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Tunisia: first African country associated to EU Horizon 2020 programme

1 December, Brussels: Tunisia became the first country on the African continent to be formally associated to the Horizon 2020 programme. The Association Agreement allows for enhanced cooperation in research and innovation with the EU. Tunisian research institutes, universities and individual researchers will now have access to all opportunities offered by Horizon 2020. Tunisian SMEs and businesses will also be able to benefit from increased support to develop new ideas and bring products and services to the market. For details: https://ec.europa.eu/research/index.cfm?pg=newsalert&year=2015&na=na-011215.

Africa-EU internet boosted by €26.6m investment for science and education

8 December 2015, Lilongwe/Cambridge: a €26.6m EU co-funded project is to provide dedicated high-speed internet all over Africa. AfricaConnect2 will create the first pan-African research and education network by partnering African research and education network associations UbuntuNet Alliance, ASREN and WACREN with their European counterpart GÉANT. This builds on the success of the AfricaConnect project which contributed to the creation of the UbuntuNet – the high-speed network for research and education in Eastern and Southern Africa – between 2011 and 2015. EU development co-operation funds contribute up to €20m, with the beneficiary partners providing in the remaining €6.6m. AfricaConnect2 is due to be completed by end 2018. For details: https://www.ubuntunet.net/press%20release_africaconnect2.

Science Forum South Africa: "*Igniting conversations about science*"

8-9 December, Pretoria: The 1st Science Forum South Africa (SFSA) was a great success, bringing together over 1200 participants, twice the number initially foreseen. Partly inspired by the EuroScience Open Forum (ESOF) and very ably organised by South Africa's Department of Science and Technology under the leadership of by Minister of S&T Naledi Pandor, SFSA sought to bring together a broad group of scientists, policy makers and stakeholders for a broad array of discussions on science and science policy, including South Africa's flagship projects and achievements, as well as regional and continental partnerships advancing Africa's growth and development. SFSA also inaugurated the Science Diplomacy Awards presented by Minister Pandor. Notable recipients included the European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) and the Group on Earth Observations (GEO). See: www.sfsa.co.za.

TRUST: for trustworthy, responsible and equitable partnerships in international research

14 December: The TRUST project, which aims to create and enhance trustworthy, responsible and equitable partnerships in international research – with the support of the EU's Horizon 2020 programme, has launched a call for case studies "*identifying the risks of exporting non-ethical research practices to low and middle income countries*". The deadline for submission of abstracts is 2 March, 2016 with full submission of selected proposals on 2 May 2016. For details: http://announcementsfiles.cohred.org/competition_trust.pdf.

TRUST is led by University of Central Lancashire and involves several international organisations, including the Council on Health Research for Development (COHRED), UNESCO, EDCTP, Partners for Health and Development in Africa (PHDA) in Kenya and universities of Cape Town and of the Witwatersrand in South Africa. For details: http://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/197442_en.html.

ANDi board meeting and stakeholder forum

21-25 November, Nairobi: The African Network for Drugs & Diagnostics Innovation (ANDi) held its board meeting and stakeholder forum. The board approved ANDi's Strategic Plan and encouraged further development of its Fundraising and Growth Strategy, which includes an "Impact Venture" arm, prior to approval. The board also approved the nomination of 7 African institutions for Innovation Awards.
For details: www.andi-africa.org.

Building capacities for ethics and bioethics

26-27 November 2015, Addis Ababa: a workshop to develop capacities and expertise for ethics & bioethics review and advice across Africa was jointly organised by the African Union Commission (AUC) Department of Human Resources and Science & Technology and the Pan African Congress for Ethics & Bioethics (COPAB), with EU support through the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) Support Mechanism.

Good ethics is a dimension of excellence in research and is essential for international collaboration. The aim is to consolidate such capacities throughout Africa with a proposed regional structure whereby expertise could be pooled and shared by several countries in each region. It now remains to be seen if the momentum will be sustained. This requires the effective support of the African Union (AU) and of the Regional Economic Communities. The meeting produced a declaration detailing the necessary actions for the attention of the AU. However, unless this need for ethics capacities is recognised as a key enabler for the AU's STI Strategy for Africa (STISA 2024), it will not be implemented in the foreseeable future.

Africa Techno fosters tech transfer from French research institutions to Africa

23-27 November – Pretoria: Africa Techno meetings are organised by CVT Valorisation Sud each year in different African countries in order to disseminate and transfer technologies from IRD, CIRAD, Institut Pasteur and France's 4 overseas universities in Africa. The event brought together inventors, researchers and financials partners in search of innovative technologies, from laboratory stage to experimental scale.
For details: www.africatechno.com/en/.

Showcasing EU-Africa Cooperation in Horizon 2020 – focus on ICT:

There are now 107 participants from 25 African countries involved in 48 Horizon 2020 projects who will receive a total EU contribution of €17m (average: €158,000 per participant). Here are some examples:

Developing mHealth4Afrika – Community-based ICT for Maternal Health in Africa.
Led by International Information Management Corp. (Ireland), with 2 other European partners (UK & Norway) and 5 African partners (Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi (2) & South Africa). EU grant: €2 million.

DMC-MALVEC – Automated diagnostic platform, data management system and innovative communication tool, for improving the impact of malaria vector control interventions.
Led by IMBB-FORTH (Greece), with 5 other European partners (Germany, Luxembourg, Italy, Switzerland & UK) and 3 African partners (Cameroon, Ethiopia & Zambia). EU grant: €2.77 million.

its4land – Geospatial technology for land tenure security in East Africa.
Led by Twente University (The Netherlands), with 3 other European partners (Germany (2) & Belgium) and 4 African partners (Ethiopia, Kenya & Rwanda (2)). EU grant: €3.9 million.

WAZIUP – Open Innovation Platform for IoT-Big Data in Sub-Sahara Africa.
Led by Ass. CREATE-NET (Italy), with 4 other European partners (Germany, France (2) & Portugal) and 7 African partners (Burkina Faso, Ghana (2), Senegal (3) & Togo). EU grant: €2.8 million.

Upcoming events:

- 17 January 2016 – Khartoum: **Horizon 2020 information seminar**
- 4-5 February – Pretoria: **CAAST-Net Plus workshop with African Regional Economic Communities**
- 22-23 February – Cape Town: **Workshop on Research Impact Assessment** organised by the Southern African Research and Innovation Management Association (SARIMA)
- 21-23 February – Addis Ababa: **Symposium on Climate Change Adaptation in Africa** (http://start.org/announcements/call-for-papers-symposium-on-climate-change-adaptation-in-africa)
- 1-31 March: **Sci-Gaia Winter School online** to create the skills to integrate scientific applications in the Africa Grid Science Gateway. Deadline for applications: 22 Jan. 2016 (www.sci-gaia.eu/winter-school/)
- 11-12 April (TBC), Addis Ababa: EU-Africa High Level Policy Dialogue on STI stakeholder forum
- 11-13 May – Durban: **IST-Africa 2016 Conference** (www.ist-africa.org/Conference2016/)
  Call for Papers - deadline 18 January (contact: Miriam Cunningham - miriam@iimg.com)
- 17 - 20 May – Umhlanga (South Africa): **SARIMA conference** (www.sarimaconference.co.za/)

Contact: Stéphane Hogan, Counsellor for R&I, EU Delegation to AU: stephane.hogan@eeas.europa.eu
Website of EU Delegation to the African Union (AU): http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/african_union