

« Towards a better governance of science, technology and innovation (STI): tools for analysing and monitoring policies and instruments »

Dakar- Sénégal
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Tentative rational/Concept note

The Division of Science Policy and Capacity Building (PCB) of UNESCO in Paris is organizing in cooperation with UNESCO BREDIA office, the African Observatory of STI (AOSTI) and the Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche de Senegal, a training workshop on tools for designing and monitoring STI policies and policy instruments aiming at a better STI governance at the national and regional level.

The UNESCO project on Capacity-Building on STI policies in African countries, financed by the Spanish Government and coordinated by PCB, is being supporting the development of effective STI policies, policy instruments and governing bodies since 2007 in more than 20 African countries, including Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Niger et Sénégal. From this regional experience, two main challenges have been identified by the Member States.

Policymakers need to have a better picture of their national, regional and global performance with regard to the distribution of knowledge and to estimate the magnitude of the loss of potential innovation due to the limitation of the STI policy instruments which are applied. In this context, a better understanding of the long-term evolution of STI policy institutions and organizations as well as their governance characteristics is also needed. The lack of precise information and technical analytical capacity to design and monitor innovative STI policies are one of the major problems for LDCs. The UNESCO Global Observatory on Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Instruments (GO→SPIN) provides the methodological approach needed and is also a useful tool for the democratization of decision-making and public accountability on STI policies.

The second related challenge identified is the need to adapt and develop new indicators to cover all aspects of LDC reality (i.e measure the impact of innovation in the informal sector, which accounts of 42,3% of GNP in Sub-Saharan Africa¹) and include values as social inclusion, peace or sustainability to improve the contribution of STI to them. The UNESCO STI Global Assessment Program (STIGAP) is aiming at creating forums and networks to address these gaps through development of new indicators and testing

¹ ILO 2002

experiences in cooperation with the African Economic Commissions and main international partners operating in the region- the newly established African Observatory of STI (AOSTI), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Planning & Coordinating Agency (NPCA), the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS), the African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS) and the University of United Nations (UNU-Merit) .

Therefore, the Division of Science Policy and Capacity Building (PCB) is organizing, in the framework of the Spanish-funded project, the second of a series of participative workshops aiming at incorporating the African region in the UNESCO Global Observatory on STI Policy Instruments (GO→SPIN) and the STI Global Assessment Program (STIGAP) that complement and provide both, the methodological approach and the regional perspective needed to address effectively these challenges.

The workshop will be destined to 40 government officials at the ministries of S&T and planning, experts from academia, from the National Statistical Offices (NSOs) assisting the ASTII ground work and from the advisory STI commissions of parliaments of the six countries. The format of the workshop, with general presentations and working groups will enable not only the building of capacities for the national critical mass but also to ensure the dialog at national and sub-regional level of the STI main actors and governing bodies.

The main output of the workshop will be the development of the GO→SPIN country profiles by the representatives of the six countries in collaboration with AOSTI, which recently has signed a cooperation agreement with UNESCO, following the recommendation made by the African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology (AMCOST V) last November 2012 in Brazzaville (Rep. Congo). The surveys will then be standardized by UNESCO and included in the GO→SPIN on-line platform. This is an expansion of the revolutionary cluster of databases equipped with powerful graphic and analytic tools which was developed for the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region.