



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Draft Concept Note

International Workshop

*(in follow up to the Ministerial Statement of Rabat
signed during the 2nd African Ministerial Forum on STI)*

Inter-university networking for capacity-building in STI policy: Towards a comprehensive African master programme at the National Engineering School of Tunis (ENIT)

Tunis-Hammamet, Tunisia

11-12 June 2015

I. Background

In the lead up to the adoption of the post-2015 Development Agenda and the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the Special Summit on Sustainable Development in New York in September 2015, the importance of science, technology and innovation (STI) has never been more relevant. STI play a role far beyond economic growth and industrial development. They also make an important contribution to eradicating poverty, creating inclusive societies and ensuring a sustainable environment. Therefore, placing STI at the top of this agenda requires that all concerned stakeholders, notably policy-makers, universities, parliamentarians, civil society, the private sector and international organizations join forces to strengthen national STI systems and their interaction with the productive sector systems. Tapping into the benefits of STI begins with strengthening institutional and human capacities with trained stakeholders that can fully contribute to the formulation and implementation of specific strategies, public policies and means of governing.

In the case of Africa, the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa - 2024 (STISA-2024), adopted in June 2014, recognizes in its situational analysis section that the continent has “inadequate expertise on STI policy development” and stresses the fact that “many of the officials involved in or responsible for drafting policy documents do not have the necessary skills or training and have no experience in evidence based policy making. Moreover, in most countries, institutions responsible for STI policy do not have appropriate libraries or easy access to sources of relevant information for policy-making.” Recently, the issue concerning the need to build decision-makers’ capacities in STI policy was also raised at the Second African Ministerial Forum which was held in Rabat (Morocco) in October 2014, where over 20 African Ministers in charge of STI committed to support initiatives, “programmes and networks that aim at developing human and institutional capacities in STI policy”, which was reflected in the [Ministerial Statement of Rabat](#).

Universities across the globe have a crucial role to play in developing these capacities. Through their different faculties, chairs, fellowship programmes and formalised courses, universities are a central component to providing an environment to train new generations of researchers and experts in STI policy-making and policy analysis.

However, despite the need for strong national capacities in STI policy, few universities in developing countries offer educational and research programmes in this field. To address this human and institutional resource gap, throughout the years UNESCO and other agencies have worked with higher educational institutions in developing countries

to train STI managers and decision-makers in the formulation, management, and review of their STI policies. The main goal is to enable relevant STI stakeholders to analyze the development challenges in their own countries, and to equip them with the tools to shape an STI agenda that can provide sustainable solutions and improve livelihoods.

To further develop expertise and train a critical mass of experts in the field, as well as promote the creation and strengthen STI policy programmes in universities and centres to act as advisory bodies to governments and regional bodies, UNESCO continues to pursue its work in this field through its programme on “*Capacity Building in STI Policy and Governance*”. This programme seeks to further stimulate the establishment of STI policy programmes in universities by establishing a North-South-South academic and inter-university network that will link existing academic centres and university programmes in STI policy to facilitate exchange and cooperation. The network will enable universities and academic centres to pool their know-how and capabilities together and to share resources in order to offer solid comprehensive STI policy training and research programmes.

It is within this context that UNESCO’s Division of Science Policy and Capacity-Building has responded positively to the National Engineering School of Tunis’ (ENIT) request to assist in the finalization and launching of an African Master Programme in STI Policy, and have teamed up with them to organize this international workshop entitled “*Inter-university networking for capacity-building in STI policy: Towards a comprehensive African master programme at the National Engineering School of Tunis (ENIT)*”.

II. Objectives

1. Exploring and identifying modalities to establish an innovative North-South-South inter-university network in STI policy, with an emphasis on capacity-building in STI policy in Africa. Focus will be placed on identifying potential joint activities that the proposed network can undertake and on how to ensure its sustainability. The following modalities and suggestions for joint activities may guide the presentations and later discussions and concrete proposals:
 - a. Making an inventory of existing STI policy courses/modules/open resources worldwide
 - b. Sharing training/teaching modules between participating institutions
 - c. Developing experts/ faculty members/scholars exchange programmes
 - d. Launching joint fellowship programmes
 - e. Establishing modes of delivery of the courses – online and face to face
 - f. Setting-up an African STI virtual hub

- g. Identifying potential funding sources and deploying fund raising strategies
 - h. Overviewing existing mechanisms for inter-university networking, including UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN networks
 - i. Elaborating terms of reference to set up network of consultative groups
 - j. Working jointly on developing and validating new STI policy modules
2. Reviewing the ENIT Master course, proposing ideas based on comparative experiences, and making concrete proposals for the following:
- a. Target students
 - b. Curriculum design
 - c. Provision of complementary modules and training material
 - d. Teachers and learners guide books
 - e. Modes of delivery
 - f. Partnerships with other institutes - proposals and mechanisms
 - g. Fellowships scheme for African students

III. Expected outcomes

- Fine-tuning the modalities to create an innovative inter-university network in STI policy, and identifying its potential future joint activities;
- Reviewing, seeking technical input and exploring exchange opportunities for ENIT's proposal to establish a comprehensive STI policy master programme for Africa.

IV. Participants

The workshop will bring together representatives from international organizations, universities and centres from Africa and other parts of the world that have established programmes in STI policies and/or those who would like to establish such programmes through networking.

V. Venue

The international workshop will be held from 11 to 12 June 2015 in Hammamet (Tunisia) at the Hôtel Le Sultan (approximately 65 km from Tunis airport). Airport pick-up and drop-off will be organized by the workshop coordinators.

VI. Language

The working languages of the workshop will be English and French.

Workshop Coordinators:

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