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WORKSHOP SERIES OUTLINE

Exploring Synergies and Opportunities in African–Swiss Science Diplomacy

Background

The Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute (Swiss TPH), the Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries (KFPE) and the University of Johannesburg are conducting a study that seeks to provide insights into the African Science Diplomacy ecosystem and avenues for bilateral cooperation between African countries and Switzerland. The study is supported in this effort by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation as well as the South African Department of Science Technology and Innovation and the Human Sciences Research Council.

The study will provide broad and deep insights of the Science Diplomacy situation in Africa. In a first step, all major Anglophone and Francophone countries are screened for explicit Science Diplomacy components; in a second step, a few selected countries with a high level of activity, will be assessed in detail for Science Diplomacy activities (**country case studies**). The study is running throughout 2024 and its primary aim is to enhance the mutual knowledge of the Science Diplomacy ecosystems in Africa and Switzerland and to strengthen bilateral exchanges between the African and Swiss Science Diplomacy communities.

The overall aim of the study is composed of four specific objectives:

1. To describe Science Diplomacy strategies, instruments and actors and assess the Science Diplomacy objectives and priorities in selected African countries
2. To identify hotspots of Science Diplomacy in Africa
3. To analyse bilateral Science Diplomacy initiatives between Switzerland and selected African countries, delineating their characteristics, mutual benefits and identify opportunities and obstacles and the means to overcome them
4. To start discussions on the value of an African Science Diplomacy framework

The Objective of this workshop series organized by KFPE and Swiss TPH is to contribute towards overall study objective (3), analysing bilateral Science Diplomacy initiatives between Switzerland and selected African countries. This includes the **special role of SDC** since the agency is operating at the intersection of development and innovation across Africa.

Date: 22nd October 2024; 13:00-14:30 PM CET / 14:00-15:30 EAT

Duration workshop: 1:30 hrs

Participants: 10–15 stakeholders from the Kenyan–Swiss Science diplomacy ecosystem

Framework: The workshop will take place online and will be recorded. Data and information obtained during this workshop will be summarized and disseminated on public domains. By taking part in this workshop, participants agree to publicly share their information given in writing or verbally unless a disclaimer is made for part(s) of a presentation/discourse. They also agree for the session to be recorded.

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introduction (5 minutes)

- Welcome participants (*Dr Fabian Käser, Head KFPE & Dr Elisabeth Schubiger, KFPE*)
- Brief overview of the workshop's objectives (*Dr Jasmina Saric, Swiss TPH*)
- Introduction of key speakers (*Dr Jasmina Saric, Swiss TPH*)

2. Presentation of National Science Diplomacy Ecosystems (15 minutes)

Kenya Overview (7 minutes) (*Director General Walter O. Oyawa, National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation / NACOSTI*)

- Current science diplomacy initiatives and key actors
- Main objectives and domains of science diplomacy
- Key areas of scientific research and innovation
- Major challenges and opportunities in science diplomacy

Switzerland Overview (7 minutes) (*Niccolò Iorno, Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs / FDFA, Science Diplomacy Unit*)

- Current science diplomacy initiatives and key actors
- Main objectives and domains of science diplomacy
- Key areas of scientific research and innovation
- Major challenges and opportunities in science diplomacy

3. Identifying Synergies and Opportunities (50 minutes)

Presenting three Kenyan–Swiss bilateral Science Diplomacy activity areas (Total 15 min)

- **Case study 1** CETRAD – a history of government supported institutional research collaboration (*Director Boniface Kiteme, Centre for Training and Integrated Research in ASAL Development / CETRAD & Dr Isabelle Providoli, Senior Research Scientist, Centre for Development and Environment / CDE*) (5 min)
- **Case study 2** Kenya–Switzerland cooperation in agricultural and food security research (*Manfred Kaufmann, Senior Advisor Thematic Cooperation, Food Systems Section, FDFA / SDC*) (5 min)

- **Case study 3** Kenyan-Swiss cooperation in the area of biosecurity/arms control/lab and technical capacity building (*Dr Cédric Invernizzi, Head of the NBC Arms Control Division, Spiez Laboratory*) (5 min)

Breakout rooms to discussing aspects a, b and c for each Case Study (Breakout rooms: Case Study 1; Case Study 2; Case Study 3 (10 min)

- Mutual benefits of those initiatives from Kenyan and Swiss perspectives
- Challenges to collaboration and additional needs and ways to address them
- Opportunities (nationally and regionally) arising from those activities

Each Case Study (1–3) group to present main conclusions (10 min)

Open discussion and examples of best practice (15 min) (3–6 other stakeholders/guests from, e.g., the study team, Swiss Embassy in Nairobi, SDC, African Academy of Sciences, French Institute for Research in Africa; IFRA)

- Questions and additions to the above conclusions
- Other potential synergies and joint initiatives in the Kenyan–Swiss SD bilateral context that are currently missed?
- What should be the common themes and strategic priorities in Kenyan–Swiss SD cooperation moving forward?
- IFRA best practice – Point of contact for French researchers in Kenya/regionally
- Regional applicability of the conclusions taken from the Kenya-Switzerland context

4. Next steps and closing (10 minutes)

Developing next steps (5 minutes)

- Follow-up activities and timelines
 - Workshop series - next
 - Dissemination of findings
 - Contact list of participants – anyone to opt out via email
 - Final dissemination event

Closing Remarks