



The Fifth African Higher Education Week and RUFORUM Biennial Conference 2016

NEPAD SANBio Parallel Session: Innovating Sustainable Partnerships in Nutrition

Concept Note

Background

The Southern Africa Network for Biosciences (SANBio) is a NEPAD Agency Flagship for collaborative research, development and an innovation platform aimed at addressing Southern Africa's challenges in health and nutrition. It is one of the five Networks under the Consolidated Plan of Action for Science and Technology (African Biosciences Initiative) and was officially launched in August 2005. The NEPAD SANBio Network was reconfigured in response to the four Pillars and six Priority Areas of the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2024), a 10-year strategy which is part of the long-term African Union Agenda 2063. The STISA-2024 envisages the accelerated transition of largely commodity-based African economies to innovation-led, knowledge-based economies. Such economies should be underpinned by robust science, technology and innovation (STI) systems.

In line with STISA-2024, the SANBio Flagship and its supporting programmes are implemented on a regional multi-country basis outlined in the SANBio Business Plan. The Network is comprised of 12 of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Member States and operates on a Regional Hub (The CSIR in South Africa) and Country Nodes model. The current SANBio Member States are Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Lesotho, South Africa, Seychelles, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The role of science in societal development and improvement of people's lives is largely uncontested. There is no doubt that millions of people have access to basic needs of life, vaccinations have saved lives, travelling and communication has become faster and cheaper, the rights for disadvantaged community members have largely been upheld, child mortality has relatively declined and the life expectancy has doubled

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(www.humanprogres.org). Having said that, in other parts of the world, inequality still exists and malnutrition is still a major challenge. Large knowledge stocks have been generated and archived but some countries have not managed to translate knowledge into usable products. The current model of R&D to Innovation has predominantly been expensive and sometimes non-responsive to current needs in society especially in the life sciences. As part of the new dispensation in putting STI into other policies and using strong science to support policy, the continent needs to innovate on new partnerships for innovation, where multidisciplines converge to address specific problems and new models of institutions for coordinating STI policies are tested. According to the SPRU the new framework of Innovation policy has to include rapid experimentation (testing of solutions) and scale-up of technologies and constructive technology assessment where there is strong participation of the beneficiaries. Technologies that do not meet the mark need to be quickly retired and resources use to beneficial interventions.

It is in the above context that NEPAD SANBio is convening this platform for dialogue to share ideas on novel partnerships for advancing technology scaling-up, funding thereof and models of coordinating the research in the sub-continent.

Objectives of the sessions

1. Highlight the role of partnerships in scaling-up agriculture technologies
2. Discuss possible funding models for Research for Development Innovation in the agriculture sector
3. Share experiences on the future of STI partnership between Academia, Industry and government

Approach and Methodology

The side event will involve lead paper presentations, panel discussion and group discussion sessions facilitated by a moderator. SANBio will also have an exhibition to profile its activities.

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Venue and Participants

Venue: Century City Conference Centre, Meeting Room 9

Date & Time: Wednesday 19th October 2016

Side Event Organizers and Contact

The Southern Africa Network for Biosciences (SANBio)

Contact: Dr Ereck Chakauya

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Proposed Key speakers

Facilitator: Dr Ereck Chakauya (NEPAD SANBio Network Manager)

- Opening speech – NEPAD ISTIH representative (Dr Tichaona Mangwende)– Role of STI in development
- Prof Linus Opara (Stellenbosch University) - Value-addition and Post-harvest innovations
- Ms Zvikomborero Tangawamira - Approaches to funding Bio-Innovations- SANBio/BioFISA experience
- Prof Emmanuel Kaunda - Innovation in fisheries: Case of NEPAD Fish Node
- Appolinaire Djikeng (BecA Hub) - Demand-driven Innovations: BioInnovate
- Towards supporting Bionnovations in informal sector (speaker to be identified)

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