

RUFORUM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023 AT YAOUNDE, CAMEROON- REPORT

BY ONYANGO LILIAN, MSC AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT EGERTON
UNIVERSITY

Themed “*Transforming Higher Education to Sustainably Feed and Create Prosperity for Africa*,” the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), 19th AGM, held at *Palais des Congres* between October 28th –November 2nd 2023, presented an opportunity for young change makers like me to share our journeys of impact and change. The AGM which brought together educators, researchers, policymakers, and stakeholders from across Africa created a forum for African change makers to collaborate and exchange ideas on better moves to forge Africa ahead.

The AGM was comprised of different and insightful plenary sessions, panel discussions, collaboration and networking opportunities, all geared towards promoting sustainable higher learning and agri-food systems in Africa. High level meetings like Ministerial Round Table Discussions, Deans and Principals meetings, numerous side events, exhibitions and poster presentations, all occurred during the historic 2023 AGM. The event was officially opened by Hon. Minister of Higher Education on behalf of President. Paul Biya which was graced by different officials from the government of Cameroon.

Selected and sponsored by RUFORUM, I was privileged to attend the event as a delegate and given an opportunity to participate in a panel discussion themed “**Young people creating value and taking responsibility of their society’s future**”. I was specifically tasked to talk about my journey as a MasterCard@RUFORUM scholar and the role of the youths in Climate Change adaptation and Mitigation action in Kenya.



The Youths for Green Action Kenya (YGAK) is a wholly youth-led Non-Governmental Organization seeking to position the youths at the center of environmental action. The organization believes that the youths have the capacity to drive change with regards to climate action agenda. The organization ensures collaborative engagement with other organizations, institutions of higher learning, corporate organizations and individuals towards promoting environmental conservation. Lilian Onyango has been a board member of YGAK and has spearheaded Egerton University students' participation in climate action as volunteers. The organization has successfully planted over 200,000 tree seedlings in the Counties of Narok, Nakuru, Mombasa, Kakamega and Kisumu within three years and collected over 10 tons of wastes in our different cleanup activities. This has been possible with partnership with different institutions, organizations and individuals. Egerton University through the TAGDev program has facilitated YGAK tree planting activities in Narok, Kakamega and Mombasa Counties.

Sharing my work as a young African involved in championing climate action was received with positivity and through this, I was able to build more networks to help me continue with my championship journey. This event challenged me to put more efforts in championing climate change adaptation and mitigation. I am inspired by the RUFORUM's commitment to support young change makers like me to help build the Africa that we want, a food secure Africa, a learned Africa and a calm and resilient Africa that is able to deal with the effects of climate change. I appreciate the RUFORUM and Egerton University teams for their unwavering commitment and support towards the journeys of the young.

