

Communiqué
African Science, Technology & Innovation Indicators (ASTII) Initiative
Workshop
Release of the African Innovation Outlook 2010 and Launch of ASTII
Phase 2
Addis-Ababa/Ethiopia: 23-25 May 2011

1. Participants from 21 African countries including Permanent Secretaries responsible for Science and Technology, Heads of National Statistical Offices and several international organisations, met for the release of the African Innovation Outlook 2010 and the launch of the second phase of the African Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (ASTII) Initiative. They discussed among other things:
 - a. The outcomes of the first phase of the ASTII Initiative and lessons learned
 - b. Sustainability of the ASTII Initiative
 - c. A road map for Phase 2 and the scaling up of the initiative

2. The meeting noted:
 - a. The significance and role of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for Africa's development and the need for increased investment by African countries in STI.
 - b. That the ASTII Initiative is a flagship programme developed in accordance with the Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA). The CPA was endorsed in 2005 by the African Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology (AMCOST) as the guiding framework for Africa's development in science.
 - c. That the overall goal of ASTII is to contribute to improving the quality of STI policies at national, regional and continental level by strengthening Africa's capacity to develop and use STI indicators
 - d. That the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency is working closely with the African Union through the Directorate for Human Resources Science and Technology in delivery of the ASTII Initiative

3. The meeting took stock of the successes of ASTII:
 - a. The establishment of Focal Points to spearhead the production of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) indicators at national level
 - b. Capacity building in STI data collection
 - c. The publication of the African Innovation Outlook (AIO) 2010
 - d. The development of the ASTII information System (web platform) which will be used during Phase 2

4. The meeting recognised that the following challenges had been encountered in the implementation of ASTII Phase 1:
 - a. Limited human capacity at national level to conduct R&D and innovation surveys, analyze the results and sustain the production and dissemination of reliable, relevant and timely STI statistics
 - b. Limited political & civic buy-in
 - c. The absence of national budget-lines which may affect the sustainability of regular R&D and Innovation data being produced by African countries and institutions.
5. As a result of the deliberations the meeting made the following recommendations:
 - a. Capacity building and well documented guidelines to enable the production of high quality STI statistics and their analysis and use to inform policy making needs to be enhanced.
 - b. Awareness-raising and dissemination of STI information and the results of the ASTII surveys should be conducted at national, regional and continental levels to ensure that the data is able to influence and inform policy making.
 - c. Participating countries should include ASTII activities in the budget lines of the relevant ministries and statistical offices to assure sustainability.
 - d. Participating countries should demonstrate ownership of the ASTII initiative and ASTII activities in Phase 2 should be conducted using cost-sharing principles between the NEPAD Agency and participating countries.
 - e. Participating countries should put in place proper coordination mechanisms between the Ministries responsible for Science and Technology, the National Statistical Offices and other relevant stakeholder institutions.
 - f. In implementing ASTII Phase 2 and beyond, the NEPAD Agency should work towards strengthening regional integration by working with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the African Observatory on Science Technology and Innovation (AOSTI).
6. The meeting acknowledged the importance of linkages with other initiatives based on the presentations from other STI projects and initiatives.
7. The meeting acknowledged the support of the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) and other partners in the ASTII Initiative.

The meeting concluded with adoption of this communiqué at 14:20 on 25th May 2011.