

# **Disrupting orthodoxies in global North-Africa research cooperation and knowledge production for sustainable development**

*A WUN Global Africa Group workshop series*

## **BACKGROUND:**

The WUN Global Africa Group's programme of initiatives 2020–2022 seeks to challenge, explicitly, the historically rooted inequities and existing orthodoxies in the global field of knowledge production, specifically in research cooperation with Africa; and to develop alternative approaches for constructive collaboration to advance inquiry on sustainable development.

A first, virtual, seminar convened in 15 December 2020, brought together GAG steering group members and relevant scholars to jointly explore an initial frame of reference for the group's further work toward i) deepening present understandings of the nature, manifestations and implications of imbalances in global North – Africa research cooperation and knowledge production around sustainable development; and ii) identifying ways to redress them.

The frame considers four key 'layers' of imbalances that act and interact at different levels to undermine Africa's ability to harness research and knowledge generation for achieving its own development aspirations:

1. The international development frame and gaze
2. The relative power and strength of African research institutions within the global research ecosystem
3. Collaboration and funding modes within research programmes (division of labour, access to rewards,
4. The application of existing and production and use of new knowledge (epistemology, methodology, theorizing)

## **THE WORKSHOP SERIES**

Drawing on this initial frame and perspectives raised in the first seminar, the GAG now plans to convene a subsequent series of four virtual subsequent workshops, respectively for each layer of imbalances. Each forum will aim to:

- Further interrogate and synthesise key strands of relevant literatures, debates
- Foster reflexivity and joint reflection on GAG members' own experiences of the imbalances concerned and their impacts

- Explore broad levels and principles for action needed to overcome the to redress the imbalances

### ***Format and focus***

Each workshop will be co-led by, and its format and focus co-developed with, the key scholar who ‘introduced’ the particular layer of imbalance in the initial seminar. The deliberations themselves will be informed by a prior scoping of relevant literature.

### ***Participation***

Participation in the workshops will be open to GAG steering group members and a small number of relevant experts or actors from within the WUN network.

### ***Schedule***

The workshop series will take place over a period of four months, from April to July 2021, as follows:

#### **Workshop 1, 7 April 2021:**

*The international development frame and gaze* (with Prof. Elisio Macamo)

#### **Workshop 2, 5 May 2021:**

*Collaboration and funding modes within research projects* (with Dr. Samia Chasi)

#### **Workshop 3, 2 June 2021:**

*The application of existing and production and use of new knowledge* (with Dr. Adriaan van Klinken)

#### **Workshop 4, 7 July 2021**

*The relative power and strength of African research institutions within the global research ecosystem* (with Prof. Alex Ezeh)