



Lessons from the FP7 INCO-NET for Sub-Saharan Africa

Perspectives on research cooperation with the ACP Region

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

- **CAAST-Net**

- What is CAAST-Net
- Achievements
- Future prospects

- **Guiding questions**

- How to foster research cooperation with ACP region?
- What is mutual benefit of international cooperation?
- How to improve existing programmes?
- Are there synergies between research and education cooperation programmes?



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An Overview of CAAST-Net

- FP7 “INCO-NET” for Sub-Saharan Africa (NB: covers 47 countries)
 - INCO-Nets are networking, dialogue and support platforms for international cooperation between EU and other regions
 - CAAST-Net objective to enhance S&T cooperation between Sub-Saharan Africa and EU under but not limited to FP7
- 4 year project, starting 1 January 2008 (possible extension to 2012)
- €3 million budget (possible top-up to €4 million)
- Currently: 18 consortium partners: 10 in Africa, 8 in Europe (possibly three more from Africa and two from Europe)



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CAAST-Net Partners

- Africa

- Cameroun
- Cape Verde
- Ghana
- Kenya
- Madagascar
- Research Africa (Pty) Ltd.
- Rwanda
- South Africa
- Senegal
- Uganda

- Europe

- United Kingdom
- Finland
- Norway
- Portugal
- IRD France
- CIRAD France
- Germany
- Sweden



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Main CAAST-Net Activities

- Context: Close cooperation and coordination with African bodies, such as AU Commission and NEPAD
- Monitor and analyse Africa-EU S&T cooperation trends in order to support policy advice and guide project implementation
- Foster synergy with other instruments for Africa-EU S&T cooperation, especially development cooperation
- Support Africa-EU S&T policy dialogue(s)
- Identify shared Africa-EU research priorities well-suited for international cooperation
- Promote and facilitate African participation in FP7 (awareness-raising, training, information services)



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CAAST-Net Highlights

- Analytical report of “barriers” to African FP7 participation
- Review of Africa-EU S&T policy dialogues
- Expert consultation and report on synergy research cooperation and development cooperation
- Mobilization of broader African and European research community stakeholders to consider policy challenges for cooperation
- Research priority identification in health, energy and socio-economic sciences and humanities
- FP7 awareness workshops and NCP training
- Dedicated and comprehensive information platform



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CAAST-Net Future Plans

- Greater focus on collaboration with Africa's Regional Economic Communities, i.e. SADC, ECA, ECOWAS and ECCAS
- Support coordination platform for projects to be funded under FP7 Africa Call
- Support as required to future Africa-EU S&T policy dialogue platform
- Contributing to Joint Africa-EU Strategy



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How to foster research cooperation with ACP region in future?

- Premise should be that of true partnership:
 - Activities informed by shared priorities (African priorities for example articulated in Consolidated Plan of Action)
 - ***Reciprocal but not necessarily symmetric investment to promote cooperation***
 - Recognize shared global challenges and strategic significance importance of ACP inclusion in international science – in order to leverage political support
- Capacity-building important – achieve synergy between research and development cooperation instruments
 - Support human capital development, research infrastructures
- Raise awareness of opportunities for and potential of cooperation
 - Including marketing ACP S&T excellence,
- Invest in appropriate support platforms for cooperation, in both EU and ACP
 - Brokerage, (partner search) training



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What is mutual benefit of international cooperation?

- Significant interest in EU in cooperation with APC: EU research for development agenda and bodies
- Long-standing historical ties make EU important partner for ACP
- Common benefits for ACP and EU:
 - Access to unique skills, sharing of experience and expertise
 - Mutual access to scientific resources (data) and research infrastructures
 - Access to funding – especially for ACP to leverage return on own investments; presents additional funding opportunity for EU parties
 - Platform for training, human capital development
 - Internationalize R&D networks and especially for ACP supports retention of skills
 - Deliver research outputs enhancing sustainable development, economic competitiveness, etc.
 - Support political and economic cooperation agendas



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How to improve existing cooperation programmes?

- Learn lessons from past – legacy of old FP INCO programmes, success of FP7 Africa Call, ACP S&T Capacity-Building Programme, etc.
- Achieve greater synergy research and development cooperation
- Based on principles of shared ownership, and shared interest, consider respective policy environments
 - E.g. FP7 mobility instruments such as International Research Staff Exchange Scheme address brain drain concerns in ACP
- **Simplification** of instruments – but carefully considered, e.g. example of FP7 ICPC lump sum disadvantaging participants
- Consider how changing ERA landscape impacts on international cooperation, e.g. Joint Technology Initiatives, European Research Council, Joint Programming, Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme



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What synergy exists between research and education cooperation programmes?

- In ideal world should be strong synergy – policy context of triple helix, etc. Human capital essential for research
- In practice little synergy – separate structures in both EU and ACP regions promote for example Erasmus Mundus and FP7 People programmes
- CAAST-Net has, thus far, had no engagement with education programmes – only FP7 mobility
- Demand from higher education institutions for greater synergy, since actors involved in both programmes often the same coordination would be valuable:
 - Avoid duplication and achieve synergy
 - But also need to maintain specific focus to deal with specificities





Thank you

Visit CAAST-Net's website:

www.caast-net.org

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