



**Natural and Human-Induced Hazards and Disasters Consortium Project Proposals
Consolidation Workshop
Yamoussoukro, Ivory Coast
2 – 4 December 2014**

REPORT

Executive Summary

Five core scientists of the Hazards and Disasters Consortium and the Programme Specialist responsible for the Hazards and Disasters Science Plan of ICSU ROA participated in a 3-day project proposal consolidation workshop in Yamoussoukro, Ivory Coast from 2 to 4 December, 2014. The workshop formed part of the activities of the 15th International Conference on Science and Technology (QIST) organised by the Directorate-General of Scientific Research and Technological Innovation (Department of Scientific Research and Technological Innovation) of the Ivory Coast under the broad theme “Future Earth”.

Prior to leaving for the workshop in Yamoussoukro, the scientists and Programme Specialist participated in the Open-Day activities of the QIST at the Bingerville Campus of the Université Felix Houphouët Boigny (UFHB), Abidjan which provided the opportunity for an exposition on the programmes and activities of ICSU ROA and interaction between consortium members and a cross-section of the scientific community of the Ivory Coast.

During the workshop, participants reviewed the existing project proposals in the sub-thematic areas of geological and hydrometeorological hazards, agreed on areas of concentration to be integrated with vulnerability and risk assessment studies, and packaged under one broad title “Resilience to hazards and disasters in Africa” to be submitted in response to the Sida Grant call. Definite timelines were set to achieve this goal.

Background and Objective of the Workshop

The International Council for Science, Regional Office for Africa (ICSU-ROA) hazards and disasters research program is a regional scientific initiative that aims to provide science based solutions to combat the risks posed by hazards and disasters in Sub Saharan Africa (SSA). In its initial phase, the initiative drafted a science plan¹, which proposed the establishment of a research, capacity building and outreach programme aimed at reducing the risk of disasters and for increasing resilience. The main focus of the proposal, as outlined in the science plan,

is the development of a truly regional and inter-disciplinary approach to the understanding, prediction, assessment and mitigation of hazards and disasters, through the collaborative effort of the African scientific community that will enable science to benefit society. Several workshops have been held over the years to attain this goal, the last being in Pretoria in September 2013 aimed at producing a proposal on “Reducing risk to natural and human-induced hazards and disasters in sub-Saharan Africa” that integrated three research components namely, a) reducing risk from geo-hazards such as earthquakes, volcanoes, and landslides, b) reducing risk from hydro-meteorological hazards such as floods, droughts and fires, and c) an integrated assessment of vulnerabilities to these hazards and disasters. This proposal was to initially target the call from the Sida Grant proposal being developed by ICSU, but that could also be modified appropriately to meet the requirements of other calls as and when they came.

With the Sida Grant Call soon to come out, the main objective of the Yamoussoukro workshop was to discuss and agree on the content of the consolidated proposal on “Reducing risk to natural and human-induced hazards and disasters in sub-Saharan Africa” and set definite timelines for coming out with same in readiness for submission to grant calls, particularly the Sida Grant Call. It was also to finalize arrangements for the publication of the book on hazards and disasters. Another objective of the workshop was to set into motion modalities for the review of the science plan on hazards and disasters to reflect emerging trends.

¹<http://www.icsu.org/africa/publications/reports-and-reviews/icsu-roa-science-plan-on-hazards-disasters/roa-science-plan-on-hazards>

Opening

Opening the workshop on behalf of the chair of presidents of universities in the Ivory Coast, and the Ivorian Government, Prof. Adama Coulibaly, President of Péléforo Gon Coulibaly University, Korhogo said the Ivory Coast was honoured by the visit and participation of the consortium members in the QIST. He indicated that the long-standing association of Prof. Konare with ICSU was better highlighted by the interaction with the consortium members and the exposition on ICSU’s programmes activities during the opening ceremony of the QIST. This has better informed and enkindled the interest of the government and scientific community of the Ivory Coast in the activities of ICSU, prompting the Director of Cabinet of the Ministry of Scientific Research to call for further support for Prof. Konare’s involvement with ICSU. While wishing the meeting well, he hoped the network being developed between ICSU and Ivorian scientists will take on board the interest of Ivorian institutions as well, to benefit all.

In his response, Prof. Mulugeta, the Consortium Leader expressed appreciation to the government of the Ivory Coast and Prof. Konare in particular for this generous gesture of hosting the workshop, since funding for hosting African workshops usually comes from outside, never from Africa. He commended the Ivory Coast for taking this impressive lead for other African countries to follow. Prof. Mulugeta also commended the QIST programme, particularly its involvement of young school children.

Overview of workshop objectives

Consortium leader Prof. Mulugeta, in his overview of the objectives of the workshop made particular reference to the need to address evolving epidemics like Ebola on the continent. He therefore underscored the importance of including health professionals in the consortium to provide this missing link. He said the Yamoussoukro workshop should set the mode of operation of the consortium for the years to come. He lamented the lack of commitment on the part of some experts from the hydrometeorological hazards group. Prof. Mulugeta called for an enhanced networking to yield concrete outputs which should not only be proposals but activities to show to funders. This, he said, could be achieved through facilitating and implementing research proposals. He stressed the need to reduce focus on foreign donors who have strings attached to their funding packages and seek funding from African nations as well, for project proposals.

Updates on follow-up activities and meetings

Respective individuals gave updates on follow-up activities and meetings attended on behalf of the consortium over the period. The included:

- i) The IRDR Conference 2014 on **Integrated disaster risk science: A tool for sustainability** and The 11th Scientific Committee Meeting of IRDR (Beijing, China, 7th to 11th June 2014)- reported by Prof. S. Ayonghe
- ii) 1st and 2nd Preparatory Meetings (Prep Com 1 and 2) of the World Congress on Disaster Risk Research (WCDRR) (Geneva, Switzerland, 14-15 July and 17-18 November, 2014)-reported by Profs. Mulugeta and Ayonghe
- iii) Swedish/Africa Consortium-building Workshop, (Uppsala, 31 October, 2014)- reported by Prof. Mulugeta
- iv) Consultative Meeting of IRDR National Committees (London, UK, 11-12 November, 2014)-reported by Prof. Mulugeta
- v) Africa Array Programme –(Impending Workshop on Seismology- Johannesburg, January 2015)-reported by Prof. Durrheim

Key recommendations and outcomes

Participants discussed the objectives of the current workshop against the recommendations of the last workshop held in Pretoria as well as updates on the follow-up activities and meetings involving individual consortium members and made the following recommendations:

1. Project proposals to be in one package titled “Resilience to hazards and disasters in Africa” but with two separate components, Geohazards and Hydrometeorological hazards, integrated with vulnerability risk assessment and having separate budgets. The proposals will be developed in line with the Science Plans of the other ICSU Regional Offices and Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (IRDR). This is necessary to avoid duplication of efforts, as well as build synergies among the different actors.
2. Proposals in response to the Sida Grant, will tackle Earthquakes and Volcanoes (Geohazards) with a focus on Mount Cameroon, but involving scientists from other

- African countries where volcanic eruptions pose a risk; and Droughts and Floods (Hydrometeorological hazards) with a focus on the Volta River basin, but involving scientists from other African countries where flooding poses a risk.
3. Proposals to be developed on landslides and fires for future calls
 4. Proposals are to be inter/multi-disciplinary and regional in character and streamlined according to the budgets
 5. Components shall be harmonised, detailing counterpart support and sustainability measures
 6. First version of proposals to reach consortium leader-Prof. Mulugeta mid-January
 7. Final version to reach ICSU ROA latest end of February
 8. Consortium's activities should be linked up with the Future Earth Initiative to take advantage of the big grants that will be made available under this initiative in coming years.
 9. Participants called on ICSU ROA to intensify engagement with African governments and development agencies such as the AfDB to see the need to support activities of scientists financially and materially and reduce dependence on external funding which is often not reliable and comes with strings attached.
 10. Participants also realised the potential of Francophone countries in supporting scientific research on the continent, the Ivory Coast being an example where the autonomy enjoyed by its universities and research institutions provides an enabling environment for collaborative research activities and called for enhanced networking among African scientists to harness all potentials on the continent.
 11. Participants lauded the scientific research agenda of the Ivory Coast as outlined for the 15th International Conference on Science and Technologies (QIST) under the broad theme "Future Earth" noting that the country is also planning a workshop on Future Earth next year. They therefore recommended that the Ivory Coast be considered one of the potential candidates in the ongoing search for a regional hub for Future Earth in Africa outside the MENA region.
 12. Furthermore, at the meeting it was agreed that plans for developing and sustaining active networks with experts, regular meetings and workshops as well as databases will be detailed, as part of the consortium activities. It is envisioned that a Steering Committee, comprising experts from the region and Swedish Scientists will guide and support ICSU-ROA in managing the regional programme and oversee its activities.

Science Plan Review

The draft list of proposed participants in the science plan review activity was beefed-up with the addition of three names:

- a) Prof. Deolall Daby, a health professional from the University of Mauritius who was part of the original team of authors
- b) Prof. Jean-Jacques Kouame, a social scientist from the Ivory Coast
- c) Prof. Emmanuel Yenshu Vubo, a sociologist from Cameroon

Prof. Ray Durrheim also offered to solicit the contacts of some more health professionals from the Medicin sans Frontieres group to augment the list.

The consolidated list is to be compiled by the Programme Specialist and sent through to the Consortium Leader by the end of December 2014. The latter is to initiate the electronic review process subsequently until the physical meeting in May or June.

Book Project

The last two chapters are being reviewed for publication to start.

Wrap-up and Closing

Prof. Konare expressed his delight at hosting his colleague consortium members and was happy that the objectives of the workshop had largely been realised as a group, giving him personally, a clearer insight into the way forward. He intimated that his government had backed him to host the workshop, having seen it as worthwhile and beneficial and expressed the readiness of his colleagues in Ivorian universities to collaborate in ICSU activities.

Prof Mulugeta the Consortium Leader once again expressed his personal appreciation and on behalf of the consortium to Prof Konare. He posited that it was a positive step to have support from an African government for the consortium's activities for science to take root in Africa and translate into the 10-year Future Earth Initiative.

At the end of the workshop, the participants visited the three National Polytechnique Institutes of the Ivory Coast to familiarise themselves with the programmes of these institutes. On the way back to Abidjan on 5 December, they were guests of honour at a half-day exposition on activities of the Geophysical Station of LAMTO to students of technical institutions and pupils of elementary schools. On 6 December team returned to Abidjan and attended an exhibition on the industrialisation of research and technology and a ceremony to honour leading innovators held at the University of Nangui Abrogoua.