

Workshop Output Summary

In the second part of the Sub-Saharan Africa Workshop of the GlobalTech Alliance, four parallel working groups discussed possible important elements for a future GlobalTech strategy in the Sub-Saharan Africa region. This brief output summary will be used as a base for the future overall strategy. The statements are grouped in “Common Statements”, which were mentioned in all the group reports and “Additional Statements”, which were only mentioned in some reports.

Common Statements

- **Capacity Building:**
Capacity Building was mentioned in the output reports of all workshop groups as one of the most important elements. It is requested that the partners from the North should get involved in capacity building on all levels (Bachelor, Master, PhD and Post-Doc). Local multipliers from the South should be educated; “train the trainers” and capacity building should become a relevant component of research collaboration projects as well.
Different means were mentioned: trainings, workshops, scholarship opportunities, faculty exchange, e-learning, open source distance education, etc.
- **Research Collaboration:**
The need for long-term research collaboration projects matching the local needs was mentioned several times in the group reports. The groups agree that research cooperation in the Sub-Saharan Africa region can only be fruitful if they are maintained over a longer time period and mutual trust can be generated.
The transaction costs and the lack of acknowledgement in the North for research work done in the South were mentioned as the two main issues in North-South research collaborations. The workshop participants therefore propose that the GlobalTech members should establish internal processes, which value the work done in countries of the South much more than they do now. Researchers should be encouraged to realize projects in the Sub-Saharan Africa region. In addition it is proposed that the GlobalTech member universities establish seed money systems to enable their researchers to overcome the high transaction costs in the initial state of a project.
Several groups also mentioned that the GlobalTech Alliance as an alliance should focus on a research field of common interest for several member universities and establish a larger cooperation with the involvement of multiple members. It was also mentioned that the alliance should focus and invest in already established research centers in the Sub-Saharan Africa region and use them as local hubs and multipliers.
- **GlobalTech as an Information and Contact Platform**
Several groups mentioned the need for an information platform, where researchers from the North and South could interact.
Ideas like “GlobalTech on Demand” were launched, where partners from the South could contact the alliance with a concrete demand and receive a feedback from a member university.
The Ethiopian students placed a request for workshops, summer schools, a digital platform and other means to get in contact with students from the GlobalTech member universities.

Additional Statements

- ***Infrastructure***
A need for a high quality ICT infrastructure was mentioned by a couple of groups. It was also stated that there would also be a need to educate people for the maintenance of the systems (capacity building). The quality of the infrastructure was also mentioned as one of the main obstacles to realize research cooperation in Sub-Saharan Africa and why GlobalTech should focus on research cooperation in already established centers to reduce these issues.
- ***Industry***
Some groups mentioned that the contacts between academia and industry in Sub-Saharan Africa should be intensified to encourage entrepreneurship and to enhance technology transfer.
- ***Possible Common Research Topics***
Some groups mentioned that the Alliance should focus on common research topics in Sub-Saharan Africa, which are relevant for several partners and one group proposed some topics of common interest: Urbanization, Health, Food Security, Water Resource Management, Education, Governance
- ***Vocational Education as a Chance for the Region***
It was mentioned that vocational educational training and a higher appreciation of practically oriented labor is very important for the Sub-Saharan Africa region. A change of the education system to a dual system as it is in Switzerland would be a great chance for the region. But it was agreed that it is not the task of the GlobalTech Alliance to initiate such a system.
- ***African GlobalTech member***
Some groups raised the issue that no African institute is part of the GlobalTech Alliance and if there would be the opportunity to change that. It would be appreciated if African partners of GlobalTech member universities could participate in other GlobalTech initiatives and workshops. It should be considered to include an African partner in the design of the overall Sub-Saharan Africa strategy for the alliance to ensure that the African perspective is present in the final discussions.