



A Network for the Coordination and Advancement of Sub-Saharan Africa-EU Science and Technology Cooperation

**RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE WORKSHOP OF LESSONS
LEARNED FROM SPECIFIC BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL S&T
ACTIVITIES BETWEEN EUROPE AND AFRICA**

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Table of contents

Preamble	3
I Ethics	5
II Partnership within a project	6
III Results of a project: ownership/dissemination	7
IV Sustainable action after the termination of a project	8

FINAL

Preamble

The notion of a partnership between countries or continents can take a long time to materialise. **Bilateral relations** between **Europe**, a former colonial power, and **Africa**, formerly colonised by Europe, have been affected by the history of colonialism. In the era of postcolonialism, Europe's relationship with Africa has often been based on development assistance, which has excluded any idea of cooperation.

New political configurations in Africa and Europe have helped to promote a more accurate image of each other. Relationships, which have been marred by history, are now driven towards a more strategic vision based on a partnership with shared objectives. The creation of regional or continental structures like the African Union (AU, 2002), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) reflect the drive towards new partnerships in Africa.

Science and Technology (S&T) entered rather late in the field of development between Europe and Africa. In Lisbon, Portugal in December 2007, Heads of State from Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa made a pledge to adhere to the principles of a partnership that promotes the ideals of an equal relationship between Africa and the rest of the world, thus opening a new page of relations between the two regions. An important outcome of this summit was the approval of a special partnership on science, information society and space. S&T are now recognised as key vehicles for reducing poverty, ensuring sustainable socio-economic development, helping to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and ultimately making Africa a prosperous continent which plays a major role in the governance of the global community.

Moreover, African policymakers have taken steps to formulate a good science policy that will provide visible results in the continental framework and help to address Africa's relatively low research capacity. Thus, the Consolidated Plan of Action in S&T made by the AU and NEPAD, and the creation of the African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology (AMCOST) and the African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE) are examples of **African political will to make S&T a means of achieving the objectives of growth and development through the pooling of resources.**

The scientific collaboration between Europe and Africa is evident at several levels, including bilateral and multilateral, and is achieved through several programmes and instruments. The Framework Programme (FP) of the European Union (EU), the European Development Fund and various cooperation agreements between the EU and Africa are some examples.

In order to successfully address the challenges of scientific collaboration between Africa and Europe, we have to learn from the different actions carried out in its framework and work out the best practices.

CAAST-Net (A Network for the Coordination and Advancement of Sub-Saharan Africa – EU Science and Technology Cooperation) project is an INCO-NET action of the EU. It was set up to establish a structured dialogue between the EU and Sub-Saharan African States. It brings together key actors of cooperation in science and technology from Europe and Africa and aims to create conditions for this dialogue on S&T.

A workshop of lessons learned from specific bilateral and multilateral S&T activities between Europe and Africa was designed by CAAST-Net and organised by the Institute for Research

for Development (IRD), France, and the Ministry of Scientific Research, Senegal, in November 2010 in Marseille, France.

Representatives from Africa and Europe with extensive experience in bilateral and multilateral cooperation projects shared their experience and knowledge to identify best practices and recommendations promoting effective cooperation within a project between the EU and Africa.

The objective of the workshop was to analyse the existing practises within EU-African S&T cooperation projects and to capitalise on the experience of the actors involved in such projects for future S&T cooperation initiatives within the FP and beyond.

The workshop addressed a number of issues which are considered crucial for ensuring a successful S&T cooperation, and most particularly between Europe and Africa. These issues cover important dimensions of S&T cooperation during the different phases of a project (from the preparation to the implementation and the sustainability of the action):

- **The ethics dimension;**
- **The construction, organisation and deontology of the consortium;**
- **The joint ownership and the dissemination of the project results;**
- **The impact of capacity building in S&T cooperation projects;**
- **The sustainability of the results and the partnerships.**

This document of recommendations is aimed at stakeholders of projects targeting EU-Africa S&T cooperation. It provides concise and targeted information (drawn from practical cooperation experiences) which has the potential to make significant improvements to future initiatives.

I Ethics

Ethical conduct plays a major role in ensuring that S&T progress benefits humanity as a whole. The relevance of ethical conduct should be highlighted when S&T cooperation between Europe and African countries takes place.

Science, technology and innovation are essential factors to promote sustainable development in Africa, including poverty reduction and sustainable economic growth. The development of S&T strategies will only succeed if built on strong ethical foundations. These foundations are debated worldwide and the need for global governance of science has been advocated by several ethics bodies.

Recommendations

- ▶ **Develop awareness campaigns and capacity building exercises about national and international legal and ethical instruments.**
- ▶ **Harmonisation of national and international legal instruments is needed.**
- ▶ **Evaluate the compliance with traditional customary law.**
- ▶ **Share benefits: technology transfer and inappropriate inducement are taken into account.**
- ▶ **The responsibility of researchers (emancipatory research?) is claimed.**
- ▶ **Produce a broad framework for ethical issues.**
- ▶ **Importance of respectful dialogue should be observed.**

II Partnership within a project

Building-up multi-stakeholder partnerships between Africa and Europe around S&T is not always an easy task. Important challenges need to be addressed, such as the wide disparity of the state-of-the-art in S&T between countries and partners. At the same time, major global challenges such as climate change, poverty, infectious disease, threats to energy, food and water supply, et cetera, cannot be addressed without effective S&T collaboration. This collaboration requires working in close partnership with southern scientific communities.

Furthermore, becoming a partner of a project entails numerous opportunities. These opportunities include access to networks, new ideas, expertise, markets and target groups. Working in partnership also increases the influence on policy and decisionmakers, as well as access to new funding opportunities.

Recommendations

- ▶ **Conduct the search of partners with defined objectives on a selected scientific topic that meets the capacity of the proponent and the interest of future partners.**
- ▶ **African ICPC partners should be more active and take the initiative of elaborating proposals, search for new partners and conduct their own projects.**
- ▶ **A leader has to take the initiative: the coordinator has a central role.**
- ▶ **Partners have to be pro-active and quick to respond to solicitation.**
- ▶ **No passive attitude is acceptable.**
- ▶ **Partnerships should be complementary in order to build a long-term vision.**
- ▶ **Raise the relevance of the research question addressed in Framework Programme Seven (FP7) for Africa.**
- ▶ **Raise the question of equal partnership, especially through infrastructural investment.**

III Results of a project: ownership/dissemination

Sharing and disseminating the results of S&T collaboration are key factors to ensure a fruitful cooperation. Nonetheless, they raise complex issues such as ownership, intellectual property rights and scientific communication.

To encourage ownership, the cooperation needs to be balanced. It should allow both European and African partners to be equally involved in drawing up the project and to benefit from its results. Dealing with Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues requires the set-up of clear and firm rules at the beginning of the project. The dissemination of scientific results calls for a strategic plan, together with an collaborative methodology.

The consortium agreement ensures ownership and shared benefits within a project.

Recommendations for ownership

- ▶ **Use the existing platforms and FP7 structures (eg NCP-INCO, the INCONTACT and ESASTAP support actions, and the IPR Help Desk) to assist Third Country (African) project participants (notably in organising specific IPR workshops).**
- ▶ **Promote the organisation of consultative workshops on IPR challenges and best practices by coordinators of International Scientific Cooperation (INCO) projects.**
- ▶ **Create the formation of a “FAQs” addressing Third Country IPR issues.**
- ▶ **Promote the engagement of Third Country representative organisations in development of a model of consortium agreements.**

Recommendations for dissemination

- ▶ **Dissemination is one of the main instruments for innovation as it is an investment which must be available to enhance opportunities and knowledge.**
- ▶ **Design a detailed “dissemination plan” and “strategy plan” focused on the target group and the message that will be transferred.**
- ▶ **Take into account the local conditions when designing the dissemination plan.**
- ▶ **Dissemination is a process, and this process needs to be embedded in the project planning and design stage for it to be effective.**
- ▶ **A dialogue between science and society is needed. Researchers should learn how to communicate.**
- ▶ **Careful consideration of new means of communication, such as social networks and community platforms, is a need.**

IV Sustainable action after the termination of a project

North-South scientific partnerships have been identified as an essential way to build and strengthen human and institutional capacity of African organisations. International S&T collaboration is indeed playing a major role in building the scientific capacity of developing countries and it is producing results. Bibliometric indicators show that the amount of collaborative research between advanced and developing country scientists is rising. In this context, one major topic to be aware of when building partnerships between the North and South is sustainability.

Capacity building primarily supports research mobility and scientific training. However, to ensure sustainability, it is of utmost importance to equally support research management, including building the skills needed to access research funding and to manage collaborative research projects. Only through access to international cooperation in S&T will African researchers have the chance to play a substantial role in the international scientific arena.

Recommendations

- ▶ **The definition of capacity building depends on the context it occurs. Within the framework of a scientific cooperation, and notably with regard to the Institute for Research for Development (IRD), capacity building is closely linked to different stages of a typical research project.**
- ▶ **Take into account the wide variety of skills and competencies of researchers so that the researchers can do their job properly and compete internationally.**
- ▶ **Address capacity building activities - not only for researchers and their teams but also for their institutional environment.**
- ▶ **Encourage need-based projects.**
- ▶ **Develop science funds.**
- ▶ **Assist the RECs in prioritising on S&T.**
- ▶ **Address the remuneration issues in order to retain the built capacity.**
- ▶ **Strengthen the collaboration between scientists and the private sector.**
- ▶ **Encourage the young researchers in Africa to publish in existing African journals.**
- ▶ **Promote research and development (R&D) in Africa by critical mass of qualified human resources.**