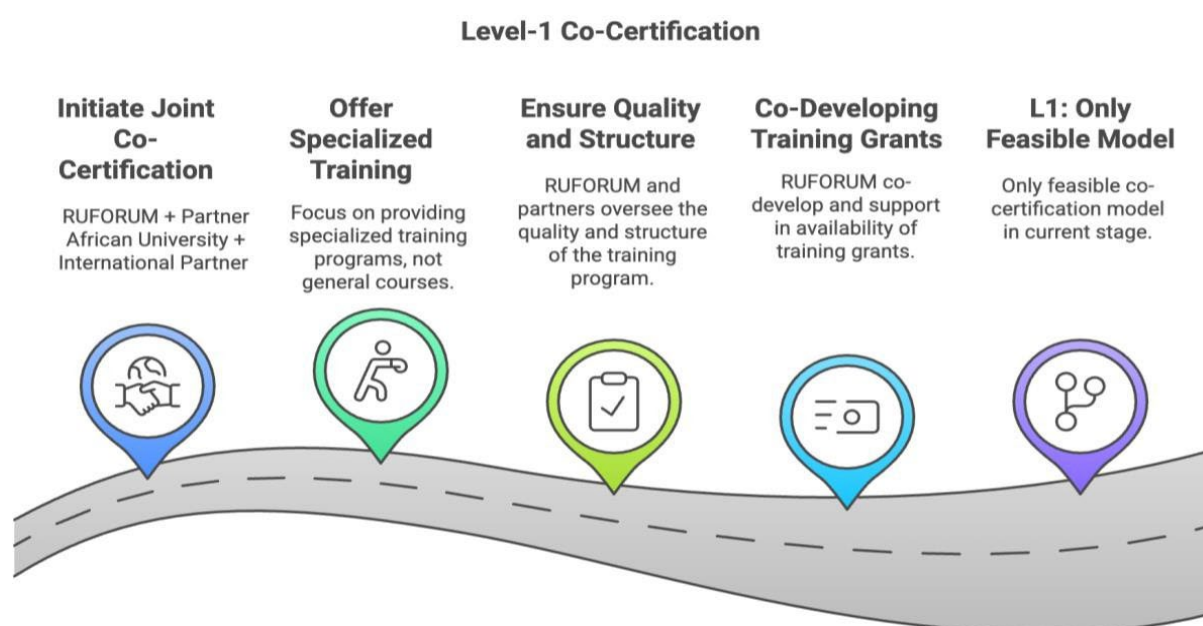
The Level-1 of co-certification involves a collaborative model between RUFORUM, partner universities, and specialized international organizations such as CGIAR, FAO, Wageningen University & Research etc. It is envisaged that level – 1 will not bear any credit in university system but a quality co- certification by partners. This tripartite approach focuses on delivering quality and specialized training programs that complement rather than duplicate existing university offerings, targeting niche areas where international partner organizations have particular expertise.



The model emphasizes rigorous quality assurance through standardized training content and materials, delivery modalities, comprehensive assessment mechanisms, and centralized program management.

Key components of this certification level include:

- Joint oversight of all training aspects including curriculum development, training materials, and both formative and summative assessments – which may be conducted by a third-party evaluator.
- Capacity development for university trainers through Training of Trainers (ToT) programs
- Infrastructure standardization for labs and specialized training facilities
- A centralized Management Information System (MIS) for tracking participant progress and certification issuance
- Financial support through RUFORUM-managed training grants
- L1 – Currently only feasible and easiest model to start with co-certification



*Figure 4: Proposed Level 1 Co-Certification Model*

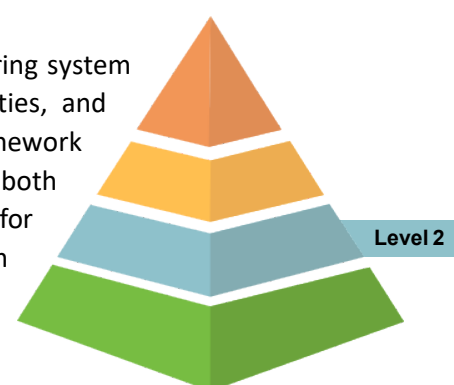
This level represents the most immediately implementable approach to co-certification due to its flexibility and fewer regulatory constraints compared to credit-bearing or nationally accredited

programs. By focusing on specialized training, it avoids complex academic credit systems which may take some time to evolve in partner university system, while still establishing robust quality standards and join certification of the training programs. The partnership model leverages each organization's strengths - RUFORUM's regional network and credibility, universities' local presence and training capacity, and international partners' technical expertise and global perspectives.

The success of this model depends on clear delineation of responsibilities among partners, with RUFORUM and international organizations taking primary ownership of quality content, training methodology and assurance mechanisms among others while universities provide institutional support and local implementation capacity. This approach creates a foundation for potential expansion into more advanced certification levels while addressing immediate needs for recognized, quality professional short-term training in specialized agricultural domains.

## 4.2 Level 2: RUFORUM + Partner University + International Organization with Credit Mechanism in University System

The second tier of proposed co-certification model introduces a credit-bearing system developed through collaboration between RUFORUM, partner universities, and specialized international organizations (where applicable). This framework incorporates academic credit transfer mechanisms that comply with both university and national education regulations, creating pathways for learners to accumulate and transfer of credits in a university system for degree or diploma.



Key components and suggested considerations:

### 1. Credit Transfer Infrastructure:

- RUFORUM in consultation with university partners should establish and maintain a centralized "Academic Bank of Credit" to facilitate recognition and transfer of credits between partner institutions.
- The system will track and validate training programs while maintaining rigorous quality standards.
- Credit equivalencies should be mapped across participating universities to ensure fair recognition and transferability.

### 2. Regulatory Compliance:

- Strict adherence to national data privacy laws and national credit transfer policies.
- Development of standardized credit conversion protocols between different national systems.

### 3. Implementation Timeline:

- Phased rollout beginning with pilot programs at select universities.
- The credit system process may take time, based on readiness of partner universities, national education policy frameworks and complexity of credit harmonization.

### 4. Quality Assurance:

- Joint oversight of curriculum development to ensure credit-worthiness.
- Standardized learning outcomes and assessment criteria.
- Continuous M&E and audit mechanisms to maintain quality and integrity.

### 5. Operational Requirements:

- Specialized training focus areas that complement existing university programs.

- Clear articulation agreements between participating institutions.
- Digital infrastructure for certification, credit tracking and verification.

#### Level-2: Co-Certification with Credit Transfer

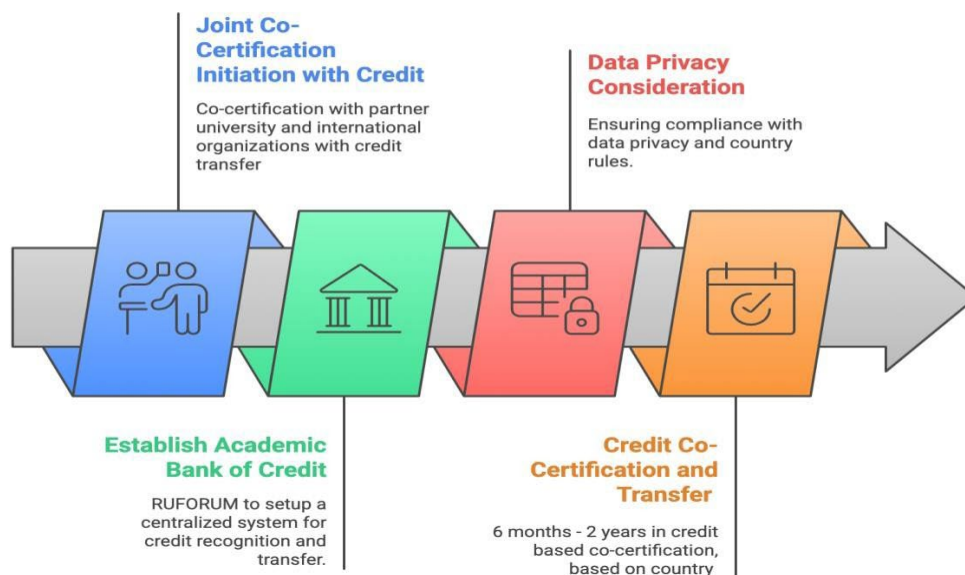


Figure 5: Proposed Level 2 Co-Certification Model

This credit-based model represents a significant advancement in professional short-term agricultural training, offering learners:

- Formal academic recognition of specialized training
- Pathways for continuous professional development
- Enhanced mobility between universities and countries
- Improved industry and labor market recognition of qualifications

### 4.3 Level 3: RUFORUM + Partner University + International Organization + National Qualification Framework (NQF)

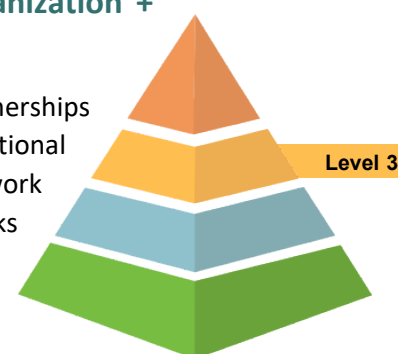
The third tier of proposed certification model establishes formal partnerships between RUFORUM, partner universities, international organization and national qualification authorities to create nationally recognized credentials. This framework integrates university credit systems with National Skills Qualification Frameworks (NSQF / NQF), ensuring both academic recognition and labor market relevance.

Key components and benefits:

#### 1. National Recognition Mechanism:

- Formal alignment with host country's National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF/ NQF).
- Dual or joint certification issued by RUFORUM, partner university, and national qualification agency.
- Dual validation through both academic credit systems and national skills standards.

#### 2. Enhanced Employability Features:





- The proposed model may benefit participants with direct linkage to national employment benefits (bank loans, government subsidies etc as per government policies and rules).
- Industry-recognized certification for specific occupational standards.
- Potential articulation and recognition with national apprenticeship programs, as may be applicable.
- May be eligibility for government-funded / sponsored skill development initiatives.

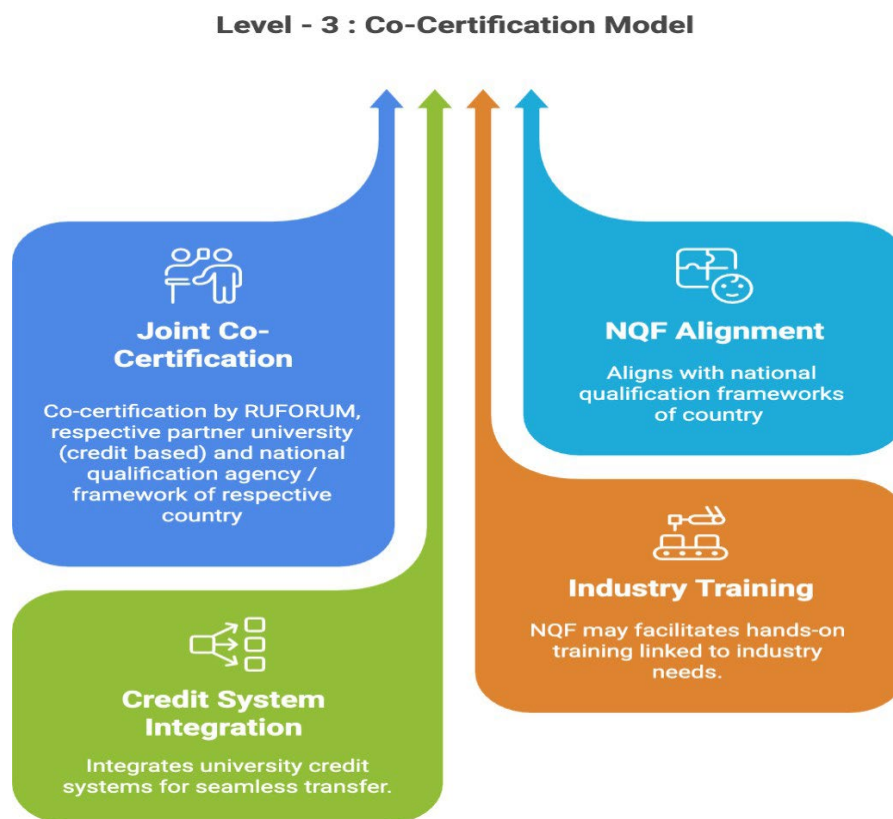
### 3. Quality Assurance:

- Compliance with national skills agency requirements.
- Standardized competency-based assessment frameworks.
- Regular review cycles may involve industry stakeholders.

### 4. Implementation Framework:

- Potential understanding between RUFORUM, national qualification authorities and partner universities.
- Credit mapping between university systems and NQF levels.

The framework is designed to be adaptable to different national contexts while maintaining consistent

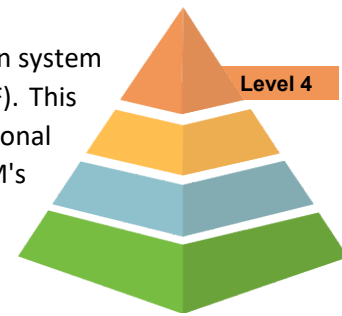


*Figure 6: Proposed Level 3 Co-Certification Model*

quality benchmarks across countries. Implementation requires close coordination with national skills regulators, university accreditation bodies, and industry representatives to ensure the certifications meet both academic standards and workplace requirements.

#### 4.4 Level 4: RUFORUM + Partner University + International Organization + Africa Continental Qualification Framework (ACQF) Alignment

The level-4 of proposed certification model establishes a pan-African recognition system through alignment with upcoming Africa Continental Qualification Framework (ACQF). This comprehensive framework creates a unified standard for short-term professional agricultural training across the continent, combining the strengths of RUFORUM's academic network with continental quality benchmarks.



Key components and potential benefits:

**1. Multi-Stakeholder Co-Certification Partnership**

- Joint / dual certification by RUFORUM, host universities (preferably using credit systems), and ACQF.
- Optional inclusion of specialized international partners where they add value.

**2. Africa Continental Alignment Mechanism**

- Formal mapping to ACQF levels and descriptors.
- Integration with the ACQF's digital credentials infrastructure, as may be needed or required.
- Compliance with Africa continental standards for learning outcomes assessment.

**3. Cross-Border Recognition Features**

- Potential digital credentialing for easy verification across borders
- Potential built-in compatibility with national qualification frameworks.
- Possible support for both academic progression and occupational mobility.

**4. Strategic Value Proposition**

- Support in addressing Africa's skills gap through standardized, quality-assured short-term professional agricultural programs.
- Enables workforce mobility under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) implementation.
- Creates pathways for lifelong learning across multiple countries.

The framework is designed to complement rather than replace national systems, creating a "skills or qualifications passport" that maintains local relevance while enabling continental recognition.

#### Level -4 : Co-Certification Aligned with Africa Continental Qualification Framework ( ACQF)



Figure 7: Proposed Level 4 Co-Certification Model

The overall four level of co-certification model of short-term professional agricultural training program can be represented as below-

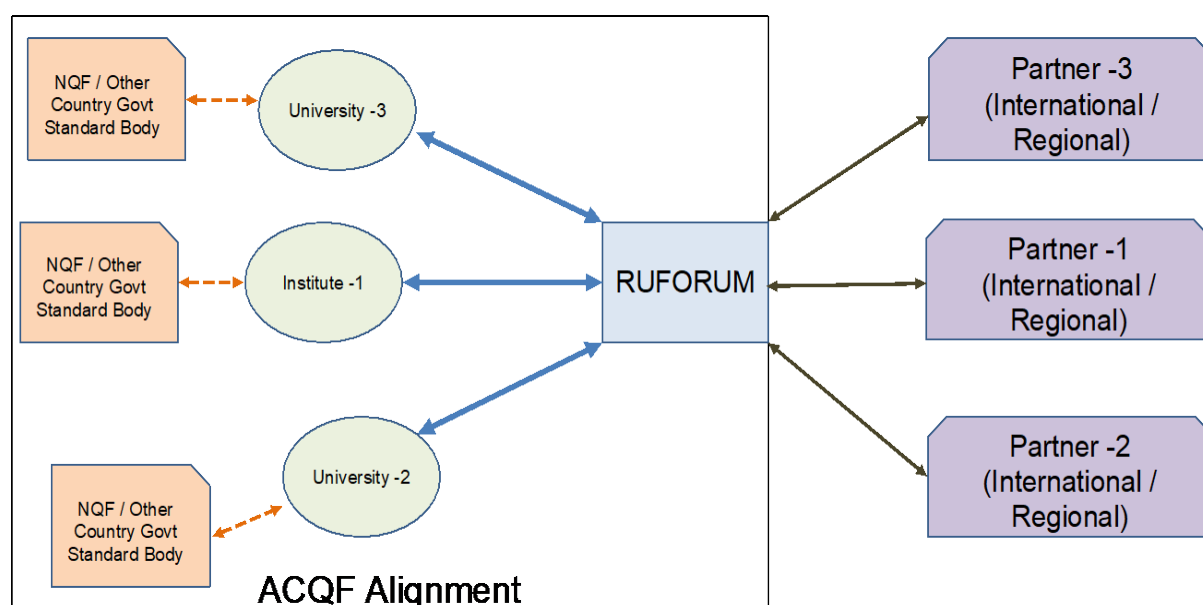


Figure 8: Overall four level of co-certification model of short-term training with RUFORUM

#### 4.5 Opportunities for RUFORUM:

By taking a leadership role in the proposed co-certification mechanism, RUFORUM has a transformative opportunity to establish itself as the premier brand for short-term professional agricultural training in Africa by developing a robust, continentally recognized co-certification system.

This initiative would involve creating a dedicated quality assurance body – something akin to ISO standards - to oversee co-certification processes, ensuring rigorous benchmarks for curricula, training modalities and delivery methodologies, infrastructure, third-party assessments, training of the trainer (ToT) etc. A centralized digital certificate repository and credit bank would enhance credential authenticity and transferability across its partner institutions.



Figure 9: Opportunities for RUFORUM in Co-Certification Model

By leading strategic partnerships at international, regional, and continental levels, RUFORUM can harmonize agricultural short-term training standards while aligning with the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF) through direct engagement with the African Union. This effort would not only elevate the quality and recognition of agricultural education and training but also unlock long-term institutional sustainability through a viable revenue model built on certification services, partnerships, and premium quality assurance offerings. Ultimately, this positions RUFORUM as a key driver of Africa's agricultural skilling, upskilling and reskilling agenda, directly supporting the continent's "Feed and Prosperous Africa" vision through standardized, industry-relevant, and widely recognized training programs.

#### 4.6 Proposed and Tentative Stakeholder Responsibility Matrix for Agricultural Short-Term Professional Trainings

RUFORUM should act as the central Quality Assurance/Accreditation agency for Agricultural Short-Term Professional Training programs in Africa (e.g., akin to an ISO for Agricultural trainings).

- To develop and maintain a centralized MIS/Academic Bank of Credit to ensure transferability of credit across member universities.
- To ensure overall quality of training programs, including:
  - Course structure, curricula, and training plans.
  - Training and Learning Materials (TLM), formative/summative assessments
  - Delivery methodologies
  - Training of Trainers (ToT) for university trainers.
  - Lab and infrastructure standards/availability.
  - Co-certification issuance with a tracking mechanism.
- To lead coordination with ACQF and other agencies to align standards.

- To drive international/regional/continental partnerships for quality training delivery.
- Should secure partnerships and funding for training program implementation.
- Making available training infrastructure/labs not available at universities.
- Should bear overall responsibility for ensuring quality agricultural education and training across member universities in Africa.

#### **Partner University/Institute**

- Follow the quality assurance framework provided by RUFORUM.
- Ensures the quality of training delivery.
- Conducts Training of Trainers (ToT) for master trainers/trainers, authorized by RUFORUM.
- Integrates short-term courses as credit-based programs within the university system.
- Provide data and other necessary information to RUFORUM.
- Collaborate and deliver on co-certification of training programs.

#### **International/Regional Partner**

- May serve as a knowledge partner in specific subject areas.
- Brings international best practices, research, and innovations in food, land, and water systems.
- Supports RUFORUM with training material, curricula, learning delivery, and infrastructure/lab standards.
- Provides master trainers in subject areas and assists in organizing ToT programs.
- Engages in joint fundraising to develop local African agricultural capacities.
- Partners on a case-by-case basis, with long-term goals for RUFORUM to build its own capacities for driving Agricultural Education and Training Transformation in Africa.

#### **NQF/ACQF/Another Country Agency / Private Sector**

- RUFORUM to coordinate and align short-term professional trainings with these standards/frameworks for broader acceptance and transferability across Africa.
- Works in partnership and consultation with partner universities/institutes.

## 5. Pilot Implementation / Delivery Roadmap

To establish a robust foundation for co-certification, RUFORUM—in collaboration with international organizations and partner universities—should initiate a pilot implementation of the Level-1 certification mechanism (non-credit bearing) across a few strategically chosen countries. This phased approach will allow for testing, refinement, and eventual scaling of co- certification. Below is an indicative step-by-step process for piloting and delivering the co- certification program:

### 5.1 Define Phase

RUFORUM and its partners must first clearly outline the program’s objectives, target audience, and scope. Key activities include:

- **Stakeholder Alignment:** Establish shared goals among RUFORUM, partner universities, and international organizations.
- **Program Scope:** Define the specific training subjects, topics, and expected outcomes.
- **Target Beneficiaries:** Identify the primary audience (e.g., students, early-career professionals, researchers, mid-career upskillers, extension workers etc).
- **Certification Framework:** Clarify roles, responsibilities, and branding (e.g., joint certificates with partner logos and authorized signatories).

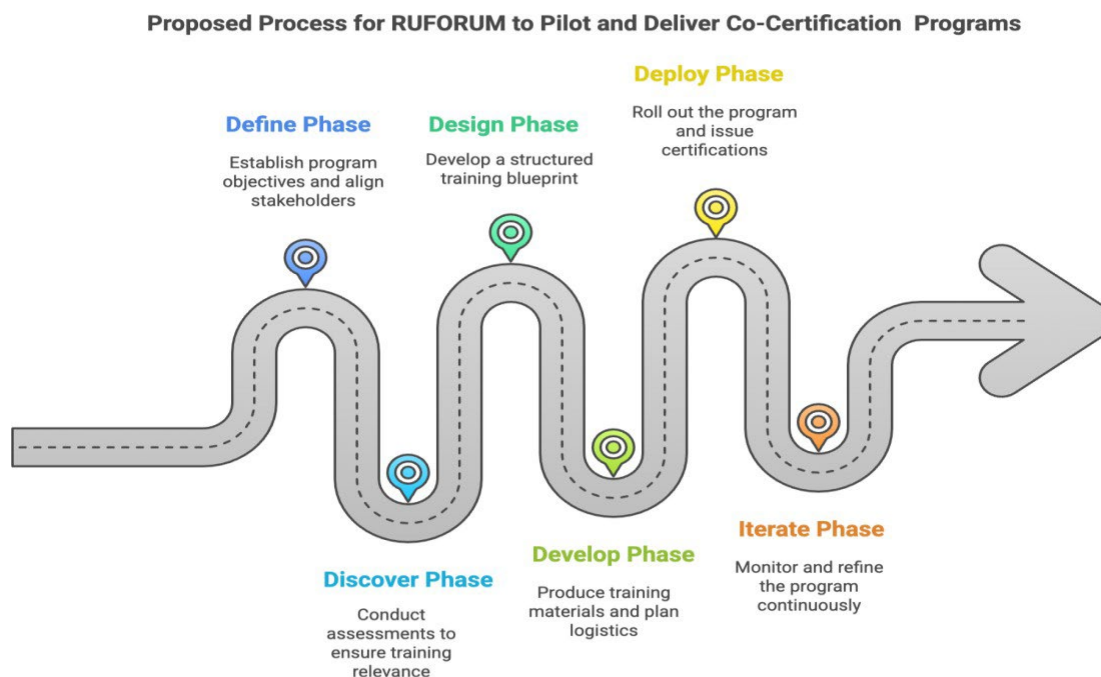


Figure 10: Proposed Process for RUFORUM to Pilot and Deliver Co-Certification Programs

### 5.2 Discover Phase

Before finalizing the training design, a thorough demand and supply analysis must be conducted in the pilot countries to ensure relevance and sustainability of the training. This involves:

- **Capacity Needs Assessment:** Understand the capacity needs of intended participants to design the training program.
- **Market Needs Assessment:** Engage with industry, employers, and potential trainees to



identify needs.

- **Institutional Readiness Review:** Evaluate partner universities' capacity to deliver the training (faculty, infrastructure, logistical support).
- **Feasibility Study:** Assess financial, and operational constraints of partners, as needed.

### 5.3 Design Phase

With insights from the discovery phase, RUFORUM and partners to develop a structured training blueprint, including:

- **Learning Objectives:** Clearly defined competencies and outcomes.
- **Curriculum Framework:** Modular course structure, session outlines, and pedagogical approaches.
- **Delivery Modalities:** In-person, Online or Blended (online + in-person), duration, and language considerations.
- **Assessment Criteria:** Performance-based evaluations aligned with quality standards.

### 5.4 Develop Phase

This stage focuses on material production and logistical preparation:

- **Training Resources:** Develop facilitator guides, trainee handbooks, multimedia content, and case studies.
- **Logistics Planning:** Readiness of training venues, equipment, and digital platforms (if hybrid).
- **Quality Checks:** Pilot-test materials with a small group for feedback.

### 5.5 Deploy Phase

The program to be rolled out with strict adherence to co-certification protocols:

- **Training Delivery:** Conduct sessions with certified trainers, ensuring consistency across locations.
- **Joint Certification:** Issue co-branded certificates (RUFORUM + University + International Partner) upon successful completion.
- **Documentation:** Maintain records for audits and future scaling.

### 5.6 Iterate Phase

Continuous monitoring and evaluation (M&E) ensure program improvement:

- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Collect trainee and trainer insights post-training.
- **Quality Audits:** Regular reviews of content, delivery, and certification processes.
- **Adaptive Management:** Refine the model based on M&E data before expanding to other regions.

### 5.7 Key Considerations for Successful Piloting

- **Geographical Selection:** Prioritize countries with strong RUFORUM partnerships and based on needs assessment.
- **Phased Scaling:** Start with 2–3 countries, then expand based on lessons learned.

This structured yet flexible approach ensures that the Level-1 short-term agriculture co- certification mechanism is practical, quality-driven, and primed for continental adoption. By rigorously testing the model, RUFORUM can refine its framework before introducing credit- bearing certifications (Levels 2 and beyond).

## 6. Conclusion & Way Forward

This scoping study highlights the urgent need for a standardized, widely recognized co-certification mechanism for short-term professional agricultural training programs across Africa. The current landscape is fragmented, with most certifications issued by individual universities only lacking portability, credit transferability, and alignment with national or continental qualification frameworks.

Key challenges include:

- Limited recognition of certificates beyond institutional, local or national borders.
- Absence of credit-based systems for short-term training, hindering academic progression.
- Regulatory misalignment between countries, restricting workforce and educational mobility.
- Resource constraints in delivering high-quality, demand-driven programs.

The proposed four-level co-certification model - ranging from foundational partnerships (Level 1) to continental alignment with the Africa Continental Qualification Framework (ACQF, Level 4) - provides a scalable pathway to enhance the credibility, employability, and mobility of agricultural co-certification and credits. RUFORUM is uniquely positioned to lead this initiative, leveraging its network of 170+ universities and partnerships with international organizations (e.g., CGIAR, FAO, WUR) to establish quality benchmarks and foster harmonization.

It is envisaged that the four-level co-certification framework will act as a dynamic system that will continuously evolve in response to multiple factors, including Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) outcomes of implemented training programs, changes in national regulatory environments, developments in continental policy frameworks, and other relevant operational parameters. This adaptive approach ensures the certification model remains responsive to both institutional needs and broader sectoral transformations across Africa's agricultural education and training landscape.

### 6.1 Way Forward

To operationalize the co-certification framework, the following steps are recommended:

#### **Pilot Implementation (Level 1)**

- Launch non-credit-bearing co-certification programs (RUFORUM + Partner University + International Organization) in 2–3 countries, as pilot in short-term.
- Focus on high-demand niche areas (e.g., agricultural innovation, climate-smart agriculture etc) with blended delivery modes.
- Develop digital certification and credentialing tools to track and verify certifications.

#### **Strengthen Partnerships**

- Formalize collaborations with national accreditation bodies (e.g., KNQA, SAQA) and continental agencies (ACQF, AfCFTA) for broader recognition in mid-term to long-term.
- Consider engaging industry stakeholders (e.g., agribusinesses, seed boards) to align training with workforce and market needs.

#### **Phased Scaling to Higher Certification Levels**

- Level 2 (Credit-Based): Integrate short courses into university credit systems, starting with select RUFORUM partners, once ready.
- Level 3 (National Alignment): Advocate for policy reforms to embed co-certifications in

National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) with RUFORUM and partner institutions.

- Level 4 (Continental Alignment): Work with the African Union to align with ACQF, enabling cross-border recognition.

#### **Sustainable Governance & Funding**

- Establish a RUFORUM-led Quality Assurance Mechanism to oversee standards, curricula, and accreditation.
- Explore revenue models (e.g., certification fees, partnership grants) to ensure long-term viability. Also, jointly work on proposals to secure funding from donors.

#### **Monitoring & Iteration**

- Conduct rigorous impact assessments of pilot programs to refine the model.
- Use stakeholder feedback to address challenges in credit transfer, regulatory compliance, and scalability.

By adopting this structured, collaborative approach, RUFORUM can transform short-term agricultural training into a powerful tool for Africa's agricultural revolution riding on knowledge and skills.

## Appendix 1: Summary of Review of Literature Done:

A review of the grey literature included consideration of qualification frameworks, credit transfer systems, and skills development in Africa and beyond, which provided valuable insights into short-term professional training program, higher education harmonization, accreditation, and lifelong learning. The review synthesizes key insights from global and African frameworks, national qualification systems, and institutional practices to inform the development of a co-certification model for short-term agricultural training programs in Africa. The focus is on credit transfer, quality assurance, and continental harmonization.

### European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)

The ECTS, as outlined by the European Commission, serves as a standard for credit allocation and recognition across European universities. The key features of ECTS includes: a) its learner- centered approach - credits reflect workload and learning outcomes, b) transferability - credit transfers are recognized across borders and c) quality assurance - linked to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). It enhances student mobility and transparency in higher education by allowing credits to be transferred between institutions and accumulated toward degrees. This model offers insights into structuring potential credit transfer mechanisms for African education and training systems. For more information, please visit: <https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/higher-education/inclusive-and-connected-higher-education/european-credit-transfer-and-accumulation-system>

### African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF)

The ACQF, which is under development to support harmonization in Africa's education and training systems, establishes guidelines for recognition and comparability of qualifications across countries. The report on ACQF development emphasizes the need for policy coherence, stakeholder engagement, and capacity building to ensure effective implementation and alignment with national qualification frameworks. For more information, please visit: <https://acqf.africa/>

### International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED)

Published by UNESCO, ISCED provides a globally recognized framework for classifying educational programs and levels. It facilitates international comparability of education systems and supports policy development in accreditation, quality assurance, and cross- border education recognition. For more information, please visit: <https://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/international-standard-classification-of-education-isced-2011-en.pdf>

### UNESCO Convention on Recognition of Qualifications in African States

This convention provides a framework for recognizing academic qualifications across African nations. It promotes student and labor mobility by establishing common criteria for assessing foreign qualifications and fostering mutual trust among education systems. For more information, please visit: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000372988?posInSet=1&queryId=N-EXPLORE-356ca9fb-761e-4741-84c9-21c6a956d4ea>

### Kenya National Qualification Authority (KNQA)

KNQA plays a critical role in overseeing qualifications for equating formal, informal, and non- formal learning in Kenya. It regulates, assesses, and recognizes qualifications within Kenya, contributing to regional mobility and employability. For more information, please visit: <https://knqa.go.ke/>

### Skills Initiatives for Africa

The Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) supports technical and vocational education and training (TVET)

programs to enhance employability and entrepreneurship. It aligns with broader continental strategies for economic development and workforce readiness. For more information, please visit: <https://skillsafrica.org/>

### **RUFORUM and Partner Universities**

RUFORUM (Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture) connects African universities to foster research, training, and development in higher education. Its network supports knowledge sharing, institutional collaboration and potential student and faculty mobility. For more information, please visit: <https://www.ruforum.org/our-member-universities>

### **Short Courses and Lifelong Learning Initiatives (RUFORUM University Partners)**

Short courses offered by RUFORUM university partners such as by Stellenbosch University and Elsenburg Agricultural Training Institute in South Africa highlight the importance of flexible, competency-based learning. These initiatives contribute to skills development, vocational training, and workforce preparedness, complementing formal higher education. For more information, please visit: <https://agric.sun.ac.za/short-courses/> and <https://www.westerncape.gov.za/agriculture/service/agricultural-training-institute>

### **Conclusion**

The review highlights the importance of current international, regional and national qualification frameworks, quality assurance, credit transfer systems, and short-term professional capacity development initiatives in creating a cohesive education ecosystem. Harmonizing policies, fostering institutional collaborations, and leveraging international best practices are essential for achieving academic and professional mobility, enhancing employability, and supporting sustainable development in Africa.



## Appendix 2: Key RUFORUM Partner University Survey and Secondary Research Results

**Countries Represented in Survey:** Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Uganda, Namibia, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, and Ghana.



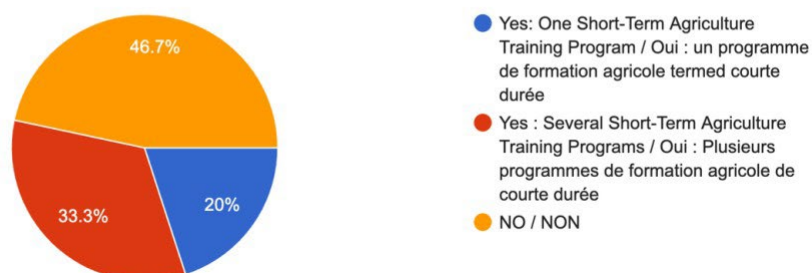
*Survey and One-to-One Meetings - Primary Research Countries (20 RUFORUM Partner Institutes in 15 Countries)*

### Key Findings from the Survey:

#### Short-Term Agriculture Training Programs

Do you run a short-term professional agriculture training program in your institute / university? In your institute/university, do you offer a short-term ...l training program related to agricultural themes?

15 responses



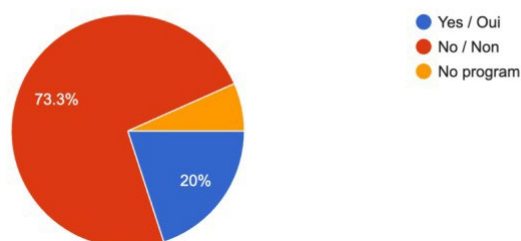
*Program Duration:* Short-term training programs ranges from three days to one year, with most programs lasting two weeks to three months.

*Average Participants Annually:* Varies widely; five to 200 participants per program. Mixed of students, professionals, government officials and others.

### Co-Certification Engagement

Are you currently engaged in co-certification with any other agency or organization, such as RUFORUM or anyone else? (Co-certification refers to...s or institutions for a course or training program)

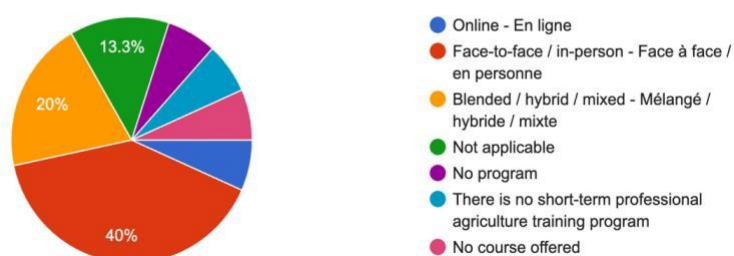
15 responses



### Training Delivery Mode

What is the mode of delivery for the short-term professional agriculture training programs offered by your institute or university? (eg, in-person, online, hybrid...institute/university? (e.g., in-person, online, hybrid)

15 responses

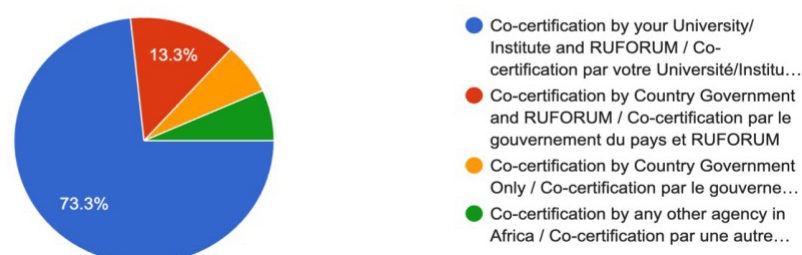


### Co-Certification Design Suggestions

- Steps proposed include stakeholder identification, partnership development, quality program development, QA, validation, and monitoring.
- Emphasis on national and regional accreditation bodies and digital platforms for scalability.

How do you think the co-certification mechanism for short-term professional agriculture training programs can be effectively designed and implemented...can be designed and implemented effectively?

15 responses



## Secondary Research of RUFORUM University Partners

The secondary research survey of selected RUFORUM university examined short-term professional agriculture training programs offered across Africa. The findings reveal that while many institutions provide certificate and diploma courses in agriculture, there are significant gaps in standardization,

certification recognition, and collaborative frameworks.

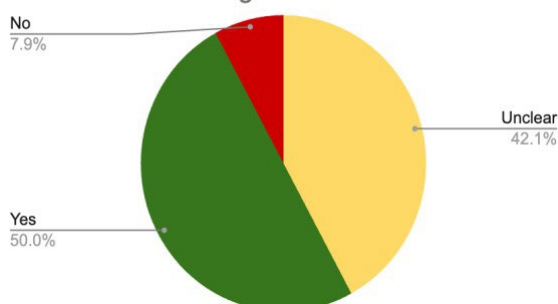
Of the 36 universities surveyed, around 50% confirmed offering short-term agriculture training programs, while around 42 % had unclear or missing data. Programs typically range from two weeks to one year, with face-to-face delivery being the most common mode, though blended learning is gaining traction. Certification is primarily issued by the universities themselves as certificate of participation, with very few cases of co-certification with external bodies like NGOs or industry. Challenges such as low recognition of certifications across borders and inconsistent credit systems further hinder the scalability of these programs.



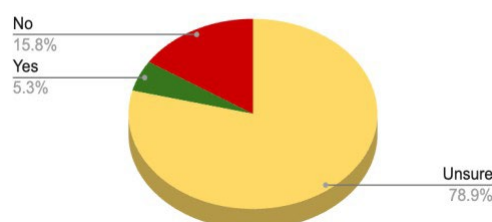
*Secondary Research Countries (36 RUFORUM Partner Institutes in 19 Countries)*

The research underscores opportunities for strengthening short-term professional agricultural training through enhanced collaboration, standardized program structures, and greater adoption of digital and hybrid learning models. Expanding partnerships with accreditation bodies could improve the credibility and impact of short-term agriculture courses, ensuring they meet regional labor market demands and contribute effectively to Africa’s agricultural innovation and developmental goals.

Short Courses in Agriculture and Allied Fields



Any courses on agricultural innovation ?



### Appendix 3: Key Takeaways from One-on-One Consultation Meetings with RUFORUM and Its Partner Universities:

#### University of Eldoret, Kenya

##### Current Certification Model:

**i. Program Offerings:**

- Short-term courses focus on seed science, horticulture, and general agriculture, tailored for industry professionals and similar stakeholders. Other such short-term programs are also offered for different stakeholders.

**ii. Certification Process:**

- Certificates are issued by the university only.
- Limited recognition beyond the university, except for seed science courses endorsed by KEFIS (Kenya's seed regulatory body).
- No credit integration: Certificates are seen as "participation proof" rather than academic credits for higher education progression.

**iii. Challenges:**

- Lack of standardized credit transfer mechanisms to diplomas/degrees.
- Limited local/global recognition of certificates (except seed science).
- Certificates are valued for upskilling but lack portability or alignment with industry/licensing requirements.

## **Suggestions/ Feedback on Proposed Co-Certification Model**

**i. Benefits of Co-Certification:**

- **Enhanced recognition:** Partnerships with reputed bodies (e.g., RUFORUM, International Seed Testing Association) could boost credibility across Africa/globally.
- **Credit portability:** Align with academic systems (e.g., credit accumulation for diploma/degree pathways).
- **Industry alignment:** Model after professional certifications where employers prioritize well known co-certified candidates.

**ii. Key Partners Suggested:**

- **Regulatory bodies:** KEFIS (seed science), horticulture export agencies.
- **International agencies:** e.g., GlobalGAP (horticulture standards), ISTA (seed testing).
- **Employers:** Seed/horticulture industries to co-design skill-based curricula.

**iii. Recommendations:**

- **Modular credit system:** Design tiered certifications (NQF Levels) for progressive credit accumulation.
- **Quality assurance:** Collaborate with RUFORUM to standardize training and ensure compliance with global benchmarks (e.g., seed production, horticultural exports).
- **Marketing value:** Position co-certification as a gateway for job opportunities and international trade (e.g., certified seed exporters).

## **University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria**

### **Current Certification Model by the University**

**i. Program Offerings:**

- Short-term courses (3 weeks to 12 months) in agribusiness, poultry, fisheries, crop

management, and post-harvest technology, tailored for professionals, students, and farmers.

- Modes: Primarily face-to-face, with hybrid options for busy participants.

**ii. Certification Process:**

- Certificates are issued by the university senate, with no formal co-certification partners.
- Non-credit courses: Most short-term programs (e.g., 3-week certificates) lack academic credits; only longer diplomas (12 months) may include credits.
- Limited recognition: Certificates are valued for skill-building but lack portability or alignment with national/international standards.

**iii. Challenges:**

- Inconsistent demand: Enrolment fluctuates based on sponsor interests / financial concerns.
- Low global acceptability: Certificates are not widely recognized beyond Nigeria.
- No credit transfer: Short courses cannot be used for academic progression (e.g., master's degrees).

### **Proposed Co-Certification Model**

**i. Benefits of Co-Certification:**

- Enhanced recognition: Partnering with RUFORUM and other bodies (e.g., International Partner, National Board for Technical Education, Agricultural Society of Nigeria) would boost credibility across Africa.
- Credit portability: Design credit-bearing short courses to enable academic progression.
- Standardization: Harmonize curricula with continental priorities (e.g., climate-smart agriculture, AI in agribusiness etc).

**ii. Key Partners Suggested:**

- National: National Universities Commission (NUC), Agricultural Policy Research Network.
- Regional/International: RUFORUM, FAO, CGIAR (for technical input), and Africa Continental Qualifications Agency.

**iii. Implementation Strategy:**

- Pilot phase: Collaborate with select institutions in Anglophone/Francophone Africa to test curricula.
- Stakeholder workshops: Engage deans of agriculture, farmers, and policymakers to align content with workforce needs.
- Long-term scaling: Institutionalize co-certification through national regulatory bodies (e.g., NUC) over 3–5 years.

**iv. Challenges Ahead:**

- Regulatory hurdles: Requires approval from Nigerian authorities (e.g., NUC) for credit integration.
- Awareness gaps: Need campaigns to attract youth/farmers to short courses.

## **University of the Free State, South Africa**

### **Current Certification Model by the University**

**i. Program Offerings:**

- Short-term courses focus on practical, field-based training (e.g., artificial insemination, sustainable farming, agribusiness) for students, small-scale farmers, and commercial farmers.
- Modes: Primarily face-to-face, with limited hybrid options.
- Duration: Ranges from 1-hour sessions to 11-month programs, with most programs lasting 6–8 weeks (upskilling) or 3–6 months (reskilling).

**ii. Certification Process:**

- Certificates are issued by the university, often as attendance-based (non-credit) or skill-specific (e.g., pregnancy diagnosis certification for entrepreneurship).
- Some programs can combine into diplomas but lack formal credit integration.
- No co-certification currently, though collaborations (e.g., with Standard Bank) involve co-branding.

**iii. Challenges:**

- Limited credit transfer: Short courses are non-credit-bearing; credit accumulation is capped at 25% for exit-level programs in formal qualifications.
- Low portability: Certificates lack recognition outside South Africa due to misaligned qualification frameworks.
- Inconsistent demand: Enrolment depends on sponsor interests and participant needs.

**iv. National Frameworks:**

- Governed by SAQA (South African Qualifications Authority) and CHE (Council on Higher Education).
- TVET (QCTO) programs exist but are siloed from higher education; agriculture-specific TVET collaborations are minimal.

## **Proposed Co-Certification Model**

**i. Benefits of Co-Certification:**

- Enhanced recognition: Partnering with RUFORUM and other institutions could standardize certifications continent-wide.
- Credit pathways: Design programs with modular credits to enable credit transfer within institutions.
- Specialization: Focus on niche areas (e.g., gene editing, climate-smart agriculture etc).

**ii. Key Recommendations:**

- Pilot phase: Start with RUFORUM-linked programs and align learning outcomes with SAQA frameworks.
- Collaborative design: Involve industry bodies (e.g., agribusiness, banks) and African universities to ensure relevance.
- Quality assurance: Mirror formal program accreditation processes for short courses.

**iii. Operational Considerations:**

- Flexibility: Tailor programs to target audiences (e.g., farmers vs. entrepreneurs) with clear learning outcomes.
- Balanced partnerships: Avoid over-complication by limiting collaborators to essential

stakeholders (e.g., RUFORUM + host university + one industry partner).

- RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning): Use short courses to meet admission requirements for formal diplomas/degrees.

**iv. Challenges Ahead:**

- Policy barriers: South Africa’s 25% credit cap and lack of seamless inter- university credit transfer limit scalability.
- Alignment with ACQF: Continental qualification frameworks (e.g., Africa Continental Qualifications Framework) are still evolving.

## University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe

### Current Certification Model by the University

**i. Program Offerings:**

- Short-term courses: Limited to farmers (e.g., 2-week certificate of participation programs focused on improving agricultural production).
- No specialized short courses for professionals (e.g., extension workers, entrepreneurs).

**ii. Certification Process:**

- Certificates for farmers are issued by the university (attendance-based, non- credit).
- Modular system: Only formal programs use credit-bearing modules aligned with Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE) standards and not short-courses.

**iii. Challenges:**

- Limited short-term programs: No offerings for professionals or credit-based short courses.
- Rigid approval: ZIMCHE mandates strict approval for all modules/courses, limiting flexibility.

### Proposed Co-Certification Model

**i. Opportunities:**

- High demand for upskilling: Staff and professionals need short-term, skill- specific programs (e.g., lab techniques, machinery use).
- Modular flexibility: Existing modular system can integrate co-certified programs with RUFORUM.
- Credit portability: Zimbabwe’s credit transfer framework supports cross- university recognition.

**ii. Key Recommendations:**

- Specialized programs: Focus on high-end, niche areas (e.g., climate-smart agriculture, digital tools) rather than generic topics.
- Harmonization: Align with ZIMCHE standards and RUFORUM’s regional framework to ensure local and continental recognition.
- Customization: Tailor programs to Zimbabwe’s socio-economic needs (e.g., drought-resistant crops, value-chain development).

**iii. Implementation Steps:**

- Partner with RUFORUM for co-branded certifications, leveraging its regional network.



- Design credit-bearing modules that fit into existing university structures.
- Involve ZIMCHE early to streamline approvals and ensure compliance. Submit co-certified modules to ZIMCHE for accreditation.

**iv. Challenges Ahead:**

- Regulatory hurdles: ZIMCHE's strict approval process may slow down new program adoption.
- Resource gaps: Need for dedicated RUFORUM staff to manage co-certification logistics.

## University of Bamenda, Cameroon

### Current Certification Model by the University

**i. Program Offerings:**

- Short-term courses cover agricultural value chains, processing, marketing, mechanization, and extension services.
- Duration: Typically 2 weeks, delivered via face-to-face or blended modes.
- Target beneficiaries: Farmers, unemployed youth, and professionals seeking upskilling.

**ii. Certification Process:**

- Certificates are issued solely by the university (no external co-certification).
- Some university programs offer credit transfer to other Cameroonian universities (not short-term programs).

**iii. Challenges:**

- Limited external recognition: Certificates lack acceptance outside Cameroon.
- Resource-intensive: High costs for practical training (e.g., equipment, field visits).

### Proposed Co-Certification Model

**i. Benefits of Co-Certification:**

- Enhanced recognition: Partnering with RUFORUM would boost credibility across Africa.
- Capacity building: Requested train-the-trainer programs to improve faculty skills.
- Mobility: Facilitate credit transfer and employment opportunities for graduates.

**ii. Key Recommendations:**

- Credit integration: Can design credit-bearing modules aligned with RUFORUM and local needs.
- Industry collaboration: Involve agribusinesses for practical training and certification.
- Government engagement: Partner with Cameroon's employment and vocational training agencies for wider reach.

**iii. Implementation Steps:**

- Pilot high-demand programs (e.g., agri-processing, mechanization) with RUFORUM.
- Align curricula with national priorities (e.g., youth employment, food security).
- Advocate for policy support to formalize co-certification frameworks.

**iv. Challenges Ahead:**

- Regulatory gaps: No existing national framework for short-course accreditation.

- Funding: Need for external support to offset training costs.

## UM6P (University Mohammed VI Polytechnic), Morocco

### Current Certification Model

- No Active Programs Yet:** UM6P has not yet started any short-term agricultural training programs. The planned institute, CAFA (African Institute for Agricultural Training), is expected to begin operations next year.
- Focus Areas:** Proposed programs may include agriculture mechanization and related fields, but details (e.g., credit-based systems, certification authority) remain undefined.
- Limited Information:** Due to the early stage, UM6P lacks concrete data on course structure, target audiences (students, professionals, farmers), or duration (envisioned as 3 days to 1 year).

### Proposed Co-Certification Model

- Objectives:**
  - To enhance recognition and acceptability of certifications across Africa and globally.
  - Promote cooperation, transparency, and quality assurance among institutions.
  - Explore credit transfer mechanisms for mobility between African universities.
- Partnership Scope:**
  - Collaboration between UM6P, RUFORUM and potentially other international bodies (e.g., CGIAR, FAO).
  - Flexibility in the number of partnering institutions, but emphasis on maintaining quality ("too many cooks spoil the broth").
- Program Design:**
  - Short-term (3 days to 1 year) certificate/diploma programs in agriculture and related domains.
  - Practical, field- or lab-based training.
- Benefits for UM6P:**
  - Opportunity to design programs "from scratch" with co-certification in mind.
  - Increased credibility and alignment with international standards.

## Pwani University, Kenya

- Existing Short-Term Programs:**
  - Offers face-to-face, practical-based courses in agriculture, including:
    - Animal Sciences: Artificial insemination (AI), poultry production.
    - Crop Sciences: Landscape management (previously offered).
  - Duration: Typically short-term, with no online/blended options currently.
- Certification Mechanism:**
  - Certificates are issued solely by Pwani University; no external or co-certification bodies are involved.
  - Some programs (e.g., animal health) align with national regulatory bodies (e.g., National

Veterinary Board) for professional licensing.

**iii. Target Audience:**

- Local participants, including students, working professionals, and youth seeking employment/entrepreneurship.

**iv. Challenges:**

- Declining enrolment over time due to limited outreach beyond local areas.
- Lack of international recognition or standardized credit systems.
- No integration with online platforms or blended learning models.

**v. Value Addition:**

- Certificates aid in securing training roles with NGOs or self-employment but lack broader financial/credit benefits (e.g., bank loans).

### **Proposed Co-Certification Model**

**i. Objectives:**

- Enhance recognition of certifications across Africa/globally.
- Improve mobility and credit transfer between universities.
- Integrate practical, field-based training with standardized curricula.

**ii. Potential Partners:**

- RUFORUM: Seen as a key partner to leverage its network of African universities and best practices.
- International Bodies: Collaboration with entities like FAO, CGIAR, International Universities for global credibility.

**iii. Benefits of Co-Certification:**

- For Participants: Increased employability, international marketability, and access to credit-based systems.
- For Pwani University: Curriculum improvement, attracting international students, and aligning with Kenya's TVET (Technical and Vocational Education) framework.

**iv. Proposed Structure:**

- Credit-Based System: Accumulating credits from short courses (e.g., 3 credits for a 1-month AI course) toward diplomas/degrees.
- Flexible Delivery: Introduce online/blended models to widen participation.
- Multi-Logo Certificates: Include Pwani University, RUFORUM, and other partners to boost credibility.

**v. Challenges to Address:**

- Aligning with national accreditation bodies (e.g., Kenya National Qualifications Authority).
- Ensuring quality assurance across partner institutions.

## **National University of Agriculture, Benin**

### **Current Certification Model**

**i. Limited Short-Term Programs:**

- No formal short-term agricultural courses currently offered.
- Focus on soft skills and entrepreneurship (e.g., business planning, financial management) in partnership with NGOs (e.g., Dutch organizations) and internships.
- Duration: Varies (e.g., one-week intensive training to 6-month programs).

**ii. Certification Mechanism:**

- Certificates issued by partner institutions (NGOs, international collaborators) rather than the university.
- No co-certification models in place; accreditation is limited to formal degrees (BSc/MSc/PhD).

**iii. Challenges:**

- Process Barriers: Lack of institutional frameworks to design/approve short courses.
- Demand and Resources: Limited demand from professionals; unclear financial/resource allocation.

### **Proposed Co-Certification Model**

**i. Opportunities:**

- Enhanced Partnerships: Collaboration with RUFORUM and international bodies could boost credibility and visibility.
- Entrepreneurship Focus: Aligns with existing training in agribusiness and practical skills.
- Credit Integration: Potential to link short courses with national/continental qualification frameworks for credit transfer.

**ii. Proposed Structure:**

- Partners: RUFORUM (for pan-African reach) + Benin's national accreditation bodies (if developed).
- Delivery: Blend face-to-face, online, and field-based learning.
- Target Groups: Students, professionals, and entrepreneurs.

**iii. Challenges to Address:**

- Process Clarity: Need clear guidelines on co-certification requirements and university policies.
- Resource Mobilization: Financial and administrative support for program design and accreditation.
- Demand Creation: Market short courses to local/regional professionals and agribusinesses.

## **Makerere University, Uganda**

### **Current Certification Model**

**i. Limited Short-Term Programs:**

- Short-term agricultural courses only occur on ad-hoc or project-based (e.g., partnerships with NGOs/international institutions).

**ii. Certification Mechanism:**

- Certificates issued by Makerere or partner institutions, but no standardized co-certification.

- Approval Process: Short courses require internal university approval; formal degrees need National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) accreditation.

**iii. Challenges:**

- Structural Barriers: Bureaucracy, lack of incentives for faculty, and centralized revenue pooling limit scalability.
- Fragmented Recognition: Certificates lack continental acceptance; no robust credit-transfer system akin to the EU framework.
- Resource Constraints: Infrastructure and staffing gaps hinder efficient delivery.

**iv. Target Audience:**

- Primarily students (credit-bearing modules) and farmers (non-credit training). Limited engagement with professionals.

**Proposed Co-Certification Model:** Could not be discussed due to time constraints.

## Africa University, Zimbabwe

### Current Certification Model

**i. Short-Term Programs:**

- Existing Courses: Focus is on practical, production-oriented training (e.g., poultry production, mushroom farming, artificial insemination).
- Duration: Typically 3–5 days, blending theory (online) and practical (on-campus/field-based) components.
- Target Audience: Farmers, students, entrepreneurs, and vulnerable communities.

**ii. Certification Mechanism:**

- Certificates issued solely by Africa University; no formal co-certification with external bodies.
- Industry Partnerships: Proposed collaborations (e.g., Pig Industry Board, dairy associations) to enhance credibility but face competition concerns.

**Challenges:**

- Resource Constraints: High costs for digital platforms (data expenses), limited trainer capacity, and infrastructure gaps.
- Demand & Funding: Low enrolment thresholds (15–20 participants) required for affordability; reliance on donor funding.
- Fragmented Recognition: Certificates lack continental acceptance; no credit-transfer system.

**Value Addition:**

- For Farmers: Improved productivity.
- For Entrepreneurs: Income-generating skills.
- For Students: Supplementary knowledge (non-credit).

### Proposed Co-Certification Model

**i. Opportunities:**

- RUFORUM Partnership: Leverage RUFORUM’s reputation for pan-African recognition and quality assurance.
- Industry Integration: Partner with national bodies (e.g., dairy associations) to align training with labor market needs.
- Digital Delivery: Expand online theoretical components to reduce costs and increase accessibility.

**ii. Proposed Structure:**

- Partners: Africa University + RUFORUM + industry bodies (e.g., Pig Industry Board).
- Credit System: Advocate for Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE) approval to integrate credits into national frameworks.
- Flexible Models: Stackable credentials (e.g., accumulate credits for diplomas) and hybrid delivery (online + practical).

**iii. Benefits:**

- For Participants: Enhanced employability, continental recognition, and credit portability.
- For Africa University: Increased enrolment, revenue, and alignment with
- Zimbabwe’s skills development goals.

**iv. Challenges to Address:**

- Policy Alignment: Secure ZIMCHE approval for credit-based certifications.
- Capacity Building: Train faculty for high-demand courses (e.g., genomics, climate-smart agriculture).
- Demand Creation: Market programs to professionals and agribusinesses.

## University of Namibia, Namibia

### Current Certification Model

**i. Short-Term Programs:**

- Demand-Driven: Courses are primarily requested by government institutions (e.g., ministries) and focus on practical skills (e.g., animal feed formulation).
- Duration: Typically 3–5 days, delivered face-to-face or blended (online + practical).
- Non-Credit Bearing: Certificates issued are "attendance-based" and not accredited by the Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA).

**ii. Certification Mechanism:**

- Sole Issuer: Certificates are provided solely by the university; no co-certification with external bodies.
- Challenges:
  - Lack of standardized accreditation for short courses.
  - Limited industry recognition beyond Namibia.

**iii. Target Audience:**

- Government officials, farmers, and private sector professionals.
- Value Addition: Skills enhancement for job efficiency, though some participants seek certificates for promotions.

**iv. Challenges:**

- Logistics: High costs for field-based training and equipment access in remote areas.
- Funding: Reliance on external grants; low enrolment due to participant-paid models.
- Policy Gaps: No clear pathway to integrate short courses into Namibia's National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

**Proposed Co-Certification Model**

**i. Opportunities:**

- RUFORUM Partnership: Leverage RUFORUM's network for pan-African recognition and curriculum design support.
- Industry Alignment: Collaborate with regional bodies (e.g., FAO, SARUA) to enhance credibility.
- Flexible Delivery: Hybrid models (online theory + in-person practicums) to reduce costs.

**ii. Proposed Structure:**

- Partners: University of Namibia + RUFORUM + international agencies (e.g., CGIAR).
- Phased Approach:
  - Phase 1: Non-credit co-certification to build trust and demand.
  - Phase 2: Credit integration via NQA approval for stackable credentials.

**iii. Benefits:**

- For Participants: Continental recognition, improved employability.
- For University: Increased enrolment, alignment with Namibia's vocational training authority (NTA).

**iv. Challenges to Address:**

- Policy Harmonization: Engage NQA and NCHE (Namibia Commission for Higher Education) to approve credit transfer mechanisms.
- Capacity Building: Train faculty for high-demand topics (e.g., climate-smart agriculture).
- Demand Creation: Market programs to private sector and NGOs through RUFORUM's platform.

## **Egerton University, Kenya**

**Current Certification Model by the University**

**i. Types of Courses Offered:**

- Short-term professional courses in agriculture (e.g., GIS, water resources, artificial insemination) are offered.
- Most courses are delivered in a blended format (face-to-face and online), with some being purely face-to-face (e.g., artificial insemination).
- Duration varies from two weeks to three months.

**ii. Certification Mechanism:**

- Certificates are issued solely by Egerton University, with no co-certification from national or international bodies.



- The Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQA) equates training levels but does not co-certify courses.
- For long-term programs (e.g., master's degrees), collaborative certifications exist with other universities under RUFORUM and international partnerships.

**iii. Challenges:**

- Funding: Short courses rely on external funding or participant payments, affecting consistency.
- Competition: Government support for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions has shifted demand away from university certifications.
- Credit Transfer: Lack of alignment between TVET and university credit systems hinders mobility.
- Legal Barriers: Universities cannot directly access TVET funding or offer certain professional licenses (e.g., seed inspection).

**iv. Target Audience and Motivation:**

- Participants include farmers, government extension officers, students, and agripreneurs.
- Motivations range from knowledge acquisition to career advancement and entrepreneurship.

## **Proposed Co-Certification Models**

**i. Collaborative Institutional Model:**

- Multiple partners or universities (e.g., RUFORUM members, Wageningen University) jointly develop curricula, deliver courses, and issue certificates.

**ii. RUFORUM as a Facilitator:**

- RUFORUM could act as a quality assurance body, providing content, assessment frameworks, and teacher training, while universities handle accreditation.

**iii. Pilot Approach:**

- Start with non-credit co-certification (e.g., logos of RUFORUM, Egerton, and Wageningen on certificates).
- Gradually transition to credit-based systems after pilot success and institutional approvals (3–12 months).

**iv. Inclusion of Other Agencies:**

- National Bodies: KNQA, Kenya National Innovations Agency, or TVET Authority for broader recognition.
- International Partners: FAO, CGIAR, or Inter-University Council for East Africa to enhance credibility and continental mobility.

**v. Benefits of Co-Certification:**

- Increased enrolment due to collaborative appeal.
- Enhanced credibility and portability of qualifications across Africa.
- Access to high-end resources (e.g., CGIAR labs for gene editing practical's).

**vi. Challenges to Address:**

- Sustainability without external funding.
- Lengthy institutional approval processes for credit integration.
- Harmonizing assessment standards across institutions.

## Meeting and Consultation with RUFORUM

### Current Role

#### ***RUFORUM's Current Role:***

- Acts as a facilitator for capacity development programs across its 175+ member universities in Africa.
- Develops cross-cutting courses by leveraging expertise from member institutions.
- Offers certificates of participation/completion.

#### ***Existing Programs:***

- Focus on Training of Trainers (ToT) and workshops for university staff and students, with some openness to civil society and government participants.
- Courses are delivered via blended methods (online and face-to-face workshops), often targeting niche or emerging topics.

### Discussion on Proposed Co-Certification Models

#### ***Quality Assurance Framework:***

- RUFORUM could establish quality standards for courses (e.g., curricula, assessment methods) without directly working as an accrediting institution.
- Partner with universities to align courses with national/continental frameworks (e.g., African Continental Qualifications Framework, once operational).

#### ***Collaborative Certification:***

- Could offer joint certification with specialized institutions (e.g., CGIAR, Wageningen University, FOA) for niche areas (e.g., gene editing, agri- innovation).

#### ***Pilot Approach:***

- To start with non-credit co-certification (e.g., RUFORUM + university logos) for selecting high-demand courses.
- Gradually integrate credit systems by partnering with universities' academic boards.

#### ***Centralized Database:***

- Explore the possibility of creating an "academic bank of credits" to track certifications and enable cross-institutional recognition.

### Strategic Recommendations discussed during the Meeting

#### ***RUFORUM as a Catalyst:***

- Position RUFORUM as a continental leader in harmonizing agricultural education standards, particularly in short-term training programs.
- Focus on niche, future-oriented courses (e.g., digital agriculture, climate resilience) where member universities lack capacity.

#### ***Partnerships:***

- Collaborate with CGIAR, FAO, and international universities to enhance course credibility and resource sharing.
- Engage national bodies (e.g., Kenya National Qualifications Authority) for local alignment.

#### **Funding and Sustainability:**

- Develop a revenue-sharing model (e.g., certification fees) to fund quality assurance processes.
- Seek donor support by framing the initiative as transformative for Africa's agricultural education.

#### **Long-Term Vision:**

- Build a brand around "RUFORUM-certified" courses, ensuring continental recognition.
- Advocate for integration with the African Continental Qualifications Framework, when operational.

## **Discussion Pointers During One-To-One Meetings with RUFORUM and Its Partner Universities**

### **Current Certification Model of Short-Term Professional Agriculture Courses**

1. Which type of short term professional courses do you run in agriculture (face-to-face, online, blended, practical-field-lab based / theoretical)? What is the average duration / duration range of these short-term courses?
2. What is the certification mechanism for these courses? Who offers certifications?
3. Is there a co-certification of these short term agricultural programs? If so, then with whom ? (Institution name / co-certification body)?
4. Who are these courses targeting (e.g. students, working professionals or both)? From within your country or beyond?
5. Why do participants take these courses? What is the value add? Only knowledge or job, or part of credit, or any other benefits? Any statistics or data available on the outcomes as mentioned above?
6. What are the major challenges these short-term agriculture courses face? What are the issues and challenges with the current certification mechanism of these agriculture courses?
7. Is there a professional training qualification and certification mechanism in the country? - Like National Skills Qualification Framework etc? Any government department or commission or anything else?



## **Suggestions on the Proposed Co-Certification Mechanism**

1. Would co-certification help your organization and trainees? YES/ NO. Please explain your answer- If YES then why (benefits) and if NO then why (disadvantages)?
2. How should this co-certification be done ? Proposed model according to you?
3. Do you see RUFORUM as a co-certification agency with your institute? If yes then why? What benefits or values will they bring to the table? If not then why?
4. How do you suggest a credit-based co-certification with RUFORUM be done in your country?
5. Which other agencies could be co-certification bodies in your country and your organization and why? (Any university, any international institute, any government department such as NSQF, any government department etc, intercontinental qualification agency such as ACQF etc).
6. Any other suggestions on co-certification of short-term professional programs with RUFORUM?



## Appendix 4: Presentation of Co-Certification Model to RUFORUM Partner Universities

A comprehensive presentation on the proposed co-certification model was delivered to RUFORUM partner universities, with guidance and oversight from RUFORUM and DeSIRA-LIFT officials on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2025. The session highlighted the framework's objectives, operational structure, and anticipated benefits for enhancing the recognition and portability of short-term professional agricultural training certifications across Africa.

### Key Responses from Partner Universities

- **Endorsement of the Model:** Principals, deans, and academic leaders from participating RUFORUM partner universities expressed strong support for the proposed co-certification system. They emphasized its potential to standardize qualifications, portability, and foster collaboration among institutions.
- **Request for Framework Development:** Universities urged RUFORUM to take the lead in formalizing a standardized framework, including curricula guidelines, quality assurance mechanisms, and credit transfer protocols etc. This framework would ensure consistency and scalability across member institutions.
- **Call for Immediate Implementation:** Participants advocated for a phased rollout, beginning with pilot programs in select universities, to test the model's feasibility and refine processes before wider adoption.

### Lessons from Existing Collaborations

Several universities shared insights from national-level consortia, where alliances between institutions have successfully harmonized curricula, however certification is offered by respective university only.

### Next Steps

RUFORUM will consolidate feedback, finalize the co-certification framework, and initiate partnerships with universities for pilot implementation. Regular consultations with stakeholders will ensure the model remains responsive to regional needs and global best practices.

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