



Study on 'R&I for improved FNSSA in relation to innovation and entrepreneurship, with special attention to gender and youth'

Terms of Reference

Background

The [EU-Africa research innovation cooperation on FNSSA](#) provides a roadmap for improved coordination of Research and Innovation policies, programs and funding mechanisms. The roadmap is structured around four main pillars: (i) Sustainable intensification, (ii) Agriculture and food systems for nutrition, (iii) Expansion and improvement of agricultural markets and trade and (iv) Cross-cutting issues. The cross-cutting topics include improved coordination between European and African FNSSA R&I projects, supporting innovation processes, strengthening collaborative capacities of R&I communities, and integrating social and cultural contexts of FNSSA production systems within the context of the FNSSA Roadmap and the AU-EU Innovation Agenda. Under this roadmap, the [LEAP4FNSSA](#) consortium is preparing an International Research Consortium for FNSSA, thereby supporting the AU-EU policy for sustainable growth and jobs, in particular for women and youth, and jointly delivering on the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture are a priority of the AU-EU High-Level Policy Dialogue on Science, Technology and Innovation¹ (HLPD on STI). The HLPD acknowledges links between the public and private sectors, in particular SMEs, from low tech to high tech. Climate resilience and adaptation practices are also high on the agenda to avoid lock-in development paths. For the uptake of new technologies, the participation of financing partners will be fostered.

In addition, a joint AU-EU Innovation Agenda has been prepared, to be finalized in 2023, and confirmed by the AU-EU Summit (2022). This [AU-EU innovation agenda](#) prioritizes R&I and impact on the ground and refers to the growth potential of innovation ecosystems. The objectives in the innovation agenda are summarized as:

1. Translate innovative capacities and achievements directly into tangible outputs
2. Strengthen innovation ecosystems to enhance socio-economic impact on the ground
3. Strengthen people, communities, and institutions
4. Scale-up instruments that can take forward existing successful programmes and projects between AU and EU partners

The agenda strives to reduce the gap between research experts and grass root innovators to spur the achievement of the SDGs, primarily by fostering entrepreneurship, strengthening human resource capacities and the uptake of research findings by policy and society.

¹ [EU-Africa cooperation in research and innovation | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

Analysis

Going from research to innovation is key to achieve sustainable changes of food systems. Innovation can be broadly defined as the translation toward new technologies, products, but also toward services, practices, and social or institutional arrangements which are used and put in practice². When research is considered an entity delivering technologies for innovation, implemented by entrepreneurs, this can be seen as a more or less “linear, pipeline” approach in which innovation results from the mobilization of various research efforts and different stakeholders, which in turn would lead to impact (‘from lab to market’). There is also evidence that feedback loops and learning cycles, reflecting on the process, can reframe research and guide scaling in a positive way³. In this view, research and innovation are linked more interactively and in multiples ways, assuming to deliver better perspectives for the needs of practitioners like women and youth.

Second, innovations need to be used and mobilised by as many relevant practitioners as possible. One way of achieving this is through support for successful entrepreneurial ventures, like start-ups (see AU-EU innovation agenda). An alternative way is by taking into account multiple levels of scale and actors, as results in one domain or level of scale are connected to the conditions at another domain or level. The process of scaling innovations might therefore be involved with multiple aspects: collaboration, trust, data sharing etc.⁴ There is a need for the different methodologies to be thoroughly investigated, in particular with regard to the applicability for women and youth.

Both remarks on innovation (the complexity of the linkages between R&I, and the various forms of supporting innovation processes) commonly lead to replace the word “innovation” by “innovation systems”.

A clear overview on the R&I agenda for FNSSA in the Africa-EU partnership can support the next programming phase of this bicontinental collaboration and give recommendations to future activities covered by Horizon Europe, the programmes of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), or those from member states or the private sector.

Scope of the study

A study is demanded to compare the existing patterns of R&I in the field of FNSSA, as described above, with emerging views on the linkages between research and innovation, in order to illuminate how research can be mobilized to support innovation processes and strengthen innovation systems, with particular focus on gender, youth and entrepreneurship.

The study is expected to:

1. Outline how the current policies for R&I in FNSSA are described in the AU-EU partnership, including its relation to gender, youth and entrepreneurship, and compare these with recent scientific findings. Give recommendations on pathways that foster women and youth entrepreneurship, taking into account possible trade-offs. Address various levels of scale, from country, regional to bicontinental (Africa – Europe).
2. Propose topics for further research that bring R&I to scale in an inclusive way, taking forward existing successful programmes and projects between AU and EU partners. Address methodologies on how to increase a just, inclusive impact of R&I on the ground, avoiding

² This is often described as “an innovation is an invention which has reached its market”

³ [Science of Scaling: Understanding and guiding the scaling of innovation for societal outcomes - ScienceDirect](#)

⁴ [Navigating the Twilight Zone: Pathways towards digital transformation of food systems — Research@WUR](#)

potential negative effects on economic, social and ecological aspects, taking into account linkages between different scaling levels.

3. How can the bicontinental research community support this process of R&I systematically? Which role could be performed by the IRC community to improve scaling in a diverse and sustainable way? How does this fit in the broader community of support to innovation systems or “transformation” science, as implemented by initiatives of national institutions, international institutions like the FAO, and international consortia like CGIAR or AGRINATURA?
4. What R&I instruments or initiatives could the IRC apply to foster impact on the ground, particularly for women, youth and entrepreneurship, and what are the main barriers to overcome?

The study should be undertaken as a desk study primarily through literature and statistics analysis supplemented with additional key-informant interviews (following current EU General Data Protection rules).

Deliverable: A validated study report in English.

Timeline

The study should be undertaken between May 2022 and August 2022, with the first draft submitted by 4 July 2022, and the final report ready by 29 July 2022.

Action	Date
Deadline for expressions of interest	April 22 st , 2022
Notification of the acceptance or rejection of proposals	April 29 th , 2022
Start of the study	May 2 nd , 2022
Submission of draft study report	July 4 rd , 2022
Response from Task 1.3 (requests for revisions and comments by the FNSSA WG)	July 18 th , 2022
Submission of final study report	July 29 th , 2022

Indicative budget allocation

It is expected that this study can be undertaken by one or several expert members of the LEAP4FNSSA consortium (Beneficiary). The Beneficiary must declare costs in accordance with article 6 of the Grant Agreement (e.g. Person Months)⁵. The beneficiary must keep records and supporting documentation as per article 18 of the GA. Be aware that indicatively, the max. amount is 20,000 € (including the 25% of the indirect costs to be automatically added on the basis of the direct costs as accepted by REA).

⁵ The costs need to be actually incurred by the beneficiary (i.e. real and not estimated or imputed; and, definitively and genuinely borne by the beneficiary) to be eligible as for any other project activities. Only the costs actually incurred by a beneficiary to prepare the study may be charged to the action and may be funded; the indicative budget mentioned in the terms of reference is not a fixed financial contribution for the studies.

Acceptance of the costs by REA will be implemented as part of the periodic reporting. This means the costs have to be claimed in the related Periodic financial report, by the beneficiary conducting the study after reception and acceptance of the final study report.

Identification of beneficiary

To identify which beneficiary (or beneficiaries) of LEAP4FNSSA will conduct this study, a process of expression of interest will be set. All beneficiaries are invited to express to UCPH and IITA (the task 1.3 co-leaders) their interest, motivation and experience in the domain in order to conduct this study, individually or as a team (in case of a team submission by multiple Beneficiaries, UCPH shall deal solely with the Team Lead as the responsible Beneficiary on behalf of the team). These expression of interest will be reviewed by the T1.3 task co-leaders (IITA, UCPH) and the contributing partner (WR). If one or more of the institutions in T1.3 are part of a proposal, alternative reviewers will be found from the Coordination and/or WP1 leaders (UH and DSI).

Proposal requirements

- A description of who will do the study, including indication of competency and suitability for the study.
- A description of how the study will be done, including an action plan.
- A detailed budget (in person-month) corresponding to an indicatively maximum of 20 000 € (total including the 25% of the indirect costs to be automatically added on the direct costs accepted by REA).
- Contact person on behalf of the submitters (Team Lead): name, email, phone.
- Maximum number of words of the proposal: 2,000.
- Bi-continental teams of applicants are encouraged, though optional.

Submission of proposal by email: nf@ign.ku.dk

Evaluation criteria

The evaluation of the proposals will be based on "best value for money" with the following sub-criteria and percentage weighing:

Sub-criteria	Percentage weighting
Quality of the proposal (including action plan)	40 %
Experience and competences of the submitting team	40%
Innovative approach and additional topics covered	20%

Evaluation process

The Task 1.3 co-leaders from IITA and UCPH, and the contributing partner WR, will evaluate the submitted proposals according to the evaluation criteria and make a prioritized list of recommendations for the WP1 co-leaders and the Coordination to decide who should do the study. A prioritized list of recommendations will be forwarded to the LEAP4FNSSA Work Package 1 co-leaders and the Coordinator to decide who should be given the opportunity to do the study.

Conditions

In addition to everything mentioned above Beneficiaries must adhere to all the rules in the Consortium Agreement and Grant Agreement.

The results and the delivered study report will be owned by LEAP4FNSSA and will be made publicly available.

The conditions mentioned in the ToR are not for negotiation.