Workshop Report

From	ACTS	**To**	AUC
Office	ACTS/ NBI	**CC**	SGCI SGC HORCs
Title of Workshop	SGCI STISA-2034 Consultative Workshop		
Country of Workshop	Ghana		
City of Workshop	Alisa Hotel – North Ridge, Accra		
Workshop dates	18 – 19 September, 2024		

Author

Dr. Nicholas Odongo,
Research Fellow,
nodongo@acts-net.org
African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS).

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Executive Summary

The Science Granting Councils contribute in a number of ways in their respective national as well as continental science, technology, and innovation systems. They do so by supporting research, innovation and policy processes in their respective countries, which also influences continental processes.
The Science Granting Council's Initiative (SCGI) has supported the SGCs by strengthening their capacities to manage and fund research & innovation projects, use data and evidence in policy and decision-making, strategic communications and knowledge translation & uptake, gender equality and inclusivity, as well as strengthening national science, technology, and innovation systems. Councils are mandated, amongst others, to develop national STI policies and strategies. Most of the national STI policies developed during 2014-2024 indicate their alignment with STISA 2024. Therefore, Councils are well placed to contribute to the formulation and implementation of STISA-2034.

Under the stewardship of the Department of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, the African Union Commission is developing the next iteration of the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2034) based on the review of the STISA-2024. The African Union has established a Task Force and a Drafting Team to spearhead the development of the Strategy.

It is in this regard that the IDRC, through the ACTS, convened an in-person consultative workshop of the Councils and AUC on the development of the Science Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2034) from **September 18 to 19** in Accra, Ghana.

Objectives of workshop

The overall goal of the workshop was to provide an opportunity for the SGCI and participating councils to discuss, gather inputs, and deliberate over the Draft Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2034). This was scheduled to occur within the context of consultative discussions in and around the STI ecosystem in Africa. More specifically, the workshop intended to allow the Councils and SGCI to:

1. Deliberate on and assess the state of the STI ecosystem in Africa, at both national and continental levels
2. Discuss and gather inputs for the enrichment of the Draft STISA-2034
3. Discuss how the SGCI can effectively position itself to contribute, influence and enrich both the development and implementation of the STISA-2034.
4. Develop an SGCI position paper/ statement to be submitted to the African Union Commission (AUC) Task Force and Drafting Team for enriching the development of STISA-2034
5. Discuss other key thematic areas of interest to the councils including (i) Private sector investments and involvement in research and innovation, (ii) Strengthening partnerships with private sector, (iii) Increasing the profiles and visibility of SGCI Councils, (iv) STI policy and Governance, (v) Technology assessment and foresight, and (vi) Financing research and innovation, among others

Expected Outputs/ Outcomes of workshop

- Workshop report
- SGCI position paper on STISA-2034 – Accra Communiqué
- An enriched STISA-2034 strategy document

Context and Purpose of the Meeting

In August 2023, the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) was commissioned by UNESCO to review the implementation of STISA-2024 and make recommendations for STISA-2034. The review

identified some key achievements that may be attributed to or initiatives that were stimulated by STISA-2024. They include: (a) increased political interest in and support for STI; (b) increased number of African countries with national STI policies; (c) increased number of STI funding agencies and (d) enhanced Africa's participation in international STI policy processes.

The review also noted several shortcomings (or limitations) of STISA-2024. They include (a) limited participation of AU member states, civil society and private sector in the design and implementation of STISA-2024; (b) absence of a monitoring and evaluation mechanism to assess progress and impacts of the strategy; and (c) a lack of a dedicated mechanism or fund for STISA-2024. While new initiatives e.g. the Science Granting Councils Initiatives (SGCI), the Science for Africa Foundation and the African Research Universities Association were launched and implemented activities that had direct impact on or relationships with STISA-2024, due to limited coordination and documentation, the contributions of these initiatives to the realization of STISA-2024 goals and objectives we not captured. Overall, the AU Commission has not leveraged the new initiatives (e.g. SGCI) and existing organizations such as ACTS, the African Association of Universities (AAU), the African Academy of Sciences (AAS) to support the implementation of STISA-2024. The STISA-2024 review report recommends that the design and implementation of STISA-2034 should be inclusive, driven by African countries and institutions. It is critical that knowledge and evidence generated by various institutions be used in the formulation of STISA-2034.

To respond to the above recommendations, the AU Commission has established a Task Force and a Drafting Team to help mobilize various actors to participate in the formulation and later implementation of STISA-2034. To facilitate consultative engagements with key STI stakeholders in the continent, ACTS organized this consultative meeting with science granting councils under the SGCI to consider and deliberate on the draft STISA-2034. Representatives of SGCs convened in Accra, Ghana over two (2) days; 18 – 19 September 2024) for this consultative meeting, to collect views and deliberations of SGCs (as key stakeholders) for the development and enhancement of STISA-2034.

The objective of the workshop was to *Support Africa's Science Granting Councils to effectively develop and implement the Science Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2034*.

The workshop was designed to facilitate debates, reflections, discussions, and deliberations on the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2034) currently being drafted by the African Union Commission, steered by the Department of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation.

Workshop Notes

1. Opening Session

The workshop began with a round of opening remarks.

Prof. Tom Ogada

On his part, Prof. Ogada thanked MESTI for agreeing to cohost the event and thanked the HORCs for their setting aside time to be able to attend this workshop, recognizing this as their clear indication of your commitment to advancing the Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) agenda on the continent.

Prof. Ogada then laid out the objectives of the workshop, using the STISA-2024 review report as a foundational point of discussion. He noted that one key finding from the review of STISA-2024 was "the lack of adequate consultation and stakeholder involvement during the development of STISA-2024 which hampered its implementation. This shortcoming impacted its implementation, and as a result, the African Union Commission has made stakeholder engagement a priority in the development of STISA-2034". Prof. Ogada then connected this finding to the AUC's initiative to establish a STISA-20234 task force, whose responsibility is to prioritize and organize stakeholder engagements, (such as this one), and also as a response to member states/ councils' request for 'improved consultation during the development of STISA-2034.'

Mr. Hambani Masheleni

On his part, Mr. Masheleni called upon councils to reflect on their role in policy development & implementation, advancing scientific progress in their respective countries, and ask the question, "Where do we stand now?" This question is intended to provoke thoughts and considerations on the concrete steps that need to be taken towards meaningful contribution to the development of the continent.

Mr. Masheleni appreciated the pivotal moment in the Accra workshop especially in closing the gaps of stakeholder engagements.

Mr. Masheleni reflected on the COVID-19 pandemic period and its lessons on collaboration among African countries on research, research funding, and innovation. He called upon African countries to foster cooperation and drive collective action, is crucial to establishing a functional mechanism that supports research across the continent.

Mr. Masheleni called for revitalization of STEM education, being crucial for advancing research and innovation on the continent.

He challenged member states and development partners to ensure that elaborate funding mechanism and strategies are paired with actionable implementation plans.

Prof. John Mugabe

Prof. Mugabe started by reminding councils of the 1980 Lagos Plan of Action.

Strategy to Action: Prof. Mugabe observed that the African continent has several elaborate strategies with little progress. He marshalled councils to reflect on how the continent should move from strategy to action. He cautioned councils that a continental strategy document should not replace the national policies. The strategy should address continental public goods, shared problems – things countries can only achieve when they act collaboratively

Funding for research: Prof. Mugabe challenged the misconception that there isn't sufficient resources to fund research activities, but rather that resources are not employed efficiently and effectively.

Alignment of resources and objectives: Prof. Mugabe emphasized the need for councils to align their focus and resources on achieving the goals articulated in these strategies, ensuring, stressing on accountability.

Impact assessment and political support for Councils: Prof. Mugabe noted that if councils are to receive political support from their national governments, receive more funding from the African Union and allocate these appropriately, then significant progress will be made.

He called for increased efforts in the assessment of impact of invested funds in research & innovation as a sure and clear way to demonstrate the return of investments to make a strong case for request for increased funding. Councils are called upon to demonstrate that every project funded has led to tangible outcomes.

"If we want political support, we must demonstrate the impact". Unlike construction projects whose outcomes are immediate and easily visible, there is need to show that "… investments in science, technology, and innovation (STI) can have similar, if not greater, long-term benefits."

Rev. Dr. Patrick Nomo Remarks

Rev. Dr. Nomo started off his remarks with a word of welcome to the participants, conveying welcome remarks from the Honorable Minister of Environment, Science, and Technology in Ghana, and the Vice President of Parliament.

Registered gratitude to IDRC for facilitating the Accra consultative workshop that allowed councils to engage and contribute meaningfully to shape the STISA-2034. He recounted how MESTI has benefited from the SGCI initiative: "Since joining the Science Granting Councils Initiative in 2016, Ghana has benefitted tremendously, gaining access to experts and enacting the Ghana National Research Fund Act of 2020, Act 1056. We have also improved in areas such as research grant management, policy development, capacity building, gender equality, and the integration of data-driven decision-making. In particular, we've enhanced collaboration with agencies like South Africa's National Research Foundation, Tanzania's Commission for Science and Technology and Zambia's National Science Technology Council. Recent initiatives like the online grants management system and impact assessment studies have strengthened our research and innovation landscape.

The reverend called upon councils to consider critical STI issues such as technology assessment, foresight, and innovation financing, considering regional and continental implications. He rallied councils to reflect on their role, profile and visibility in shaping the STI agenda for the continent and during the implementation of STISA-2034. Dr. Nomo also reiterated the call or moving from strategy to action. He buttressed the message that resources are not Africa's chief concern but rather the judicial employment of resources.

Rev. Dr. Nomo called for enhanced collaboration in the quadruple helix model of government, private sector, academia and civil society.

"I urge everyone here to keep in mind that science is only valuable when it leads to tangible outcomes. Together, we can unlock the full potential of science, technology, and innovation to shape a more prosperous, resilient, and sustainable Africa."

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2. Highlights of the STISA-2024 Review

To provide a background to the discussions around STISA-2034 draft, participants relooked the STISA-2024 review report. This was considered necessary and paramount to ensure that challenges identified with STISA-2024 are addressed within STISA-2034 drafting process.

The objectives, methodology, key findings and recommendations of the STISA-2024 review were highlighted by Dr. Wilhelmina Quaye (Director, CSIR-STEPRI)

- **STI Policy framework**
  - A number of countries developed national STI policies in alignment with the strategy
  - Policies without IP, M&E frameworks
  - Very few countries had domesticated the STISA-2024
- **Funding mechanisms**
  - A few countries had put in place mechanisms for funding i.e. creation of funding organizations, research funds, SGCI in promoting regional collaboration
  - Target of 1% of GDP not realized by countries, the bulk of funding sourced externally.
  - Limited availability of data on funding; Lack of comprehensive data to track how much funding is being directed toward R&D from various sources.
  - Need to establish regional funds to support both existing and new regional centers of excellence in response to key priority areas.
  - Establish a Pan-African Science and Technology Innovation Fund. This follows the finding that most R&D funds in Africa are sourced externally as opposed to more than 50% of R&D funding in developed countries that come from the private sector
- **Innovation and entrepreneurship**
  - Focused more on promotion of research and less on innovation
  - Increase in IP applications
  - Innovation and tech support structures i.e. Growth of innovation hubs, accelerators
  - Low contributions from locals
- **Enabling environment**
  - Lacked a link between STI and SDGs
- **Governance**
  - The absence of a solid theory of change
  - STISA-2024 had no funding and no implementation plan – a glaring absence
  - Most Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) policies are managed by Ministries of Education, with limited engagement from other sectoral agencies.

- Approach to science and innovation: STI should not be confined to a specific sector say education like it is structured in many governments across Africa. SGCs are called upon to influence the leadership and ensure policy coherence across sectors

3. STISA-2034

Summary of the STISA-2034 Draft

Having set a good foundation thus, highlights of the draft STISA-2034 were presented. Dr. Wilhelmina described the draft STISA-2034 as a 3-part document (i) Narrations - contextual analysis, vision, mission, objectives, (ii), Impact pathways, Strategic priorities and priority sectors; and (iii) Governance

The STISA-2034 draft was presented as building on and linking with existing frameworks and initiatives e.g., APET, AOSTI, Lagos Action Plan.

- **Vision**
    - An integrated, prosperous, peaceful Africa where science, technology, and innovation are the driving forces behind sustainable socio-economic development.
- **Mission**
    - To harness the transformative power of science, technology, and innovation in accelerating Africa's transition into a knowledge-based and innovation-driven continent.
- **Objectives**
    - Drive economic growth and social progress
    - Create a supportive environment for STI
    - Empower youth and women
    - Enhance STI governance and collaboration
    - Increase investment in STI
    - Foster a scientific culture

Priority sectors (5); Health, Energy, ICT, Agriculture, Environment,

Cross-cutting, interlinked strategic priority areas (6); Industrialization, Human capital and capacity building, Private sector, Frontier technologies, Gender and youth, Science diplomacy

Development of the STISA-2034

Dr. Wilhelmina described the process of development of the strategy, which started with a needs/ gaps assessment and identification of challenges, followed by a round of consultations and deliberations with stakeholders at the national level. She observed that the strategy has been kept short concise intentionally, but that the development of an implementation plan would follow.

Dr. Wilhelmina observed, as opposed to STISA-2024, the significant shift in the process management of STISA 2034 towards a more inclusive, bottom-up approach, with a stronger focus on resource efficiency and institutional capacity.

4. SGCs Reflections on STISA-2034

In making suggestions to the strategy, councils were reminded that the STISA-2034 aims to address what individual countries cannot achieve on their own, hence the need to focus on actions that require collective efforts e.g., investing in R&D, enhancing STEM education, and developing infrastructure for research are areas where collaboration will make the most significant impact

Councils called upon to focus more on the implementation and action plans of STISA-2034 since the strategy drafting phase has significantly advanced and only minimal changes can be expected.

Overall Comments on the STISA-2034 Document

i. Integrating STI in urbanization (cleaning air in the cities) and other emerging areas – these give politicians and policymakers tick
ii. Investment in STI - Issue of 1% of GDP to STI development – need for an extended platform to have discourse on best practice to achieve the target. Efforts should be driven towards incentivizing the private sector to invest in R&D
iii. Need for an accountability mechanism/ framework that can track all the investment. Emphasis on the Implementation Plan, MEL
iv. Identified data as a real problem; accessing data on R&D investment a challenge. For instance, Africa likely performs poorly on the Global innovation index because of limited data. Need for countries to invest in collection and analysis of data/indicators, and SGCs challenged to coordinate collection and submission of data
v. Intra-Africa collaboration: Councils challenged to promote intra-Africa mobility to share facilities e.g., centers of excellence. African countries and institutions are called upon to work together to build a vibrant research community capable of driving implementation in key areas like energy, climate change, water, agriculture, and health. This includes the creation of Centers of Excellence (COEs) across the continent:

"What role can we play in ensuring the availability of research facilities and developing the critical mass of researchers needed to address these challenges? The success of our strategies depends on our ability to cultivate the right talent, infrastructure, and collaboration to achieve tangible results." Hambani Masheleni

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vi. Encourage Foresighting; A critical component to undertake in developing the strategy. There is need to interrogate what the future looks like and plan how to address potential future challenges. The need to conduct an African foresight on STI has been emphasized. This will be strategically important in:

a. Providing evidence for policy development
b. Map STI capacity on the continent,
c. Find a niche of collaboration

vii. Institutionalize the SGCI to highlight the role and contribution of SGCs in the success of STISA-2034. Councils deliberate on recognizing and designating SGCI as a special implementation partner of the STISA-2034.

viii. De-risking research and innovation projects and processes; councils need to be more proactive to cushion the private sector from high risks. For instance, Uganda created a huge science park, but it is not getting sufficient applications from the private sector

ix. Recommending a study on African private sector to understand their unique characteristics and features

x. Roundtables in Nigeria as a case study/ successful practice: Can SGCI adopt this to help mobilize private sector finance

xi. Success cases and good practices need to be documented within the strategy document.

xii. TVETs and skilling sectors have been largely missing in the strategy document

xiii. Advocate for countries to have parliamentary STI committees and SGCs access the Pan African parliament to continue continental STI advocacy initiatives

xiv. Need to consider and incorporate social scientists into the working of STISA-2034. Is their entry level the commercialization and upscaling of technology stage?

xv. This strategy should include a platform where, on an annual or biannual basis, ministers responsible for science, technology, and innovation can come together. This forum would allow the SGCI to present and share progress on what we are collectively doing across the continent. Science Granting Councils should take advantage of this platform to emphasize the importance of strong collaboration, advocate for more resources, and push for deeper partnerships.

xvi. Desire to have R&D and Innovation included in the strategy document as an explicit stand-alone objective despite it being cross-cutting

Considerations and Recommendations Per Priority Sector and Strategic Area

a. Governance

i. There is need for precision in the discussions about governance in the strategy document. As presently framed, the governance topic is too broad. The STISA 2034 needs to consider governance at two (2) levels: (i) Governance of the strategy; and (ii) Broader STI governance issues peculiar to Africa, which includes impact of new tech on women, ethics of AI, type of research being funded etc.

ii. Role of SGCs in implementing the strategy to be highlighted and strongly advocated for. SGCs role needs to be well-defined, significant and prominent.

iii. Recommend for establishment of STI councils in all countries

iv. Need for member states and councils to contribute effectively in policy review and align national priorities to STISA 2034

v. Need for an Implementation Plan, complete with;

a. a resource mobilization strategy,
b. communication and awareness strategy and

c. MEL plan

vi. Potential problem for having an implementation plan as a separate from the strategy. Members advocated for a brief implementation roadmap within the strategy document to ensure linkage between the ultimate implementation plan and the strategy document.

b. Private sector engagement

Participants welcomed the inclusion of Private sector engagement in the strategy, and identified some action points that councils need to pursue to enhance private sector engagement:

i. Funding research and innovation projects relevant to industry. Private sector are the end users of R&D outputs and therefore must be involved in funding it

ii. Incentives for the private sector to invest in R&D, which include de-risking private sector involvement in R&D and frameworks for private sector engagement. The latter requires that councils conduct a private sector mapping in Africa to understand the unique character of the private sector at the national, regional and continental levels for effective stakeholder engagement.

iii. SGC-Business Councils round tables (refer to the Lagos plan of action).

iv. Capacity building to mobilize resources for the implementation of PPP in R&D

c. Funding R&I in Africa

i. Quality of investment matters; where are we investing the funds, how are we deciding what and how to fund etc. are critical questions that need to be effectively addressed.

ii. SGCI to consider conducting a peer review of the 1% target

iii. Alternative sources of funding i.e. PPP,

iv. Councils already have national research agendas, and research & innovation frameworks (supported by ACTS) that needs to be implemented

v. Funding is focused on research with very little on innovation, therefore the benefits of research are not visible. "We must strengthen our ability to manage and report on funding effectively, so we can absorb more resources and ensure they are used productively. This can be a strategy towards unlocking public funds and end the dependency on external funds." Prof. Mugabe

vi. Need to measure impact of investment in R&D to provide tangible evidence to policy makers for the unlocking of resources

vii. Indicators for measuring impact must be Africa-relevant i.e. how have you impacted on post-harvest losses, access to health care, jobs created etc.

viii. Capacity of absorption of funds is low; need to build capacity in this area

ix. Deliberately set aside funds for commissioned research to address specific need areas

x. Upscaling funds to move projects from one stage to another until they get to the market

Health; The health priority sector is majorly focused on human health, animal health remains mostly neglected

Informal sector; Recognition of the informal sector in the strategy since the informal sector is one of the leading employers in the continent.

Manufacturing; Strengthen the focus on manufacturing as a priority sector within STISA-2034 and publicize "*Made in Africa initiatives*"

Urbanization; Include urbanization as a priority sector to help address urbanization challenges including equitable & affordable housing and clean energy

Agriculture; Need to be expanded to include Livestock and Fisheries. Crop health has been overemphasized and there is need to expand focus on the livestock sub-sector

Workshop Discussion Points

i. Councils' role in defining national and continental STI agendas
ii. Opportunity to raise the visibility of SGCs at continental level
iii. Development of a position statement/ a communique to be shared with the AUC for consideration in the development of the STISA-2034
iv. SGCI model and its benefits for intra-Africa collaboration explained and acknowledged. The Science Granting Councils Initiative was hailed as an exemplary initiative for promoting regional collaboration in research – increased patent applications and the promotion of innovation
v. Councils encouraged to put emphasis on implementation of the many good policies and strategies already in place.
vi. Call for impactful and judicial use of resources. The problem with RSTI in Africa goes beyond financing, it also includes responsible and prudent use of resources
vii. Develop an impact assessment framework to account for the funds invested in STI
viii. Participants observed that there is no framework for funding research in Africa, thus SGCs challenged to develop a funding instrument to support research
ix. With the observation that STEM has been neglected in most African economies; SGCs were challenged to prioritize STEM as the foundation for research
x. Innovation Hubs: Participants noted the rise of innovation hubs across Africa and reflected on how these can be supported to scale up and help innovators commercialize their ideas.
xi. Need to link STI with SDGs
xii. Most national STI policies are administered by ministries of higher education with limited cooperation with other sectors
xiii. Need for elaborate M&E mechanisms and frameworks to effectively track performance in the RSTI sector
xiv. Implementation plan: Need for a well-articulated resource mobilization strategy, communication and monitoring & evaluation plan
xv. Councils noted the convergence of SGCs' interests and the aspirations of STISA-2034
xvi. Participants identified SGCs as critical players in the development and implementation of the STISA 2034

xvii. Foster a culture of science: Promoting evidence-based decision-making among policymakers and encouraging a scientific approach to everyday problems

xviii. Governance: The STISA-2034 should be owned by the stakeholders, with AU and AUC only providing leadership

xix. Incentivize the private sector's engagement in STI and develop policies that promote partnerships, entrepreneurship, and job creation through science and innovation

xx. Local innovation, indigenous knowledge, and youth & women leadership in STI

xxi. Need to foster more collaboration within Africa to build a sustainable and self-reliant research ecosystem. Intra-African partnerships or regional economic communities (RECs) rarely promote joint research initiatives. This starts with building key social virtues like transparency and trust. Seeing the fragmentation of continental institutions goes against the call for collaborations and points to the matter of trust and transparency. This weakens the unity being sought through partnerships and collaborations.

xxii. Need for the development of an SGCI Accra Communique to be submitted to the AUC, concerning findings of the SGCI STISA-2034 consultations and deliberations.

xxiii. Explored relevance of STISA-2034 priorities, issues of coordination and how activities are harnessed and reported at continental level.

Recommendations

Key Recommendations to SGCI

The SGCI was recognized and celebrated as a unique model partnership whose story needs to be told extensively

a. Leverage on the already approved STI fund and let the SGCI promote and support the implementation of STISA-2034
b. Funders must always go through the councils and not dealing directly with the research institutions
c. Promote science diplomacy - Create a community of researchers to enable collaboration, external review, mobility of researchers
d. Recognize and celebrate the high performing researchers on the continent
e. SGCI must have a robust committee to lead the implementation of STISA recommendations
f. Demonstrate the impact of the projects being funded under the SGCI
g. Support mobilization of resources, as a collective, to address the thematic areas identified in the strategy
h. Lead the push to operationalize the pan African fund; African development bank
i. Lobby governments to put in money to implement the STISA 2034
j. SGCI should be a fully enabled body that can present to the biennial AUC meetings
k. Expand the SGCI initiative to bring more countries on board

Key Recommendations to SGCs

a. Need for enhance capacity to absorb resources/ grants to thereafter be able to report on impact of grants effectively.
b. Support the mobility of African researchers, social capital. Advocate for science diplomats and attaches at foreign missions. Some countries including Malawi have already proposed reforms and need to constitute positions of science diplomats within embassies and foreign missions
c. One of the greatest problems with STISA-2024 was a funding problem, and SGCs being funders and having been involved in STISA-2034 development, have an opportunity to make sure STISA-2034 is successfully implemented
d. SGCs should make reports and update their ministers to ensure effective contribution to STISA-2034 development.
e. Councils to be part of all research and innovation projects in the country including those funded by other regional/ global bodies such as WHO
f. Leverage on SGCI and the collective experiences to develop a unified approach and push for a broader and more impactful implementation of the strategy.
g. Coordination of research efforts at national level should be achieve effectiveness through an efficient decision-making framework.
h. Councils to expand their influence with national governance structures.
i. Visibility of SGCs at all levels - Appeal to the governments that the SGCs be included in delegations for all STI related bilateral and multilateral missions
j. Fund projects aligned to the priority areas identified in the strategy, prioritizing research on emerging technologies
k. Councils to support organizations that are supporting STI among women and the youth, and encourage participation of regional bodies in all national/ regional STI events.

Conclusion

The workshop was concluded successfully, having received overwhelming suggestions and recommendations on the development and implementation of STISA-2034. Participants also spared time to reflect on the SGCI framework and the mandate of SGCs, individually and as corporate (SGCI) and the opportunities for growth and impact both in the context of STISA-2034 and in general concerning STI in Africa.

Members observed that over the last decade, SGCs' capacity to develop mechanisms for enhanced gross domestic expenditure on research and development (GERD) has improved both in quality and quantity, more transparency, impact and accountability – SGCI's raison d'être of SGCI). SGCs have also successfully advocated for higher GERD from their governments. "Through the SGCI, councils have been able to leverage additional research and funding from their governments"[1].

[1] **Africa's Funding Councils Meet for Impact**

Funding Mechanisms and Instruments

To address barriers and challenges related to funding, funding mechanisms and instruments we have adopted to pursue, among other things, a dedicated funding mechanism and instrument to support STISA-2034 by these actions.

a. **Align** national documents and instruments such as STI Policy and National Research and Innovation Agenda (NRIA) with STISA-20234.
b. **Advocate** for budget allocation through a higher GERD in the implementation of STISA-2034, prioritizing research and innovation towards the Lagos Plan of Action targets.
c. **Fund**, directly and indirectly, research and innovation projects in priority sectors of STISA-2034.
d. **Fund** research and innovation projects towards scaling up and commercialization of technologies generated.
e. **Establish and support** the emergence and growth technopolis (innovation cities, innovation and tech hubs) to support startups and foster entrepreneurship, through funding and mentorship.
f. **Mobilize funds**, using existing fora such as SGCI, as well as philanthropic investments and venture capital to support innovative projects and startups.
g. Participate in **competitive grants** to respond to calls for proposals.

Governance

To better the management and successful implementation of STISA-2034, through improved governance structures, practices, and frameworks, we have resolved to:

a. **Advocate** for funding from national government to funds and support regional and continental priorities.
b. **Align** council programming and priorities with the STISA-2034 priorities and actions
c. **Fund** implementation of STISA-2034
d. **Integrate** STISA-2034 into national STI policy processes
e. **Publish** and mobilize support for STISA-2034 at national government
f. **Recognize** the SGCI as a special platform and a special implementation platform for the implementation of STISA-2034

PPP and Investments in STI

Objective 6 of the STISA 2034 seeks to *Promote and advocate for increased public and private partnership (PPP) and investment in STI.* We have endorsed to:

a. **Involve** the Private Sector in the identification, conceptualisation and prioritisation during the identification of research projects to drive science-led development.
b. **Undertake** awareness and advocacy with the private sector on issues regarding financing, collaboration, and partnerships through new mechanisms, like the Business Round Tables and Science Investment Forums

c. **Establish** Knowledge Sharing Platforms to strengthen knowledge sharing between countries and researchers for cost avoidance and sustainable private sector partnerships.
d. **Facilitate** the establishment of incentive mechanism (including tax breaks for R&D) to support and incentivise research and science practice
e. **Encourage** collaboration between academia and industry by establishing mechanisms and funding schemes to facilitate gainful partnerships between the academia and Industry.
f. **Develop** special programs and frameworks directed at the Private Sector to support the engagement for commercialisation and impact
g. **Strengthen,** promote, and advocate for increased public and private partnerships (PPP) and investment in these partnerships to de-risk research and science through sharing of risks and rewards across different STI Value Chains
h. **Undertake** Mapping of Africa's unique Private Sector to facilitate for focused and evidence-based interventions that drive sustainable growth.
i. **Support** reverse migration and use of Africa's Science Diaspora to promote reverse investment and collaboration in different STI programs through functional science diplomacy platforms (Science Attaché)
j. **Promote** and increase investment in Start-ups, SMEs and Cottage industry to support employment and inclusive growth
k. **Map** research capacity (infrastructure and human resources) to support intra-Africa collaboration and investment in equipment and infrastructure

Gender, Youth and Inclusivity

We deliberated on youth and women's inclusion and integration into the Science Technology and Innovation (STI) ecosystem in the continent. We adopt these actions and strategies.

a. **Support** women in STEM careers through mentorship & training, special funding for women-led projects, award & recognition, and entrepreneurship programmes etc
b. **Address** sexual harassment issues at the workplace.
c. **Champion** and support the development of gender and youth-friendly STI policies
d. **Engage,** actively and effectively, the youth in STI policy creation and innovation
e. Engage deliberate effort for youth innovative Grants.

Action Points

SGCs adopted several action points for the short to medium-term period as follows:

a. Heads of Councils to engage with their line ministers on this STISA-2034 draft and workshop discussion points, as the formal emissaries representing member states in the STISA-2034 development process.
b. Councils to create awareness of STISA-2034 among the stakeholders. Need to mobilize the scientific community to interrogate the STISA-2034 and make technical contributions.
c. Initiate actions that enhance closeness and proximity to policy makers. These should support the SGCs influence in public policy processes.

d. SGC challenged to capitalize on the power of convincing and convening: Members advocated that SGCs reach out to the team of ten presidents (Champion Presidents) championing Sti in Africa and enhance their convenings to enhance deliberations and advocacy on continental STI matters.

e. Enhance the visibility of SGCs at all levels - Appeal to the governments that the councils be included in delegations for all STI related missions

f. Alignment of the mandate of SGCs with the STISA-2034 priorities

Acknowledgements

- SGCs for their interest, commitments and active and effective engagements
- The funders of SGCI, IDRC in particular, for facilitating the STISA-2034 consultative workshop. IDRC has demonstrated dedication towards science advocacy and bearing a strong vision to mobilize international resources towards national science systems, and commitment to develop more equitable partnerships.
- ACTS for bringing together the stakeholders and giving the SGC an opportunity to be heard in the STISA 2034 development process
- MESTI Ghana for hosting the workshop.

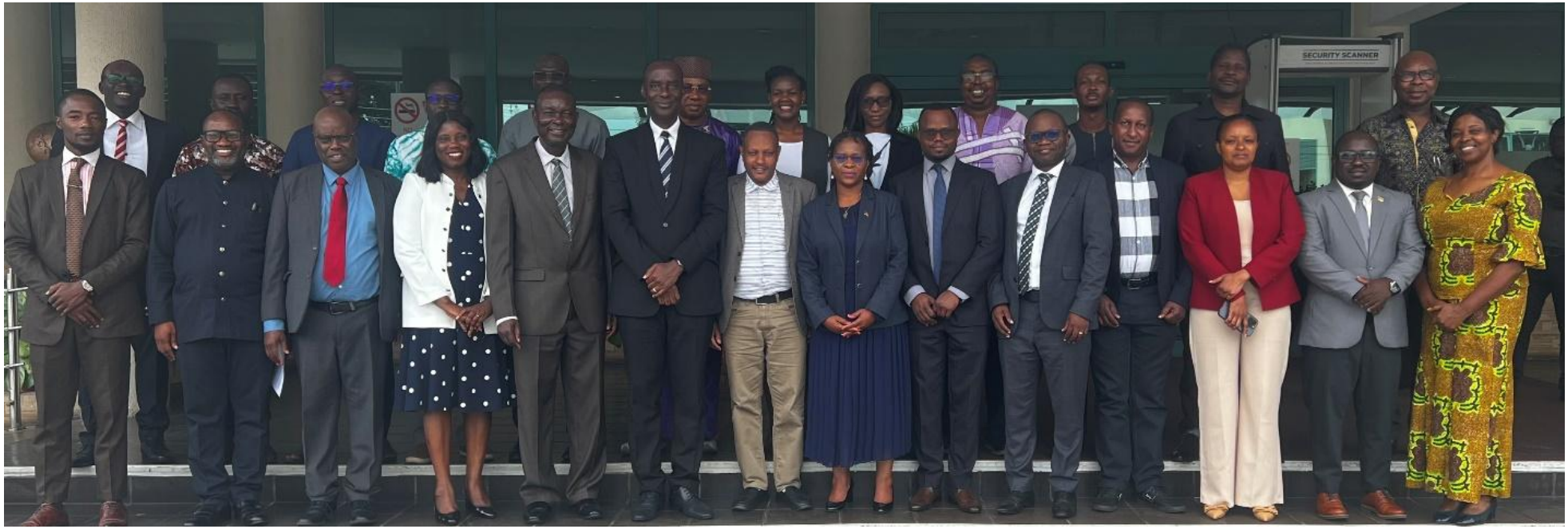
ANNEX

Annex 1: Attendance

1. Rev. Dr. Patrick Nomo: Chief Director (Permanent Secretary), Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology, and Innovation (MESTI) Ghana
2. Mr. Cephas Adjei: Director of Research, Statistics and Information Management and HORC, Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology, and Innovation (MESTI) Ghana
3. Mr. Wilfred Edem Dennis: SGCI Coordinator, MESTI
4. Mr. Prince Charles Ababio: Research Officer, Research Statistics and Information Management Directorate, MESTI
5. Mr. Dennis Dela Setsoafya: IT Expert, MESTI
6. Ms. Nodumo Dhlamini: XXXX, Association of African Universities (AAU)
7. Mrs. Gift Kadzamira: Director General & HORC, National Commission for Science and Technology (NCST) of Malawi
8. Dr. Habtamu Abera Goshu: Chief Executive Officer of National Research Development & HORC Research Grant Council, Ministry of Innovation and Technology of Ethiopia (RGC-MINT)
9. Dr. Sangare Yaya: Secrétaire Général & HORC, Fonds pour la Science, la Technologie et l'Innovation (FONSTI) Cote d'Ivoire
10. Mr. Tafsir Babacar NDOYE: SGCI Coordinator Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur, de la Recherche et de l'Innovation du Senegal (MESRI)
11. Mr. Jacob Njagi: SGCI Coordinator, National Research Fund (NRF) of Kenya
12. Dr. Alex Blanshard: Programme Officer PREM, National Science Technology and Innovation Council (NSTIC) of Sierra Leone
13. Dr. Beatrice Lyimo: National Fund for Advancement of Science and Technology (NFAST) Manager at Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH)
14. Prof. Florêncio Maulano: General Deputy Director, Fundo Nacional de Investigação – FNI (National Research Fund), Mozambique
15. Dr. (Mrs) Wilhelmina Quaye: Director, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research - Science and Technology Policy Research Institute (CSIR-STEPRI)
16. Ms. Atridah Mulonga: SGCI Coordinator, National Science Technology Council (NSTC) of Zambia
17. Dr. Partson Chikudza: Executive Director and HORC, Research Council of Zimbabwe (RCZ)
18. Dr. Nicholas Odongo: Research Fellow, African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS)
19. Prof. Tom Ogada: Executive Director, African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS)
20. Ms. Nora Ndege: Research Fellow, African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS)
21. Dr. Djibril YONLI: SGCI Coordinator, Fonds National de la Recherche et de l'Innovation pour le Devéloppement (FONRID) Burkina Faso.
22. Dr. Japhet Niyobuhungiro: Research and Development Analyst, National Commission for Science and Technology (NCST) of Rwanda
23. Mr. Steven Ssebale: M&E Manager, Uganda National Commission for Science and Technology (UNCST)
24. Prof. John Ouma-Mugabe: Professor of STI, University of Pretoria
25. Mr. Hambani Maseheleni: Science Advisor, United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
26. Mr. Thiam Souleymane: Representative, International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

27. Ms. Mabel Naa Aboe: Representative, Network of Young Leaders of Peace and Sustainable Development
28. Ms. Judith Awo Semabia: Officer, MESTI
29. Ms. Naana Kwatengmaa Boadi: Officer, MESTI
30. Mr. Nashiru Salifu: Officer, MESTI
31. Mr. Royal Tetteh: Officer, MESTI

Annex 2: Photos


SECURITY SCANNER