

POLICY SUPPORT FACILITY
MUTUAL LEARNING EXERCISE ON RESEARCH AND INNOVATION (R&I)
STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

Knowledge Exchange Meeting & Capacity-building

Briefing note and Agenda

14 – 17 February 2023

Best Western Plus Addis Ababa Hotel

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Background

Research and Innovation remain the key drivers of development and for achieving sustainable development. Despite developments in the field of science, technology and innovation (STI), many countries in Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) are yet to realise the benefits of R&I strategies and policies that yield value for their sustainable development. The defragmented national and regional research and innovation systems and their detachment from the mainstream socio-economic activities create a misalignment of opportunities that could otherwise be harnessed from Research and Innovation (R&I) for prosperity. In recent years, with the advent of globalization, many countries have received support to further enhance their capacity in STI policy formulation as well as implementation. These countries present the best cases for practical experiences in R&I policy and strategies going forward.

There are different factors that influence the success or otherwise of national STI policies and strategies, as observed in all regions and countries. These include inadequate infrastructure, lack of human capacity, and misaligned policy framework among others. There is a new paradigm shift towards the development/adoption and implementation of impactful policy instruments in many countries. Among the opportunities that can be leveraged is the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement framework (AfCTA), which if well-developed shall create opportunities for tapping into global value chains where knowledge-based goods that not only exploit the immense raw-material disposal but work towards value addition and, more generally, towards a more just and inclusive sustainable development.

Background of the OACPS R&I PSF

In order to support ACP countries to enhance the quality and efficiency of their R&I strategies and policies, the **Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS)** launched in the framework of its R&I and Programme, funded by the European Union, a **Policy Support Facility (PSF)** in 2021. The

PSF is a policy support tool that addresses shortfalls in R&I policy and strategy implementation. The PSF offers tailor-made services that are based on country needs, impact-oriented and evidence-based.

The Policy Support Facility provides national or regional public authorities from OACPS countries, in charge of Research and Innovation, and Higher Education, with high-level expertise and practical support to:

- improve the design and implementation of evidence-based R&I policies and strategies;

- support the development of national R&I capacities needed to make the transition to self-sustaining knowledge-led economies;
- foster – at national and regional levels – collaboration opportunities between R&I institutions, businesses, academia and civil society organizations to unleash their innovation potential.

Background of UN-Interagency Task Team (UN-IATT) WS6

The *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* highlight the importance of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) policies and actions for meeting the SDGs. The *Technology Facilitation Mechanism* (TFM) and its *UN Interagency Task Team on STI for the SDGs* (IATT) were established in order to mobilize STI solutions for attaining the SDGs.

The IATT is composed of diverse entities, including **UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNU MERIT, WIPO, UNDESA, UNEP, UNESCWA, UNECA, UNECLAC, UNECE, UNESCAP** and **UN TBLDC**, among others. The IATT's *Work Stream 6 (WS6)* is responsible on STI for SDGs capacity building, designing and delivering training courses and workshops on STI Policy for SDGs addressed to policy-makers and key STI managers from developing countries.

Since 2018, the WS6 has delivered a number of regional trainings and webinars that benefited over 800 officials from over 90 countries. Resources and more information about the training could be found on the IATT WS6 [website](#).

The Mutual Learning Exercise (MLE) on R&I Strategies and Policies

The **Mutual Learning Exercise (MLE)** is a unique tool from the PSF which allows a process of engagement on policies and strategies with recommendations on improvements through cross-fertilization engagement processes. It is in this regard that this *MLE on R&I strategies* shall be conducted among participants from 16- OACPS Member States, experts in R&I policy development, to share ideas and identify opportunities.

The objective of this MLE is to exchange knowledge and experience and discuss key challenges and lessons learnt on how to successfully develop and implement R&I policies and strategies, as well as to enhance the capacities of policy-makers in this respect. Amidst the gap that prevails in STI policies and strategies in the ACP countries is the ability to effectively implement sound policy instruments on R&I with the anticipated impact. The OACPS MLE gives participating countries an opportunity to dialogue on the different policy instruments and identify challenges with possible resolutions. The MLE will address different aspects of policy implementation through:

- exchange on developing and implementing R&I policies and strategies
- capacity reinforcement activity
- exchange on measurement, evaluation, on and monitoring of R&I policies/strategies
- exchange of financial resources and incentives for effective implementation

Two different activities will be conducted during the event in Addis Ababa (14-17 February):

- A **Knowledge Exchange Meeting (14-15)**, which will facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences between countries on how to successfully develop and implement R&I policies and strategies that can be useful not only to strengthen ongoing, upcoming, and future R&I

initiatives but also to provide a unique opportunity to establish networks and new partnerships between countries and with regional entities.

- **a Capacity building (16-17)** on STI policy and policy instruments for SDGs to build awareness and understanding concerning key aspects of STI policies development and implementation, as well as innovation, entrepreneurship, open science, gender in STI, and how they relate to the SDGs.

The MLE will also create opportunities to build a network among the participating national public authorities in charge of research and innovation. The exercise will therefore also be a unique opportunity to achieve regional and interregional collaboration to ensure effective and efficient responses to national as well as complex and cross-border problems.

Participants of the MLE

A group of around 30-40 STI officials from different countries in Africa, mostly at the level of STI department directors or heads of national R&I agencies, will be participating in the interactive discussions exchanging and bringing examples of actions and practices from their countries' experiences, representing the following countries: Botswana (TBC), Cameroon, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinée, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Seychelles, Tanzania, Timor-Leste (only non-African country), Togo and Zambia.

Profile of facilitators and trainers

The first part of the programme will be facilitated by experts in R&I policy development and implementation, followed in the second training part by STI policy specialists from the UN IATT will animate and deliver lectures.

Interpretation

The first part of the MLE, the *Knowledge Exchange Meeting* (14-15 February) will be conducted in English and French interpretation will be provided. The capacity-building part of the MLE (16-17 February) will be conducted in English only.

PART I: Knowledge Exchange Meeting (14-15 February)

This first part of the MLE consists of a **Knowledge exchange** which will be facilitated by experts in R&I policy development and implementation. The sessions will be structured such that first, the countries can present the pros and cons of R&I policy and strategies implementation in their respective countries. Starting with evidence of the existence of such policies and strategies in their countries. Based on the information provided and the analysis thereof. Key emanating issues shall be identified that shall complement the ones common to most states. These will be further discussed in group sessions which allow in-depth analysis through among other tools SWOT and PESTLE to reflect on the internal as well as external factors affecting the implementation of R&I policies in the participating countries towards their sustainability.

This will serve as a basis for the MLE handbook compilation with additional information being sought through the national focal point contacts post the meeting. The meeting will also explore other means to collect relevant data and information outside the formal sessions where additional material relating to the R&I policies and strategies can be obtained to augment the MLE outcome.

In this framework, the exchange of knowledge and experiences between countries on how to successfully develop and implement R&I policies and strategies can be useful not only to strengthen ongoing, upcoming, and future R&I initiatives but also to provide a unique opportunity to establish networks and new partnerships between countries and with regional entities.

PART II: Capacity building on STI policy and policy instruments for SDGs (16-17 February)

Regions and countries need to build capacities to create robust STI systems for achieving SDGs and addressing the pressing environmental, health, economic and social challenges of the global crisis, such as the current pandemic. In Africa, governments are increasingly recognizing the need to invest in STI capacities in order to implement the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 and the African Strategy on STI (STISA-2024).

In this context, the UN-IATT and OACPS propose a training on STI Policy and Policy instruments for STI officials, as the second part of the MLE. The purpose of the two-day training is to build awareness and understanding concerning key aspects of STI policies development and implementation, as well as innovation, entrepreneurship, open science, gender in STI, and how they relate to the SDGs.

The sessions aim at engaging participants in interactive discussions and practical reflection on existing approaches, case studies and national experiences in establishing and managing STI in the context of the SDGs. Interactive tools and exercises will be proposed during the sessions.

The proposed sessions will have the following specific objectives:

1. Sharing knowledge and practices using different methodological approaches to the design and implementation of STI policies and instruments
2. Recognizing the importance of transparent, participatory, inclusive and evidence-based STI policy-making processes, with effective monitoring and evaluation
3. Understanding the importance of establishing appropriate and well-balanced policy mix of instruments and means that help address the global challenges
4. Sensitizing the participants to the requirement for successful STI policy implementation
5. Increasing awareness that productive actors – private enterprises, public firms, small and medium-sized enterprises, farmers, inventors, entrepreneurs – are as crucial to responding to the global crisis and contributing to the achievement of SDGs
6. Appreciating the need to support innovation and entrepreneurship through government support, financing etc.
7. Discussing key concepts and recognizing their transformative power, such as open science, technology needs assessment and gender equality in STI

The proposed training will introduce STI policy-makers and managers to theory and practice of STI policy, in the context of the SDGs. Two days are proposed and structured along the core elements: STI policy development and implementation, monitoring and evaluation, policy instruments, including innovation and entrepreneurship, open science, technology needs assessment and gender equality in STI.

Content of the MLE

DAY 1: Tuesday, 14 February

The first part of this session during the afternoon shall be introductions to the participants by the parties that are hosting the MLE and the Capacity Building. These being the OACPS, EU, UN IATT WS 6. Presentation to introduce the OACPS R&I PSF initiative and expectations shall follow, then the MLE presentation.

Participating Countries shall be given the opportunity for each representative to pitch high level STI policy initiatives in their country. Following which there shall be questions discussions and crystallization of the salient points from the discussion for further discussion the next sessions.

DAY 2: Wednesday, 15 February

The morning shall include selection of groups and the commencement of focused group discussions, based on the identified areas of interest. The group discussions shall be guided by the experts with groups rapporteurs appointed for each group followed by report backs and plenary session.

The Second session shall follow a similar fashion with consolidation of the group results at the end of the day and charting a way forward. This shall be followed by a plenary session and conclusions facilitated by the experts

DAY 3: Thursday, 16 February

Session 1: Current approaches to STI Policy making in the context of SDGs, with focus on open science and gender equality

Session introducing existing approaches and methodologies for policy – making and implementation across UN agencies with discussion on case studies in developing, reviewing and implementing STI policies and strategies. Illustrations of how STI policies are being geared towards achieving SDGs and strengthening STI systems for better responses to current and future crisis, including how science is used for decision-making processes.

The session will also discuss the meaning, opportunities and challenges of open science and the international framework for policy and practice that recognizes disciplinary and regional differences. It will discuss the capabilities and resources needed for implementation of open science.

Session 2: STI policy instruments design

Session introducing the concepts of policy instruments, including legal frameworks, funding mechanisms etc., followed by methodological approaches for the design of policy instruments across UN agencies. The session will illustrate how existing STI policy instruments can be used / adapted to try to find solutions in times of crisis.

Session 3: STI policy implementation

Session focusing on the requirements for successful implementation of policies and instruments. Policy implementation will be discussed through the analysis of its key dimensions as well as the presentation of concrete experiences in countries with different levels of development.

DAY 4: Friday, 17 February
Session 4: Innovation and entrepreneurship

Session discussing the concepts of innovation and entrepreneurship, with focus on governmental support to start-ups, SMEs and innovators, followed by best practices and successful stories from innovation entities in response crisis and global challenges, and examples of direct policy impact on innovation.

Session 5: Technology Transfer Needs Assessment

Session addressing the need and current limitations of technology transfer for developing and least developed countries, with a focus on discussing the effectiveness of relevant policy tools such as needs assessments.

Session 6: STI Policy Monitoring and Evaluation

Session introducing approaches, practices and methods for M&E with presentation and discussion on case studies and examples of current practices, challenges and lessons learnt. The session will provide overall introduction and answers the question “Why to monitor and Evaluate STI Policies?”

Methodologies and international standards for measurement of R&D and innovation will also be introduced and discussed.

Agenda

<i>Meeting room Janmeda</i>	
Part I : Exchange Meeting	
Day 1 : Tuesday 14th February (pm)	
<i>Time</i>	<i>Activity</i>
14:00 – 14:15	Welcome remarks and tour de table <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Norbert Richard Ibrahim, Assistant Secretary General, Political Affairs & Human Development, OACPS Secretariat - Mr. Jean-Michel Sers, Policy officer, Research, STI and Digitalization Unit, DG International Partnerships, European Commission - Ms. Tzinova Kornelia, UN IATT WS6 (TBC) - Ms. Mahlet Teshome, African Union Commission (TBC) Tour de table
14:15 – 14:30	Presentation of the OACPS R&I PSF
14:30 – 14:45	Presentation of the MLE
<i>14:45 – 15:00</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>
15:00 – 17:00	Overview of national R&I ecosystems- Presentations from different countries
17:00 – 17:45	Open discussion (to summarise the key points from the presentations)
17:45 – 18:00	Wrap up
<i>19:00</i>	<i>Cocktail/dinner</i>
Day 2 : Wednesday 15th February	
9:00 – 09:30	Recap of Day 1
9:30 – 11:00	Working group (WG) Session 1 (break out into 4 groups to discuss selected themes/topics)
<i>11:00 – 11:15</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:15 – 12:30	Plenary (feedback from WG Session 1 and open discussions)
<i>12:30 – 14:00</i>	<i>Lunch</i>

14:00 – 15:30	Working group Session 2 (4 groups)
15:30 – 15:45	<i>Coffee break</i>
15:45 – 16:45	Plenary (feedback from WG Session 2 and open discussions)
16:45 – 17:30	Open discussion
17:30 – 18:00	Wrap up and conclusions

Part II : Capacity building	
Day 3 Thursday 16th February	
Time	Activity
9:00 – 09:30	Welcome remarks and presentation
9:30 – 11:30	STI policy making approaches in the context of the SDGs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction (UNCTAD) • STI for the SDGs and gender equality (UNESCO) • Open Science (UNESCO) • Science for decision-making (UNEP)
11:30 – 11:45	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:45 – 12:30	Interactive session
12:30 – 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00 – 16:00	STI policy instruments design for the SDGs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STI policy instruments (UNCTAD) • Case studies from Africa (UNECA) • Examples from EAC (UNESCO) • Case studies from Europe (EU/JRC)
16:00 – 16:15	<i>Coffee break</i>
16:15 – 18:00	Implementation of STI policy instruments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation aspects (UNU MERIT) • Case studies (UNECA)
Day 4 Friday 17th February	
9:00 – 10:30	Innovation and entrepreneurship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key concepts (UNIDO) • Entrepreneurship in the Arab Region (UN-ESCWA) • Case studies (UNCTAD)
10:30 – 10:45	<i>Coffee break</i>
10:45 – 11:30	Innovation and Entrepreneurship (cont.)
11:30 – 12:30	Technology transfer needs assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology needs assessment (UNCTAD) • International collaboration (UNTB/LDC)
12:30 – 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00 – 16:00	Monitoring and Evaluation of STI policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key concepts (UNESCO) • Assessing policy effectiveness (UNEP) • STIP Reviews (UNCTAD)
16:00 – 16:15	<i>Coffee break</i>
16:15 – 17:00	Wrap up
17:00 – 17:30	Conclusions of the Mutual Learning Exercise