

2024 GLOBAL RESEARCH COUNCIL SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA REGIONAL MEETING

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

Avani Gaborone Resort & Casino, Botswana, 11 – 15 November 2024

1. INTRODUCTION

This report summarises the inputs, discussions, and outcomes of the 2024 Global Research Council (GRC) Sub-Saharan Africa regional meeting, that was held in November 2024 in Gaborone, Botswana, and hosted by the Ministry of Communications, Knowledge and Technology (MCKT), Republic of Botswana.

The objective of GRC Sub-Saharan Africa regional meeting, was to:

1. Collectively shape the region's input to the 2025 GRC Annual Meeting themes on “*Research Management in the Era of Artificial Intelligence*” and “*Working Together in Co-Creation to Address Global Challenges*”.
2. Engage and update African Heads of Research Councils (AHORCs) on GRC business and governance.

The meeting was held in conjunction with the Science Granting Councils Initiative in Sub-Saharan Africa (SGCI) Annual Forum and Academic Symposium hosted on 11-15 November 2024.

The meeting was attended by Heads or representatives of Research Councils (HORCs) from 20 sub-Saharan African countries (Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe) as well as representatives of other GRC participants (Saudi Arabia, Norway, Germany, United Kingdom, and Japan), observers from global science agencies, development funders, university associations, and research policy organisations.

This report has been prepared as an official record of the discussions and to support the preparations for the 13th GRC Annual Meeting to be hosted by the Research, Development, and Innovation Authority (RDIA) and King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology (KACST) in partnership with the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye (TÜBİTAK), in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on 18-22 May 2024. The gathering explored the discussion papers (*Section 2 and 3*), received reports from the three GRC working groups (*Section 4*), and during a closed meeting of AHORCs, GRC governance and especially linked to SSA was discussed (*Section 5*) (*See Annexure A for the detailed agenda*).

2. SETTING THE SCENE

A joint opening session of the GRC regional meeting and academic symposium provided the opportunity for interaction with researchers, including engagement with poster sessions. The following key messages emanated from discussions, which included a keynote address and panel on co-creation to solve global challenges:

a. Role of communication technologies in bridging inequalities

Communication technologies, such as broadband internet and digital platforms, are pivotal in bridging the digital divide in Africa. They empower researchers, policymakers, and underserved communities by providing access to global knowledge, collaborative tools, and real-time data for evidence-based policymaking. These tools enhance equity, enable capacity building through virtual training and e-learning, and amplify the voices of marginalised communities in decision-making processes.

b. Transformative potential of ai in addressing systemic challenges

AI has immense potential to tackle systemic issues in public health, education, and resource management. In healthcare, it enables early disease detection, optimised resource allocation, and enhanced decision-making. In education, AI-powered tools personalise learning experiences and bridge access gaps. Case studies, such as AI optimising water management in East Africa, demonstrate how tailored, data-driven solutions can resolve local challenges and create equitable opportunities for underserved communities.

c. Ethical considerations in ai-driven innovation

AI-driven solutions must address ethical concerns, particularly around data collection, privacy, and systemic bias. Robust data protection policies, transparency, and informed consent are essential to safeguard privacy and prevent exploitation. Mitigating bias in datasets is critical to ensuring that AI-driven innovations deliver equitable and fair outcomes without reinforcing existing inequalities.

d. Importance of knowledge sharing and policy frameworks

Policies that promote knowledge sharing and open data access are essential to equitable innovation. Frameworks that encourage cross-border collaboration, such as streamlined visa processes and standardised funding requirements, foster effective knowledge exchange and co-creation. Locally contextualised policies are critical for the adoption of innovations that address regional challenges.

e. Trust-based partnerships for sustainable collaboration

Trust-based partnerships, founded on principles of transparency, equity, and long-term engagement, are vital for advancing global research. Inclusivity in decision-making processes ensures that underrepresented groups have a voice, strengthening collaboration and fostering mutual trust among stakeholders.

f. Equitable funding mechanisms for diversity and inclusion

Inclusive funding frameworks, such as multi-tiered grants and collaborative funding pools, play a key role in promoting diversity in research. Targeted funding for underrepresented regions and co-leadership requirements in projects ensure equitable resource allocation, balancing contributions between high-resource and low-resource partners.

g. Integrating co-creation into research management

Co-creation in research management fosters collaborative decision-making and equitable resource distribution. Initiatives such as multilateral research programmes, standardised guidelines for funding applications, and shared governance frameworks streamline processes and promote inclusivity. These strategies enhance trust and create sustainable partnerships for tackling global challenges.

h. Strengthening international cooperation through standardization

Unified guidelines for funding applications and evaluation ensure consistency and fairness across regions. Joint funding pools and governance practices, such as regular audits and shared decision-making, reduce administrative burdens and support equitable partnerships. These strategies promote transparency and strengthen international collaboration in addressing systemic global issues.

3. DISCUSSIONS ON RESEARCH MANAGEMENT IN THE ERA OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Informed by the discussion paper on research management in the era of artificial intelligence, the following key messages represent the region's discussions:

a. AI for objectivity and efficiency in proposal evaluation

- AI tools can significantly streamline the evaluation process by analysing large data volumes and mitigating human biases.
- In Uganda, while AI adoption is still in its initial stages, its use has demonstrated efficiency in research proposal reviews. The council is also analysing the return on investment.
- Councils raised several ways they have gained from the use of AI: time saving, support for scribing panel meetings,

b. Ethical frameworks and data privacy in ai adoption

- The importance of ethical frameworks, including transparency, accountability, and data governance, is critical to fostering trust in AI-assisted decision-making processes.
- The risks of algorithmic bias and potential misuse of sensitive data highlight the need for robust policies to protect intellectual property and user privacy.

c. AI's role in addressing regional challenges

- Case studies illustrate how AI is tackling critical challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa, such as deforestation monitoring and vaccine distribution in low-resource settings. These demonstrate the practical potential of AI in addressing health and climate crises.
- In South Africa, AI-driven analytics provide insights into research trends, enabling the research council to align its funding priorities with emerging societal and scientific needs. AI is also used to track the progress and impact of funded projects, offering real-time updates, and facilitating evidence-based adjustments to funding strategies.

d. Infrastructure gaps and access inequities

- Significant disparities in digital infrastructure (incl. prohibitive costs) and technical expertise prevent some African nations from leveraging AI fully. Investments in capacity building are crucial for inclusive adoption.
- Examples from Kenya and Uganda underline the importance of fostering localised expertise and partnerships to bridge these gaps. The University of Nairobi (UoN) has already piloted an introduction to AI course to support greater capacity strengthening of students and researchers.

e. The scalability of AI in diverse contexts

- The challenges of adapting AI solutions to local sociopolitical and cultural contexts in Africa require intensive customisation and collaboration.

- The National Research Fund (NRF) Kenya plans to issue a call for proposal targeting Conceptual Collaborative Framework for Cultural Heritage Preservation leveraging on innovative technologies, including Artificial Intelligence (AI). Similarly, NRF Kenya is in the process implementing AI infrastructure, now under pilot scale, to utilise AI in research.
- f. **Human oversight as a cornerstone of ethical AI use**
- AI in decision-making should function as a support system rather than a replacement for human judgement, ensuring nuanced and context-aware decisions.
- g. **Promoting collaboration through AI-enabled platforms**
- Initiatives such as using AI to match researchers with complementary expertise are fostering co-creation and interdisciplinary partnerships. These systems enhance collaboration while driving efficiency and equity.
- h. **Regional leadership in AI integration**
- Adaptive governance models and investments in AI literacy position organisations in Sub-Saharan Africa as leaders in integrating AI. These efforts demonstrate how AI can align with ethical standards while advancing sustainable development goals.

There was unanimous agreement of the need to establish a GRC and regional working group focused on AI use by funders. The following key messages relate to the catalytic role of GRC participating organisations:

a. **Capacity building and knowledge transfer**

In Sub-Saharan Africa, the successful adoption of AI in research funding systems is closely tied to building local expertise and knowledge. Public funding agencies should invest in training programmes and initiatives to equip researchers and administrators with the skills needed to effectively use AI tools. Knowledge transfer partnerships with international institutions can also help mitigate the gap in technical expertise and ensure the sustainable use of AI.

b. **Public funding agencies' role in ensuring inclusivity**

Public funding bodies have a unique responsibility to ensure that AI tools do not perpetuate existing inequalities, especially in regions with significant socio-economic disparities. They must develop policies that promote equitable access to AI-driven funding opportunities for underrepresented groups and regions, ensuring that research initiatives align with national and regional priorities. In Sub-Saharan Africa, this could mean prioritising projects that address local challenges, such as food security, public health, and climate change. It also means prioritising investing in AI models and infrastructure that takes into consideration Indigenous languages.

c. **Monitoring and evaluating AI impact on research ecosystems**

Public funding agencies should establish robust frameworks for monitoring and evaluating the impact of AI integration not only in research management but also on the research ecosystem. This includes assessing whether AI tools are achieving their intended outcomes in terms of efficiency, fairness, and transparency. In Sub-Saharan Africa, it is important that these agencies develop context-specific metrics that consider the diverse and dynamic research environments across the region. Continuous evaluation helps in refining AI systems to align with long-term strategic goals for sustainable development.

4. DISCUSSIONS ON WORKING TOGETHER IN CO-CREATION TO ADDRESS GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Informed by the discussion paper on working together in co-creation to address global challenges, the following key messages represent the region's discussions:

a. Early stakeholder involvement ensures relevance and inclusivity

Successful co-creation initiatives, such as Ethiopia's drought-resistant crops and Zambia's policymaker involvement, demonstrate the importance of engaging stakeholders—researchers, communities, and policymakers—early in project cycles to establish shared goals and address local challenges effectively.

b. Diverse perspectives foster trust

Establishing research teams (including in research management and support) with diverse stakeholders enhances inclusivity, identifies challenges early, and builds trust. This approach ensures more impactful and equitable decision-making.

c. Localised strategies outperform one-size-fits-all approaches

Solutions tailored to regional needs, such as Angola's integration of indigenous knowledge in renewable energy and Senegal's dynamic policy reviews, have greater acceptance and sustainability compared to generic approaches.

d. Blending indigenous knowledge with scientific innovation drives impact

Projects incorporating traditional practices, such as Zambia's agricultural initiatives and Angola's land-use strategies, illustrate how combining indigenous knowledge with modern research can create effective, culturally sensitive solutions. For Africa, IKS is a strategic field where co-creation should be both encouraged and adequately funded.

e. Digital tools democratise collaboration across resource-constrained regions

Platforms like Zoom and mobile health technologies have enabled equitable participation in co-creation processes. Ethiopia's malaria prevention programme and Zambia's co-creation platforms exemplify how digital tools enhance accessibility and foster innovation.

f. Policy coherence aligns local, regional, and global goals

Co-creation initiatives aligning with frameworks like the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the SDGs, as seen in Senegal's renewable energy and health programmes, amplify impact through strategic alignment. However, it was also raised that geopolitical tensions and regional geopolitics do influence the ability to effectively co-create, linked to cross-border collaboration.

g. Funding models empower emerging researchers in underserved regions

Ethiopia's call for dedicated grants and mentorship for early-career researchers underscores the importance of investing in local talent to address specific challenges and diversify perspectives in global co-creation.

h. Community engagement strengthens trust and collaboration

Angola's participatory design sessions and Zambia's community engagement platforms highlight the value of inclusive decision-making, ensuring projects meet the actual needs of communities and gain long-term support. The discussion also raised that community engagement can also be harder to implementing practice, and that the necessary skillset can enable funders and researchers practice this in a sustainable manner.

i. Resource allocation must balance local and global priorities

Transparent resource distribution, as advocated by Senegal, ensures equitable impact and avoids neglecting local challenges while pursuing global goals, enhancing the effectiveness of co-creation initiatives.

The following key messages relate to the catalytic role of GRC participating organisations in supporting co-creation initiatives:

a. Role of public funding agencies in supporting co-creation

Public funding agencies play a crucial role in facilitating co-creation initiatives by providing the necessary financial support, particularly in resource-constrained regions. These agencies, as exemplified in Senegal's policy frameworks and Ethiopia's emerging researcher funding models, are essential in ensuring that local researchers and communities have access to the resources and training needed to participate in global partnerships. Public funding can also help address disparities in resource availability and foster inclusivity in collaborative projects. Public funders should also realise that co-creation initiatives are not applicable for all research activities and should enhance flexibility of systems and processes to ensure these initiatives are well supported. Funders should also engender relational practice (trust building, allowing time, flexibility, funding capacity strengthening, and ensuring reflexivity) are in-built for co-creation initiatives.

b. Sustainability and long-term impact of co-creation initiatives

The long-term sustainability of co-creation projects, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, is vital for continued success. Initiatives like Zambia's integration of traditional knowledge and Ethiopia's bioenergy solutions for underserved communities demonstrate the importance of embedding sustainability into the design and implementation of co-created solutions. Public funding agencies must ensure that financial support is directed not only towards project inception but also towards monitoring and scaling efforts to maintain their impact over time.

c. Capacity building and strengthening local institutions

Effective co-creation requires strengthening local institutions to ensure that knowledge and skills remain within the region. Public funding agencies can play a pivotal role in capacity-building efforts, supporting local universities, research centres, and community organisations. This approach, as seen in Ethiopia's mentorship models and Zambia's policy alignment, ensures that Sub-Saharan African countries are better equipped to lead future co-creation projects, fostering local ownership, and reducing dependency on external support. Funders need to enhance internal capacities for co-creation methodologies, strategies, and practices, and to share experiences across the GRC network.

5. SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS ON THE WORKING GROUPS

The three GRC working groups Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), Responsible Research Assessment (RRA) and Multilateral Engagement (MLE) presented reports and updates. The following presents a summary of the discussions for each working group, including next steps and actions from the region as applicable.

a. Multilateral Engagement (MLE)

The group presented the results of a scoping survey to understand the trends, practices, and experiences of GRC participating organisations, primarily comprising the working group. The presentation highlighted the following areas as those that have sparked the establishment of MLE's: to facilitate collaboration, strengthen research excellence, and to work on areas of global importance such as climate change, water, energy, food and sustainability. Energy, health and sustainability spanned the broad areas where MLEs were likely to be established. It highlighted lack of standardised processes and guidelines, time, budget differences (how schemes are financed) and commitment as key challenges to implementing MLEs. Joint research projects, infrastructure sharing and networking researchers were the key funding modalities that worked best in addressing global challenges. The group recommended the importance of developing common standards and exchange of knowledge as key areas for GRC participating organisations in taking the findings forward. *A report will be launched at the Annual Meeting in May 2025.*

b. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

This working group utilised the opportunity to workshop questions to participants, and to enhance the connections between the SGCI gender and inclusivity project and the EDI group in the region. It provided an update related to the expanded membership of the group in the region and the existence of long-term plans to continue engaging in its activities. The workshop focused on the role of HORCs in championing EDI work and sharing of experiences by councils. The key messages from that discussion were:

- A need to emphasise the importance of creativity and how this encouraged research diversity
- An increase in specific platforms that recognise the achievements of women in science
- The importance of integrating intersectionality in research design and content
- Continuing to explore the topic of implicit bias and the role it plays in the research ecosystem
- Investing in research that explores the socio-cultural dimensions that disadvantage progress is key

c. Responsible Research Assessment (RRA)

The working group provided a comprehensive update on their work, reminding participants of the 11 dimensions of RRA, and providing examples across the world on how councils are implementing the dimensions, including lessons learnt. These highlighted key areas include the disadvantages of exclusive use of bibliometrics in science, the importance of training workshops for researchers, emerging examples of the advantages of using narrative CVs in research assessment, and the advantages of assessing research quality within a national system. The RRA working group has partnered with the Research on Research Institute (RoRI) to develop and implement a new survey on RRA and councils were encouraged to complete the survey to enhance representation of the SSA region.

6. SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS ON GRC GOVERNANCE

During a closed meeting of the research councils, the discussion centred socialising GRC governance within the region. ESG members Dr Dorothy Ngila (NRF SA), Dr Marcus Wilms (DFG) and Osamu Kobayashi (JST, Japan) presented on the governing board, programme committee, working groups, the ESG and the Executive Secretariat. The following is a summary of key discussions and actions:

- The region supports the continued efforts of the GRC to make the organisation apolitical and supports efforts to maintain both proximity and distance of science towards politics.
- Councils from Angola and Togo were confirmed as participant organisations of the GRC and that there was not an application criterion to be part of the organisation. The foundational document of the GRC provided the parameters for engagement in GRC activities.
- Governing Board: It was reported that Dr Yaya Sangare would set off the Governing Board in May 2025 and that an election would be conducted virtually early 2025 to determine the next regional representative:
 - It was agreed by consensus that the Eastern Africa region would be prioritised as there has never been a council from that sub-region on the Governing Board.
 - It was agreed that the SSA Governing Board members would table a motion to increase the number of SSA representatives on the Governing Board following the next cycle of elections.
 - It was agreed that the latter position would then be filled by a council from the Western Africa region, ensuring adequate representation of the three sub-regions.
 - It was agreed that this representation of the sub-regions would be critical towards building an elected leadership of councils in the region beyond the SGCI.
- Executive Support Group: It was reported that Dr Annette Ouattara (FONSTI) had stepped back from this governance structure and that there was a need to fill this position, which required an experienced senior official from a council.
 - Dr Amos Nungu (COSTECH) elected to nominate a senior representative, later confirmed as Ms Neema Tindamanyire to join the ESG
 - The second ESG member from the region is Dr Dorothy Ngila.
- Executive secretariat: the participants were updated on the status of the executive secretariat and that a distributed leadership model would be tabled to the Governing Board in December to enhance sustainability of this role. SSA councils were requested to consider investing staff time as needed to support GRC's activities through contacting the interim executive secretariat (UKRI and DFG).
- Working Groups: HORCs were requested to support, champion and enable the engagement of working group members in their activities.

ANNEXURE 1: GRC SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA REGIONAL MEETING PROGRAMME

Thursday, 14 November 2024

GRC Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Meeting Themes: Research Management in the Era of Artificial Intelligence and Working Together in Co-Creation to Address Global Challenges Moderator: Dr Dorothy Ngila, National Research Foundation, South Africa and GRC Executive Support Group	
Session 1: Joint Opening Session GRC Africa Regional Meeting and SGCI Academic Symposium Chair: Dr Fulufhelo Nelwamondo, National Research Foundation, South Africa and GRC Governing Board	
09:00 – 09:40	Welcoming and introductory remarks 1. Ms Lesego M Thamae , Ministry of Communications, Knowledge and Technology, Botswana 2. Prof Katja Becker , German Research Foundation, Germany 3. Prof Karen Lips , International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, Austria
09:40-09:50	Introduction and overview of the GRC Dr Marcus Wilms , German Research Foundation and GRC Executive Support Group
09:50-10:00	Overview of the SGCI Academic Symposium Dr Prudence Makhura , National Research Foundation, South Africa
10:00-10:30	Keynote address: Global and African perspectives on innovation in the era of AI Dr Isaac Rutenberg , Intellectual Property Advisor, CIFOR-ICRAF and Associate Professor of ICT Policy and Innovation, Strathmore University
10:00-11:00	Panel on enhancing collaboration to address global challenges Facilitator: Dr Thandi Mgwebi , National Research Foundation, South Africa 1. Prof Jean Nduwamungu , University of Rwanda 2. Dr Amos Nungu , Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology 3. Dr Lorenza Fluks , Human Sciences Research Council, South Africa 4. Prof Matthias Koenig , German Research Foundation 5. Mr Rune Vistad , Research Council of Norway
11:00-11:30	GROUP PHOTO AND TEA/COFFEE BREAK
Session 2: Working Together in Co-Creation to Address Global Challenges Chair: Ms Gift Kadzamira, National Commission for Science and Technology, Malawi	
11:30-11:40	Presentation of GRC discussion paper (<i>by video</i>) Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye, TÜBİTAK
11:40-11:50	Harnessing bilateral and multilateral research programming as instruments of co-creation: experiences from the UKRI Dr Michael Booth , UK Research and Innovation

11:50-13:20	<p>Panel discussion on Working Together in Co-Creation to Address Global Challenges</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Dr Habtamu Abera Goshu, Bio and Emerging Technology Institute, Ethiopia Prof Mamadou Sy, Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, Senegal Prof Mario Fresta, <i>Fundação para o Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico</i>, Angola Dr Ardjouma Coulibaly, <i>Le fonds National pour la Recherche et de l'Innovation pour le Developpement</i>, Burkina Faso Mr Guest Mugala, National Science and Technology Council, Zambia <p><i>Includes input from participants</i></p> <p><u>Guiding Questions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How can co-creation platforms enhance RDI efforts directed to global challenges? How can joint funding schemes and resource allocation support impactful co-creation initiatives? How can funding organisations enhance researchers' and innovators' skills in interdisciplinary collaboration and community engagement? Can policy influence and contribute to addressing global challenges through co-creation and how? What are the strategies for enhancing stakeholder engagement and working closely with policymakers to effectively address complex global challenges? What is the role of platforms for sharing best practices and lessons learned to promote continuous improvement in co-creation initiatives? How can GRC effectively provide a structured framework for co-creation in RDI which includes processes, methodologies and best practices? What is GRC's role in advocating for evidence-based policymaking to ensure inclusive and equitable solutions?
13:20-13:30	<p>Key messages</p> <p>Ms Lesego M Thamae, Ministry of Communications, Knowledge and Technology, Botswana</p>
13:30-14:30	LUNCH BREAK
<p>Session 3: Research Management in the Era of Artificial Intelligence</p> <p>Chair: Prof Anicia Peters, National Commission on Research, Science and Technology, Namibia</p>	
14:30-14:40	<p>Presentation of GRC Discussion Paper</p> <p>Dr Hassan Y. Alayied, King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology, Saudi Arabia</p>
14:40-14:50	<p>Insights from IDRC's Artificial Intelligence for Development Program</p> <p>Dr Fernando Perini, International Development Research Centre, Canada</p>
14:50-16:20	<p>Panel discussion on Research Management in the Era of Artificial Intelligence</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Dr Martin Ongol, Uganda National Council for Science and Technology Dr Yaya Sangare, <i>Fonds pour la Science, la Technologie et l'Innovation</i>, Cote d'Ivoire Prof Dickson Andala, National Research Fund, Kenya Dr Partson Chikudza, Research Council of Zimbabwe Ms Nosisa Dube, National Research Foundation, South Africa and GRC Responsible Research Assessment Working Group <p><i>Includes input from participants</i></p> <p><u>Guiding Questions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How can AI enhance efficiency and objectivity in research funding management, including proposal screening, data analysis, decision-making, and fostering innovation and international collaboration?

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. In what ways can AI both reduce human bias in the peer review process and funding decisions and potentially introduce or amplify other types of biases, and what strategies can be implemented to mitigate these risks and ensure fairness? 3. What are the key ethical and governance challenges associated with integrating AI into research funding—such as transparency, accountability, privacy, and data security—and how can these challenges be effectively addressed to ensure responsible use of AI? 4. How might the adoption of AI impact job roles and skill requirements within research funding agencies, and how can organizations support staff in adapting to new AI-related roles while preventing over-reliance on AI and maintaining essential human oversight in decision-making processes? 5. What roles should international collaboration, standardized policies, and ethical guidelines play in developing AI governance for research management, and how can funding agencies and organizations like the Global Research Council (GRC) facilitate responsible AI use across different regions and cultures? Specifically, should the GRC establish a dedicated AI working group, or integrate AI considerations into existing groups like Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) and Responsible Research Assessment (RRA), and how can these groups address specific issues such as equity, bias, and responsible research assessment in the context of AI? 6. How does the digital divide affect the ability of different regions to adopt and benefit from AI in research funding, and what strategies can be implemented to ensure equitable access to AI technologies and infrastructure globally, thereby reducing disparities and promoting inclusivity? 7. What are the potential long-term implications of AI integration into the research landscape including technological dependence and ethical misuse—and how can we proactively address these issues by enhancing AI literacy, establishing robust governance frameworks, and implementing effective monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure fairness and human oversight in AI-assisted funding decisions?
16:20-16:30	<p>Key messages Dr Tonya Blowers, Organisation for Women in Science for the Developing World</p>
16:30-16:45	<p>Spotlight on GRC Participating Council (Angola) Dr Rosa Maurício, <i>Fundação para o Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico</i>, Angola</p>
END OF SESSION	
Networking Event Organized by MCKT and NRF	

Friday, 15 November 2024

Session 4: GRC Working Groups Chair: Dr Cephass Adjey Mensah, Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation, Ghana	
09:00-09:30	Update: Multilateral Collaboration Working Group Dr Prudence Makhura , National Research Foundation, South Africa and Mr Osamu Kobayashi , Japan Science and Technology Agency
09:30-10:30	Leading with Intention: Advancing Gender Equality and Intersectional Leadership in Research Funding Ms Bestina Daniel , Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology, Dr Lorenza Fluks and Ms Nazeema Isaacs , Human Sciences Research Council, South Africa
10:30-11:00	BREAK
11:00-12:00	Update: Responsible Research Assessment (RRA) Working Group Ms Dirce Madeira , Fundo Nacional de Investigaçã, Mozambique and Ms Nosisa Dube , National Research Foundation, South Africa
12:00-12:15	Closing Remarks Mr Abraham Mathodi , Ministry of Communications, Knowledge and Technology, Botswana and Host 2024 SSA Regional Consultative Meeting
12:15-12:30	BREAK
Session 6: GRC Governance and Closing Chair: Dr Fulufhelo Nelwamondo SSA GRC Governing Board <i>Closed meeting of HORCs and GRC ESG</i>	
12:30-13:30	Update on GRC activities
END OF SESSION	
13:30-14:30	LUNCH
Institutional Visits	