International Research Consortium for Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable agriculture (FNSSA): an EU-AU partnership

Possible role(s) of the IRC on FNSSA in the implementation of the AU-EU Innovation Agenda

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European Commission, DG Research & Innovation
LEAP4FNSSA Webinar, 24 October 2022
A global food crisis

2022: A YEAR OF UNPRECEDENTED HUNGER

- In just two years, the number of people facing or at risk of acute food insecurity increased from 135 million in 53 countries pre-pandemic, to 345 million in 82 countries today.

- Fuelled by conflict, climate shocks and COVID-19, the crisis is escalating as the war in Ukraine drives up the costs of food, fuel and fertilizers. Africa is heavily affected.
What is the AU-EU Innovation Agenda?
The joint AU-EU Innovation Agenda

- An ambitious, unprecedented joint initiative aiming to foster the translation of R&I endeavours into tangible products, services, businesses and jobs.
- Mainstay of the AU-EU Cooperation in R&I for the next decade.

4 objectives:

- Make it real: Translate innovative capacities and achievements into tangible outputs, supporting sustainable growth and jobs, in particular for the youth.
- Generate impact by design: Foster - strengthen innovation ecosystems to enhance socio-economic impact.
- Strengthen people, communities & institutions: Develop sustainable, long lasting and mutually beneficial higher education and R&I partnerships.
- Learn, monitor, and scale it up: Scale-up instruments that can take forward existing successful programmes and projects, enable - strengthen the knowledge triangle of education, R&I & place special focus on public participation, transparency, and inclusion.

Short-, medium- and long-term set of actions, according to four joint priority areas:
- Public Health
- Green Transition
- Innovation & Technology
- Capacities for Science

Mapping of gaps & needs for each priority area

- Currently at the stage of ‘Working Document’ being discussed through an extensive stakeholder dialogue: online public consultation (Feb. – June 2022) and Stakeholder Event (Nov. 23-24, Nairobi).
- Final version of the AU-EU Innovation Agenda expected to be adopted by end Q2-2023.
The Joint AU-EU Innovation Agenda

- The collaboration under the AU-EU Innovation Agenda needs to occur with all innovation stakeholders, from conceptualisation throughout implementation, leveraging the demographic dividend to empower the youth.
Short-term Actions

Cross-cutting
1. Networking of business, government, higher education and NPO sectors through platforms.
2. Pro-active involvement of citizens in the innovation ecosystems
3. Identifying/Sharing climate resilience/adaptation practices (SDGs 13)
4. Fostering the participation of financing partners

Public Health
1. Support to Health R&I outputs to turn into relevant products, policy guidance and services
2. Joint R&I agendas on health priorities, enhancing best practices and common standards, Using emerging tech (e.g., digitalisation, ICT, robotics, AI)

Green Transition
1. Developing/transferring innovative renewable energy production and use devices, suitable for easy and prompt adoption by ‘energy communities.’
2. Supporting the development of innovative climate services through a new “space STI cooperation” action for risk reduction at local and regional level.

Innovation & Technology
1. Supporting research and innovation cooperation between AU and EU research organizations and companies (in particular SMEs) from low tech to high tech
2. Supporting tech/innovation hubs, networks, & operations of accelerators and incubators.

Capacities for Science
1. Strengthening R&D cooperation between AU-EU HE/Gov. institutions through knowledge transfer, teaming, twinning and learning mobility activities.
2. Improving transparency/recognition of qualifications/relevance of curricula for enhanced mobility & Digital education transformation
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Medium-term Actions

**Cross-Cutting**
1. Re-skilling/upskilling citizens to profit from innovation and technologies to prevent inequalities and/or discriminations (SDGs 8-9-13)

**Public Health**
1. Ensuring tech-transfer and affordable, available, accessible and quality vaccine, medicines and health technologies & production

**Green Transition**
1. Fostering digital applications and green technologies for agro-ecological production, healthy and sustainable food processing and consumption.
2. Developing in Africa renewable fuels in a changing world for climate change mitigation.

**Capacities for Science**
1. Promoting joint master/doctoral degrees between AU-EU universities, mobility of researchers
2. Creating enabling STI environment for sustainable innovation ecosystems (Quadruple helix actors)
## Medium-term Actions

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| | 2. Modernizing/Reinforcing R&D & Higher education systems (RHEs) |

**Dissemination of knowledge through digital transformation**

**Improving the agricultural innovation ecosystem to co-invest in start-ups and agro-SME**

**Facilitating inclusive/affordable access to world-class research and innovation infrastructures**

**Bridging R&I in fostering the emergence of or strengthening centres of excellence**

**Modernizing/Reinforcing R&D & Higher education systems (RHEs)**
Feedback very much welcomed the AU-EU Innovation Agenda and endorsed its objectives and actions.

Respondents highlighted the need to build on the good results that have already been achieved in joint AU-EU R&I cooperation, but also the importance of collaborating inclusively across sectors (public, private, NGOs, CSOs, etc.) from the conception throughout the implementation phases (i.e. in the short-, medium- and long-term).

The need to enhance capacity in terms of research infrastructure, training (staff and students’ exchanges included) and funding was highly mentioned.

Respondents emphasised the importance of Monitoring & Evaluating results to ensure the successful implementation of the Agenda.

While researchers and research institutions were deemed as key beneficiaries of the work of the Agenda, the importance of involving other groups was widely acknowledged, going beyond Higher Education Institutions and involving schools, local communities (in urban and rural areas), leveraging and protecting indigenous know-how, empowering youth, women and vulnerable groups (e.g. persons with disabilities) and engaging the African diaspora.
AU-EU Innovation Agenda – Upcoming Stakeholder Event, Nov. 23-24!

• On 23 and 24 November in Nairobi and online.

• Aiming to gather further views on the Innovation Agenda and trigger the co-creation of its implementation plan.

• Discussions in plenary sessions and 8 thematic workshops → 1 dedicated to FNNSA.

• Featuring the AU-EU Innovation Fair - Meet the innovators as well as training and information sessions addressed to researchers and innovators.

• Info and registration: AU-EU Innovation Agenda Stakeholder Event (aueu-innovationagenda-stakeholderevent.com)
The IRC and the AU-EU Innovation Agenda, can represent:

• An **unparalleled opportunity**, to each other!
The role(s) of the IRC in the AU-EU Innovation Agenda:
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An enabler, promoter and catalyst

IRC on FNSSA for the IA
The role(s) of the IRC in the AU-EU Innovation Agenda:

Projects & Programmes

An enabler, promoter and catalyst

Funding

IRC on FNSSA for the IA
The role(s) of the IRC in the AU-EU Innovation Agenda:

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 IRC on FNSSA for the IA
The role(s) of the IRC in the AU-EU Innovation Agenda:

- **Projects & Programmes**: An enabler, promoter and catalyst
- **Funding**: A capacity creator and builder
- **Human development**: IRC on FNSSA for the IA
- **Research infrastructures**
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Funding

Human development

Research infrastructures

- Students, Researchers, Farmers, Organisations
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IRC on FNSSA for the IA

EU-AU Research and Innovation Partnership on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA Partnership)
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Stakeholders & Organisations (across sectors)
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- **Stakeholders & Organisations (across sectors)**
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A "stock-taker"

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- A forward-looking strategic reference

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**FACR-AU**

EU-AU Research and Innovation Partnership on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA Partnership)
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**Funding**
- Students
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- Farmers
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The role(s) of the IRC in the AU-EU Innovation Agenda:

- An enabler, promoter and catalyst
- A "stock-taker"
- A forward-looking strategic reference
- A steady interlocutor

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IRC on FNSSA for the IA

For the AU-EU High-Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) on STI

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- **A guarantor of coherence, alignment and synergies**

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  - For the AU-EU High-Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) on STI

- **A steady interlocutor**
  - Actions vis-à-vis Policy

- **A guarantor of coherence, alignment and synergies**

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**IRC on FNSSA for the IA**

EU-AU Research and Innovation Partnership on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA Partnership)
All in all:

- The IRC could be a **key implementer** of actions of the **AU-EU Innovation Agenda**, in the area of **Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA)** and beyond.

**IRC on FNSSA for the IA**

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**Projects & Programmes**
Thank you very much for your attention!

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