



Center for European  
Integration Studies

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**Higher Education and  
Research Policy for  
Regional Integration in  
West Africa and Beyond**

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## ***ECOPOST - La Politique Science, Technologie et Innovation de la CEDEAO***

Le plan de l'exposé se présente comme suit :

Après avoir présenté le contexte et la justification de la Politique Science, Technologie et Innovation (ECOPOST) de la Communauté Economique des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CEDEAO), nous dresserons l'état des lieux de la Science, la Technologie et l'Innovation dans les Etats Membres de la CEDEAO que constituent les pays suivants : Bénin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambie, Ghana, Guinée, Guinée Bissau, Libéria, Mali, Niger, Nigéria, Sierra Leone, Sénégal, Togo.

Ensuite seront successivement abordés le cadre institutionnel et l'approche méthodologique adoptés pour formuler l'ECOPOST, ainsi que les objectifs visés.

Les activités réalisées en matière de « Science, Technologie et Innovation » et les recommandations formulées par les différents acteurs de la politique nous conduiront à la conclusion.

Afin de comprendre le contexte et la justification de la politique Science, Technologie et Innovation (ECOPOST) de la CEDEAO, il convient de mettre en exergue le fait que ces trois secteurs constituent les éléments clés du programme de développement de l'Afrique. En effet, dans le Traité Révisé de la CEDEAO et le Protocole sur l'Education et la Formation, les Chefs d'Etats et de Gouvernement reconnaissent la Science et la Technologie comme étant les dénominateurs communs du développement du continent africain.

La science permet de fournir des informations dont l'application permet l'innovation technologique et la création des technologies. Ce constat est à l'origine de la formulation de l'ECOPOST. Ainsi, La Première Conférence des Ministres en charge des Sciences et des Technologies de la CEDEAO, tenue en 2004 à Abuja, République Fédérale du Nigéria, a mis l'accent sur les

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nombreux problèmes qui entravent le développement économique de la région ouest-africaine, notamment :

1. Les profondes inégalités entre les pays en matière de science, de technologie et d'innovation ;
2. L'inadaptation des infrastructures de recherche ;
3. Le faible niveau des formulations scientifiques couplées au déséquilibre du genre dans les activités de recherche scientifique ;
4. Le manque de données sur les activités et sur les experts en Sciences et Technologies.

La conférence de 2004 a par ailleurs clairement identifié les défis à relever au plan régional et national et a recommandé de doter la CEDEAO d'une politique « Science et Technologie », reflétant les aspirations des Etats Membres. Cette politique se devait à terme d'assurer la réduction de la pauvreté par la création d'emplois, renforcer les capacités institutionnelles et humaines, promouvoir la bonne gouvernance et le développement durable et enfin accélérer le niveau d'industrialisation de la région.

ECOPOST s'inscrit dans la Vision 2020 dégagée par les Chefs d'Etat et de Gouvernement, car la science et la technologie sont non seulement des axes du Programme Communautaire de Développement et les piliers de la sécurité et de la vitalité économique, mais représentent également la base de la plupart des entreprises modernes à travers la valorisation de la recherche scientifique et technologique.

Avant d'aborder le contenu de la politique ECOPOST, il convient de dresser l'état de lieu de la science, la technologie et l'innovation dans l'espace CEDEAO. Cet état de lieu est marqué par plusieurs contraintes, dont :

- La mise en œuvre inappropriée des activités de science et technologie dans les États membres;
- L'inadaptation des infrastructures, des équipements, des structures et du personnel des institutions de recherche;
- Le faible niveau de financement. En effet, la région Afrique de l'Ouest consacre moins de 0,34 % de son PIB aux activités de recherche, alors que

les taux sont pour la France: 2,2%, les Etats-Unis d'Amérique: 2,6% et le Japon: 5,0%;

- La faible qualité de la normalisation de certains produits (ce qui rend certaines de nos fabrications non compétitives, non seulement sur le marché mondial, mais également sur le marché africain);
- La faible qualité de la formation scientifique couplée avec un grave déséquilibre entre les sexes dans les activités de recherche scientifique;
- Le quasi absence d'un lien entre l'innovation et l'utilisation des applications de résultats de recherche. Un constat souvent établi est que malheureusement, les résultats de la recherche dorment dans les tiroirs dans beaucoup de pays africains;
- Le manque de base de données sur les activités et sur les experts en sciences et en technologie dans la sous-région, la faible qualité de la normalisation de certains produits - les rendant du coup non compétitifs sur le marché mondial, et même africain;
- La duplication au niveau des activités scientifiques des institutions de recherche. Il convient d'attirer l'attention sur le fait que beaucoup de centres de recherche travaillent dans la plus grande isolation et qu'une plus grande collaboration et plus de synergie entre les institutions de recherche serait nécessaire au niveau de la sous-région et au-delà, au niveau continental ;
- La lourdeur des procédures administratives qui ne rend pas attractives les activités de recherche scientifique.

Le cadre institutionnel mis en œuvre pour l'élaboration de l'ECOPOST était constitué comme suit :

- un Comité Directeur ECOPOST
- un Comité Technique Interne
- un Comité Scientifique Régional ou Observatoire Scientifique Régional
- des Comités Scientifiques et Techniques Nationaux

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En ce qui concerne l'élaboration de l'approche méthodologique d'ECOPOST, six (6) phases ont été identifiées et mises en œuvre:

- Phase 1: Elaboration du projet de document sur la Stratégie pour l'Orientation et la Validation de la Feuille de Route de ECOPOST;
- Phase 2: Elaboration de la politique de la CEDEAO des Sciences, technologie et Innovation;
- Phase 3: Ratification du Plan d'Action de ECOPOST;
- Phase 4: Adoption de la politique Science, Technologie et Innovation de la CEDEAO;
- Phase 5: Diffusion de la politique de la CEDEAO Science, Technologie et Innovation dans les États membres (à partir de 2012);
- Phase 6: Mise en œuvre du Plan d'Action par les parties prenantes (à partir de 2014).

La CEDEAO qui représente un espace de plus de 300 millions d'habitants, a pour missions essentielles de promouvoir la coopération et l'intégration économique, de favoriser l'intégration de l'espace ouest-africain qui s'exprime notamment en termes de libre circulation des personnes, des biens et des services, d'intervenir dans la prévention et la résolution des conflits, de contribuer à améliorer la gouvernance démocratique, ainsi que le niveau de vie des populations et d'assurer la croissance économique. A cet effet, des institutions et agences spécialisées stratégiques ont été mises en place. Les Institutions de la CEDEAO sont :

- La Conférence des Chefs d'Etat et de Gouvernement.
- Le Conseil des Ministres.
- Les Comités techniques spécialisés.
- La Commission.
- Le Parlement de la Communauté.
- La Cour de Justice de la Communauté.
- La Banque d'Investissement et de Développement de la CEDEAO (BIDC).



La CEDEAO a créé plusieurs Agences Spécialisées, notamment :

- L'Organisation Ouest-Africaine de la Santé (OOAS).
- L'Agence Monétaire de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (AMAD).
- Le Groupe Intergouvernemental d'Action contre le Blanchiment d'Argent en Afrique de l'Ouest (GIABA) :
- Le Centre de la CEDEAO pour le Développement du Genre .
- Le Centre du Développement de la Jeunesse et des Sports.
- Le Centre de Coordination des Ressources en Eau.
- Le Centre Régional pour les Energies Renouvelables et l'Efficacité Energétique (ECREEE) :

A l'horizon 2020, l'objectif que s'est fixé l'Organisation sous régionale est de réussir la transition de la « CEDEAO des États » à la « CEDEAO des Peuples », c'est-à-dire de parvenir à une région ouest-africaine sans frontières dans laquelle les populations vivent dans la dignité et la paix, dans un État de droit et de bonne gouvernance.

## *Quels sont les objectifs de l'ECOPOST ?*

Dans le domaine de la science, de la technologie et de l'innovation, il s'agit de formuler des politiques de développement durable capables :

- de renforcer la capacité de réaliser des recherches à travers la mise en place de programmes de formation, la tenue d'ateliers de travail et l'organisation de forums de discussion ;
- d'encourager les scientifiques et les chercheurs par l'octroi de bourses de recherche et des facilités de voyage ;
- de promouvoir la coordination et la complémentarité entre les institutions de recherche et le secteur de l'industrie ;
- d'encourager l'établissement de réseaux entre les scientifiques et les institutions de recherche dans les Etats membres et améliorer les moyens

- d'obtenir les résultats par la recherche scientifique ;
- d'accorder une assistance technique aux Etats membres en vue de mettre en place des politiques et programmes de recherche adéquats, conformément aux besoins technologiques de chaque Etat ;
- d'encourager la participation de la femme dans les spécialités scientifiques et dans la mise en place des politiques et la prise de décision dans le domaine scientifique ;

Il convient de mentionner que la CEDEAO participe depuis 2009, année de la première édition, au «Prix Régional Kwame N’Krumah de l’Union Africaine pour la Femme Scientifique». Ainsi, chaque année, des femmes scientifiques africaines de haut niveau sont primées dans chacune des cinq régions: Afrique du Nord, Afrique de l’Ouest, Afrique de l’Est, Afrique Centrale, Afrique Australe, recevant mandat de procéder à la distinction de deux femmes scientifiques dont les résultats de recherche ont contribué au progrès social et économique à l’échelle locale, nationale ou régionale. D’une valeur de \$20,000 US, ce prix est décerné dans chacun des deux groupes de disciplines scientifiques suivantes:

1. Sciences de la vie et de la terre;
2. Sciences fondamentales, technologie et innovation.

### *Quelles sont les activités réalisées en matière d’ECOPOST ?*

Depuis l’année 2000, une prise de conscience sur les enjeux et les bénéfices liés à l’essor de la science, de la technologie et de l’innovation s’est manifestée par la réalisation de nombreuses initiatives notamment par l’Union Africaine (UA) et le Nouveau Partenariat pour le Développement de l’Afrique (en anglais: New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD)).

Au niveau de l’Afrique de l’Ouest, des efforts ont été déployés avec l’organisation de la Première Conférence des Ministres en Science et Technologie en 2004 et la création en 2007 d’une Division Science et Technologie au sein de la Commission de la CEDEAO. Le mandat assigné à cette division consiste à promouvoir les activités régionales y compris l’élaboration des politiques et des programmes dans les domaines de la science, de la technologie et de

l'innovation. Elle doit également veiller à la facilitation de la coopération entre les Etats Membres avec la Commission de la CEDEAO et les autres agences.

Dans le cadre de l'ECOPOST, la division doit s'assurer que cette politique constitue un mécanisme d'incitation des scientifiques de la région afin de réussir un entrepreneuriat avec les secteurs de production et des services.

Parmi les activités menées sur le plan régional pour la formulation de la politique, qui a été insufflée à partir de l'année 2000, nous pouvons citer la tenue à Jos, au Nigéria, de la réunion de « Validation au plan interne du document d'orientation stratégique pour l'élaboration de la politique science et technologie de la CEDEAO ». Au terme des travaux, plusieurs textes ont été validés par les participants dont le document d'orientation définissant les axes stratégiques, le cadre institutionnel et la feuille de route à suivre pour finaliser le document de politique. L'objectif étant de placer l'ECOPOST comme plateforme de collaboration entre les départements stratégiques de la Commission pour lesquels la Science et la Technologie sont de première importance pour leur développement. Les Départements identifiés à cet effet ont été ceux de l'agriculture, des transports et des communications, de l'industrie, du secteur privé, de l'énergie, de l'environnement, de la libre circulation et de la Santé.

Au niveau national, des initiatives existent avec les actions entreprises par certains pays en vue de réexaminer, réviser ou formuler des nouvelles stratégies et des nouvelles politiques portant sur la science, la technologie et l'innovation.

Dans un contexte d'intégration progressive des approches en matière de politique scientifique et technologique, l'approche participative a été privilégiée. Ainsi, les Etats Membres, l'ensemble des acteurs, les décideurs politiques, les chercheurs, les enseignants chercheurs, les organisations nationales, régionales et internationales, les réseaux intervenant dans les domaines des Sciences et des Technologies ont été associés à la formulation de la politique ECOPOST. La conception d'ECOPOST a par conséquent nécessité la mise en œuvre d'une stratégie cohérente.

Parmi les recommandations qui ont été formulées pour la politique d'ECOPOST nous pouvons retenir celles qui ont été formulées par les Ministres en charge des Sciences et de Technologie en 2004 et qui devraient être examinées dans le Protocol pour tenir compte de l'état actuel de sa mise en œuvre. Ensuite, des résolutions ont été prises par les Chefs d'État lors du Sommet de l'Union

Africaine de 2007 instituant l'allocation de 1% du PIB à la Science et à la Technologie par tous les pays membres, ceci devrait constituer l'une des bases pour justifier la nécessité pour la politique de la CEDEAO en matière de Science et de Technologie.

Il faut noter que c'est lors de la Réunion des Experts des Sciences et Technologies de la CEDEAO, tenue à Abidjan à l'Assemblée Nationale de la République de Côte d'Ivoire, du 27 au 30 juillet 2010, que le terme « Innovation » a été inséré dans la dénomination de la politique. Ainsi, c'est à partir de 2010 que le concept de l'innovation va être considéré comme un élément clef de la réforme scientifique pour le développement de l'Afrique de l'Ouest.

La rencontre visait les objectifs ci-après:

- Analyser, développer et effectuer la synthèse de la connaissance et de la compréhension des questions importantes liées à la science et à la technologie dans la région CEDEAO ;
- Echanger les expériences sur les procédures ou les méthodologies dans le cadre des politiques publiques et sectorielles, principalement dans le domaine des sciences et des technologies ;
- Adopter une feuille de route consensuelle devant aboutir à une Politique Science et Technologie de la CEDEAO.

La réunion des Experts visait particulièrement l'approfondissement de la réflexion sur la politique scientifique et technologique de la CEDEAO, sur la base d'un document d'orientation comportant 12 axes stratégiques, notamment:

- L'appui à la recherche scientifique, à l'innovation et au développement technologique ;
- L'appui à l'éducation et à la formation;
- La promotion et le développement de l'enseignement supérieur;
- La promotion de la culture scientifique;
- La création d'un environnement favorable à la créativité scientifique; La coopération régionale et internationale;
- L'appui aux renforcements de capacités;

- Le financement de la science et de la technologie et la participation du secteur privé;
- L'information sur la science et la technologie: données, statistiques et indicateurs;
- L'approche genre dans la science et la technologie;
- La gouvernance électronique et la massification au niveau des Universités;
- Le Transfert de Technologie et Veille technologique.

Au cours des travaux de la session, les rapports pays ont été présentés par les Experts des Etats membres. Ces rapports étaient centrés entre autres, sur le cadre des politiques scientifiques et technologiques, le potentiel scientifique et technique, ainsi que les politiques du développement scientifique.

Les difficultés liées à la mise en œuvre des politiques relatives à la science, à la technologie et aux innovations (STI) ont été mises définies par les participants. Il s'agit :

- des insuffisances institutionnelles et organisationnelles au sein des structures de recherche ;
- de l'absence de synergie/cohérence entre la vision, les missions du sous-secteur et les activités de recherche ;
- de la faible adaptation de la recherche scientifique et technologique aux besoins de développement ;
- du faible renforcement de capacités au niveau des structures de recherche ;
- des programmes de recherche non cohérents et des activités non coordonnées ;
- de l'utilisation peu optimale des ressources humaines et la faible valorisation de la fonction de chercheur ;
- de la faible valorisation des résultats de recherche ;
- de l'insuffisance et/ou l'utilisation peu rationnelle du financement, des équipements dans les structures de recherche.

Les Experts ont plaidé pour l'institution de Centres Régionaux d'Excellence axés sur la Recherche et la Formation en Sciences, Technologie et Innovation (STI) au sein de l'espace CEDEAO. La question de l'harmonisation des statuts des chercheurs, des dispositions à mettre en œuvre pour freiner significativement la fuite des cerveaux, la normalisation des programmes en STI pour la formation des ressources humaines aux différents niveaux d'éducation dans la sous-région, le renforcement des structures régionales d'Assurance Qualité pour les établissements d'enseignement et de recherche, l'identification des besoins régionaux en STI ont fait l'objet d'échanges fructueux.

Parmi les autres recommandations qui ont été énoncées, il faut mentionner la prise en compte des résolutions d'autres conférences de parties prenantes telles que la Commission Économique Africaine, la CEA.

En guise de conclusion, nous pouvons souligner de nouveau qu'ECOPOST s'inscrit dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre de la Vision 2020 de la CEDEAO, dans le but de parvenir à la CEDEAO des Peuples. Comme nous l'avons mentionné, la Vision 2020 intègre une approche participative et inclusive pour toutes les parties prenantes au processus.

ECOPOST doit non seulement permettre, à terme, de maîtriser toutes les sciences et les technologies nécessaires pour le développement et l'innovation dans notre région, mais aussi permettre l'émergence d'une communauté scientifique capable de rivaliser et de communiquer avec les meilleures équipes scientifiques mondiales dans divers domaines, de manière à être à la fois consciente et bénéficiaire de tous les progrès scientifiques et technologiques nécessaires au développement de la région.

En somme, le développement de la science, de la technologie et de l'innovation doit prendre en compte l'urgente nécessité de relever un défi crucial : celui d'instaurer un développement humain durable, équitable et intégral impliquant le respect de l'égalité des chances entre les genres, ainsi que la reconnaissance de la diversité culturelle et ethnique.

À titre informatif, le document de politique Science, Technologie et Innovation et le plan d'action stratégique 2013-2017 ECOPOST de la CEDEAO sont maintenant disponibles. Ils ont été conçus en 2012, validés en 2014 et se trouvent actuellement dans leur phase de mise en œuvre. Leur mise en ligne sur le site web de la CEDEAO est prévue courant 2015.

*Charles Edward Minega*

***The WAI - CEDIR Workshop on Higher Education and Research Policy for Regional Integration in West Africa and beyond***

*September 29-30, 2014 - Praia, Cabo Verde*

The workshop on Higher Education and Research Policy for Regional Integration in West Africa and beyond was held on 29th -30th September, 2014, in Praia, Cabo Verde and was organized in the auditorium of the University of Cabo Verde (UNICV), at the Palmarejo Campus. The participants included various expert academics, practitioners, policy makers, advocates and educationists with specialized experience in higher education, regional integration, institutional development and governance, capacity building, higher education projects development and centers for excellence in knowledge development and management from Africa, America and Europe. It was also an opportunity for academics and experts in Cabo Verde to interact directly with various institutions working on higher education and regional integration worldwide.

The brainstorming workshop provided a platform for researchers, practitioners and educators to present and discuss recent innovations, trends, experiences and concerns on the nexus between higher education, research policy and regional integration. The theme was explored under four main parameters: Higher Education, Research Policy, Regional Integration and the Nexus between Higher Education and Regional Integration. The workshop was mostly characterized by its intensive ICT and Video Conference mode of delivery and attracted mainly a group of academics, researchers, and post graduate students from various institutions in Cabo Verde.

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Jointly sponsored by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and WAI, the workshop enabled Mr. Charles Edward Minega to identify areas of interest for research in the area of higher education, research policy and institutional governance for regional integration in West Africa and beyond, providing the contextual basis for the need for deeper research in the identified areas. In line with the terms of reference, the experts supported the WAI-ZEI Fellow, Mr. Charles Edward Minega to collate information that will ensure that the proposal to be submitted has sound theoretical and practical foundations.

Due to travel constraints resulting from the ongoing Ebola crisis which caused havoc in some countries of the West African region, some key experts and presenters could not make it to the venue of the workshop, and some of the key presentations and debates were realized though video link (Skype and Policom Video Conference), bringing into perspective the imperative to promote the use of innovative solutions and technology to advance academic cooperation and partnership for research in Africa. As various experts could not be available at the time assigned for their respective presentations, the initial workshop sessions were adapted to make room for flexibility; this resulted in a reshuffling of the contents without reference to their respective thematic sessions. However the present report has been arranged in line with the ultimate goal to present the topics under their relevant thematic area.

Experts who attended the workshop include:

- Mrs. Sally Brammer, ZEI Coordinator, WAI Master in African Regional Integration, Bonn, Germany
- Prof. Julio Cesar de Carvalho, University of Phoenix, USA
- Ms. Maria de Fatima Fortes, Lecturer, School of Governance, University of Cabo Verde, Praia

Experts who could not make it to the venue and made their presentations via video link include:

- Prof. Djénéba Traoré, Director General of WAI, Cabo Verde
- Dr. William Baah-Boateng, University of Ghana in Accra
- Mr. Mustapha Sadni Jallab, Head of the WTO Chairs at the ITTC Division, World Trade Organisation, Geneva, Switzerland



- Prof. Herbert Robinson, Head of Program, Training and Capacity Building, UNIDEP, Dakar, Senegal
- Prof. Firmin Mbala, Higher Education Support Program Officer, Open Society, OSIWA, Dakar, Senegal
- Mr. Arun Sharma, AIMS, Manager of the African institute of Mathematical Sciences (AIMS), Next Einstein Initiative (NEI), Berlin, Germany
- Dr. Andreas Blom, Education Economist and Team Leader, World Bank, African Centres of Excellence Project (ACE), Washington D.C., USA

Among invited participants, it is worth noting the representative of the Delegation of the European Union in Cabo Verde, responsible for institutional capacity, Ms. Ana Sofia Silva, the representative of the National Commission for UNESCO, Mr. José Antoniό Pinas and a delegation of academics from Jean Piaget University, led by the former Rector, Prof. Jorge Souza Brito. Others present were, Mr. Daniel Yeboah, WAI-ZEI Project Coordinator, Mr. Benjamin Ablam Akoutou, WAI-ZEI Project Coordinator and WAI members of staff.

Dr. Aida Opokou Mensah, UNECA (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia) and Ms. Karrine Sanders, Association of Commonwealth Universities (London, UK), were invited but presented their apologies for not being in the position to attend or to make their presentations. As a result of travel constraints, Prof. Kebede Kassa Tsegaye, University of Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) and IGAD Expert, could not arrive in time for the workshop, but finally managed to arrive at WAI and made his presentations to a limited group of experts and WAI staff. A complete list of participants and experts is attached (Annex 1).

The workshop's opening session was chaired by the Rector of the University of Cabo Verde (UNICV), Prof. Judite Medina do Nascimento. She expressed her deep gratitude for the organization of the event at UNICV and challenged the experts to come up with innovative measures to enhance synergies between various universities in West Africa to support the regional integration process, which has been defined as a key pillar for the African economic development. The Rector of UNICV stressed that her university was fully committed to supporting the outcome of the workshop and the implementation of recommendations towards practical solutions based on South-South Academic cooperation. In particular, she pledged her unfailing support for the proposed master program in

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African Regional Integration to be based at UNICV. She concluded her address by calling on all stakeholders to support the program.

In her welcome address, the Director General of the West Africa Institute (WAI), Prof. Djeneba Traoré expressed her gratitude to the experts and participants for their presence and support of the workshop; she presented her apologies for her absence from the workshop as a result of an obligation to travel on short notice for an important meeting organized by the UEMOA in Burkina Faso. She conveyed her warm appreciation to the Rector of UNICV and her substantial support for the workshop and more importantly, for the ongoing partnership between the University, the West Africa Institute and the Centre for European Integration Studies (ZEI) which is now working towards the launching of a new Masters in Africa Regional Integration at UNICV in 2016. She expressed her confidence that the workshop would address pertinent issues related to higher education, research policy and regional integration, and develop concrete proposals to enhance academic cooperation towards an effective regional integration process in West Africa.

The workshop was facilitated by Mr. Charles Edward Minega, a lecturer at the Faculty of Law and Researcher at the Centre of Studies on Regional Integration and SADC Law (CEDIR) of Eduardo Mondlane University (Mozambique), who was invited as a research Fellow by the West Africa Institute (WAI) to conduct an analysis of the role of higher education and research policy in the regional integration process in West Africa. He is currently working on a proposal to support a long-term bilateral collaboration between WAI and CEDIR.

In his introductory presentation, the WAI ZEI Fellow, Mr. Charles Edward Minega, explained the rationale of the workshop, stressing that the importance and the role of higher education and research policy in regional integration processes have been downplayed for many years, leading to situations where the RECs have adopted unrealistic development targets which were never implemented because they were not based on factual evidence and empirical research. He observed that the development of academic and research capacity to support the regional integration policy making process in Africa in general, and in West Africa in particular, is a daunting task that academics cannot accomplish single handedly, as there is a pressing imperative to promote synergies between various actors and stakeholders including policy makers, development partners, civil society and private sector to develop people oriented development policies. He indicated that the objective of the workshop was to find solutions to the

key issues identified, through strong synergies and partnership and capacity building for high quality academic training and research skill development.

The main issues raised were: how higher education and research policies contribute to the process of regional integration in West Africa and in SADC, what are the opportunities and the challenges related to introducing regional integration as a topic in the higher education curriculum in West Africa, how to strengthen the newly developed Master Program in Africa Regional Integration proposed to be offered by WAI in cooperation with the National University of Cabo Verde (UNICV), what political measures can be adopted to close the gap between the national higher education and research policies and the relevant actors on the ground (students and researchers) with the aim to facilitate a fruitful exchange and better research results, how to mobilize effective support for a regional approach to higher education and research in West Africa, how to bridge gaps between African Francophone, Anglophone and Lusophone higher education systems , what strategies can be designed in terms of institutional governance and leadership to enhance the efficiency and quality in academic teaching and research, what strategies can be devised to promote the use of new Technologies and innovative solutions to enhance the contribution of universities in national and regional policy making (implementation of existing Policy and Action Plan), can internationalization of programs be used to strengthen the capacity of universities in West Africa ?

The first thematic area discussed was the “contextual background of the regional integration process in West Africa” and the need to have the relevant “key facts and accurate data on higher education and regional integration”. Experts analyzed the key drivers and obstacles affecting the implementation of the regional integration agenda in ECOWAS. Various challenges were identified including the alarming level of low education and overall illiteracy in the region (with the exception of two countries, namely Cabo Verde and Ghana), the constraints resulting from the limited budgets allocated to the education sector by national governments, the unrealistic targets adopted by the regional institutions without evidence based relevant studies to support the political decisions. Under this theme, an overview of higher education institutions in West Africa was also presented. Experts noted that for decades, African leaders have neglected to adopt consistent policies to promote the recruitment and retention of highly qualified academics, and found that the “brain drain” phenomenon that negatively affects African countries is not only international, but can also be national, from public institutions to the private sector, due to

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lack of incentives in the higher education structure. In addition, they warned that any initiative to strengthen higher education should start in elementary and secondary education systems to strengthen reforms in tertiary institutions level. They also raised the issue of growing multiplication of protocols in various sectors of ECOWAS programs, in contrast with the lack of a relevant policies and frameworks dealing with the harmonization of higher education systems and the quality of education standards within various countries of ECOWAS, which are more characterized by different European systems and languages.

Further, the discussion underscored the persistence of social, cultural and languages barriers as a serious impediment to integration, and the gap between the English, French and Portuguese speaking countries as a key barrier to integration in higher education. While the diversity of African traditional cultural and social values, which have common denominators in various countries, should be used as a pillar for enhanced integration in the region. They noted that since ECOWAS leaders currently seek to promote a people-based regional institution and community, they should always abide by the bottom-up principles in their national and regional policy making and avoid the top-down approach which has so far been used without any positive impact on the welfare of the common citizen.

The second thematic area focused on national and regional experiences in engaging higher education institutions in regional integration policy making and discussed ways to collaborate with stakeholders to promote adequate policies at national and regional levels. Under this thematic area, two best cases of global reference were presented, one regional case in institutional capacity building and one model academic networking as pillars for excellence in higher education, training and research. The first one focused on the multilingual, United Nations funded African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) of Dakar (Senegal) and the second was the WTO Chairs program supported by the Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation (ITTTC) of the World Trade Organisation (Geneva, Switzerland), which involves more than 20 universities in the world, providing funding and institutional capacity to enhance knowledge and understanding of the multilateral trading system among academics and students in developing countries through teaching, research and outreach activities in research institutions. The experts and participants also discussed one of the best cases presented for institutional capacity building for Higher Education and Research: the African Climate Change Adaptation Initiative

(ACCAI) Network, which seeks to strengthen the capacity of African universities in climate change adaptation.

Two case studies were discussed, demonstrating academic efforts to deal with structural and policy challenges in national contexts: the first presentation showcased the institutional reforms (scission) developed at the University of Bamako (Mali) as a solution to accelerated students mass enrollment from 2005 to 2011. The second presentation “Making a compelling case for high quality in higher education and evidence based research”, with a focus on institutional capacity building for improved high quality training, governance and institutional mechanisms to engage and communicate with policy makers and other stakeholders, presented the evolving mission and vision of the University of Cabo Verde (UNICV) which within less than a decade has become a national center of high quality education and seeks to enhance, in the near future, its visibility as a regional and international stakeholder committed to engaging policy makers to promote regional integration in West Africa.

Under the third thematic area, experts and participants focused on strengthening excellence in academic training and research on regional integration issues, with a key presentation on “mainstreaming regional integration in academic programmes and research in West Africa”, which allowed experts and participants to have in depth discussion on the new Master course in African Regional Integration to be launched at the University of Cabo Verde (UNICV) in cooperation with WAI and ZEI. It was noted that Africa lacks relevant academic programmes which focus on regional integration as a taught discipline and a key research topic. Other similar courses were identified at the University of Yaoundé II (PAU), Cameroon, the University of Ghana (Legon), the University of Ilorin (Nigeria), the Catholic University of East Africa (Kenya), the University of Pretoria and the joint course offered by the University of Cape Town (UCT)/ University of Western Cape (South Africa), while various post graduate courses and professional training on regional integration have been organized by universities and other institutions (World bank, UNIDEP, ECA) in Africa. It was noted that research institutes and centers of excellence on regional integration have been established at the Eduardo Mondlane University (Mozambique), the Catholic University of East Africa (Kenya), the University of Ghana (Legon) and the University of Pretoria (South Africa). Participants stressed the need to extend such specialized courses and research to other faculties such as engineering, agriculture, social sciences and literature to train a generation of graduates who are well informed of wide ranging regional integration issues and with

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the relevant skills to work anywhere within the region and more importantly to build a strong database for collaborative research and networking partnerships among academic institutions with such programs.

Finally, the fourth thematic area focused on mechanisms of leveraging regional integration and development through higher education, research, innovation, science and technology. The workshop also analyzed aspects of using regional integration as a pillar for economic and technological development in Africa. As most of the workshop speakers addressed the audience through video links, it was demonstrated that technology and innovation can play a decisive role in the way academics, policy makers and other stakeholders interact when dealing with regional integration issues. The participants observed that universities and research institutes in the regional context should have the necessary institutional and financial support to establish regional hubs of knowledge which can be shared between national and regional institutions and which are easily accessible by researchers, lecturers, students, policy makers and the public in general.

Despite the cancellation of two valuable presentations, namely on “knowledge management and technology as drivers of regional integration” and on “preparedness for technology and environment related challenges”, participants were highly animated with presentations on best cases of “centers of excellence” currently being developed in Africa in general and in West Africa in particular. These presentations covered the World Bank funded Project on Africa Centers of Excellence (ACE), the German sponsored African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS) and Next Einstein Initiative (NEI) which has established centers in four African countries (Cameroon, Ghana, Senegal and South Africa), and the African Union initiative to establish the Pan African University (PAU) which has established hubs of excellence in teaching and research in five countries (Algeria, Nigeria, Cameroon, Kenya and South Africa).

A special presentation was made on the ECOWAS Policy Framework on Science, Technology and Innovation (ECOPOST) and the related ECOWAS Strategic Action Plan (2013 – 2017). After introducing the rationale, relevance, objectives, institutional and methodological approach of the policy framework, Prof. Djeneba Traoré discussed issues related to the activities realized in the process of the adoption of the ECOWAS Policy framework and perspectives of its implementation. It was noted that the framework takes into account the revised ECOWAS Treaty and Protocol A/P3 /1/03 on Education and Training.

It was noted that the main objectives of the policy are to reduce poverty through job creation, strengthening institutional and human capacity, promote good governance and sustainable development and accelerate the level of industrialization in the region. ECOPOST is part of the implementation of the ECOWAS Vision 2020 and aims to involve all stakeholders in the process, including the technical departments of the Commission, Member States' Ministries of Science, scientific and technological institutions in the region, regional organizations of civil society, private sector, research, and development partners. Its main goal is not only to promote science, technology and innovation for the development of the ECOWAS region (an ECOWAS of the people, not of the States), but also to build a scientific community able to compete and communicate with the world's best research teams in various areas. The policy should be all inclusive, participatory and take into account the challenge of sustainable human development in terms of equal opportunities and respect of cultural and ethnic diversity.

Finally, during a separate session after the workshop, Prof. Kebede Kassa Tsegaye discussed issues related to the social, cultural and scientific dimension of regional integration in West Africa, and the regional initiatives using higher education institutions of learning as important platforms to promote regional integration. Participants observed that while social, cultural and scientific values are a very important foundation to advance the regional integration agenda, RECs in Africa have neglected these aspects and mainly focused on the economic and monetary benefits of integration. However, a close scrutiny shows that since the early stages of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), and followed by initiatives by the African Union (AU), higher education and research were one of the priorities on the continental organization's policy making agenda, with the launching of the "First Decade of Education in Africa (OAU:1997-2006) and the "Second Decade of Education in Africa (AU: 2007-2015), the decision to establish an institute of African Studies, and the African University (OAU:1963) which was implemented more than 50 years later (by the AU Kampala Summit in 2010) with the creation of the Pan African University (PAU) which was inaugurated in 2011 with five centers of excellence established in different regions (North Africa, West Africa, Central Africa, East Africa and Southern Africa).

During the final session, participants used information presented by experts to propose some topics for priority research as a way to promote the role of higher education and research in regional integration policy making processes in West

Africa. Some experts proposed that WAI and its partners should develop a regional / continental academic network of partnerships to create synergies for training and research on regional integration policy related topics.

It was also proposed to support ideas and projects related with the use of ICT and Knowledge Management for higher education and research into concrete actions, with the establishment of Knowledge and ICT Hubs within partner universities to enhance sharing and facilitate easy access to research output by academics, policy makers and the public in general. It was finally agreed that close follow up contacts would continue to facilitate the fine tuning of the proposed areas of research for future cooperation between higher education and research institutions dealing with regional integration issues in West Africa and beyond.

In total, the following twenty eight research topics were identified and it was proposed to group them in five different thematic areas (*not an exhaustive, but an indicative list to be reviewed and approved*):

### ***Thematic area no. one (1): The Development and implementation of a regional collaborative academic network in West Africa and beyond***

*Note: this is not per se a research area as it does not focus on substantive issues related to higher education, research and regional integration. However we considered it to be a “must-do” on our list of tasks as a prerequisite for academic cooperation and in this context, the adoption of the best model of operation of the academic network, amongst various models to be analyzed and discussed, should be developed with a specific research methodology, which requires a working group on this area to be of utmost importance. Any comments or proposals are most welcome.*

- Designing a framework for academic cooperation and networking in West Africa,
- Consolidating academic cooperation, research partnerships and funding for regional projects through interactive networking in West Africa,



- Developing a Knowledge Management Programme (KMP) with a database, sharing interdisciplinary perspectives and creating communities of practice for academic cooperation partners in West Africa,
- Engaging national and regional policy makers and other stakeholders through dialogue, seminars, workshops, policy briefs, and research papers: (research question should focus on what, when, where, who and how the academic partners should engage policy makers and stakeholders),
- The Regional Integration Observer RIO: Harmonizing Fact-Finding and Reporting Methodologies in West Africa,
- Developing Regional Integration Knowledge Hubs in Tertiary Education Institutions in West Africa,
- In search for innovative solutions for funding partnerships to support the engagement of higher education institutions and research for regional integration in West Africa,
- Building the pillars for academic excellence in regional think tanks: Strengthening organizational and institutional management capacity at the West Africa Institute (WAI) and its network of regional partners.

***Thematic area no. two (2): The Role of Higher Education in resolving the Social, Cultural and Scientific challenges arising from the Regional Integration Process in West Africa***

- Breaking the curses of the colonial legacy for a healthier regional integration process: tapping into historical perspectives and laying the foundations for contributions from universities in closing linguistic and cultural diversity gaps in West Africa.
- Harmonization of higher education fundamentals: academic curriculum, degree equivalence standards and fees in higher education institutions, resolving issues of regional mobility of students and professors,
- Towards African based approaches to reducing the social, cultural and linguistic gaps in West Africa through regional integration: a people-centered conflict resolution analysis.

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- Improving social inclusion and gender balance in higher education systems in West Africa.
- Enhancing women's opportunities, gender equity and better inclusion of minority groups and disabled students in African institutions of higher education,
- Coping with violent student protests at universities, severe economic hardships, HIV and other health risks,
- Collaborative and interactive approaches to resolving institutional conflicts between universities and governments in West Africa.

### ***Thematic area no. three (3) – Strengthening institutional capacity towards further integration and improved quality; mainstreaming regional integration through teaching and research in Tertiary Institutions in West Africa***

- Mainstreaming regional integration concepts and principles in the higher education landscape and curriculum in West Africa and beyond: designing innovative and collaborative methodologies and approaches for regional integration courses in tertiary education,
- Understanding and the root causes of “national” and “international brain drain” in West African Universities: in search of approaches which encourage local expertise and facilitate regional mobility in higher education institutions, attracting and retaining quality lecturers in higher education institutions: mechanisms to keep motivated and highly efficient academic staff in West African Universities.
- Mainstreaming leadership, governance and ethics in higher education in ECOWAS: integrating excellence in higher education and integrity as values to achieve readiness for employment and adequacy with the existing job market,
- Understanding the dimensions of governance, human rights and corporate social responsibility in a regional perspective,

- Rethinking higher education in West Africa: Building human capital, raising academic standards, increasing enrollment, rehabilitating and expanding infrastructure and technology in universities,
- Analysis of harmonization efforts of higher education systems in ECOWAS,
- Aligning and harmonizing national policies to support higher education and research through enhanced conditions of service and salaries, capacity building and institutional governance frameworks.

***Thematic area no. four (4): Leveraging Higher Education and Research Policy for Knowledge Management, Innovation and Technology as drivers of the regional integration process in West Africa***

- The role of universities and research institutions in the implementation of the ECOWAS ECONET Policy Framework ,
- Towards the development and implementation of strategies to improve access to internet connectivity for higher education and research,
- How to link higher education institutions with existing centres of excellence in Africa for enhanced knowledge management, innovation, science and technology,
- Using ICT and Social Media for mainstreaming regional integration in higher education.

### ***Thematic area no. five (5): How can Universities create synergies to assist West African countries to better integrate into the growing global knowledge-based economy?***

- Creating pathways to more adapted educational and economic opportunities by generating systemic change for social and gender inclusion in higher education systems across West Africa,
- Fostering innovation and excellence through disciplinary networks and industry-based fellowships for academics and researchers across West Africa,
- Creating conditions for excellence and Innovation incubators in higher education institutions: the making of a new young generation of academics who will change Africa in the 21st Century.
- Casting the nets wider for excellence in tomorrow's higher education: How to enable more students, including historically underserved populations, to achieve academic success, including preparedness for pre-university / secondary school curriculum.



The **West Africa Institute (WAI)** is a research center offering research, capacity-development and social dialogue on regional integration in West Africa. WAI is promoted by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), ECOBANK and the Government of Cape Verde. WAI is based in Praia Cape Verde.

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WAI-ZEI Papers are published in the framework of the research cooperation both institutes conduct on “Sustainable regional integration in West Africa and Europe” in the years 2013-2016. They are intended to stimulate discussion about regional integration processes in West Africa and Europe from a comparative perspective and about the development of European-West African relations in the political and economic sector. Papers express the personal opinions of the authors.

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