

International Network for  
Governmental Science  
Advice-Africa Chapter

Bringing together policy practitioners and scientists  
across the African continent



Est February 2016

# The JOURNEY So Far

*Edited By:*

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# INGSA-AFRICA: *The Journey So Far*

## INGSA Regional Chapters enabling change by:

- Undertaking individual and institutional capacity development in science advice and science diplomacy to empower resilient systems
- Building and networking regional communities of practice
- Acting as a conduit of exchange between policy-makers and knowledge generators
- Providing chapter members with unique opportunities, including events and grant funding
- Ensuring that regional interests and priorities inform INGSA's global activities and feed into international projects and partnerships

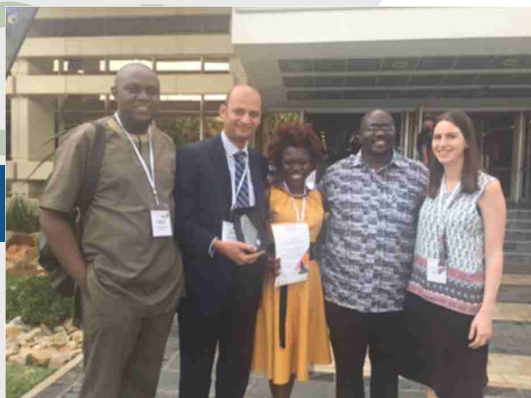
## About INGSA-Africa

### Chapter Establishment and Governance

The Africa Regional Chapter of the International Network for Governmental Science Advice (INGSA-Africa), the first of INGSA's Regional Chapters, was established in February 2016 at INGSA's first successful workshop in Africa, held in Hermanus, South Africa. The chapter was initially steered by a five-member committee but later expanded with the addition of two West and Central African country representatives and a Regional Programme Officer from the ICSU Regional Office for Africa (acting as the secretariat of the chapter).

# AFRICA

Inaugural Steering Committee of INGSA-Africa



## First Strategy Retreat

The Steering Committee of the Africa Chapter of International Network for Governmental Science Advice (INGSA-Africa) convened for a strategy retreat in Kampala, Uganda, from the 22nd to 23rd of August, 2017. Sponsored by the ICSU Regional Office for Africa and hosted by the Uganda National Academy of Sciences (UNAS), the retreat aimed to achieve two main objectives: (i) to discuss and provide

input on the revised terms of reference and mode of operation of INGSA Regional Chapters, and (ii) to establish consensus on the operational framework of INGSA-Africa within the broader INGSA and the then International Council for Science (ICSU) ecosystem. The output to the INGSA Secretariat and to ICSU were recommendations to review the terms of reference and the mode of operation of Regional Chapters.



**SC Strategy Retreat, Uganda**  
with award presented to INGSA-Africa at SFSA

### Growth of INGSA Africa Steering Committee

The Steering Committee has since 2021 been expanded to 11 consisting of two representatives from each of the five sub-regions of the continent and a Regional Programme Officer as Coordinator.



M. Oladoyin Odubanjo  
(Nigeria, Chair)



Richard L.K. Glover  
(RPO)



Shaheen Motala-Timol  
(Mauritius)



Madiagne Diallo  
(Senegal)



Enock Musungwini  
SC Member (Zimbabwe)



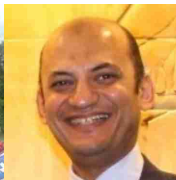
Jean E. Liyongo (DRC)



Farah Ouechtati  
(Tunisia)



Christian Acemah  
(Uganda)



Sameh Soror  
(Egypt)



Renee Street  
(South Africa)



Justine G. Nzweundji  
(Cameroon)

### Mission

INGSA-Africa brings together policy practitioners and scientists from across the African continent.

The three main action-oriented pillars are:

**Build**  
Providing local practitioners with a way to network with their peers, while utilising that collective knowledge to develop Africa-specific insight into the relationships, Process, and systems of science advice

## **Connect**

Connect African practitioners and knowledge with the global conversation to ensure that African lessons and innovations are a part of developing best practices in science advice

## **Create**

Enable INGSA-Africa members to create new knowledge, build new skills, and leverage unique opportunities to build the science advice and science diplomacy systems of the future

## **INGSA-Africa Hub Rwanda**

Established in 2022, this hub represents a significant step forward in INGSA-Africa's mission to provide opportunities and skills development to practitioners. Its overarching goal is to assess, coordinate, and strengthen the national (especially Rwandan) and regional science advice ecosystems by acting as a focal point for training and networking opportunities in Africa.

## **Events and Activities**

INGSA-Africa focuses on providing opportunities for individuals and organisations to improve their abilities to give and receive science advice through workshops, networking opportunities, and novel research

## **International (Global INGSA) Engagements**

INGSA-Africa was represented in three INGSA Biennial Conferences: INGSA2016 (Brussels, Belgium); INGSA2018 (Tokyo, Japan) and INGSA2021 (Montreal, Canada), where it engaged in knowledge exchange, collaborative discussions, and networking aimed at advancing science advice practices on the global stage. Of note, Africa was ably represented by its member countries of ICSU, in Auckland, New Zealand in 2014, when INGSA was set up.

## **Sub-Regional Capacity Enhancement Activities**

Over the 8-year journey, INGSA-Africa has organised four successful capacity enhancement activities in three sub-regions of the continent for individuals and organisations (practitioners) to develop their skills and provide opportunities for them to improve their abilities to give and receive science advice. These are:

### **The Francophone Workshop**

This capacity building workshop entitled 'Enhancing capacities in providing science advice to government' for Francophone Africa was held in Dakar, Senegal, from 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017, hosted by the Académie Nationale des Sciences et Techniques du Senegal (ANSTS). It brought together forty-four established and emerging scientists from various fields, along with policy professionals, from various African countries. Structured around case studies designed to engage participants in

role-playing scenarios, the workshop aimed to provide a platform for networking expertise to reinforce capacity for science advice within Francophone Africa. Funding from the Quebec and New Zealand Governments, the Fonds de Recherche de Quebec, the IDRC, and the Wellcome Trust was received for this workshop.

Francophone Workshop, Dakar, Senegal



### Eastern Africa Regional Government Science Advice Workshop

INGSA, in partnership with the Republic of Rwanda's Ministry of Education and supported by Canada's IDRC, held a Regional Government Science Advice Workshop from the 22<sup>nd</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup> of August 2018 in Kigali, Rwanda. The workshop was designed to enhance capacities in providing science advice for policy making at all levels of government, through plenary lectures, case studies, and interactive exercises. Participants included a mix of policy professionals and scientists, as well as institutional representatives from Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, South Sudan and Ethiopia. The hypothetical case studies used were *Alterra* (based on air quality and energy) and *Rawhitia* (based on healing psychological trauma).

Eastern Africa Workshop, Kigali, Rwanda



### Central Africa Sub-Regional Workshop on Government Science Advice.

The Cameroon Academy of Young Scientists (CAYS), in partnership with the Chief Scientist of Québec (Professor Rémi Quirion) and the Fonds de Recherche du Québec (FRQ), INGSA-Africa, and the Cameroon Academy of Sciences (CAS); held a Central Africa Sub-Regional Workshop on Government Science Advice from 26<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> August 2019 in Yaoundé, Cameroon. This was held with the support of the Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation (MINRESI) and the Ministry of Higher Education (MINESUP) in Cameroon. The objective of this workshop, conducted in French and with 120 participants from 11 countries (Tchad, Central African Republic, Congo, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Niger, Senegal, Canada and Cameroon), was to develop and enhance the capacity of researchers, academicians, government functionaries and civil society on the concept of Science

Advice to governments for decision making. In addition to plenary sessions, participants undertook three new INGSA case studies that were created for the workshop-**Kassemlé** (based on integration of traditional techniques in education to fight unemployment and poverty); **Gonswana** (based on food insecurity and new technologies) and **Midgaze** (based on armed rebellion and social reintegration of ex-combatants).



Central Africa Workshop, Yaoundé, Cameroon

### Role of Science in Assisting Regional Policy Development – North Eastern Africa Workshop Series.

The Ethiopian Academy of Sciences and INGSA co-hosted a series of science advice workshops in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from the 28<sup>th</sup> to the 31<sup>st</sup> of October 2019. This workshop series was designed for policymakers and scientists living or working in North Eastern Africa to enhance capacities in embedding evidence in policymaking at all levels of government. The series of events included a one-and-a-half-day science advice workshop with policymakers and select researchers and scientists; a half-day open public evidence-informed policy-making forum, particularly targeting the academic and research community; a one-day workshop focusing on the role of science advice in health for both policymakers and health researchers; and a one-day science advice workshop dedicated for young students. Case studies used were **Republic of Estrela** (based on internal displacement, climate change); **Ostal** (based on waste, land use and technological development) and **Swamperia** (based on future technology in the fight against malaria).



North-Eastern Africa Workshop, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

## Other Capacity Enhancement Activities

From its establishment to date, INGSA-Africa has been involved in varied capacity enhancement activities, both self-initiated and demand-driven.

These include:

**The Science Forum South Africa (SFSA) Series.** The chapter has participated in this international conference since its inception in 2016 and held panel sessions or roundtables on various aspects of science advice in Africa.

- Science Forum South Africa ([SFSA2019], Pretoria, South Africa, Dec 2019) - **Panel Session on Understanding the science advice landscape in Africa**, based on the findings of the INGSA- Africa consensus study on the science advice landscape in Africa
- Science Forum South Africa ([SFSA2020], Pretoria, South Africa, 10 December 2020) - **Roundtable of Strategy Working Group of the African Platform for Science Advisors (APSA) and Capacity Building Programme**
- Science Forum South Africa ([SFSA2023], Pretoria, South Africa, 6-8 December 2023) - **SC members participated in sessions with the INGSA President, Remi Quirion, and Christian Acemah (Steering Committee member)**

### **African Science Leadership Program (ASLP) Conference.**

Three Steering Committee members of INGSA-Africa - Sameh Soror, Christian Acemah and Tolu Oni - participated in a conference organized by the University of Pretoria's African Science Leadership Program in Pretoria, South Africa, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2017. They facilitated the training of its 2016/17 cohort of ASLP fellows on: (i) principles and guidelines of government science advice; (ii) different aspects of providing evidence-informed advice, and the challenges of providing science advice; (iii) the science advice landscape on the continent; and (iv) the role of, and structures through which, emerging scientists can engage with science advice to governments.

### **Pre-13<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of African Science Academies (AMASA-13) Learning Collaborative Workshop.**

This Learning Collaborative Workshop was designed to inform participants on science advice for policy making at all levels of government. It was hosted by the Nigerian Academy of Science (NAS), in collaboration with INGSA-Africa. The workshop, which took place on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of November 2017 in Lagos, Nigeria, had in attendance nearly 60 participants from various national academies of science in Africa, grantees of the Leading Integrated Research for Agenda 2030 (LIRA) program, some staff of the ICSU Regional Office for Africa, and the Steering

Committee of INGSА-Africa. Using three hypothetical case studies: *Ileojogbon* (based on legislating homosexuality); *Panderia* (based on pandemics, panics and international borders); and *Tangeria* (based on gene-editing and climate response), the workshop succeeded in creating engagement and awareness on science advice and its importance in government policy making.

Pre-AMASA13 Workshop, Abuja, Nigeria



**Global Forum of National Advisory Councils.** The Chair and a member of INGSА-Africa Steering Committee, Oladoyin Odubanjo and Christian Acemah respectively, participated in a panel discussion on **Experiences and models of science advice** at this conference held in Pretoria, South Africa, on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of December 2017.

**Conference on Surveillance and Response to Infectious Diseases and Comorbidities.**

INGSA-Africa participated in this conference held in Durban, South Africa, from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> of April 2018, co-hosted by the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf), the Uganda National Academy of Sciences (UNAS) and the German Academy (Leopoldina). Oladoyin Odubanjo, along with Renee Street and Christian Acemah organised a pre-conference capacity building workshop on science advice.

**Workshop on food security and policy.** The Chair of INGSА-Africa, Oladoyin Odubanjo, presented on **Green Economies and Evidence-Informed Policymaking** at this workshop organized by the South African Young Academy of Science (SAYAS), ASSAf and the Department of Science and Technology of South Africa (DST) in Johannesburg, South Africa, from the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> of April 2018.

**Networks for Policy Engagement.** Oladoyin Odubanjo (Chair) and Renee Street (SC member) participated in this convening by the Wellcome Trust UK, Malawi-Liverpool-Wellcome Trust Clinical Research Programme (MLW), African Institute for Development Policy (AFIDEP), in Lilongwe, Malawi in February 2019. The two facilitated a workshop on science advice.





Networks for Policy Engagement, Malawi

**African Young Graduates and Scholars (AYGS) Conference.** Sameh Soror and Renee Street, INGSА-Africa Steering Committee members, participated in this conference organized by the Africa Institute of Africa (AISA) of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in Johannesburg, South Africa in March 2019. They trained participants using a case study on *Social media and emerging mobile phone technologies as they affect African youth.*



AYGS Conference

**INGSA-Africa Session at One Health Infectious Diseases in Africa Symposium.** INGSА-Africa organized a capacity building session on **The Role of Science Advice in Infectious Disease Management** as part of the 'One Health: A focus on Infectious Diseases in Africa' symposium that took place on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of May 2019 in Durban, South Africa. The symposium was co-hosted by the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf), The World Academy of Sciences (TWAS) Young Affiliates Network, South African Young Academy of Science (SAYAS), Sub-Saharan Africa Network for TB/HIV Research Excellence, The World Academy of Sciences sub-Saharan African partner and South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC).

The INGSA-Africa session attracted approximately 40 young graduates and African Scholars. INGSA-Africa Steering Committee member, Dr Renee Street, gave a brief introduction about science advice, INGSA and INGSA-Africa and led them through the INGSA case study - *Panderia*.

INGSA-Africa Session at One Health Infectious Diseases in Africa Symposium



### Annual Meeting of African Science Academies (AMASA 15).

An INGSA-Africa Steering Committee team comprising Oladoyin Odubanjo, Christian Acemah, Justine Nzweundji and Richard Glover facilitated a Learning Collaborative Workshop on government science advice at this event held in Accra, Ghana on 15 November 2019. The workshop brought to the fore, the tenets of using scientific evidence to inform policy formulation. A fictitious case study from the *Republic of Dombelane* on mobilization of water and land resources for food security was used in a role-play, to test the potential of participants in applying the water-energy-land-food security nexus approach to ultimately advise the Prime Minister of that “country”, through his advisor and Minister of Agriculture and his Scientific Advisor, on making the best policy decisions for seizing investment opportunities available. The need for scientists to engage and collaborate with policy makers and offer their evidence-based scientific advice for socio-economic development of African countries was emphasised by participants.

AMASA15 in Accra, Ghana



## **Global Young Academy (GYA) Annual Conference.**

Christian Acemah (SC member) represented INGSA-Africa during the GYA Conference in Kigali, Rwanda on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2023. He gave a keynote address on ***The development of evidence-informed policymaking (EIPM) in sub-Saharan Africa.***

## **Commissioned Surveys/Studies/Articles/Concepts/Papers**

INGSA-Africa commissioned various surveys, studies, as well as articles and concept paper competitions over the period to expand its reach and impact across the continent. These include:

### **Survey on The Role of Scientific Knowledge in Policy Making in Africa: Policy practitioners, Scientists and Researchers Perspective.**

This was a survey commissioned by INGSA-Africa, and executed by Prof David Dadoo-Arhin of University of Ghana, between 15<sup>th</sup> November and 30<sup>th</sup> December 2019. The survey sought to provide important information for better comprehension on the issue of government science advice systems currently in place, identify the gaps and explore the avenues to bridge these gaps and strengthen the network of government science advice in Africa. Research questionnaires were used in making statistical inferences and comprehending the perspectives of scientists/researchers and policy practitioners on the use of scientific knowledge and evidence in policymaking processes in Africa. A total of 1,223 participants were contacted across the African continent using the INGSA-Africa and other network databases. Generally, over 75% of the respondents indicated that there is a big gap in collaboration between the scientific community and policymakers which, invariably, influences the use of scientific knowledge in policy making across the African continent<sup>1</sup>.



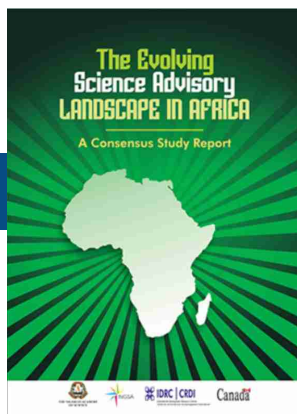
Prof David Dadoo-Arhin with Dr Richard Glover (INGSA-Africa RPO)

## **The Evolving Science Advisory Landscape in Africa.**

To better understand the role of science advice in Africa and the position that can be most effectively filled by diverse players (including the academies) in the future, the African chapter of the International Network for

<https://ingsa.org/resources/africa-research-survey/>

Governmental Science Advice (INGSAs), with funding from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), commissioned Africa's first consensus study - on The Evolving Science Advisory Landscape in Africa. The study was undertaken by The Nigerian Academy of Science (NAS) in 2020. The study investigated the current state of play and the dynamics of various national and pan-national stakeholders providing evidence and science advice for policymaking. A committee of eight (8) experts from across Africa - Nigeria, Senegal, Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, and Egypt - was constituted to conduct the study.



Consensus Study Report

The study concluded that the science-policy interface in Africa is very complex, with diverse systems, activities, and actors which come into play at every step in the policy making cycle. It asserted that a positive concept of the science advisory ecosystem in Africa is one that allows for diversity in the mechanisms and channels for science advice, particularly in the light of differences in sub-regional and national political landscapes. There is a wealth of existing organizations and structures to provide science advice across the continent - the key to their future success and inputs will be developing the sense of trust that will allow them to collaborate and work together more effectively<sup>2</sup>.

The first sub-regional launch of the consensus study report was held during a webinar jointly organised by INGSAs-Africa, the Nigerian Academy of Science, and the Uganda National Academy of Science (UNAS) in July 2021. Hon. Dr. Monica Musenero, Minister in Charge of Science, Technology, and Innovation, Office of the President, Republic of Uganda was the special guest of honour. The webinar participants represented government, private sector, civil society, academia, and development partners from such countries as Nigeria, Egypt, Ghana, South Africa, and Uganda.

<https://ingsa.org/resources/ingsa-africa-consensus-study/>



## **Call for Articles and Project Concept Notes on science advice to governments in Africa.**

In fulfilment of its aspiration to ignite conversations about evidence-based science advice to governments, INGSA-Africa launched a competition for the writing of articles and project concept notes on science advice to governments in Africa in 2019 (extended to 2020). This competition was open to all African scientists, professionals, and policy makers who registered on the INGSA website, and most importantly those that participated in INGSA science advice workshops that were held in Africa such as in Hermanus (2016), Dakar (2017), Abuja (2017), Pretoria (2018), Kigali (2018) and Yaoundé (2019). Prizes of \$300 and a diploma each for the 10 best articles and \$500 and a diploma each for the 5 best concepts were at stake. Four out of five submissions for each category were adjudged winners by an evaluation sub-committee of the INGSA-Africa Steering Committee and duly awarded cash prizes and diplomas.

## **Call for Academic and Technical papers on science advice in emergencies.**

INGSA-Africa launched a call for academic and technical papers on science advice in emergencies in 2021, open to scientists across the African continent who are 40 years of age or younger. The paper which must be accepted for publication or already published within the last three years should relate directly to science advice in emergencies and could be in English or French. There were two winners. One of the awardees availed herself of the opportunity to be partly sponsored, with the prize money of €300, to present her paper at an international conference in Cairo, Egypt<sup>3</sup>.

## **Projects and Programs**

### **COVID-19 Africa Rapid Grant Fund (CARGF) Project on Science Engagement: Science Advisers Strand**

With the intention to support Africa's response to COVID-19 and under the auspices of the Science Granting Councils Initiative (SGCI), the NRF South Africa, IDRC, Sida, DFID, United Kingdom Research and Innovation (UKRI) through the Newton Fund, South Africa's Department of Science and Innovation (DSI), Fonds de Recherche du Québec (FRQ), SGCI participating councils, and additional partners collaborated to implement a Africa Rapid Grant Fund to address research questions and implement

<https://ingsa.org/news/africa-2021-papers/>

science engagement activities associated with COVID-19. The Rapid Grant Fund supported African national academies of science, African national young academies of science, and INGSA-Africa to provide rapid science advice in support of regional and continental responses to COVID-19.

Under the Science Engagement: Science Advisers Strand of the Rapid Grant, INGSA-Africa (in collaboration with NASAC), applied for and won a \$50,000 grant to undertake a project on **Enhancing the capacity of academies of science in Africa to provide rapid science advice in emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic and other emerging infectious diseases.**

The project activities, which ran from March 2022 to September 2023, included:

- Development and administration of an online portal on NASAC's website
- Hosting tele-convenings to provide and inform the public on the latest scientific evidence on COVID-19
- Virtual capacity enhancing workshops
- Physical capacity enhancing workshops
- A continental scoping physical capacity enhancing workshop

As programmed:

- The online portal was successfully created and running on the NASAC website<sup>4</sup>. This portal aims to collect policy relevant publications from researchers in Africa, especially, but not restricted to the COVID 19 pandemic, the purpose of which is to offer rapid science advice.
- Virtual capacity enhancing workshops have been successfully held in the 5 sub-regions of the continent as follows: East Africa (24 October 2022); North Africa (25 October 2022); Southern Africa (26 October 2022); West Africa (27 October 2022); and Central Africa (28 October 2022) with an array of keynote speakers and panelists from the various sub-regions of the continent as well as other parts of the world and knowledgeable in the subject of science advice across various spheres.
- Two physical sub-regional capacity enhancing workshops for academies of science in Africa in providing rapid science advice in emergencies have been successfully held: one in Uganda (19 June 2023) as part of a 2-day Meeting of the Committee on Climate Change Community Ownership organized by the Uganda National Academy of Sciences (UNAS) and the other during a session on Science Advice and Science Diplomacy, organized by NASAC as part of the Africa Biennial Biosciences Communication (ABBC 2023) Symposium in Nairobi, Kenya (22 – 25 August 2023)

- The Continental Scoping Physical Capacity Enhancing Workshop was held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of the Annual Meeting of African Science Academies (AMASA)-2022 in Nairobi, Kenya from 28-30 November 2022, under the umbrella of NASAC.

By the time of actual inception of the project in March 2022, hosting tele-convenings to provide and inform the public on the latest scientific evidence on COVID-19 had become redundant since the COVID-19 pandemic had abated substantially.

## ENHANCING THE CAPACITY OF ACADEMIES OF SCIENCE IN AFRICA TO PROVIDE RAPID SCIENCE ADVICE IN EMERGENCIES SUCH AS THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND OTHER EMERGING INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Principal Investigator: Dr Mobolaji Oladoyin Odubanjo  
(Chair, INGS-Africa Steering Committee/Executive Secretary, Nigerian Academy of Science (NAS))



### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The unexpected emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic caught many governments unaware, resulting in various knee-jerk measures to contain the pandemic and arrest the increasing number of cases and deaths. More than ever, the reliance on evidence-informed scientific advice for rolling out appropriate policies to mitigate the effects of this pandemic as well as any such emergency crisis in the future became critical. With the \$50,000 CARGF funding, the Africa Chapter of the International Network for Governmental Science Advice (INGSA-Africa), in collaboration with the Network of African Science Academies (NASAC) and the Nigerian Academy of Science (NAS), undertook this project to enhance the capacity of academies of science in Africa to provide science advice in support of regional continental responses to COVID-19 and other emerging infectious diseases.

### PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- Development and administration of INGS-Africa Online Portal
- Virtual Capacity Enhancing Workshops
- Physical Capacity Enhancing Workshops
- Continental scoping physical capacity enhancing workshop

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT: COVID-19 AFRICA RAPID GRANT FUND (CARGF)

### RESULTS/ FINDINGS

#### Online Portal

-Created on NASAC website as "Publications Portal"  
-Aims to collect policy-relevant publications from researchers in Africa, especially about, but not restricted to the Covid 19 pandemic, to offer rapid science advice.

#### Virtual Capacity Enhancement Workshops

**Theme: The challenge of providing science advice, post COVID-19**

- Held in five sub-regions (East, North, Southern, West, Central): 24 - 28 October 2022)
- One keynote speaker and two panelists
- Keynote Address and Panel discussion



Prof Dr Abhi Veerakumarasivam (Chair, INGS-Asia)

Dr Sabrina Bakeera-Kitaka (Snr Lect., Makerere Univ., Uganda)



Prof David Dodoo-Arhin (Dir. Institute of Applied Science and Technology, Univ. of Ghana, Legon, Ghana)

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ESTABLISHING EFFECTIVE AND TRUSTWORTHY SCIENCE ADVISORY PROCESSES TO ENHANCE POLICYMAKING ON THE CONTINENT

- Empowering academies of science as think-tanks, especially in developing countries
- Establishing capacity building programs to train scientists in effective communication skills
- Production of advice that is sound, unbiased and legitimate based on the best available scientific evidence and information

### Physical Capacity Enhancing Workshops

- Two held
- 4th Meeting of UNAS Committee on Climate Change Community Ownership, Kampala, Uganda (19-20 June, 2023)
- Keynote address on Impact of Climate Change Emergencies on Agriculture: Implications for ESA Food Security (Dr Kalule Okello David (UNAS) and Principal Research Officer/Plant Breeder-Geneticist National Groundnuts Project Leader/Programme Leader Oil Crops Research NARO-NaSAARI, Soroti, Uganda)
- Learning collaborative- INGS-Africa Case Study- Republic of Estrele: Internal Displacement, Climate Change and Planning (Dr Richard L.K. Glover (IPO INGS-Africa) and Dr Shaheen Motola-Tanel (INGSA-Africa SC)
- Africa Biennial Biosciences Communication (ABBC 2023) Symposium Kenya (22-25 August 2023)

### Continental Scoping Physical Capacity Enhancing Workshop

- Held as part of Annual Meeting of African Science Academies (AMASA 2022) in Nairobi, Kenya (28-30 November 2022)
- Keynote Speaker - Prof Abhi Veerakumarasivam (Chair, INGS-Asia)
- Hypothetical Case Study - TANGERIA (based on gene-editing and climate response: science, values and politics)
- Facilitators: Dr M. Oladoyin Odubanjo (Chair, INGS-Africa); Mr Brock Musungwini (Member, INGS-Africa SC) and Dr Richard L.K. Glover (IPO, INGS-Africa)



### PROJECT OUTPUTS

- Online portal created as NASAC Publications Portal (<https://nasacscience.org/publications-portal-submission-form/>)
- Capacities of academies of science in Africa and other stakeholders enhanced in evidence-informed scientific advice during pandemics and emergencies

Options and recommendations proffered for establishing effective and trustworthy science advisory processes to enhance policymaking on the continent, post-COVID as well as during future emerging infectious diseases include:

- Provision of necessary institutional and logistical support with defined roles, responsibility, liability and expertise;
- Involvement of relevant actors, scientists and policymakers with a transparent process and participation with clear definition of conflict of interest;
- Production of advice that is sound, unbiased and legitimate based on the best available scientific evidence and information;
- Empowering academies of science as think-tanks, especially in developing countries;
- Appointment of science advisors in decision-making positions, as necessary;
- Establishment of capacity building programs to train scientists in effective communication skills.

### **Science Advice Skills Development Program (SASDP).**

This is the flagship mentorship program of INGSA-Africa to enhance the capacity of mid-career African scientists and researchers to effectively communicate their research results to influence policy. The programme is coordinated by Shaheen Motala-Timol, Sameh Soror and Richard Glover.

The inaugural program (SASDP-1) was run over a period of 3 months (14 September – 15 December 2022). It matched 10 mid-career scientists and researchers, from 8 African countries, with 10 mentors, from 8 different countries around the world. The program focused on the theme of Climate Change in Africa and selected participants with expertise related to climate change. The SASDP-1 officially concluded through a virtual closing workshop on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2022, where findings and outputs of the mentorship program were shared by the mentors while the mentors discussed their experience engaging with mentees. The program was earlier presented to representatives of the parent organisation, INGSA, at a workshop organized on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2022 as a side-event of the World Science Forum in Cape Town, South Africa<sup>8</sup>.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Cohort of the program (SASDP-2) which matched 14 mentees, from 6 African countries, with 14 mentors, from Africa and other parts of the world, commenced on the 25<sup>th</sup> of September 2023 with a virtual introductory workshop. The six-month program ended on the 24<sup>th</sup> of March 2024, with a closing workshop on the 4<sup>th</sup> of April 2024.



## **The Global Indigenous Youth Summit on Climate Change (GIYSCC).**

One of the key offshoots of the SASDP that emerged from a mentor-mentee collaboration is the Global Indigenous Youth Summit on Climate Change (GIYSCC). This event is a “virtual dialogue by, for and among Indigenous youth with global inclusion” – circling the Earth across three 8-hour time zones in 24 hours (00:00-24:00 GMT) on the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples. The GIYSCC was inaugurated on 9 August 2023 (GIYSCC-2023), showcasing the power of youth voices in driving global discourse towards tangible action on a planetary scale<sup>6</sup>. The event had 1300+ registrants from 112 nations across more than 88 languages, and partners globally, and was hosted by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) with Science Diplomacy Center™ coordination. In view of dissemination and implementation, the GIYSCC legacy is further reflected by the invited 2023 Nature Commentary, crafted by the GIYSCC Indigenous Youth Leaders that **Indigenous Youth Must Be at the Forefront of Climate Diplomacy**<sup>7</sup>

A second summit (GIYSCC-2024) is being planned as an outcome of the mentor-mentee activities of Paul Berkman and Devina Lobine under the second cohort of the SASDP, for 9<sup>th</sup> August 2024. GIYSCC-2024 will be hosted by Future Earth, with coordination by the Science Diplomacy Center™ and in collaboration of INGSA-Africa SASDP and Indigenous Youth Leaders. Potential partners are the Global Young Academy (GYA) and the International Science Council (ISC).

## **Collaborative and Expansion Activities**

**Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Future Africa (FA) at the University of Pretoria, South Africa.** This MOA envisages FA to host INGSA-Africa over two years (2023 - 2024) and support it with the following:

- Provide working space for INGSA-Africa Regional Programme Office
- Provide financial administration of ISC grant of Euro15,000 per year to INGSA-Africa
- Support in fundraising efforts for INGSA-Africa activities

## **CONCLUSION**

INGSA-Africa has blazed the trail, not only as the first regional chapter of INGSA, but also in creating and implementing several programs to increase the awareness of science advice in Africa, to enhance the capacity of both scientists and policymakers in science advice, as well as grow the community of science advice practitioners in Africa.

<https://unitar.org/sustainable-development-goals/multilateral-diplomacy/our-portfolio/global-indigenous-youth-summit-climate-change-2023>

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-023-02480-1>



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