



# European Union – African Union Cooperation in Research and Innovation



*“Research and Innovation plays an essential role in our cooperation with Africa. In view of creating a knowledge society and economy, we need to further scale up this existing academic and scientific cooperation. This has to take place through mobility schemes for our researchers and innovators as well as through vocational education and training. Enhancing skills development, particularly for women and youth, has also to be one of our priorities. By strengthening our R&I cooperation we provide concrete benefits for our people and societies.”*

**Mariya Gabriel**, Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth

The EU and the African Union (AU) are working on short-, medium-, and long-term Research and Innovation (R&I) activities to address the human health impacts and the more far reaching socio-economic effects of COVID-19. These can be presented in four groups:

1. **Public health**
2. **Green transition (food, climate change and energy)**
3. **Innovation and technology**
4. **Capacities for science**

The total amount allocated to Research & Innovation cooperation with Africa in Horizon 2020 is **EUR 860 mn**.

1400 African researchers from 43 different countries have been involved in the MSCA, which account for more than 240 participations of 164 different African organisations.

## EU-AU R&I ACTIONS

### 1. HEALTH

- The **Coronavirus Global Response pledging marathon**, which raised a total of **EUR 15.9 bn** for tests, treatment and prevention to ensure global recovery.
- The **European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP)**, with joint investment of **EUR 1.4 bn** and its efforts to gear research towards COVID-19 (e.g. clinical research networks).

### 2. GREEN TRANSITION

- **R&I Partnership on Food Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA)** channelled a joint investment of **EUR 381 mn** on four priorities: 1) Sustainable intensification; 2) Agriculture and food systems for nutrition; 3) Expansion and improvement of agricultural trade and markets; and 4) A group of cross-cutting topics.
- **R&I Partnership on Climate Change Sustainable Energy (CCSE)**, with an investment of **EUR 84 mn** for climate services, renewable energy and energy efficiency which will support adaptation and mitigation efforts in various sectors for Africa and implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.
- The **Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES)** and the **Group on Earth Observations (GEO)** initiatives for climate impact monitoring implemented actions with Africa.

### 3. INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

- The **EU-AU Innovation Partnership** encompassing:
  - › A pilot project called the **Africa-Europe Innovation Partnership** – with a budget of **EUR 2.5 mn** it aims to develop transcontinental cooperation between African and European tech hubs. So far 30 Memoranda of Understanding have been signed between incubators from 22 countries (13 African and 9 European);
  - › The setting-up of a **working group to develop a roadmap for this Partnership** (EU-AU High Level Policy Dialogue, November 2019);
  - › Other initiatives related to the promotion of digital transformation and connectivity: **Innovation Networking Centre, Africa EU Digital Innovation Hubs** and support to **African Research and Education networks infrastructure**, through programmes such as **AfricaConnect** (supported by the Pan-African Programme).

### 4. CAPACITY FOR SCIENCE

- Immediate **open access** to scientific publications and to **FAIR** (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable) **research data** through the **European Research Data Platform** on SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 to allow the scientific community to share, analyse, and process data rapidly, openly and effectively across the globe.
- Training and technical equipment for health workers via the **EU Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence (CoE)** initiative.
- **Integration of the gender dimension** in the response to the COVID-19 outbreak to mitigate its socioeconomic consequences.
- The **development of human capital**, including researchers' mobility and training – via the **Erasmus+** programme and the **Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)**, to tackle crises and create more resilient societies.

## HORIZON 2020 SUCCESS STORIES IN THE EU-AU R&I COOPERATION



The **East Africa Consortium for Clinical Research (EACCR)**, was successful in terms of **capacity building, staff training and research outputs**, playing a pivotal role in supporting South-South cooperation in Africa. It involved research organisations from Kenya, Sudan, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Uganda, as well as from Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the UK.



**InnovAfrica** developed a knowledge platform called '**Village knowledge centres**' **connecting farmers and rural communities** through smartphones, for a **faster and effective information and knowledge flow**. This enable smallholders to make informed and timely decisions, reducing risks and vulnerabilities, and maximise economic returns, thereby ensuring self-sufficiency and sustainability. The project involved partners from Kenya, Ethiopia, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania, South Africa and Zimbabwe.



The EUR 6 mn project **EUROSUNMED** developed **new technologies in 3 energy field areas**, namely **photovoltaics, concentrated solar power and grid integration**. It involved EU research centres, national agencies and SMEs in strong collaboration with universities, research organisations and SMEs from Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPC). It produced innovative components (PV cells / modules, heliostats), effectively meeting the specific conditions of the Mediterranean areas (irradiation, hot climate, dust).



**ANTHUSIA** is a multi-disciplinary European Joint Doctorate in the Anthropology of Human Security in Africa. The research will provide insights into problems such as expanding young populations, accelerated urbanisation, unequally distributed growth, recurring conflicts, persistent health problems, and refugee insecurity. This perspective shifts the focus from the security of nation states to the safety and well-being of humans in their everyday lives. The project involved partners from South Africa, Kenya, Mozambique, Somalia, Burkina Faso, Namibia, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi.

More information on the EU-AU cooperation in R&I is available at

<https://ec.europa.eu/research/iscp/index.cfm?pg=africa>