AFRICAN RURAL UNIVERSITY
for HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
Awakening the sleeping genius in each of us

EDUCATION MODEL OF THE AFRICAN RURAL UNIVERSITY



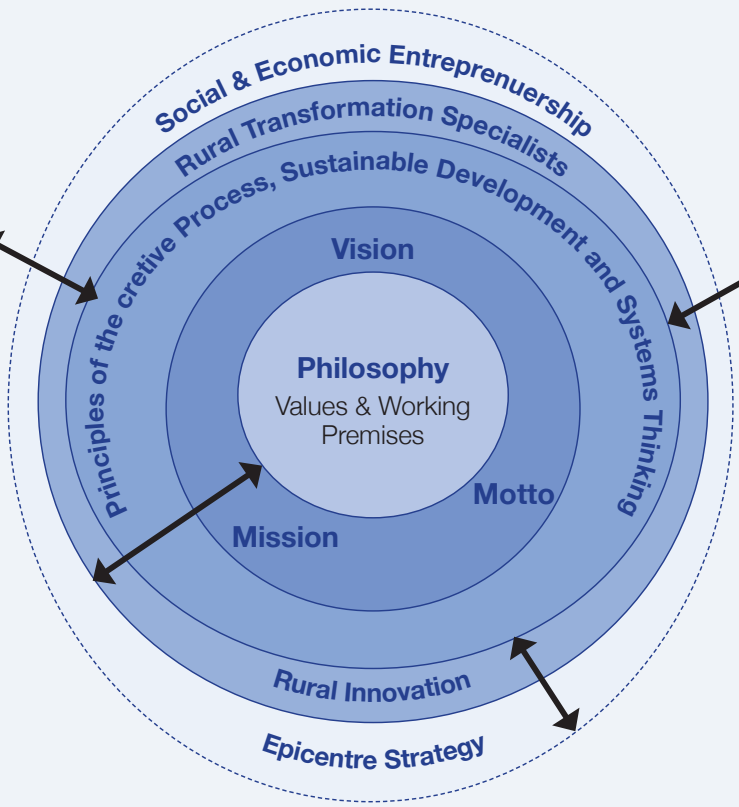



Primary agents:

- Lectures
- Communities
- Local Governments
- Traditional Wisdom Specialists
- Other URDT Institutions

ARU's products:

- Human Capital and
- Rural Transformation



Secondary agents:

- Higher Education Institutions & Agencies
- Central Government & Agencies
- Civil Society Organizations
- Regional Agencies





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@ African Rural University

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1 INTRODUCTION

African Rural University (ARU) is a value-based, all-women university that creates a discipline of professional rural transformation specialists: change-makers and agents that work within the African development context.

ARU's graduates call for a re-orientation of the mindset and generate energy around visions and possibilities, rather than problem-solving. The graduates enable the rural people to move from dependency to independency to sustainability and interdependency, Ubuntu: I am because you are, hence we care for self, others and our mother earth.

The University has a strong foundation: 25 years of successful rural development work by the Uganda Rural Development Training Programme (URDT). An indigenous NGO that founded ARU.

The 1987 Articles of Association mandated URDT to establish a rural university ''comprising disciplines which develop the full potential of the people, especially the young, to strengthen the social and economic structures at the rural and national levels". URDT is a close partner to ARU in participatory action research, placements of students in rural communities and advocating for the African Renaissance.

The preparations for ARU started in 2002. Various documents describe the co-creating process that involved multiple teams and diverse stakeholders.

In 2011, ARU enrolled its first students as soon as it received a provisional license from the National Council of Higher Education. Ever since ARU has seen steady progress towards becoming the University it aspires for: a conduit for the socio-economic system's change in Africa.

Often ARU gets the question: ''what is your education model"? Our generic answer is that the model is based on the University's values, vision, mission and working premises.

1. This document goes a step beyond and answers the following questions:
2. What is a value-based University?
3. Why an all-women university?
4. Why a rural setting?
5. What are ARU's vision and mission?
6. What does the ARU offer to the world?
7. How does ARU measure its success?
8. What is a rural transformation specialist?
9. How does ARU equip students to become rural transformation specialists?
10. What are ARU's partnerships?

The ARU model is depicted in the diagram on the front page. It shows in the middle its core: ARU's values and working premises. The philosophy gives rise to the other parts of the model and their relationships.

In this document, each part of the model is described from the inside out and keeps on adding more details. At the end of the documents, the full model is presented.

We thank all our co-creators, partners, sponsors, graduates, colleagues and community members for their invaluable contributions to establishing a unique venture for creating a world of health, happiness, peace, prosperity and freedom on the African continent.

The African Rural University: the cradle of creating.





2 A VALUE-BASED UNIVERSITY

ARU considers itself value-based because it:

- has a deep sense of purpose rooted in its values and working premises,
- aligns its students, staff and other stakeholders around a shared vision of what it wants to deliver: rural transformation specialists,
- shapes its destiny and consistently creates its aspired future around its vision and mission,

Philosophy
Values & Working Premises

- contributes to African Renaissance: programmes of African Philosophy (UBUNTU) and indigenous, traditional wisdom on culture, social anthropology and natural resources management.

Values

Ideally, ARU's values and working premises should determine its choices and actions. This so-called *underlying structure* is not seen but exists and manifests itself as the organisational culture.

In search of a handle for change at ARU, we don't focus on events, but we go deeper and examine patterns of behaviour and related values. So, we pay attention to the *underlying structure* where changes happen.

The leaders of ARU are key in nurturing the values (and related virtues and principles) as it determines the behaviour of its students, staff and governing bodies. The values should be sharped at all levels to ensure harmonious and effective working relationships.

ARU's values include:

- **Respecting Life:** Nurture the dignity of all beings. Recognize their interdependence and that all forms of life have value. To treat all living beings with respect and consideration.
- **Health:** Holistic well-being (physical, spiritual and mental health).
- **Freedom:** The ability to make choices (fundamental, primary and secondary choices) in favour of one's aspirations.
- **Peace:** Living the highest in each of us. The total of this implies a wholeness of harmonious relationships, other life, and the larger whole of which all are part.
- **Being creators:** Bringing into being that which does not exist yet rather than spend energy on solving problems.
- **Being true to oneself and others:** Make an honest assessment of reality and take actions without fear of favour for the good of a larger goal.
- **Creating and adjusting:** The focus remains on the vision and mission of ARU, but the course of action can change if this appears to be more effective.
- Eliciting peoples'abilities and commitment to service.
- Starting from where the people are and building on that to create shared structural tension.

Working premises

ARU uses the following five working premises that inform the ideology of the University.

1. **The people of Africa, like the people world over, are key to their own development.** African development professionals teach and learn with members of communities, while the people remain the driving force in all the work that is planned and accomplished. The benefits are:
   - Africans know more about their continent as most have lived a rural life. They know the culture and the people better than expatriates and they are not as costly. Locally available resources, including local experts, are utilized first. This makes lasting change more likely, fosters ownership to take root, and is much less expensive.

- Because development professionals live and work with the villagers, monitoring and evaluation of progress are ongoing, flexibility exists to make any necessary adjustments quickly, and therefore, the likelihood of success is increased.

2. **Lasting change occurs when people shift from reacting to events to being creators of their own circumstances.** The students, and through them the communities, are introduced to the principles of the creative process. Its key elements: vision, corresponding current reality, and the resultant structural tension. Together with the community, students generate result-oriented action plans using systems thinking. This creates self-generating development with the people both as objects and subjects of change.

3. **Education, training and information sharing are key ingredients in the development process**. ARU partners with URDT (the owners): 'to have a cyclic, or in a more fundamental way, a spiral action of learning and experimentation with the communities as social laboratories, collective reflection, redesign of programmes or interventions and relearning'. Hence tools and platforms such as community radios, community barazas, community dialogues and stakeholder sessions shall be employed in addition to published works.

4. **People have innate power, wisdom and authority, which they can tap, to transform the quality of their lives and that of their communities**. Students learning integrates traditional wisdom and indigenous knowledge. They tap into their inherent capacities and learn to shift from dependence to interdependence (ubuntu).

5. **People who share a common vision can transcend traditional barriers and prejudices caused by tribal, religious, political and gender differences and work together to achieve that which is truly important to them all**. This helps people rise above simplicity, pettiness and harness collective energy around what they want to create.

An all-women university

Research confirmed what the founders experienced through years of community work: the transformation of a home, community, or nation to be healthy, happy and prosperous, starts with educating women. The African Rural University recognizes and awakens the value of women in their multiple roles: teachers, managers, producers (reproductively and productively), negotiators, academics, politicians, peacemakers, leaders and above all as a humanist.

Hence, the URDT Board made a conscious choice to offer *an education continuum* from primary, secondary and tertiary education that produced women *change-makers as* all these levels. ARU graduates cause *system change* in whatever setting they are working.

They gained skills in strategy development and planning for rural transformation, management of projects and relationship building that is founded on care for self, others and the planet. Where resources allow, URDT offers the ARU graduates a job to practice their newly gained skills and sharpen them further while serving their country as rural transformation specialists. Details of the Education for Rural Transformation Value Chain are explained ahead.

Rural setting

In line with ARU's aspiration to become a centre of national and international rural development *practitioners*, the University is located far from the capital in rural Kagadi, in the Bunyoro region of Uganda.

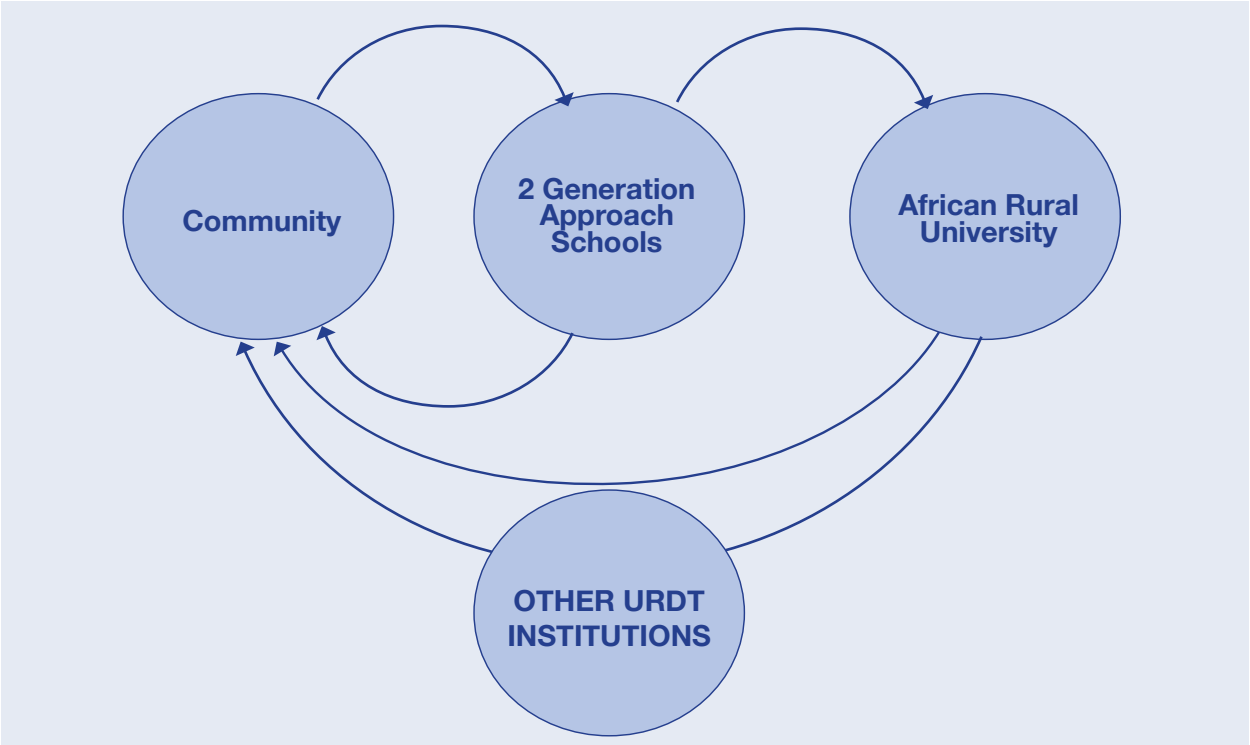
This enables the University to tap into the wisdom of rural transformation specialists, educate rural women, carry out research in the rural socio-economy, pilot test and disseminate new technologies, understand the climate change in the community and work closely with local governments towards the human rights-based approach towards programming and planning.

ARU's research agenda underscores and contributes to new soft and hard technologies in rural transformation that it disseminates through its students.

Education for Rural Transformation Value Chain

The URDT Schools enable young women from the community to access the 2 Generation Approach to education. It enables girls to become visionary leaders and change-makers in their homes. After completing A-levels, they join the University.

After graduation, they go back as Rural Transformation Specialists to work with the communities through the Epicentre strategy. As co-creators, the gradates also give feedback on the relevancy and application of competencies gained and do participatory action research. The model homes of the URDT Girls School students host ARU students during their field practicum and internship.





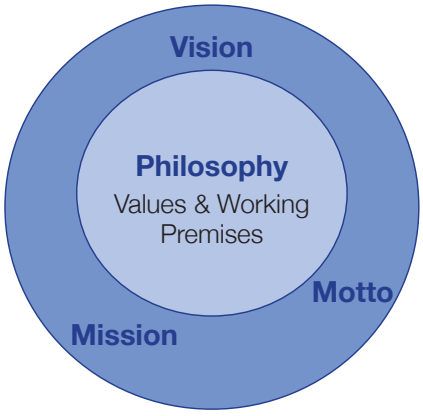
3 VISION, MISSION AND MOTTO

Societal vision

ARU's values and working premises give rise to its vision of society: A world where people live in freedom, peace, health, happiness and prosperity. People take care of themselves, others and the earth that provides all we need for our well-being.

Organisational vision

ARU's organisation vision describes the vehicle it



wants to be to achieve its mission and societal vision. This vehicle is: a value-based all-women university that offers a professional discipline in Rural Transformation. It has:

- Governance and Management systems that nurture and promote participatory decision making, transformational education, training and endogenous knowledge development.

- Products which include community practice, publications, public lectures, library, Rural Transformation Specialists, participatory action research that uses a methodology based on the visionary approach.

- Professional Board of Trustees, Council, Staff and Promoters grounded in the principles of the creative process, disciplines of a learning organization and holistic development.

- A sustainable resource base and collaborates with public, private and academic institutions, Civil Society Organizations and the donor community that share a similar philosophy of empowerment of rural people for self-reliance.

Mission

The African Rural University for Women provides transformational education to create effective change leaders within an African development context.

ARU applies theoretical learning, innovative instruction, and field practice, so that ARU graduates can create conditions for rural people to improve their lives, transform their communities, awaken inherent leadership and increase their capacity for self-generating and sustainable change.

Motto

ARU's motto is: awakening the sleeping genius in each of us.





4 THE OFFERING: DELIVERABLES TO THE WORLD

Rural transformation as a discipline

The African Rural University offers tertiary education that equips women to enable the transformation of the rural areas of Africa into societies collectively define, plan and work towards their aspirations, care for self, others and mother earth so to ensure peace, prosperity, health, happiness and freedom for all.

ARU's proposition to the world is rural transformation specialists as a professional discipline. It offers a Bsc

ARU's products:

- Human Capital and
- Rural Transformation

in Technologies for Rural Transformation; a BSC in Rural Development; Bsc in Sustainable Agriculture; a Diploma course in Entrepreneurship & Business Management. In the future, related Post Graduate Diplomas and Master of Science programmes.

Five pillars of sustainable rural development

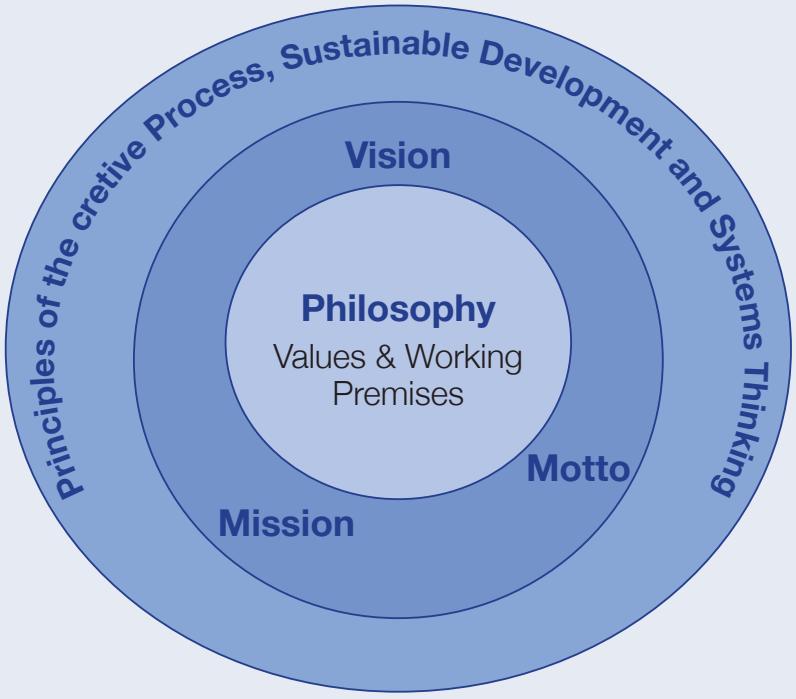
ARU considers the following pillars as key to sustainable, rural development.

1. **Ecology:** Sustainable Agriculture; Renewable energy; Transportation; Human settlements; Nutrition based agriculture; Environmental (management) ethics.
2. **Economics:** Ecological economics; care economies and other new economic models.
3. **Social justice:** gender equality and equity; public medicine & health; Education for social transformation; participatory action research
4. **Culture:** African Philosophy; Indigenous people; Indigenous science and technology
5. **Political:** Good governance; human rights-based approach to programming and planning; Africa and democracy; Citizenship and civil participation.

Measures of success

Apart from their areas of specialisation, each course offers three fundamental results whereby it is expected that the graduates disseminate the three masteries (3Ms) in their work and to others:

1. Mastery of the Principles of the Creative Process
2. Mastery of Systems Thinking
3. Mastery of Sustainable Development



The specific measures of success are given in the next section.

The Rural Transformation Specialist (RTS)

A rural transformation specialist is a person who graduated from ARU with a unique set of competencies. These include:

- **Visionary leadership:** a fundamental shift from the problem-solving to the creative orientation life orientation. RTS have a clear vision of what they want to create at any moment in life, in any situation. Whether it is while designing in rural development plan at the local government level, a community action plan, or in their personal life. They made an honest assessment of the situation as it is with what they want to create. By holding the current reality and vision at the same time they experience structural tension that provides the energy to work towards their vision (natural law of tension that seeks resolution). Once the vision is achieved it becomes part of the current reality. They ask: what is next that we want to create together? This is the basis of sustainable development at all levels.

- **Systems thinker and knowledgeably** about the pillars of sustainable development. This makes her equipped to design and mentor sustainable development interventions at the village level and beyond (see below under technical skills).

- **Entrepreneurial skills:** graduates also see possibilities and design something new. They have skills in structural thinking, preparing (business) plans, managing projects, marketing, monitoring and ably communicate achievements and lessons learned.

- **Technical skills** to facilitate transformation processes in rural communities and local governments. Hence, they are skilled in the design of sustainable development interventions, community action planning, research, know the basics of regenerative farming as a business, nutrition and nutrient-rich crop farming, water and environmental sanitation, how to set up savings and loans associations and appropriate rural technologies.

An ARU Graduate is known for her specific attributes that make her a Rural Transformation Specialist. These include:

- **Vocation for rural areas:** she has a calling, she is a caring person who works from the heart. She has enthusiasm, love for rural women, passion for rural communities, the liking, the choosing and capacity to live in rural areas and determination to take care of mother earth as a provider of all our resources. They work with community members as co-researchers and see the community as a source of wisdom and innovation.

- **Passionately promotes the visionary approach and working premises of ARU:** she works and makes decisions with the desired end result in mind. For effective strategizing, she holds both the vision and current reality together to determine actions and ways to mobilize local resources. She is an activist for women empowerment and gender equity. She believes and shows that people are key to their development.

- **Structural thinking:** her analytical capacity goes beyond looking at events and seeks patterns of behavior and the underlying structure. She raises beyond traditional prejudices like gender, age, ethnicity and religion; embraces unity in diversity. She is conscious about unlearning to learn and rises above prejudices and tests assumptions (URDT, 1988).

- **Innovative:** she sees unusual connections; she creates new technologies or modifies existing ones to find solutions to achieve her vision.

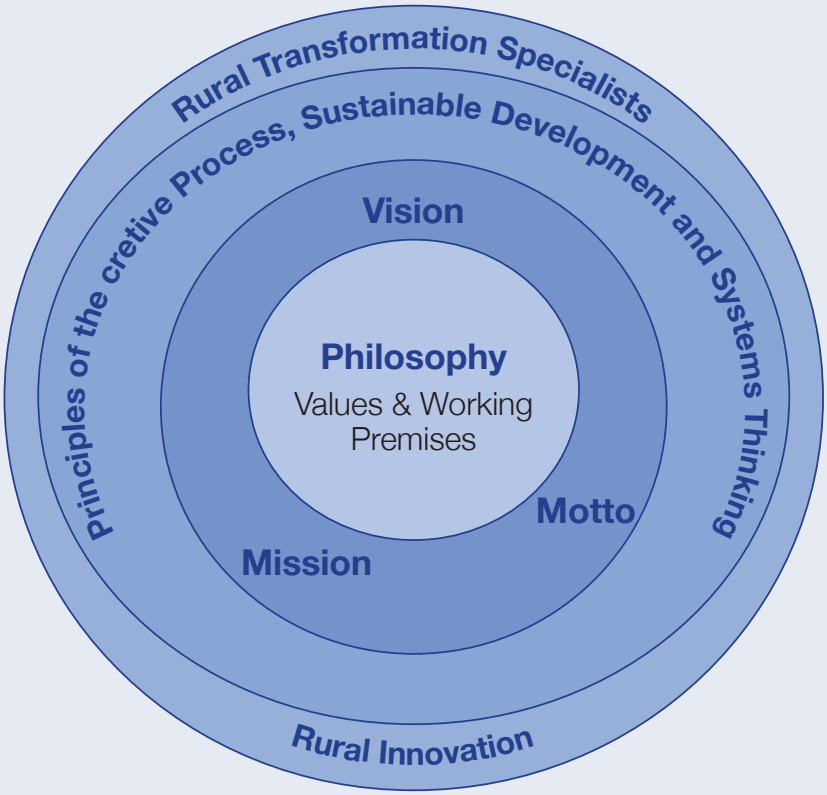
- **Academic Leadership:** She generates and disseminates new knowledge and shares it willingly with others. She has the skills to analyze and manage data. Her decisions and reports are based on evidence. She interacts with communities, fellow students, supervisors and disseminates research findings through various fora.

- **Political leadership:** She knows how power is acquired and partners with others for the benefit of the people.

- **Self-management:** she is **r**eliable, self-driven, result-oriented, recognize inherent resources one has and those available, efficient, committed and works with less or no supervision.

- **Adequate interaction and exposure to a rural environment:** She has continuous hands-on experience, engaging and interacting with the community she intends to serve.

ARU aspires to have a strong Alumni Association and a student tracer system that continuously updates the content and delivery of the courses offered at ARU.





5 MODE OF DELIVERY

How learners become rural transformation specialists

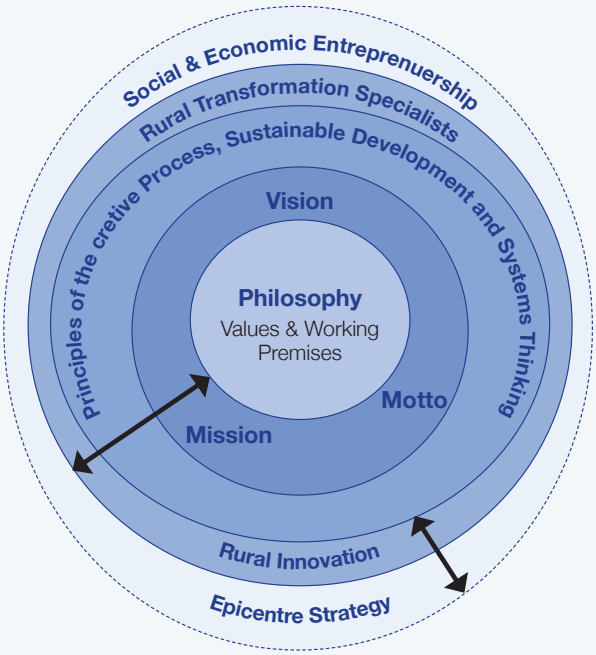
ARU's curriculum has the following features:

- 60% theoretical and 40% practical.
- Interdisciplinary. It reflects the real world and disciplines that are essential to be effective change leaders in a rural setting: a combination of Science, Technology, Engineering, Math and Social Sciences (also called ''soft technologies"). This creates an all-around professional specialised in the three masteries and the specific course-related subjects.
- The principles of creating is a basic, fundamental course mandatory to all learners and staff offered through lectures, on-line training, reading, daily foundation courses and continuous practice.
- During the Community Practicum, students are hosted by the families whose daughters study at the URDT Girls School. Through the 2Generation approach, parents play a mentoring role as they are practicing in real life: the Principles Of Creating,

Systems Thinking and the five pillars of Sustainable Development. The home offers an experience of rural community engagement that is essential for bonding with community members. Students use the host families, of which some are already leaders, to reach other members of the village.

- The rural communities are the *social laboratories* of the University: insights of participatory action research are fed back into the course design and methods of delivery. It is also used to advocate for systems change in the education sector and national development policies.
- Apart from seasoned academicians, the University works with locally resident *Traditional Wisdom Specialists* (TWS). They are their co-researchers and trainers to mainstream indigenous knowledge and promote cultural, natural and historical heritage.
- E-learning and other innovative learning methods. Examples: the one-month village practicum and one-year internship where students stay in a rural change maker family affiliated with the URDT Girls school. They work closely with gradates of ARU who have a mentoring role.
- Participatory action research. She learns to create conditions for rural people to improve their lives, transform their communities, awaken their inherent leadership and increase their capacity for self-propelling, sustainable development.
- Women circles. A method to study and practice structural thinking, leadership, poetry, appreciate the role of friendship and surprise in the creative process of social development and the ethics that this involves.

How ARU contributes to Africa's Development



As shown earlier, there is a cyclic relationship between the communities and the University: students are drawn from the villages through URDT's work and institutions.

Through the 2-generation approach to education, girl-students become change-makers in their homes and villages. After graduation at ARU, they get deployed to serve community-based institutions as Rural Transformation Specialists (that we refer to as Epicenter Managers). This is a unique niche in the African Development Processes. The Epicentre Managers are both change-makers and agents who demonstrate the effectiveness of the ARU methodology in human and rural transformation. Their end game is rural innovations for the well-being of people and the planet. They also increase gender equity and the pool of socio-economic entrepreneurs.

Hence the University has significant relevance to the African Renaissance where UBUNTU ("I am, because you are") is the driving force for planning and action.



6 PARTNERSHIPS

Co-creation

ARU is an innovation created through a process of multiple partnerships that make co-creating contributions. These include the founders of URDT, visionaries, amplifiers and collaborators that include the Committee for the establishment of ARU, the ARU Council, Faculty, Students and Parents.

ARU has a special co-creating relationship with the African Food and Peace Foundation (AFPF) that supported URDT since its inception. AFP is based in the USA and provides remarkable inputs on the design, modes of delivery and resource mobilization for the University.

How ARU relates to its operating environment

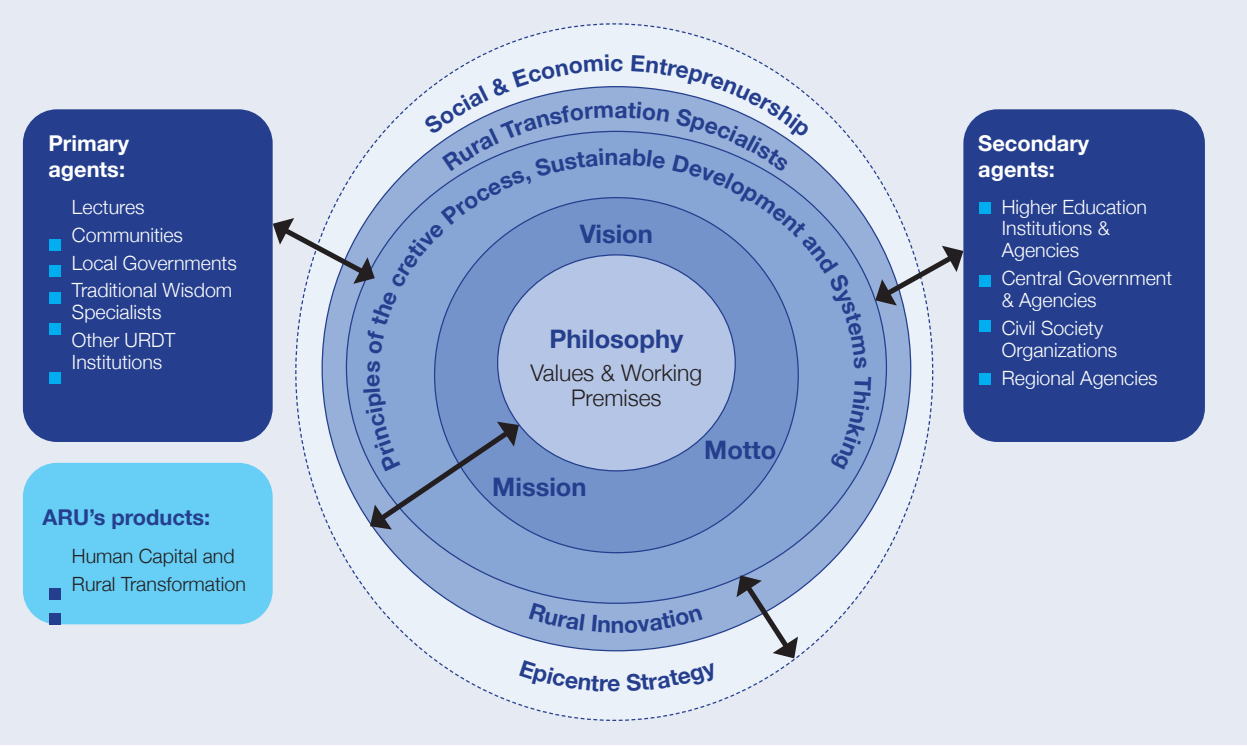
ARU appreciates that it is not an island. Apart from partnerships with its co-creators, it collaborates with others that hold financial, legal and political influence on its success.

ARU's primary agents are students, lecturers, Traditional Wisdom Specialists, parents, Council members, communities and local agencies where ARU and the graduates work.

Key are URDT and its institutions in action research and advocacy. URDT schools generate change-makers committed to joining ARU (education continuum) as described in more detail earlier on.

ARU's secondary agents include: Higher Education Institutions and Agencies Government Agencies, Civil Society Organisations and the Private sector. They are all acknowledged in their roles in the African Renaissance.

THE ARU EDUCATION MODEL IN FULL



OUR PARTNERS

African Food and Peace Foundation

Mustardseed Trust

Uganda Rural Development & Training Programme(URDT)
Home of Innovators in Education & Sustainable Development

St. het bosje

Social Initiative

Triodos Foundation

Uganda Vice Chancellors' Forum

NATIONAL COUNCIL for HIGHER EDUCATION

STICHTING ELIMU FOUNDATION

FORD FOUNDATION

RENU

Uganda Quality Assurance Forum (UUQAF)






AFRICAN RURAL UNIVERS
(ARU)
KAGADI - KIBAALE


ARU Mission







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