Africa-EU STI Cooperation : Best Practices

Outcomes of a 2013 study into good practice collaborative models and effective financing mechanisms for EU-Africa STI cooperation.

Andy Cherry

The Association of Commonwealth Universities

John Mugabe
Angela Meyer
Andy Cherry

http://ec.europa.eu/research/iscp/index.cfm?lg=en&pg=studies

Main findings

- Rich & productive landscape of Africa-EU cooperation with diverse collaborative arrangements.
- Personal relations and partnerships are supremely important.
- Success criteria include operational, institutional and political parameters.
- Co-ownership is a core value of bi-regional cooperation.
- Funding landscape is skewed, & relies heavily on non-returnable conditional grants.
- Absence of a co-financing arrangement is a prominent gap.

Models of collaboration

- No one model of collaboration is systematically more effective than another. Good practice at all levels.
- Partnerships are extremely important and greater attention to them is likely to enhance the overall quality and effectiveness of cooperation.
- Features / desirable traits of successful partnerships:
  - Equitability;
  - Strong leadership and governance;
  - Clear purpose, appropriate composition, division of responsibilities and understanding of roles;
  - Good communication, transparency and information exchange;
  - Strong interpersonal relationships and mutual trust; and
  - Long-term investment.

Financial mechanisms

- Public and private purses support cooperation.
- R&I and development cooperation policy spheres dominate.
- Asymmetry is a feature of public sector funding landscape.
- Main mechanism is the non-returnable conditional grant.
- Alternatives being explored:
  - Challenge funds (AECF, GAIN),
  - Pull mechanisms – prize based approach.
  - Shared equity and IP models,
  - Concessional loans.
- No systematic evidence for one type of mechanism being better than others.

What makes an effective financing mechanism?

- Causal associations between FM features and their effectiveness are difficult to establish. Several features held to be valuable or desirable :
  - Co-ownership;
  - Diversity of mechanisms urged;
  - Long-term, adaptive and flexible approaches to funding cycles.
  - Instruments that foster engagement and dialogue;
  - Instruments which encourage equitable sharing of financial resources across partners (gives co-ownership);
  - Non restrictive grant conditions and prizes can attract the PS;
  - Instruments with restrictive conditions and cumbersome bureaucratic processes are widely disliked;
  - Exploitation of venture capital in finance markets;

Success criteria

- Partnerships
- Expectations
- Political support
- Co-ownership
- Policy environment
- Formal agreements
- Continuity

Some other findings…

- ERAfrica
- About the private sector….
- “JAES? – What’s that?”

Main conclusions

- Key success factor is strong partnership, characterized by effective leadership with visionary champions, strong interpersonal relationships, and equitability in governance, communication and resource & benefits sharing
- Co-ownership is a fundamental value for bi-regional collaboration; asymmetry in partnerships undermines co-ownership;
- Joint financing is seen as a major determinant of co-ownership - design, piloting & scale-up of co-financing arrangements is a high priority.
- The absence of a permanent, self-funded pan-African financial instrument supporting continental research weakens the prospects of jointly financed and co-owned bi-regional STI cooperation.
- Effective collaborative initiatives are configured to involve trans-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary teams.
- Private sector increasingly participates in cooperation but is hindered by a number of factors;
- Cooperation is generating tangible outputs, notably skills development and institutional capacity building, but few jobs or enterprises - yet.

Thank you

Andy Cherry

Andy.cherry@acu.ac.uk

The Association
of Commonwealth
Universities