

# Views from NEPAD Agency: Collaboration for Research Infrastructure Sharing



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# Presentation Outline

1. NEPAD Agency programmes for leveraging research infrastructure
2. Models used
3. Key lessons learnt
4. The way ahead



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# NEPAD Agency Programmes

- NEPAD Agency implementation of the CPA
  - Africa Biosciences Initiative (ABI)
    - **Establishment of regional networks of centers of excellence**
    - **Hub and node approach**
    - **Sharing of resources**
      - Human
      - Facilities
      - Financial



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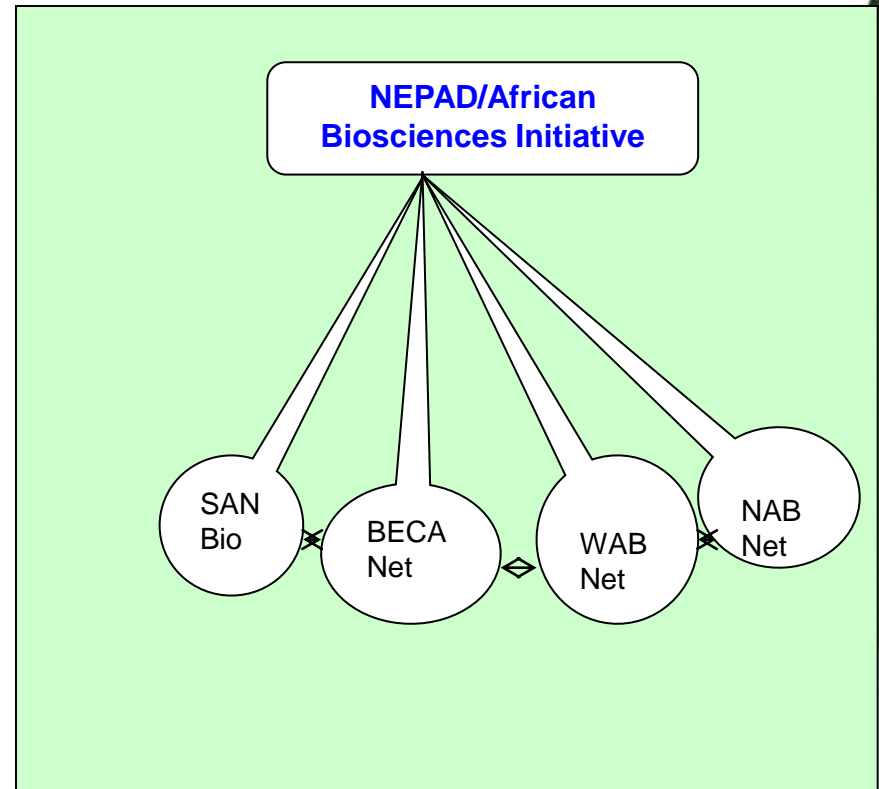
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# Networked laboratories

- **Southern African Network for Biosciences**
  - CSIR hosting the hub
  - 6 nodes
- **Biosciences east and central Africa Network (BECA)**
  - ILRI hosting the hub
  - 5 nodes
- **West Africa Biosciences Network**
  - ISRA hosting the hub
  - 3 nodes
- **North Africa Biosciences Network**
  - NRC in Egypt hosting hub
  - 4 nodes



# Other Networks of centers of excellence

- Africa Biosafety Network of Expertise (ABNE)
- Networks of water centers of excellence
- ALC
- African Mathematical Sciences Network (AMINet)



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# Models used by the NEPAD Agency to support research infrastructure

- Two specific models used within the **Centers of Excellence Approach**:
  - Opening up of **existing research infrastructure** for regional use (e.g. CSIR, NRC, ISRA.....)
  - Creating of **new research infrastructure** (e.g. BecA – ILRI & University of Mauritius)



# Using existing infrastructure

- Focus is on a specific project
- A case of SF 2000 (Zambia) whose validation has been made possible by utilizing infrastructure available in the region & shared human resource
- A more sustainable focus:
  - Utilization of existing facilities means no additional cost for infrastructure development and maintenance
  - Intra-regional collaboration based on identified needs and available resources
  - More result oriented



# New/upgraded research infrastructure

- New and upgraded facilities
- A case of the BecA Hub - with a wider focus on biosciences research
  - Projects of the hub in collaboration with other regional institutions
  - Opened up for use within and beyond the region (at a fee)
- Sustainability based on:
  - Integration of additional costs to the host institution for maintenance
  - Creation of ownership and support within the region





# Key lessons learnt

- Sustainability
  - Move beyond spontaneous establishment of RI
  - Need to focus on long-term goals on how the research infrastructure can make an impact on livelihoods
- Importance of matching needs and availability ensures impact
  - Utilization focused development of research infrastructure
- Importance of knowing where the facilities are and how they can be opened up for regional use – to facilitate access (Importance of building on the existing efforts of CAAST-Net and PAERIP)



# The way ahead

- Within the NEPAD Agency
  - Establishment of Centers of Excellence Unit within the NSTIH
    - Focus on both content of research and making effective use of available research infrastructure



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# The way ahead (2)

- Promotion of utility focused research infrastructure development based on:
  - **Internal learning** - lessons acquired overtime in implementation of programmes on the continent
  - **Peer learning** - What is happening elsewhere



# The way ahead (3)

## Steps towards impact focused research infrastructure development

1. Clear definition of the need for research infrastructure development
  - in what areas? Where is the need?
2. Matching the need to what is available and identifying the gap
3. Supporting the strengthening of networks for ensuring sharing of resources
4. Identification of strategies for filling the gap in research infrastructure



# Conclusion

- Two important aspects
  - Making the most of the available (optimizing use) while we focus on new facilities
  - Impact focused development of research infrastructure



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# Thank you



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