



THE AFRICA-EU PARTNERSHIP
LE PARTENARIAT AFRIQUE-UE

EU-Africa Research and Innovation Relations

Research and Innovation gains momentum

Agenda 2030 and the associated Addis Ababa Action Agenda fully integrate Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) as enablers for socio-economic development and call for an increase in international cooperation in this domain.

African Union's Agenda 2063 and Europe 2020 have a strong focus on investment in research and innovation for job creation. Through its 10-year Science, Innovation and Technology Strategy (STISA 2024), Africa has committed itself on the path to an innovation-led, knowledge-based economy. In 2013 African R&D spending reached 0.45% of GDP, climbing from 0.36% of GDP within 6 years*, thus taking a step closer to the 1% of GDP target agreed by AU member states as minimum investment in R&D. Commitment to R&D spending in the European Union is set to reach 3% of EU GDP in 2020 by the Innovation Union. It currently is around 2% of GDP.

Paving the way for a deeper STI cooperation

The importance of strengthening the EU-Africa relations in R&I was recognised at the 3rd Africa-EU Summit in Tripoli, in 2010, which adopted the EU-Africa High Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) on Science, Technology and Innovation as part of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES). The dialogue serves as a platform for regular exchanges in the field of research and innovation and aims to formulate and implement long-term priorities which will further foster Africa-Europe cooperation in science, technology and innovation.

Through the Roadmap 2014-2017, adopted at the EU-Africa Summit 2014, African and EU leaders emphasised the vital role that STI plays in boosting employment, competitiveness and growth, human development, as well as in addressing pressing societal challenges. Another key goal, set by the Roadmap, is the development of a long-term, jointly funded Research and Innovation Partnership with focus on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA). Milestone in this effort is the adoption of the Roadmap towards the R&I Partnership on FNSSA by the senior officials of HLPD on STI in April 2016. The joint research agenda will focus on sustainable intensification, agriculture and food systems for nutrition, agricultural trade and markets, and other cross-cutting topics, and will be implemented through joint calls under Horizon 2020 and the Pan-African Programme. The European Commission has launched an ERANET co-fund of EUR 10 million in Horizon 2020 to achieve this. European and African countries are expected to contribute with around EUR 20 million.

EU-Africa cooperation in Research and Innovation grows stronger thanks to the EU R&I Framework Programmes

Under the 7th Framework Programme (FP7), running from 2007 to 2013, organisations from the African Union reached 1055 participations in 427 collaborative actions, receiving EUR 153 million from the European Commission and contributing with EUR 50.8 million. Health, food security, ICT, climate change and energy were among the primary areas of cooperation. What is more, a total of 1319 researchers from the African Union participated in Marie-Curie actions, whereas entities from the African Union participated 10 times in signed ERC grants, receiving EUR 1.2 million from the EU.

* UNESCO Science Report Towards 2030



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Africa remains a key partner region for the EU in Horizon 2020, the current EU R&I Framework Programme (2014-2020). So far, organisations from the African Union have reached 191 participations in 79 signed grants, receiving EUR 31.2 million from the European Commission and contributing with EUR 2.9 million. The areas of cooperation vary from energy and environment to transport, ICT, research infrastructures and more. Specific calls encouraging cooperation with Africa are included in the Work Programme 2016-2017 of Horizon 2020. In addition, a total of 182 researchers from the African Union have participated in Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions, whereas entities from the African Union have participated 2 times in signed ERC grants, receiving EUR 0.1 million from the EU.

Additional channels of research cooperation

Research cooperation with the African Union is also pursued through the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC). This cooperation aims to provide evidence-based scientific and technical support to decision makers, as well as to universities, research institutes and the scientific community at large. Key priority areas include conflict prevention and early warning, food security, sustainable development, protection of biodiversity, water management and renewable energy.

Success stories of Africa-EU STI cooperation

Two successful international scientific collaborations with African and EU participation, recently honoured with a Science Award, are the European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) and the Group on Earth Observations (GEO):

- EDCTP supports collaborative research that accelerates the clinical development of new or improved interventions against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, as well as against neglected infectious diseases in sub-Saharan Africa. EDCTP's second programme (2014-2024) is being implemented as part of Horizon 2020 through which the European Commission will contribute with €683 million. The overall budget is nearly €2 billion and the partnership involves 14 African countries and 14 European Member States.
- GEO is a voluntary partnership of governments and organisations including from Africa and Europe, in which the European Commission participates as a founding member and which has been working on the development of a Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) that will link Earth observation resources world-wide across multiple Societal Benefit Areas. At the GEO Plenary meeting of November 2015 the Commission indicated its willingness to support AfriGEOSS, the African component of GEOSS.

These two cases constitute only few among various examples illustrating how cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation can contribute to human capital and sustainable development across the two continents. Discussions are now under way regarding the future orientations of cooperation with a focus on global health and global change.

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