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TRANSFORMING THE RESEARCH FOR DEVELOPMENT ECOSYSTEM

ReImagining the ReSearch for DEvelopment Landscape of WEst and Central Africa for Equitable and Transformative Impact (RISE-WECA)

A REGIONAL VISION, STRATEGIC OPTIONS, AND STORIES OF CHANGE FOR WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ATPS – African Technology Policy Studies Network
AWARD – African Women in Agricultural Research and Development
AAU – Association of African Universities
CAMES – African and Malagasy Council for Higher Education (Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Supérieur)
CcHub – Co-Creation Hub
CORAF – West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development
CRIIC – Centre de Recherche en Innovation et Création (Cameroon)*
CERDAS – Centre de Recherche et de Développement Agricole et Social (DRC)*
CBO – Community-Based Organization
DRC – Democratic Republic of Congo
ECOWAS – Economic Community of West African States
FAIR – Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable (data principles)
FARA – Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
FBO – Faith-Based Organization
FONSTI – National Fund for Science, Technology and Innovation (Côte d'Ivoire)
IDRC – International Development Research Centre
ICT – Information and Communication Technology
IGFs – Internally Generated Funds
IMANI – IMANI Center for Policy and Education (Ghana)
IP – Intellectual Property
MEL – Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MELR – Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, and Reporting
NGO – Non-Governmental Organization
NSTIC – National Science, Technology, and Innovation Council (Sierra Leone)
PASRES – Programme d'Appui Stratégique à la Recherche Scientifique (Côte d'Ivoire)
PPP – Public–Private Partnership
PWDs – Persons with Disabilities
R&D – Research and Development
R4D – Research for Development
REN – Research and Education Network
RUFORUM – Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture
TOUMI Foundation – Toumi Foundation for Social and Economic Innovation (Central Africa)*
TETFund – Tertiary Education Trust Fund (Nigeria)
UCAD – Université Cheikh Anta Diop (Senegal)
UbuntuNet – UbuntuNet Alliance for Research and Education Networking
WACREN – West and Central African Research and Education Network

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1. Context

The Regional Vision and Strategic Options for West and Central Africa form part of a broader global initiative titled: “Transforming the Research for Development Ecosystem in the Global South”. This initiative is supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). It is a collective effort encompassing five regional processes running in parallel across different regions. The West and Central Africa component is led by the African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS). The initiative aligns closely with the Science Granting Councils Initiative's (SGCI) ongoing mission to strengthen science systems across Africa. The process began with a landscape study that examined the current state of the research ecosystem in the region through desk reviews, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions. The landscape study explored key stakeholders, funding structures, ideas, innovations, and initiatives, and identified barriers and enablers to transformative research. The study framework builds on the four core pillars established in IDRC's research system transformation foresight initiative (Hichert, 2024): equitable, open, capable, and connected research systems, with the fifth pillar, "regulated research systems," which is introduced by the ATPS to address specific governance and regulatory contexts of West and Central Africa. The study was conducted in eight countries: five (5) countries from West Africa- Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Senegal and three (3) countries- Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Congo, and Cameroon from Central Africa. Insights from the landscape study was later validated and a consolidated report produced.

The landscape study revealed multiple actors playing key roles in transformation including national governments through its relevant ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs), specifically in research funding and infrastructure provisions, setting research agendas and regulatory frameworks; research institutions, universities and think tanks that produce knowledge and forge national and international collaborations; development partners and international donors that provide research funding and often influence research priorities; civil society organizations (CSOs) playing critical roles in promoting equity, transparency, and grassroots inclusion; the private sector, although with low participation, which supports the ecosystem through knowledge valorization, investments and sometimes funding of research where they have peculiar interests. Local communities contribute minimally, mainly through engagement with researchers and CSOs, while the media provide platforms for actor engagement. However, barriers persist, including governance and institutional incoherence, research funding constraints, infrastructure and digital gaps, and fragmented and weak networks among the actors.

The consultations provided an opportunity for a comparative analysis of actor dynamics in Central and West Africa, highlighting both structural similarities, such as donor dependency, underfunded institutions, and limited private sector engagement, as well as systemic differences in governance maturity, coordination, and institutional integration. While both regions aspire to build equitable, open, capable, and regulated research ecosystems, West Africa is further along the path, supported by more coherent policies, functional funding mechanisms, and diversified actor engagement. In contrast, Central Africa continues to grapple with fragmentation, limited autonomy, and exclusionary governance structures, despite strong local interest and innovative potential.

2. Vision for the Research System in West and Central Africa

The further consultations across West and Central Africa produced a clear and ambitious shared vision on what the future of the region’s research systems must become. Despite contextual differences and varying

levels of research maturity, participants reached consensus on a future in which research is equitable, connected, impact-driven, and fully embedded in the region's development agenda. While the consultation process covered a sample of countries, participants emphasized that the resulting vision broadly reflects regional aspirations, while recognizing that some countries, particularly in Central Africa, face deeper structural gaps that require targeted support.

2.1. Vision Statement: A Transformed Research Ecosystem by 2040

By 2040, West and Central Africa envision a fully integrated, well-funded, demand-driven, and socially responsive research ecosystem that is:

a) **Equitable:** Local communities, including marginalized groups such as women, youth, and persons with disabilities (PWDs), shape research priorities and benefit from outcomes. Research outputs directly improve lives, inform policy, strengthen resilience, and drive economic transformation across all sectors.
b) **Open:** Research cultures shift from "publish or perish" to "innovate, translate, and impact," ensuring that knowledge is used, not just produced.
c) **Capable:** Research institutions are well-resourced, interconnected, and globally competitive with modern infrastructure, digital tools, and skilled personnel. Innovations from agriculture, engineering, health, and ICT are widely adopted and scaled, supported by strong platforms for collaboration and commercialization in partnership with the private sector and SMEs.
d) **Connected:** Researchers and governments work as partners, not adversaries, sharing responsibility for national development. Universities become engines of innovation, working seamlessly with the private sector, and SMEs to co-create solutions, drive competitiveness, and create jobs. Cross-regional learning, especially between West and Central Africa, accelerates progress and reduces structural disparities.
e) **Regulated:** National regulatory bodies ensure quality, coordination, and ethical standards, while enabling flexible innovation pathways. Governments consistently integrate research into planning, budgeting, and decision-making, championing the use of evidence at all levels. Funding is sustainable, domestically driven, coordinated, and used effectively, rather than being fragmented or externally dictated.

This vision also reflects country-specific aspirations raised during national workshops, for example, Cameroon's ambition to become a regional hub for applied research, Ghana's emphasis on mentorship and domestic revenue generation through Internally Generated Funds (IGFs), and DRC's emphasis on supporting marginalized groups and strengthening research governance.

2.2. Key Attributes of the Future Research Ecosystem

a. ***Equitable Research Landscape:*** By 2040, the research ecosystem of West and Central Africa is inclusive, fair, and accessible. Women, youth, PWDs, smaller NGOs, and grassroots communities are active contributors, not bystanders. Indigenous knowledge is fully integrated into research ecosystems. Countries like the DRC emphasized prioritizing marginalized groups, while Ghana highlighted IGFs and broadened access through fee-paying initiatives and skills export.
b. ***Open Research and Knowledge-Sharing Culture:*** Stakeholders envision a region where data, publications, and methods are openly available through national and regional repositories, supported by FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable) data standards, interoperable databases,

and reduced publication barriers. This includes shared research directories, project registries, and user-friendly outreach products for grassroots communities.

c. ***Capable and Well-Resourced Institutions:*** By 2040, the region has modern laboratories, digital systems, high-quality training programs, and strong mentorship pipelines. Centers of excellence, robust HR systems, continuous professional development, and regional research exchanges produce a highly skilled workforce.
d. ***Connected and Collaborative Ecosystem****:* Participants envision a strong triple-helix model where academia, industry, and government co-create solutions. Multi-stakeholder networks, cross-border consortia, and platforms such as ATPS, FARA, CORAF, ECOWAS, WACREN, and Ubuntu Net form the backbone of regional cooperation. Shared equipment, joint calls, and mobility programs strengthen cohesion.
e. ***Robust Supportive Policy and Implementation Framework***: Stakeholders envision a future where supportive policies create an enabling environment in which co-created, impactful, and demand-driven research can thrive and sustainably drive national and regional development. Governments actively champion research by providing clear regulations and implementation frameworks, adequate domestic funding, and harmonized national agendas that unify actors across ministries, universities, industry, and communities.
f. ***Ethical and Trusted Research Environment*****:** A future where ethical review, data governance, Intellectual Property (IP) protection, and media accountability are harmonized and respected. Regulatory bodies function effectively, with robust oversight and transparent compliance mechanisms.
g. ***Sustainable Financing and Efficient Resource Flows:*** By 2040, research financing is domestically anchored, diversified, and accountable. Countries aspire to increased government allocations (e.g., Ghana's target of higher state funding), national research funds, research taxes, IGFs, and strong private-sector co-financing. Donor funds play a catalytic, not dominant, role.
h. ***Impact-Driven Research with Strong MELR Systems****:* Routine impact evaluations, evidence-to-policy pipelines, systems thinking, and open reporting system with practical societal impact.
i. ***Community and Cultural Integration:*** Research is grounded in society, with findings translated into local languages and disseminated through faith networks, traditional leaders, media, and community dialogues. Citizen science and local leadership structures support uptake.
j. ***Vibrant Innovation and Commercialization Pipeline****:* Industry and universities co-create innovations, supported by innovation hubs, incubators, accelerators, technology-transfer offices, and strong Public-private partnership models. Research becomes a driver of industrial growth, job creation, and regional competitiveness.
k. ***Responsible Digital and AI Governance:*** Stakeholders emphasized a future where digital transformation and AI are harnessed responsibly, supported by national data repositories, secure infrastructure, high-speed connectivity, and AI ethics frameworks.
l. ***Sector-Aligned Research for Development:*** Research is embedded within health, agriculture, engineering, climate, ICT, and other sector strategies, resulting in applied innovations that are adopted and scaled.
m. ***Regional Coordination and Learning****:* The region operates through harmonized standards, joint funding calls, regional hubs, and shared infrastructure. Lessons from West Africa are intentionally designed to support capacity growth in Central Africa.

To provide a clear and holistic overview of the future research ecosystem envisioned by stakeholders, Figure 1 presents a synthesized conceptual diagram that organizes the 12 key attributes into four interconnected

thematic quadrants. This circular framework highlights the balanced, interdependent nature of transformation, with equity and people-centered research at the core, supported by strong knowledge, impact and alignment, robust institutions, ethics and governance, and dynamic collaborations, innovation and connectivity. The diagram illustrates how these elements reinforce one another to create a fully integrated, inclusive, and impact-driven R4D system by 2040.

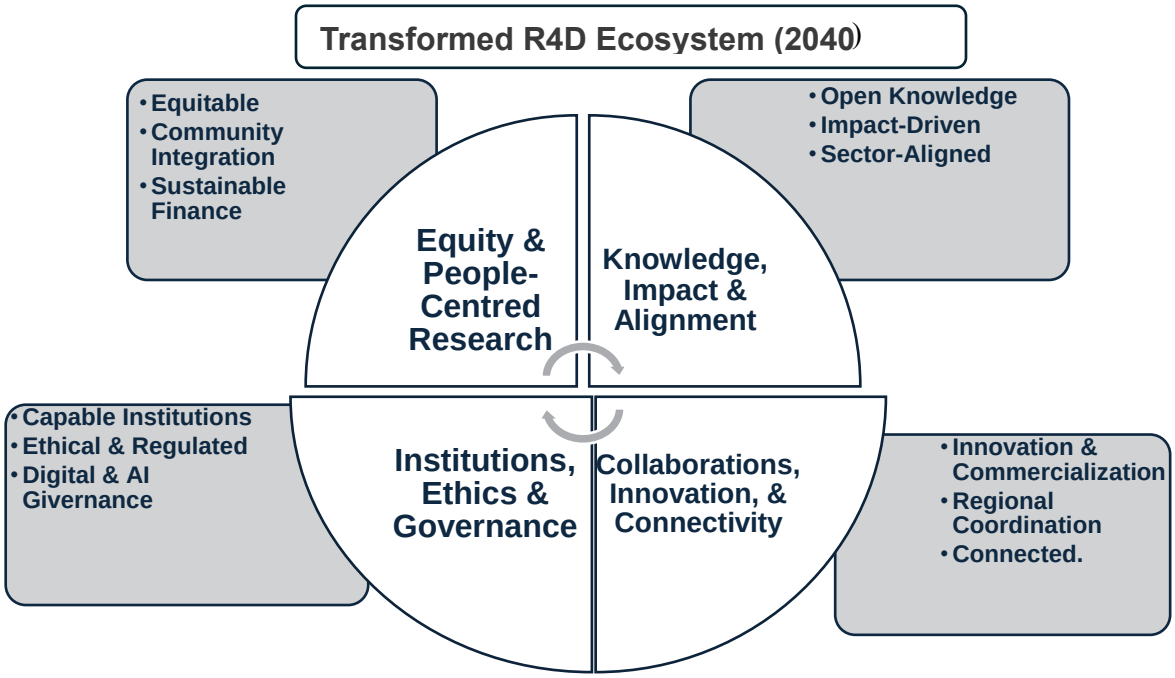

Figure 1: The 12 Attributes of the Transformed Research Ecosystem for West and Central Africa by 2040

2.3. Possible Scenarios Emerging from the development of the Attributes of the future Research Systems

The following scenarios illustrate plausible futures for research and innovation in West and Central Africa. They demonstrate how strategic investment today can unlock long-term impact, accelerate regional integration, and generate measurable returns for communities, governments, and development partners.

Scenario 1: A Collaborative Innovation Region*:* Countries across West and Central Africa operate as a connected research bloc. Institutions share infrastructure, data, and expertise, enabling faster breakthroughs and coordinated action on regional priorities. Joint platforms support cross-border commercialization and technology transfer, strengthening the region's collective competitiveness.

Scenario 2: A Demand-Driven Research and Innovation Region: Governments, the private sector, and communities jointly define research priorities. Institutions consistently deliver solutions that translate into products, policies, and services that improve livelihoods. Research becomes tightly aligned with market needs and national development agendas, ensuring relevance and sustainability.

Scenario 3: A Digitally Enabled Research Region*:* Artificial intelligence, digital repositories, interoperable systems, and high-speed networks power world-class research. Seamless digital connectivity accelerates knowledge sharing, reduces duplication, and opens new opportunities for remote collaboration, open science, and real-time decision-making.

Scenario 4: A Community-Rooted Knowledge Region: Religious, traditional, and community leaders act as trusted knowledge brokers in the region. Their engagement ensures the social acceptance, cultural relevance, and grassroots adoption of innovations. This model strengthens social cohesion and bridges the gap between scientific discovery and community practice.

Scenario 5: A Resilient and Adaptive Research Region: Research systems develop the ability to rapidly respond to global challenges including climate shocks, health emergencies, and economic disruptions. Strong local capacity, early-warning tools, and coordinated preparedness measures enable institutions to mobilize evidence and innovations that protect lives, safeguard livelihoods, and reduce crisis-related losses.

Scenario 7: A Gender-Transformative Research Region: Women, girls, and youth participate and lead at all levels of the research and innovation ecosystem. Young researchers and entrepreneurs fuel the region's innovation pipeline.

Scenario 9: A Research Commercialization and Enterprise Region: West and Central African universities and research institutions become engines of economic transformation. Patenting, licensing, and spin-off companies generate revenue, create jobs, and expand local manufacturing capacity.

Scenario 10: A Harmonized Policy and Funding Region: Countries adopt coordinated policies, shared standards, and aligned research funding mechanisms. Pooled financing reduces fragmentation, drives efficiency, and strengthens the region's ability to mobilize and manage large-scale investments. This scenario offers donors a clear pathway for achieving regional coherence and high returns on investment.

2.4. Values and Drivers of Change Identified by Participants

The stakeholder groups articulated a shared set of values that will anchor long-term transformation of the research and innovation ecosystem in West and Central Africa. The following values were identified as the core drivers for building a responsive, inclusive, and sustainable research ecosystem in the region:

a) Equity and Inclusion: Ensuring fair access and participation of women, youth, and marginalized groups as a foundation for legitimacy, social justice, and stronger development outcomes.

b) National Ownership: Strengthening domestic leadership, financing, and institutional commitment to reduce dependence on external support and increase sustainability.

c) Collaboration and Trust: Breaking down institutional silos and engaging coordinated action, shared learning, and mutual accountability across countries and sectors.

d) Accountability and Transparency: Promoting open governance, financial oversight, and performance-based systems to build confidence among funders and citizens.

e) Evidence-informed Decision-making: Embedding research and data into policy, planning, and investment processes at all levels of government.

f) Youth Empowerment and Mentorship: Empowering the next generation of researchers, innovators, and knowledge leaders through mentorship, training, and meaningful opportunities.

g) Ethical and Responsible Digital Innovation: Leveraging digital tools and AI in ways that protect privacy, uphold data rights, and ensure fairness.

h) Community Participation and Cultural Alignment: Engaging traditional, religious, and community leaders to enhance the relevance and uptake of innovations at the grassroots.

3. Strategic Options for Achieving the Regional Research Vision

To realize the shared 2040 vision of a transformed, equitable, open, capable, connected, and regulated research ecosystem and to operationalize the 12 key attributes (as synthesized in Figure 1) and the core values (equity and inclusion, national ownership, collaboration and trust, accountability and transparency, evidence-informed decision-making, youth empowerment and mentorship, ethical and responsible digital innovation, and community participation and cultural alignment), stakeholders identified a set of practical, interconnected strategic options.

These options were derived directly from the landscape study insights, co-creation workshops, and the participatory consultations. They are organized into five thematic clusters that collectively address systemic barriers (e.g., governance fragmentation, funding constraints, capacity gaps, weak networks, and limited private-sector engagement) while advancing the desired attributes and embedding the guiding values. Together, they form a comprehensive pathway for transformation: (a) the clusters cover institutional/policy foundations, (b) enhanced connectivity and resourcing, (c) innovative practices for openness and impact, (d) human and infrastructural capacity, and (e) multi-stakeholder engagement. This categorization ensures holistic coverage of the five transformation pillars and the 12 attributes, with deliberate cross-linkages (e.g., ethical oversight in (a) supports the regulated pillar, while partnerships in (b) and (e) drive connectivity and collaboration). The options are mutually reinforcing and address all major changes identified by participants, though implementation will require adaptive prioritization based on national contexts.

The five thematic clusters below are therefore purposefully mapped to advance progress across all five transformation pillars, ensuring that the strategic options remain fully aligned with the participatory thematic framework used to synthesize stakeholder insights.

a. Institutional Reforms and Policy Directions

This cluster primarily advances the regulated and capable pillars, while reinforcing equity through stronger national ownership and governance.Stakeholders identified several system-level reforms needed to strengthen governance, accountability, and national ownership of research systems. These include:

1. Establishing national research coordination bodies or councils to harmonize priorities, policies, and investments across ministries and agencies.
2. Institutionalizing co-creation and participatory research processes that embed policymakers, communities, and end users throughout the research cycle.
3. Advocating stronger government leadership in implementing existing R&D commitments and integrating research outputs into national planning and development programs.

4. Strengthening national ownership through domestic resource mobilization and institutional reforms that reduce dependence on externally driven, and fragmented funding.
5. Standardizing ethical oversight through functional national ethics boards and regionally aligned data protection frameworks.

b. New Partnerships, Networks, and Funding Mechanisms

This cluster directly strengthens the connected pillar and supports open and equitable dimensions via diversified, inclusive networks and resource flows. The consultations revealed the importance of strengthening partnerships, diversifying networks and funding pathways. Key strategic options identified include:

1. Promoting cross-institutional, cross-country, and regional research networks to facilitate knowledge exchange and joint problem-solving.
2. Strengthening academia, industry, and government partnerships through innovation hubs, co-designed research agendas, and commercialization pathways.
3. Developing shared regional infrastructure-use frameworks and cross-country resource hubs to optimize research assets and reduce costs.
4. Establishing collaborative platforms and virtual R&D markets linking researchers, private sector actors, and development partners.
5. Enhancing collaboration between West and Central African countries through shared repositories, regional learning programs, and joint research platforms.

c. New Research and Science Practices.

This cluster focuses on the open pillar, with strong contributions to equitable (inclusive policies) and capable (ethical innovation) dimensions. The participants emphasized the need for more open, inclusive, and impactful research practices. Priority was placed on:

1. Creating national and regional open-access repositories, shared data platforms, and interoperable knowledge systems to ensure transparency and accessibility in the region.
2. Developing inclusive data-sharing policies enabling grassroots communities, civil society, and local actors to access simplified research outputs.
3. Integrating gender equity, youth inclusion, and mentorship into all research programs and institutional MEL frameworks.
4. Promoting responsible innovation through ethical AI use, digital governance, and capacity for emerging technologies.
5. Enhancing research evaluation through robust Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) systems that track uptake, measure impact, and support adaptive learning.

d. Capacity, Workforce, and Governance Innovations

This cluster underpins the capable pillar across human and institutional levels, while enabling regulated and connected progress through digital and ethical capacity building. Strengthening human and institutional capacities emerged as a cross-cutting priority during the consultations. Recommended actions include:

1. Institutionalizing continuous professional development for researchers, policymakers, and institutional leaders, including mentorship, leadership, and science communication skills.
2. Building capacity for AI-driven research, digital tools, data ethics, and emerging technologies.
3. Supporting early-career researchers through structured mentorship pipelines, opportunities for cross-border collaboration, and funded trainings.
4. Investing in modern infrastructure laboratories, power supply, digital connectivity, and high-speed internet to sustain world-class research and innovation.

e. Cross-Sector Platforms and Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration

This cluster drives the connected pillar through multi-stakeholder linkages, while embedding equity, openness, and community values in engagement mechanisms. Stakeholders emphasized the need for platforms that bring together government, academia, the private sector, and communities. The identified strategic options here include:

1. Establishing national and regional dialogue platforms that promote continuous engagement, joint problem-solving, and multidisciplinary research.
2. Creating shared national databases of researchers, institutions, and ongoing projects to enhance visibility, coordination, and transparency.
3. Ensuring community-driven research practices through grassroots collaboration, localized dissemination channels, and culturally relevant engagement mechanisms.
4. Strengthening communication pathways using faith-based, cultural, and local networks to accelerate the popularization of scientific research.

4. Approach and Methodology

The development of this regional vision followed a participatory and evidence-based process designed to ensure credibility, inclusivity, and practical relevance. The process began with a landscape study that mapped the current Research for Development (R4D) ecosystem across West and Central Africa through desk reviews, online surveys, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews with representatives from government, research institutions and universities, civil society, community-based organizations, youth-based organization, the private sector, the media, and regional organizations.

In total, the initiative directly engaged more than 230 individuals and organizations through the various consultation stages:

- Key Informant Interviews (KIIs): 30 reached per country across the 8 participating countries.
- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): Approximately 15 national participants per country in person, supplemented by international participants online.
- In-person co-creation and validation workshops:
    - Ghana (Accra): 21 participants (8 females, 13 males)
    - Democratic Republic of Congo (Kinshasa): 30 participants (7 females, 23 males)

- Wider regional consultative webinar: 68 participants (49 males, 19 females) representing Nigeria (10), Kenya (2), Senegal (7), Sierra Leone (11), Ghana (12), DRC (8), Côte d'Ivoire (11), Cameroon (4), and Republic of Congo (2).

Findings from the study informed the in-person co-creation and validation workshops held in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Kinshasa) and Ghana (Accra). These workshops brought together researchers, policymakers, private-sector innovators, community organizations, women's and youth networks, and persons with disabilities (see photos from the Physical workshops attached as **Annexes 1&2,** the complete list of participants in **Annexes 4&5,** and the programmes for the in-person consultations as **Annexes 6&7**). This was followed by an iterative process of data gathering and validation using the Three Horizons Framework. With this Framework, national stakeholders worked with the project team in an active and participatory manner to analyze the current research ecosystem, create the desired future of transformative research, and identify activities that are necessary to achieve the desired future while taking cognizance of the pockets of the future that are already found in the present/stories of change. This iterative process provided an avenue for national stakeholders to dive deep into their respective research ecosystems while building on their experiences to forge a common future of transformation for the entire region. Using the Three Horizon Framework, participants validated the landscape findings, identified barriers and enablers of transformative research, co-created visions and actions for future research systems. To broaden ownership and regional alignment, a virtual, wider consultative webinar was later convened, bringing together participants from the eight countries (Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Congo, and Cameroon) across West and Central Africa as well as participants from other parts of Africa. The screenshots from the webinar are attached as **Annex 3**. Through plenary discussions, breakout sessions, mentimeter surveys, and group presentations, this dialogue refined the collective vision, integrated country-specific priorities, and consolidated the regional perspective. Data from these engagements were synthesized through thematic analysis and organized around the five pillars of transformation: equitable, open, capable, connected, and regulated research systems. This provided a coherent framework for interpreting stakeholder insights and linking them to practical transformation pathways.

Despite the huge success of the consultation process in capturing diverse perspectives and building a shared regional vision, some challenges emerged that affected participations' engagement and the depth of discussions. Participants from minority groups, including PWDs, often felt less confident contributing during deliberations, with discussions sometimes dominated by representatives from government agencies and universities. Time constraints were also a limiting factor. The three-day in-person workshops allowed ample time for richer exchanges but were still clearly not long enough for participants to explore complex concepts such as the Three Horizons approach as fully as they wanted. Similarly, some government officers and academics were unable to stay throughout the sessions and some multitasked during proceedings. On the other hand, the virtual consultations provided a broader geographic reach but faced few limitations, including challenges with the concurrent translation, which occasionally reduced interactive engagement from French-speaking participants. Short webinar durations (within two hours) also restricted more deeper discussion. Despite these limitations, the combined methodology enabled the collection of a broad range of insights. It produced a vision that genuinely reflects regional diversity, lived realities, and shared aspirations for a more robust research system in West and Central Africa.

5. Reflections from the Regional Catalyst Team

The consultation process across West and Central Africa offered rich insights into both the aspirations and day-to-day realities shaping the region's research ecosystems. The Regional Catalyst Team observed some notable transformation catalysts operating at different levels, from continental actors such as the Association of African Universities (AAU), RUFORUM, AWARD, FARA, and CAMES, to national and regional institutions including TETFund, FONSTI, PASRES, IMANI, CcHub, UCAD in West Africa, and CERDAS, CRIIC, Politoscope, Peace Without Borders Consortium, and the TOUMI Foundation in Central Africa. These organizations provided practical grounding on what the future may look like across different contexts.

5.1. Lessons Learned

A key lesson from this journey is that meaningful transformation requires commitment, time, trust, and intentional engagements. Across nearly all consultations, stakeholders expressed a strong appetite for change. However, fragmented systems and poor institutional capacities frequently constrain progress. Well-facilitated dialogue spaces enabled participants to converge around shared priorities, including the need for sustainable financing, stronger coordination, and more balanced partnerships between governments, researchers, and communities. Crucially, the success of these initiatives hinges on proactive government action through clear, forward-looking policies. Without such policy frameworks, even well-designed strategies risk stagnation. Equally important is prioritizing the adoption and integration of new technologies, ensuring that research outputs are not only produced but effectively translated into practical, scalable innovations that drive development outcomes across the region. Another important insight is the need to ground the process in national realities. Differences between West and Central Africa, whether in network maturity, digital infrastructure, coordination mechanisms, or financing models, shape the types of transformations that are possible and the pace at which they can occur. Recognizing these variations ensured that the regional vision remained realistic, inclusive, and context-aware.

5.2. Recommendations for Continuing the Process in the region

To maintain momentum, countries will need structured ways to keep engaging, such as communities of practice, thematic working groups, and periodic cross-country learning exchanges. Several countries requested support in translating the 2040 vision into practical national roadmaps with clearly sequenced implementation steps. Strengthening regional platforms such as FARA, ATPS, CORAF, WACREN, and ECOWAS will be critical for anchoring long-term coordination, reducing duplication, and enhancing coherence between national and regional agendas. For donors, supporting these initiatives offers high value for money. Continued investment will catalyze stronger national research systems, enable cross-border knowledge exchange, and accelerate the translation of research into tangible development outcomes. By funding structured engagement, capacity-building, and regional coordination, donors can help ensure that their contributions yield measurable social, economic, and technological impact across West and Central Africa.

5.3. Challenges and Opportunities

The consultations highlighted persistent challenges across West and Central Africa, including inadequate infrastructure, limited domestic funding, weak monitoring and evaluation systems, siloed mandates, and low private-sector engagement. While these challenges are more pronounced in parts of Central Africa,

they are present throughout the region. Despite these constraints, countries demonstrated strong readiness to transition toward more collaborative, digitally enabled, and demand-driven research systems. There is growing enthusiasm for mobilizing regional talent, strengthening cross-border partnerships, and aligning research with high-priority development themes such as food systems, health, climate resilience, and digital transformation; presenting significant opportunities for impactful investments.

5.4. Reflections for IDRC and Other Funders

Stakeholders consistently noted that funders have a critical catalytic role in enabling system transformation. Flexible and long-term financing, especially for coordination functions, not only for technical projects, was highlighted as a crucial enabler. Funders were also encouraged to champion open science, equitable participation, cross-regional collaboration, and responsible digital and AI governance. Crucially, future investments should aim to strengthen domestic research systems rather than create new parallel structures. Support for a gradual transition toward increased domestic financing was seen as fundamental to long-term sustainability.

5.5. Stories of Change

The consultations revealed inspiring examples of transformation across West and Central Africa, demonstrating how collaborative approaches, digital infrastructure, and policy coordination are strengthening research ecosystems. These stories serve as practical seeds of change, early manifestations ("pockets of the future") that already embody elements of the envisioned 2040 transformed research ecosystem. Each highlights emerging progress toward the 12 key attributes (as synthesized in Figure 1) and aligns with plausible scenarios (e.g., Collaborative Innovation Region, Digitally Enabled Research Region), signaling strong potential for scaling with donor support to accelerate regional transformation.

Story 1: Strengthening University-Industry Collaboration (Nigeria & Ghana) Background/Origins Context and origins : In West Africa, persistent gaps between academic knowledge production and real-world application have limited economic impact. Initiatives like the University of Lagos–Nord Motors partnership (Nigeria) and Toyota collaborations with the University of Ghana have emerged to bridge this divide, supported by emerging national funding mechanisms such as plans for a National Research Fund.

Intent and Objectives: To evolve universities into engines of innovation, bridge knowledge-application gaps, foster demand-driven research, boost employability, and drive sector competitiveness (e.g., energy, automotive, technology).

Core Activities: Establish on-campus facilities for hands-on training, joint research projects, and formal partnerships for commercialization and knowledge transfer.

Main Stakeholders: Universities, private sector firms (e.g., Nord Motors, Toyota), governments, and industry associations.

Emerging Results: Students gain practical skills, research outputs move toward commercialization, and national agendas become better coordinated.

Barriers and Enablers: Barriers include a limited commercialization culture; enablers feature government endorsement and private-sector strategic interest.

Lessons Learned: Intentional triple-helix collaboration (academia-industry-government) leverages complementary resources to drive systemic change.

Promoted Attributes & Contribution to Future Vision: This story advances the connected and collaborative ecosystem, vibrant innovation and commercialization pipeline, and equitable research landscape attributes by building triple-helix partnerships and inclusive opportunities. It reflects Scenarios 9 (Research Commercialization and Enterprise Region) and 1 (Collaborative Innovation Region), showing how universities can become drivers of job creation, economic transformation, and scaled innovation.

Story 2: Collaborative Research Ecosystems in Francophone Africa (Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon)

Background/Origins: Fragmented governance and limited cross-sector dialogue have hindered coordinated research in Francophone countries. Emerging platforms address these through national and regional coordination efforts.

Intent and Objectives: To strengthen governance, enhance communication, expand access to outputs, and promote inclusive, industry-linked collaboration.

Core Activities: Develop national co-creation platforms, virtual R&D marketplaces, and balanced funding models integrating local and international support.

Main Stakeholders: Ministries, universities, research centers, the private sector, civil society, and development partners.

Emerging Results: Improved dialogue, digital connectivity, and alignment with national priorities.

Barriers and Enablers: Barriers include coordination gaps; enablers are political support, regional momentum, and digital tools.

Lessons Learned: Coordination and transparency enable amplified impact through multi-actor collaboration.

Promoted Attributes & Contribution to Future Vision. It contributes to the Robust Supportive Policy and Implementation Framework, the Connected and Collaborative Ecosystem, and the Regional Coordination and Learning attributes through harmonized platforms. These seeds, Scenario 1 (Collaborative Innovation Region) and Scenario 10 (Harmonized Policy and Funding Region), reduce fragmentation and enable cross-border exchange.

Story 3: Strengthening Digital Research Infrastructure (Sierra Leone) Background/Origins: Weak connectivity and data access have isolated Sierra Leone's researchers. The National Science, Technology, and Innovation Council (NSTIC) is building foundational digital networks.

Intent and Objectives: Enable seamless data exchange, institutional collaboration, and global integration to embed local researchers in broader ecosystems.

Core Activities: Establish a Research and Education Network (REN) with high-speed internet, shared databases, and collaborative platforms.

Main Stakeholders: NSTIC, universities, ICT providers, international partners, and government ministries.

Emerging Results: Better internet access, increased cross-institution collaboration, and global research participation.

Barriers and Enablers: Barriers include budget constraints; enablers are political support and global partnerships.

Lessons Learned: Incremental digital investments catalyze broader institutional and regional change.

Promoted Attributes & Contribution to Future Vision. This exemplifies the Responsible Digital and AI Governance and Capable and Well-Resourced Institutions attributes through modern connectivity. It seeds Scenario 3 (A Digitally Enabled Research Region) by enabling seamless knowledge sharing and real-time collaboration.

Story 4: Policy Coordination and Innovation Ecosystem (Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Republic of Congo)

Background/Origins: Disjointed policies and multisector silos limit coherent systems. National efforts focus on coordination bodies and marketplaces.

Intent and Objectives: Promote coherent systems, cross-sector collaboration, and alignment with priorities (e.g., agriculture, health, climate).

Core Activities: Establish national coordination bodies, virtual R&D marketplaces, and policies aligned with multisector work.

Main Stakeholders: Ministries, research institutes, the private sector, civil society, funding agencies, and regional bodies.

Emerging Results: Structured collaboration foundations and better resource allocation.

Barriers and Enablers: Barriers include limited reforms; enablers are political will and digital strategies.

Lessons Learned: Early dialogue unlocks systemic change and a culture of collaboration.

Promoted Attributes & Contribution to Future Vision. It furthers the Robust Supportive Policy and Implementation Framework and Regional Coordination and Learning attributes. This plant seeds for Scenario 10 (Harmonized Policy and Funding Region) and reduces West-Central disparities.

Story 5: University-Industry Collaboration in Ghana

Background/Origins: Limited commercialization has constrained the university's impact. Growing partnerships and hubs (e.g., EQWIP) address this.

Intent and Objectives: Strengthen applied research, commercialization, private-sector development, and market responsiveness, with inclusive features (e.g., women-only spaces).

Core Activities: Establish innovation hubs, incubators, mentorship, and formal engagement platforms for knowledge translation.

Main Stakeholders: Universities, private firms, innovation hubs, government agencies, and industry associations.

Emerging Results: Deeper sector-relevant research and increased commercialization interest.

Barriers and Enablers: Barriers include capacity gaps; enablers are policy frameworks and hubs.

Lessons Learned: Intentional collaboration combines incentives for transformation.

Promoted Attributes & Contribution to Future Vision. Advances Vibrant Innovation and Commercialization Pipeline and Equitable Research Landscape through inclusive mentorship. Seeds Scenario 9 (Research Commercialization Region) and Scenario 7 (Gender-Transformative Region).

Story 6: Digital Research Infrastructure in Sierra Leone

Background/Origins: Uneven digital access hinders capacity. The 2019-2029 national strategy prioritizes "Digitization for All."

Intent and Objectives: Improve connectivity, data exchange, and global embedding for applied innovation.

Core Activities: Build shared networks, repositories, and connectivity platforms in support of the national digital strategy.

Main Stakeholders: Government (DSTI/Ministries), universities, ICT providers, international partners, and research networks.

Emerging Results: Improved access and active network participation.

Barriers and Enablers: Barriers include budgets and expertise; enablers are national commitment and partnerships.

Lessons Learned: Technical progress underpins broader ecosystem transformation.

Promoted Attributes & Contribution to Future Vision. Supports Responsible Digital and AI Governance and Connected Ecosystem via ethical connectivity. Seeds Scenario 3 (Digitally Enabled Region) and accelerates regional learning.

6. Conclusion

This regional vision articulates a coherent, system-level pathway for transforming research for development in West and Central Africa by 2040, grounded in five mutually reinforcing pillars: equitable, open, capable, connected, and regulated research systems. The analysis demonstrates that while structural asymmetries persist between West and Central Africa, the region possesses sufficient institutional seeds, policy momentum, and stakeholder alignment to enable accelerated convergence if domestic financing, governance coherence, and regional coordination are prioritized. Critically, the proposed strategic options move beyond projectized interventions toward ecosystem reform, emphasizing national ownership, harmonized regulation, open science infrastructures, and demand-driven innovation. For policymakers and funders, the implication is clear: sustained investment in coordination functions, capacity-building, and cross-border platforms will yield high systemic returns by embedding research as a core driver of inclusive development, resilience, and economic transformation across the region

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Annex 1: Pictures from the physical co-creation and validation workshop in DRC

Group photo of the participants during the workshop at CEPAS, Kinshasa, DRC

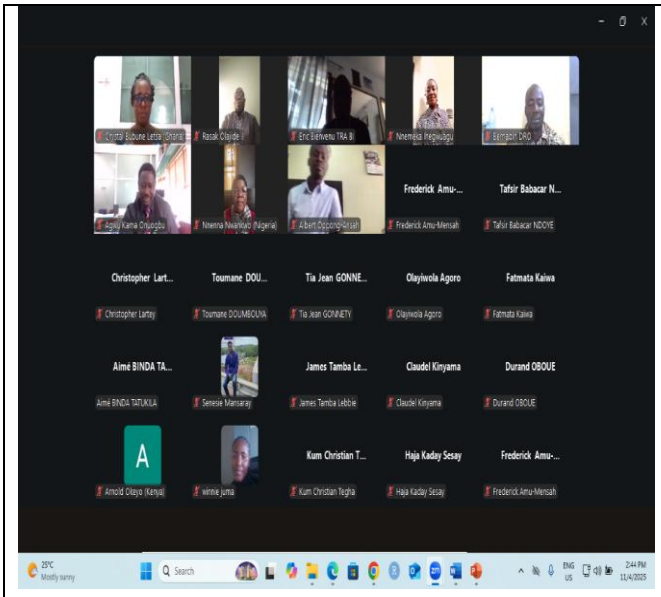
Photo of the participants during plenary sessions in Ghana

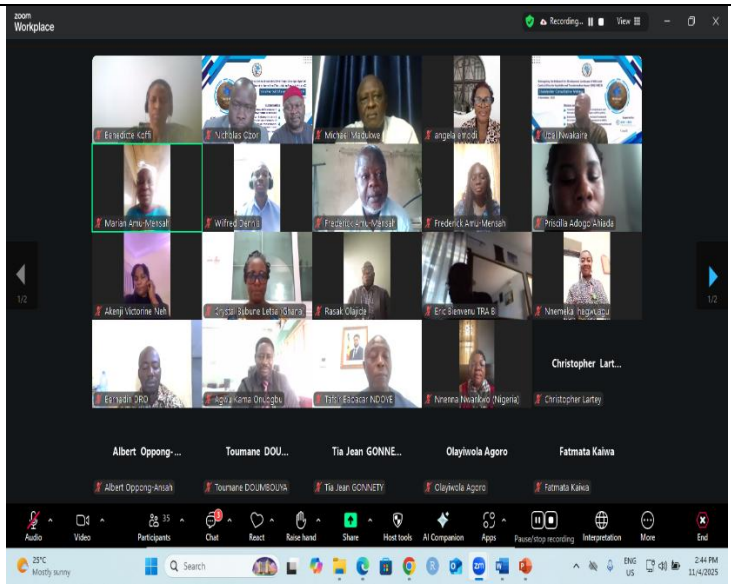
Annex 2: Pictures from the physical co-creation and validation workshop in Ghana

Group photo of the participants during the workshop at CSIR-WRI, Accra, Ghana

Photo of the participants during plenary sessions in Ghana

Annex 3: Screenshot of Participant during the Wider Stakeholder Consultative Webinar





Annex 4: List of participants for the co-creation and validation workshop in the Democratic Republic of Congo

S/N	NAMES	ORGANISATION	Sex
GOVERNMENT (3)			
1	Lutumba Narcisse	Secrétariat General Recherche Scientifique	M
2	Binda Tatukila Aimé	Ministère Genre, Famille et Enfants	M
3	Bakungu Kos	Ministère de l'Environnement, Développement Durable et Nouvelle Économie du Climat	M
UNIVERSITIES AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS (8)			
4	Nzee Soke Rene	Chaire de dynamique sociale (CDS)	M
5	Aloni Barthel Anthony	Centre de recherche indépendante et interdisciplinaire congolais (CRIIC)	M
6	Mbima Kutukila Rigobert	Centre de coordination des recherches en sciences sociales desservant l'Afrique Subsaharienne (CERDAS)	M
7	Victoire Muke	Laboratoire d'anthropologie contemporaine et de développement (LACDEV)	M
8	Prof. Mpwo Makolo	Laboratoire d'anthropologie contemporaine et de développement (LACDEV)	M
9	Kimpiomo Kawalala Chadrack	Laboratoire d'anthropologie contemporaine et de développement (LACDEV)	M
10	Prof. Joël Nzampungu	Ecole de criminologie – UNIKIN	M
11	Kalonda Michel	Institut de recherches économiques et sociales (IRES)	M
CIVIL SOCIETY (6)			
12	Tshikona Kanupabu	Consortium Paix Sans Frontieres (C-PSF)	M
13	Dr Valentin Tshitenge	Fédération congolaise des personnes en situation de handicap (FECOPEHA)	M
14	Kateme Gloire	Réseau d'organisation des droits de l'homme et d'éducation civique (RODHECIC)	M

15	Christian Nyanda Iyeli	Centre Nouvelles Perspectives (CENOPER)	M
16	Lita Beli Charles	Dynamique des politologues de la RDC (DYPOL)	M
17	Blessing Kasasi	Organisation pour la défense et la promotion des personnes vulnérables (ODPV)	F
MEDIA (3)			
18	Ngonde Nsuaka Dave	POURELLE GROUP	M
19	Itindi Rachel	ALBINOS Family TV	F
20	Rebecca Muzama	Agence congolaise de presse (ACP)	F
OTHERS			
21	Rigobert Minani	Facilitator Centre d'études pour l'action sociale (CEPAS)	M
22	Brigitte Iyeli Bokako	Facilitator Chercheure – Université de Kinshasa	F
23	Bondo Ndomba	Personnel d'appoint (CEPAS)	F
24	Abeli Kilonda	Interprète	M
25	Mwika Esther	Interprète	F
26	Ngaji Calvince	Expert ATPS	M
27	Nzey Bersily	Personnel d'Appoint (CEPAS)	M
28	Nshole Joseph	Personnel d'Appoint (CEPAS)	M
29	Luyeye Josué	Presse CEPAS	M
30	Mugoli Jolie	Personnel d'appoint (CEPAS)	F

Annex 5: List of participants for the co-creation and validation workshop in Ghana

S/N	Name	Sex	Institution	Category of Organization	Phone number
1.	Wilfred Edem Dennis	M	MESTI, Accra	Govt/Policy Maker	+233 24 327 4289
2.	Cephas Adjei Mensah	M	MESTI, Accra	Govt/Policy Maker	+233 24 488 8566
3.	Christopher Lartey	M	MESTI, Accra	Govt/Policy Maker	+233 24 626 6312
4.	Felix Atuahene	M	Ministry of Energy, Accra	Govt/Policy Maker	+233 54 926 9370
5.	Seth Agbeve Mahu	M	Ministry of Energy, Accra	Govt/Policy Maker	+233 24 420 9710
6.	Rita A. Twumasi	F	MESTI, Accra	Govt/Policy Maker	+233 20 877 7439
7.	Stephen Bekoe	M	CSIR, Secretariat	Research	+233 54 510 5623
8.	Firibu Kwesi Saalia	M	University of Ghana, Accra	University	+233 24 312 5566
9.	Crystal B. Letsa	F	CSIR-STEPRI, Accra	Research	+233 24 594 4364
10.	Afua Anane Sarpong	F	CSIR-STEPRI, Accra	Research	+233 24 320 4184
11.	Derrydean Dadzie	M	Heritors Labs Limited	Private Sector	+233 55 361 1011
12.	Edith Nkansah	F	3 Trees Company	Private Sector	+233 59 670 3315
13.	Solomon Yamoah	M	Strategic Youth Network for Dev	CSO	+233 23 368 2783
14.	Priscilla Adogo-Ahiada	F	Strategic Youth Network for Dev	CSO	+233 55 509 8530
15.	Linda Asante Agyei	F	Ghana News Agency, Accra	Media	+233 24 463 8614
16.	Albert Oppong-Ansah	M	Ghana News Agency, Accra	Media	+233 20 379 2155
17	Edward Acquah	M	Ghana News Agency, Accra	Media	+233 24 352 3955
18.	Marian Amu-Mensah	F	CSIR Water Research Institute	Rapporteur	+233 26 780 6295
19.	Sylvia Amponsah	F	CSIR Water Research Institute	Rapporteur	+233 24 500 7777
20	Calvince Ngaji	M	ATPS Nairobi	Co-Facilitator	+254 700 428668
21.	Frederick Amu-Mensah	M	ATPS Ghana	Co-Facilitator	+233 24 471 8197

Annex 6: Programme for the co-creation and validation workshop in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Premier jour : Horizon 1 - Validation des résultats de l'étude de paysage **22nd September 2025**		
Session du matin : Ouverture et aperçu global		
8:30 - 9:00	Arrival and Registration / Repertoire/Snack	Gloire and Perseverance
9:00 – 9:10	Welcome Message	Rev. Fr. Dr Rigobert Minani sj
9:10 – 9:20	Introduction of participants	The New People
9:20 -9h40	Opening remarks, introduction, and presentation of the workshop's objectives and outcomes	Prof Nicholas Ozor
	Presentation of the historical context of the development of the research system in the DRC and the three-horizon framework.	Dr. Cynthia Nwobodo
09h40 - 10:00	Family photo and break	Everyone
Session 1: First plenary session		
10:00 – 13:00	- Review of paths 1 and 2 - Validation of key players in the research ecosystem.	Rigobert Minani Sj/Brigitte Iyeli
	- Validation of the research landscape based on seven pillars: equitable, open, capable, connected, and regulated.	Rigobert Minani/Brigitte Iyeli
13:00 –14:00	**Lunch Break**	
Afternoon session: Second plenary meeting		
14:00 – 15:30	Validation of structures, funding flows, and resources in the research landscape	Rigobert Minani/Brigitte Iyeli
	Validation of innovations and initiatives that promote transformative research, seeds of the future found in the present (pockets of change)	Rigobert Minani/Brigitte Iyeli

	Validating barriers and catalysts for transformative research, seeds of the future found in the present (Pockets of Change): (interactive session)	Rigobert Minani/Brigitte Iyeli
	Final thoughts and next steps.	Dr Cynthia Nwobodo
	Networking	Everyone
Day 2: Co-creation of the vision (2040) for transformative change/Horizon Three **23rd Sept 2025**		
Morning session: Imagining the future of transformation: the players, their roles, power, and influence in the ecosystem		
8h30-9:00	Arrival and snack	Perseverance
9:00 - 9:15	Recap of Day 1 activities	Mrs Brigitte Iyeli
9:15 – 13:00	Co-creation of equitable research:	Rigobert Minani/Brigitte Iyeli
	Co-creation of open research:	Rigobert Minani/Brigitte Iyeli
	Co-creation of competent research	Rigobert Minani/Brigitte Iyeli
	Co-creation of connected research	Rigobert Minani/Brigitte Iyeli
	Co-creation of regulated research	Rigobert Minani/Brigitte Iyeli
Lunch break		
Session 1: Imagining/inventing the future of transformation - Ideas and innovations for 2040		
14:00 – 15:30	Co-creating an equitable research vision: Innovations and ideas that enable system transformation	Rigobert Minani
	Co-creating an open research vision: Innovations and ideas that enable system transformation	Rigobert Minani

Afternoon session: Imagining the future of transformation: Second plenary session		
	Co-creation of a connected research vision: Innovations and ideas that enable the system to transform itself	Rigobert Minani
	Co-creation of a regulated research vision: Innovations and ideas that enable the system to transform	Père Rigobert Minani
	Co-creation of a vision for equitable, open, competent, connected, and regulated research: Co-creation of funding and resource flows	Rigobert Minani
	Vision of equitable, open, competent, connected, and regulated research: co-creation of catalysts for change	Rigobert Minani
Validation de la vision pour la transformation/des activités (Horizon deux)		
	Présentation des groupes et validation des acteurs de l'horizon trois, des idées et des innovations, des flux de fonds et de ressources à l'aune des cinq piliers	Rigobert Minani
Session 1: Crossroads – Focusing on what needs to change (activities)		
	Sources of change: actors in light of five pillars	Rigobert Minani
	Ideas and innovations in light of five pillars	Rigobert Minani
	Funds and resources flows in light of five pillars	Rigobert Minani
	Group presentations and validation of activities for transformative change	Rigobert Minani
	Closing remarks and next steps	Dr Cynthia Nwobodo

4:00 – 4:30	Networking	Everyone
Day 3: Drafting of the Report by the rapporteurs and translation of the Report September 24, 2025		
9:00 – 13-30	Report Writing	Gloire Kateme
13h30-	Report Translation	Brigitte Iyeli

Annex 7: Programme for the co-creation and validation workshop in GhanaS

Day One: Validation of Landscape Study Results/Horizon One September 2025		**30th**
Morning Session: Opening and Overview		
9:00 - 9:30	Registration/Repertoire	Dr Mrs Marian Amu-Mensah
9:30 – 9:40	Welcome Remarks	Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah
9:40 – 9:45	Introduction of Participants	ALL
9:45 -10:00	Opening Remarks/Introduction to Workshop Objectives and Expected Outcomes	Dr Cynthia Nwobodo
10:00-10:20	Presentation on the Historical Background of the Development of the Research System of GHANA and the Three Horizon Framework.	Dr Cynthia Nwobodo
10:20 - 10:30	Group Photograph	ALL
10:30 – 11:00	**Tea Break**	
Session 1: Plenary One		

11:00 – 12:20	Validation of Key Stakeholders in the Research Landscape: Government, Research Institutions/Universities, Non-Governmental Organizations/Civil Society Organizations, Faith-Based Organizations (who also own universities), Community-Based Organizations (Youth/Women-Based Organizations, Opinion Leaders, Persons with Disability), Traditional Authorities, the Private Sector, and the Media. This includes their Power and Influence, Enablers and Barriers to transformative research; Seeds of the Future Found in the Present (Pockets of Change).	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah/ ATPS Representative
11:20 – 12:45	Validation of the Research Landscape with the lens of the Five Pillars: Equitable, Open, Capable, Connected, and Regulated. Seeds of the Future Found in the Present (Pockets of Change)	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah
12:45 – 2:00	**Lunch Break**	
Afternoon Session: Plenary Two		
2:00 – 3:30	Validation of the Structures and Flows of Funding and Resources in the Research Landscape, Seeds of the Future Found in the Present (Pockets of Change)	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah
3:30 – 4:00	Validation of the Innovations and Initiatives that Promote Transformative Research, Seeds of the Future Found in the Present (Pockets of Change).	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah
4:00 – 4:30	Validation of the Barriers and Enablers to Transformative Research, Seeds of the Future Found in the Present (Pockets of Change): **(Interactive Session)**	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah
4:30 – 5:00	Networking.	ALL

Day Two: Co-creation of Vision (2040) for Transformative Change/Horizon Three 1st October 2025		
Morning Session: Imagining the Future of Transformation – Actors who should be there and their roles, power, and influence in the ecosystem		
9:00 - 9:30	Recap of Day One Activity	Ms Sylvia Amponsah
9:30 – 9:40	Equitable Research Co-creation: Government, Research Institutions/universities, Non-governmental Organizations/Civil Society Organizations, Community-Based Organizations, Youth/women-based organizations, the Private Sector, and the Media)	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah
9:40 – 9:45	Open Research Co-creation: Government, Research Institutions/universities, Non-governmental Organizations/Civil Society Organizations, Community-Based Organizations, Youth/women-based organizations, the Private Sector, and the Media)	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah
9:45 -10:00	Capable Research Co-creation: Government, Research Institutions/universities, Non-governmental Organizations/Civil Society Organizations, Community-Based Organizations, Youth/women-based organizations, the Private Sector, and the Media)	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah
10:00-10:20	Connected Research Co-creation: Government, Research Institutions/universities, Non-governmental Organizations/Civil Society Organizations, Community-Based Organizations,	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah

	Youth/women-based organizations, the Private Sector, and the Media)	
10:20 - 10:30	Regulated Research Co-creation: Government, Research Institutions/universities, Non-governmental Organizations/Civil Society Organizations, Community-Based Organizations, Youth/women-based organizations, the Private Sector, and the Media)	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah
10:30 – 11:00	**Tea Break**	
Session 1: Imagining the Future of Transformation - Ideas and Innovations that should be there in 2040		
11:00 – 12:20	Equitable Research Vision Co-creation of Innovations and Ideas that are Enabling the System to Transform	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah
11:20 – 12:45	Open Research Vision Co-creation of Innovations and Ideas that are Enabling the System to Transform	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah
12:45 – 2:00	**Lunch Break**	
Imagining the Future Afternoon Session: Plenary Two		
2:00 – 3:30	Connected Research Vision Co-creation of Innovations and Ideas that are Enabling the System to Transform	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah
3:30 – 4:00	Regulated Research Vision Co-creation of Innovations and Ideas that are Enabling the System to Transform	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah
4:00 – 4:30	Equitable, Open, Capable, Connected, and Regulated Research Vision Co-creation of Flows of Funds and Resources	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah

4:30 – 5:00	Equitable, Open, Capable, Connected, and Regulated Research vision: Co-creation of Enablers for Change	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah

Day Three: Validation of Vision for Transformation/Activities (Horizon Two) 2nd October 2025		
Morning Session: Plenary		
9:00 - 9:30	Recap of Day Two Activity	Ms Sylvia Amponsah
9:30 – 10:30	Group Presentation and Validation of Horizon Three Actors, Ideas and Innovations, Flows of Funds and Resources with the Lens of the Five Pillars	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah
10:30 – 11:00	**Tea Break**	
Session 1: Breakout – Focus on What Needs to Change (Activities)		
11:00 – 11:45	Sources of Change: Actors with the Lens of the Five Pillars	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah
11:45 – 12:15	Ideas and Innovations with the Lens of the Five Pillars	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah
12:15 – 12:45	Flows of Funds and Resources with the Lens of the Five Pillars	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah
12:45 – 2:00	**Lunch Break**	
Afternoon Session: Plenary Two		
2:00 – 4:00	Group Presentations and Validation of Activities for Transformative Change	Facilitated by Dr Frederick Amu-Mensah
4:00 – 4:30	Networking.	ALL