

## **UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY (UNU)**

### **Support to AU/NEPAD (Period of July 2009 to June 2010)**

#### **Open Educational Resources for Agricultural Higher Education**

The UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS) is actively involved in the project 'Agrolor' aimed at improving access to and availability of quality agricultural learning resources. The project is funded by the Flemish Government and coordinated by the World Agroforestry Centre. It involves university partners from several countries in Eastern and Southern Africa (e.g., Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Malawi, and Zambia) to develop open educational resources for eLearning in higher agricultural education.

#### **UNW-DPC workshops and training programmes in Africa**

UNW-DPC (UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development) held several regional training workshops together with FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) on the use of the AquaCrop model, an FAO tool to estimate yield response to water. The purpose of the workshops were to train participants from various regions in Africa and Asia in the practical applications of AquaCrop in order to improve their skills in strategic management aimed at increasing crop-water productivity in irrigated production systems.

Two workshops entitled "Capacity Development for Farm Management Strategies to Improve Crop-Water Productivity using AquaCrop" took place in Africa, the first one in Burkina Faso in July 2009 and the fourth in Cairo in October 2009. Around 30 participants from more than 10 countries in its region attended each workshop. The participants are mainly mid-level managers, professionals and researchers in water and agriculture. UNW-DPC held three week-long training programmes for decision makers from MENA (Middle East and North Africa) countries, on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) at the DAAD branch office in Cairo. The ministries of water, planning, environment and agriculture from 12 countries of the MENA region were invited. Moreover, UNW-DPC also held three regional workshops on non revenue water, the 3rd of which was held in Rabat, Morocco in January 2010. The main objective of the regional workshops themselves was to document available know-how and best practices and to recommend new approaches for more efficient management in the field of water and sanitation in Africa, with a focus on water loss reduction.

#### **Disaster Risk Management System with the Republic of Congo**

This project is a joint initiative between the UNU Vice-Rectorate in Europe (UNU-ViE), UNU-EHS and the Disaster Risk Management Training and Education Centre for Africa (DiMTEC) of the University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa. It aims at supporting the government of the Republic of Congo in the development of a disaster management system for the country that encompasses risk reduction as well as response and recovery through the organisation of tailor-made training and education courses on vulnerability and risk reduction, joint workshops on principles and concepts of disaster risk reduction and country visits to South Africa. It further envisages the creation of a distance-learning Master programme on Disaster Risk Management in French language by 2011 in cooperation with DiMTEC, the national University Marien Ngouabi, UNU-ViE and UNU-EHS. The vision is to generate a regional hub for francophone Africa.

## **ICT Innovation and Development**

The UNU Maastricht Economic and social Research institute on Innovation and Technology (UNU-MERIT) is exploring the further use of free/libre and open source software (FLOSS) in Africa. UNU-MERIT and the Free Software and Open Source Foundation for Africa (FOSSFA) signed a memorandum of understanding in February 2008 to raise awareness on the benefits of open source software among African policymakers, civil society, academia and businesses. One outcome of this partnership is the recent [ict@innovation](mailto:ict@innovation.unu.nl) project.

The [ict@innovation](mailto:ict@innovation.unu.nl) programme builds capacities in African small and medium ICT enterprises to make a business with FLOSS. [Ict@innovation](mailto:ict@innovation.unu.nl) aims to encourage the growth of African ICT industries, particularly in Southern and East Africa. [ict@innovation](mailto:ict@innovation.unu.nl) is a partnership of FOSSFA (Free Software and Open Source Foundation for Africa) and InWEnt - Capacity Building International (Germany). The outcome of regional training sessions in Kenya, South Africa, Uganda, Tanzania, and Mozambique resulted in the creation of training materials on “Advance African FOSS business models.” Another relevant project is FLOSSInclude, coordinated by UNU-MERIT.

## **Cooperation with the African Science, Technology, and Innovation Indicators (ASTII) Initiative of NEPAD**

UNU-MERIT has been cooperating with the African Science, Technology, and Innovation Indicators (ASTII) initiative of NEPAD by giving advice on how to conduct R&D and innovation surveys in African countries, how to interpret the results and how to provide access to the data without breaking the statistical rule of confidentiality. In December of 2009, UNU-MERIT Professorial Fellow, Pierre Mohnen gave a keynote lecture at the ASTII workshop held in Addis Ababa called ‘A survey of innovation surveys: taking stock of a growing literature’.

The discussions with NEPAD on R&D and innovation surveys were initiated at the GLOBELICS ‘09 Conference in Dakar, Senegal, 6-8 October 2009. The conference was organised jointly by UNU-MERIT and Centre de Recherche Economique et Sociale (CRES), Dakar, Senegal. The conference attracted a very large number of researchers from Africa. Out of the 200 selected and presented papers in the conference more than 60 were from researchers based in Africa. The conference also provided a unique occasion for sharing knowledge and expertise on innovation and development from Africa and was attended by representatives of AU, NEPAD and other UN agencies who contributed as experts in special invited sessions.

## **NEPAD-specific Support**

UNU-MERIT as a member of the UN S&T Cluster to assist the AU/NEPAD efforts to implement the Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA) for science and technology participated in various meetings convened by UNESCO and UNECA with the aim of further coordinating and strengthening the role of the cluster members

UNU-MERIT Senior Researcher Fred Gault has worked with the NEPAD Office of Science and Technology (OST) on policies and programmes related to science, technology and innovation (STI) indicators. As a member of the Swedish team, he participated, in 2009, in a meeting in Beijing of officials from NEPAD OST and from Chinese organizations interested in STI development in Africa.

## **Assessing the Impact of Policy Change**

The UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER) is in the process of concluding the research project designed to improve the capacity in Africa for assessing the impact of policy change at the level of individual households. Teams of researchers in Botswana, Cameroon, Ghana, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia have been provided with the technical assistance necessary to build computer models that allow the impact of tax and transfer reform on income distribution and poverty to be simulated. This project has produced a website with user-friendly models where policy makers and others can experiment with the impacts of policy changes for these nine countries and for South Africa as well. During the course of the project, training workshops for the country teams have been held in Accra, Addis Ababa, Cairo, Helsinki, Kampala, Maputo, Pretoria, and Vienna. The project's microsimulation models are accessible on the WIDER website at: <http://african-models.wider.unu.edu/>

## **African Development Workshop**

UNU-WIDER organized a workshop in Accra in December 2009 for the project, 'African Development: Myths and Realities', in collaboration with the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET), based in Accra. There were 24 papers presented in six substantive sessions over two days. As the conference was geared mainly toward capacity development, most of the participants were young scholars. The majority of participants were African, with a reasonable balance between those based on the continent and others based elsewhere.

## **Interviews with Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki**

In September and October 2009 respectively, the United Nations University Office at the UN, New York (UNU-ONY) organized two interviews with Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, the new Chief Executive Officer of NEPAD. One of the interviews was conducted in English, the other in French. The interviews discussed the role of NEPAD in Africa's development in the coming years. The interviews are part of the UNU Conversation Series on Africa. They are available at [www.ony.unu.edu](http://www.ony.unu.edu). Dr. Jean-Marc Coicaud, Director of UNU-ONY, also discussed with Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki possible collaborations between UNU and NEPAD. UNU-ONY will explore with NEPAD opportunities for cooperation in the coming months.

## **UN Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development**

UNU-WIDER was a co-organizer of the side event on 'Recovering from the Global Crisis: Towards an Action Plan for Africa and the Least Developed Countries' at the UN Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development on 25 June 2009. A Discussion Paper 'The Global Economic Crisis: Towards Syndrome-Free Recovery for Africa (Augustin Fosu and Wim Naudé)' was prepared as a background document and a UNU Policy Brief on 'Policy Responses to the Global Economic Crisis in Africa' was distributed to participants.

The UNU Office at the United Nations, New York, launched a multimedia intellectual forum on the economic crisis, the 'UNU Conversation Series'. The objective of the series is to bring clarity to some of the key issues at the center of the economic crisis, to explain what is at stake, and to explore what should be done to overcome the problems we currently face. It brings together some of the most important intellectual and policy voices from around the globe, including experts on Africa. Those directly addressing the impact of the crisis on

Africa's development include Augustin Fosu, Deputy Director of UNU-WIDER; Wim Naudé, Senior Research Fellow at UNU-WIDER; and Léonce Ndikumana, Director of the Research Department at the African Development Bank. The conversations are available at [www.unueconomiccrisis.org](http://www.unueconomiccrisis.org)

UNU-ONY will continue to work on the UNU Africa Series in 2010.