

UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY

Support to NEPAD

Period of report: 2003-2004

Orientation of work in support of NEPAD

Within the framework of its overall mandate, the United Nations University (UNU) continued to support several of the priorities of NEPAD namely, agriculture and market access, sciences and technology and human resources development (capacity development). UNU's work and research focused on facilitating and promoting South-South cooperation, promoting coordination and coherence in support of NEPAD priorities, and developing and implementing joint programmes in support of NEPAD. UNU organized conferences, public lectures in order to raise awareness on NEPAD.

Food security for NEPAD

UNU Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (UNU-INRA) carried out research, education and information-sharing activities in order to strengthen the capacity of Africa's universities and research institutions to conduct research and produce well-trained, well-equipped and motivated individuals capable of developing, adapting and disseminating technologies that advance food security and promote conservation and efficient use of the continent's natural resources for sustainable development.

UNU-INRA main activities have been:

- To strengthen partnership with African scientists and research institutions through networking with African universities and research institutes (the College of Research Associates) and through strategic partnership with like-minded

organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Institutes of the Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research (CGIAR).

- To develop and strengthen relevant post-graduate programmes in African universities including the establishment of UNU-INRA Operating Units.
- To focus studies on the role of African Women in natural resources management to inform policy.
- To engage the African Diaspora in the activities of UNU-INRA.
- To make timely and relevant information available to African policymakers through the UNU-INRA Annual Lectures.

Innovative New Technologies

UNU Institute for New Technologies (UNU-INTECH) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Africa Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS) for the development of modular workshops in Africa aimed at building awareness of the underlying technological issues in development policy and practice. Three workshops, in Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Senegal, were co-organised with ATPS in 2003. The institute has also developed a partnership with The Nigerian National Agency for Biotechnology Development (NABDA). NABDA has asked UNU-INTECH to provide training for local teams carrying out a study of the Nigerian Biopharmacy Innovation System, funded by the Nigerian government and the International

Development Research Centre of Canada. The project is implemented within Nigeria's special initiative for Science and Technology, supported by UNESCO. UNU-INTECH has joined UNIDO, UNCTAD and UNESCO on the Advisory Committee for this project.

In a collaborative research project, UNU-INTECH will contribute to the implementation of the programme of activities that was endorsed at the recent African Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology for Development organised by the NEPAD Secretariat and South Africa's Department of Science and Technology in November 2003.

NEPAD's Commission on Science and Technology is launching two initiatives to build capacity among policy makers on these issues. The first is the African Innovation Outlook, to undertake national innovation studies using the National Systems of Innovation Framework.

A second initiative is a new book on Biosafety and Biotechnology issues in Africa to be edited by Prof. Norman Clark and Dr. John Mugabe (NEPAD). The main focus of the study will be the role of science institutions and scientists in making decisions on Genetically Modified Products – essentially asking the question whether science is driving executive decisions in this area. Commissioned country studies will be carried out in Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

In the initial phase of the collaboration, UNU-INTECH will develop a concept paper that will provide a coherent framework and methodology for mapping national and sectoral innovation systems of African countries. The concept will be presented to policymakers and researchers at sub-regional and national workshops to be organised by NEPAD. It will subsequently be considered and used by individual countries to conduct NSI surveys.

Furthermore, within the framework of the CTA Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation, UNU-INTECH has reached an agreement with the Netherlands based Centre to train country teams undertaking Science & Technology Innovation Policy (STIP) Studies in six ACP countries starting in February 2004.

Capacity-building for NEPAD

The UNU-International Network on Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH) has successfully completed its first major project in Africa – a World Bank funded effort to develop and deploy a predictive model of physical, chemical and water quality processes in Lake Malawi/Nyasa. The INWEH model enables local scientists to predict nutrient and sediment inputs, pollutant dispersal, phytoplankton growth and future rates of eutrophication. Training has been provided at national organizations in each of the three riparian countries where versions of the model are now installed. Much of the training was provided to graduate students, who will return to their home agencies, both to use the model and train others.

The project was implemented with Waterloo University, Canada's National Water Research Institute and Delft Hydraulics, Netherlands, supported by scientists from several universities, government institutes and private firms in Malawi, Canada, USA and UK. Begun in late 1999, the project represented INWEH's first research initiative.