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Science will unlock Africa's potential — if it is funded

Esther Ngumbi 06 Jul 2018 00:00



Bonisile Luthuli - an Africa Health Research Institute PhD student. (Africa Health Research Institute)



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Funding is crucial

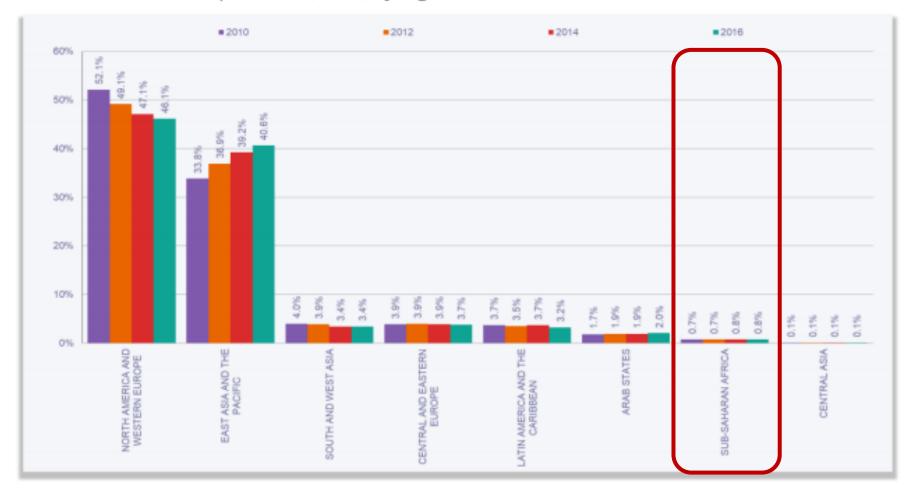


- Research and Development (R&D) is an important driver for economic growth [1].
 - Every dollar invested in R&D generates nearly two dollars in return [1].
- R&D plays a crucial role in meeting the United Nations sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Funding is crucial, but limited

Figure 1. Where are R&D investments made?

Shares of world R&D expenditure (GERD) by region, 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2016



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics estimates, February 2019.

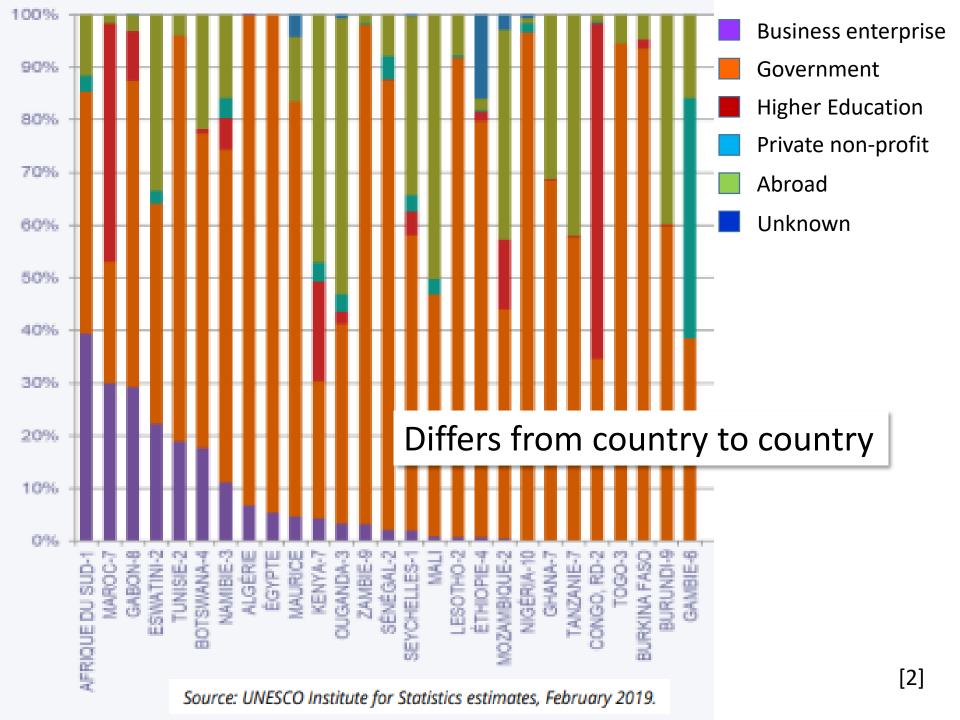
gross domestic expenditure on R&D (GERD)

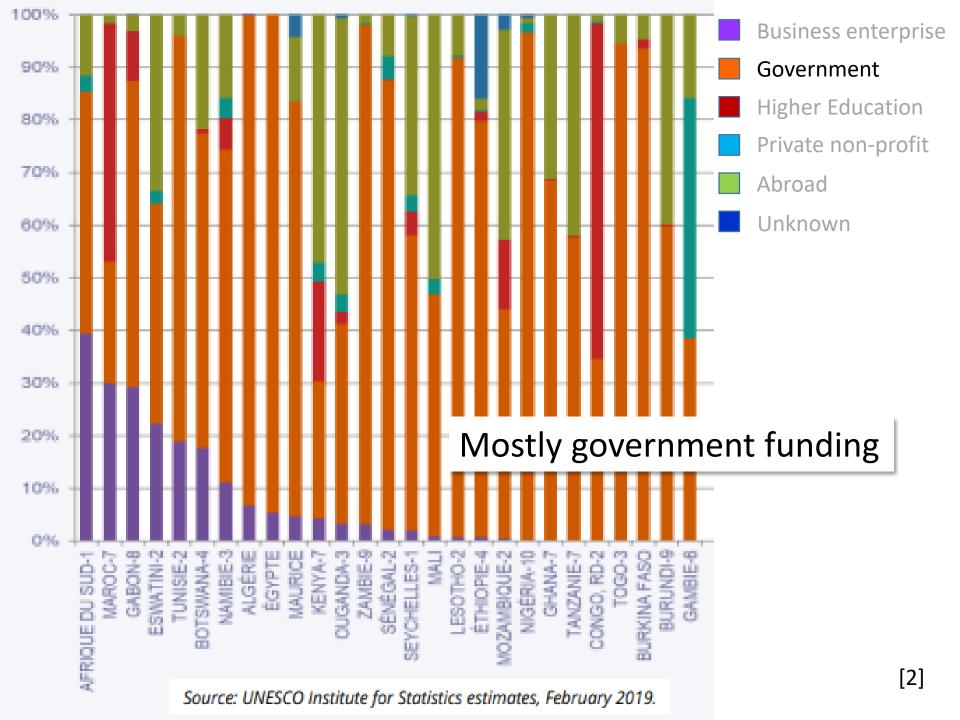
Funding is crucial, but limited

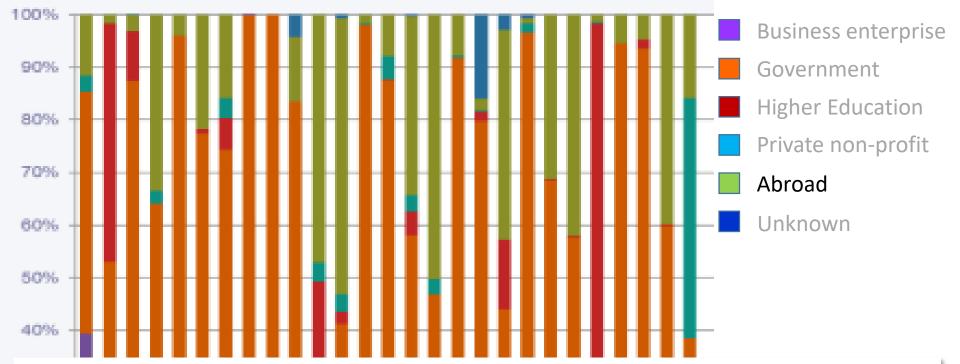
- Countries in sub-Saharan Africa spend, on average, just 0.7% of their GDP on R&D (GERD) [2].
- This proportion hasn't shown significant increases over the past decade [2]

Who is funding science in Africa?





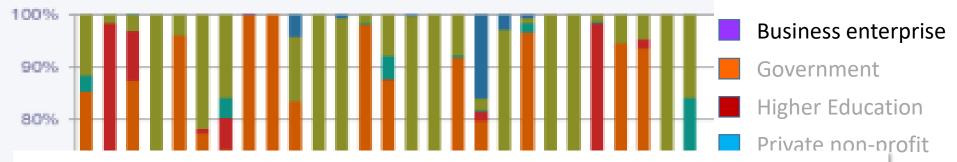




Substantial portion of the funding from non-African organisations

Such as European Union, the US National Institutes of Health (NIH), the UK-based Wellcome Trust and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

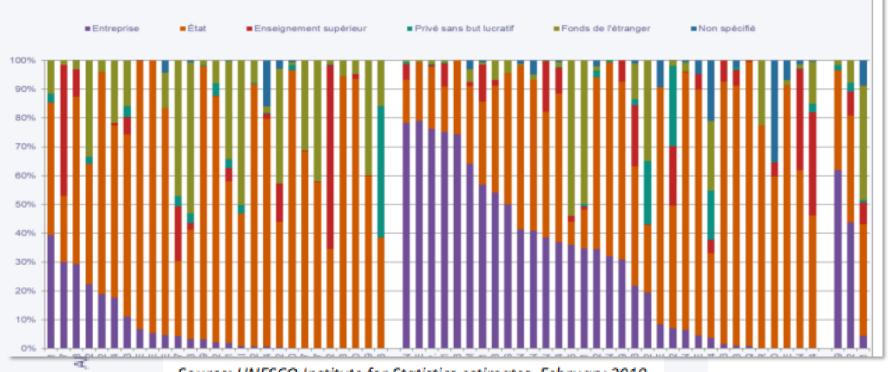




Business enterprise fund relatively little R&D compared to other world regions

Figure 7. Funding in Africa, Asia and the Pacific

GERD by source of funds, 2017 or latest year available



[2]

A new collaborative approach





AIMS

African Institute for Mathematical Sciences



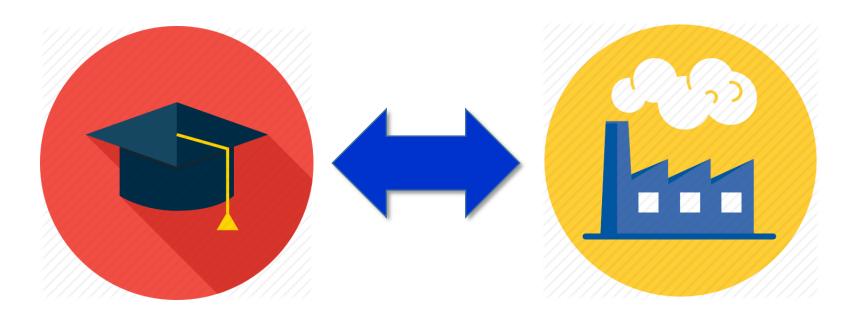
NEXT EINSTEIN FORUM

An AIMS initiative in partnership with the Robert Bosch Stiftung

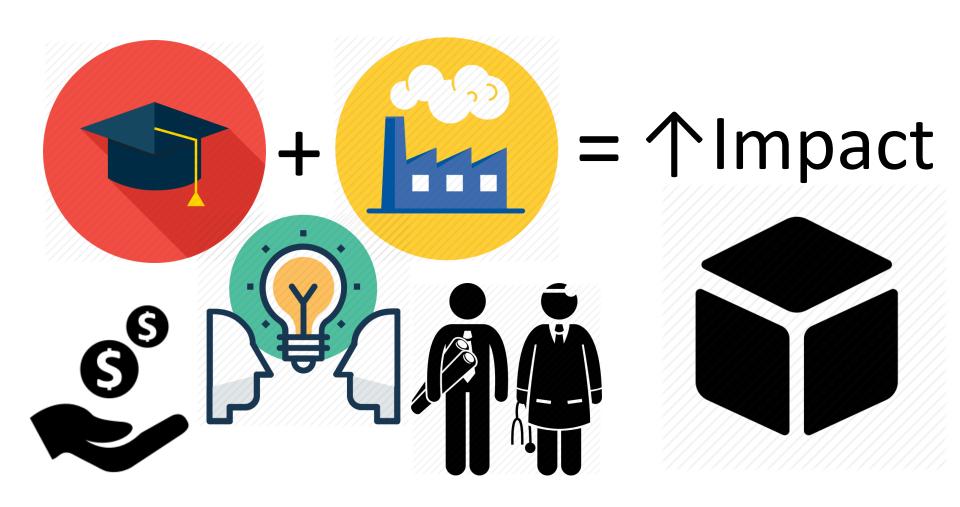
African
Climate &
Development
Initiative



University-Industry collaborations



University-Industry collaborations



Improving University-Industry collaborations

Before

Willingness to collaborate
IP considerations
Willingness to share info

Improve **communication** skills

Improve **understanding** of the commercialisation process

During

Increase **institutional flexibility** more flexible priorities

Increase **honesty**Fairness, openness and honesty

Increase **clarity**clear aims, agreeing on responsibilities / roles

Raise the partner's **awareness** current economic, political or social developments. [3]

References

- UNESCO Institute for Statistics (http://uis.unesco.org/en/topic/research-and-development)
- UNESCO Institute for Statistics. Global investments in R&D. (http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/fs54-global-investments-rd-2019-en.pdf)
- 3. Rybnicek, R., & Königsgruber, R. (2019). What makes industry—university collaboration succeed? A systematic review of the literature. *Journal of Business Economics*, 89(2), 221-250.





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