

AFRICALICS

**THE AFRICAN NETWORK FOR ECONOMICS OF LEARNING, INNOVATION,
AND COMPETENCE BUILDING SYSTEMS**

**AFRICALICS WRITESHOP AND GRANTS MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP
REPORT**

**MONDAY 24TH AUGUST 2015 TO FRIDAY 28TH AUGUST 2015
AT THE INSTITUTE FOR ECONOMIC RESEARCH ON INNOVATION (IERI),
PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA**

Brief summary

The African Network for the Economics of Learning, Innovation, and Competence Building Systems (AfricaLics) held its first Writeshop and Grants Management Workshop from 24th to 28th August 2015 at the Institute for Economic Research on Innovation (IERI), Pretoria, South Africa. The Writeshop was held with the purpose of producing at least one published/publishable output per group (to be presented in November at a research results workshop in Kigali), meeting together and discussing project progress in the context of the collaborative paper and developing skills on how to write a paper for publication in a journal through a collaborative process. The Writeshop was facilitated by Prof. Brenda Cooper, who has experience in facilitating 'work in progress conferences'. The grants management workshop was facilitated by Fridah Nkrote Mungai, who is the finance manager of the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS). In general, the writeshop and grants management were both well received by the participants.

1. Brief Background

The Sida funded AfricaLics Research Capacity Building project has a substantive activity that provided small research proposal and book project grants to provide opportunities to increase research into neglected areas of African innovation and development. The activity was also developed so as to increase collaboration between researchers, particularly young and emerging scholars, in Africa.

During this activity, a total of six projects were funded, with varying amounts of funds up to \$35,000 lasting from 3 months to one and a half year. The projects resulted in the development of journal articles, research proposal submissions and book proposals. However, the progress was not without challenges – especially relating to the collaborative process. The main aim of the writeshop and grants management workshop were therefore to build capacity in technical writing and team ethics, through a group writing activity, and to enhance research grants management capabilities of researchers in the field of innovation and development.

1.2 Location of the writeshop and grants management workshop

The writeshop and grants management workshop were held at the Institute for Economic Research on Innovation (IERI), Pretoria. IERI is a prominent research institute based in the Faculty of Economics and Finance of the Tshwane University of Technology. It does policy research in the political economy of knowledge and innovation to promote sustainable economic growth, social development and political democracy in Africa.

The institute provided key logistical support to the program from its inception to the end. The chief director of the institute, Dr. Rasigan Maharajh warmly welcomed all the participants on the first day and passionately talked about what AfricaLics is doing to build internal capacity in innovation and development in Africa. Another staff of IERI, Dr. Erika Kraemer-Mbula, was also highly supportive of the workshop assisting with logistics. She also took time to respond to questions related to AfricaLics as a board member of the AfricaLics secretariat.

The institute provided the venue (a conference room and five breakout rooms) with all the needed accessories for free. It also provided a cozy dinner on Thursday (27th of August, 2015) for all the participants. The chief director of the institute, Dr. Rasigan Maharajh, joined participants at the dinner and encouraged the participants to publish and show full dedication to the economics of technical change. The AfricaLics secretariat is very grateful and appreciative of the support we have received from IERI.

2. Overviews of the writeshop

The writeshop was attended by a total of 26 people from six funded project groups (see Figure 1 and 2 and a Table in Appendix B). From the PIs of the projects, Erika Kraemer-Mbula, Williams Ezinwa Nwagwu, Abdi Yuya Ahmad were present. Abdi Yuya was the only member of his group present. The six groups had each submitted a draft paper in advance that their group worked on before coming to the writeshop. Table 1 summarized the four days of the writeshop briefly (see

also the initial program of the writeshop in Appendix A).



Figure 1: The writeshop underway



Figure 2: Participants of the writeshop and grants management workshop that immediately followed the workshop

Table 1: Overview of the writeshop

	24 th	25 th	26 th	27 th
Morning	<p>-Aschalew Tigabu welcomed the participants and introduced the program. He outlined the major objectives and outputs of the project. He provided the background of the sida-funded seed projects. He also introduced Prof. Brenda Cooper, the facilitator of the writeshop, and requested for a round of introduction. He officially launched the writeshop</p> <p>-Brenda outlined her teaching approach. She underlined that her role was to facilitate the discussion of the work in progress and would be highly interactive. She lectured on the concept of 'shtick'; her metaphor for the unique angle of the paper.</p> <p>-The morning was highly interactive and participants were keen to ask questions and discuss issues raised.</p>	<p>-Two groups presented their paper namely: Erika Kraemer-Mbula's group on 'Work organization, competence building and innovation in formal and informal microenterprises in Africa' and Mammo Muchie's project's paper represented by Abiodun Egbetokun on: 'Engineering Design Capacity Building and Economic Development in West Africa'.</p> <p>-Both presentations discussed their titles, abstracts, 'shtick' and key words.</p> <p>-Brenda and all other participants then gave feedback on how to improve their work.</p> <p>-This was a highly interactive session. Almost everyone asked questions and providing comments.</p>	<p>-Again two groups presented their work: namely Radhika Perrot's group represented by Maruf Sanni on 'Building low carbon innovation energy systems in Africa' and Williams Ezinwa Nwagwu' group on 'The Role of Women in Science and Technology Innovation in Grassroots Agriculture in Africa'.</p> <p>-Again these groups presented their work on the titles, abstracts, 'shtick' and key words of the paper. Then Brenda and all other participants gave feedback on how to improve their work.</p> <p>-Similar to the previous days, the session was highly interactive. While most comments were positive, some have been critical on the concept of the 'Shtick' and its application in social</p>	<p>-Similarly on the third day the remaining two groups presented their titles, abstracts, 'shtick' and key words. The two groups were: Simon Roberts' group on 'Mining inputs and the development of capabilities in machinery and engineering services: technical capabilities, skills, and local content across Botswana, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe' and Abdi Yuya's on 'Does Natural Resource endowment characterize the innovation behavior of African firms? Implications to overcome the 'resource curse'.</p> <p>-Similar to the other days, Brenda and all other participants gave feedback on how to improve their work.</p>

			science research abstract.	
Afternoon	-In the afternoon, groups began discussing and modifying, particularly, titles, abstracts, thinking about the paper's 'shtick' and key words, on the basis of Brenda's morning discussions.	-All the groups worked on modifying their titles, abstracts, 'shtick' and key words. Some of them also began discussing about the structure of their paper, and dividing labor for the writing. Brenda was available between 2 and 4 PM to answer any questions from the groups	-This afternoon was similar to the afternoon on Tuesday. Groups worked on their paper in breakout rooms.	-This afternoon took the form of a general discussion on what have been the progress, the challenges and future plans based on the activities of the past four days. Tigabu also presented slides reminding the group of the core objectives of the writeshop.

3. Overviews on the progresses achieved by groups as reported by them

Erika Kraemer-Mbula's group on 'Work organization, competence building and innovation in formal and informal microenterprises in Africa' agreed that the following progress had been made:

- Modified the title
- Revised the shtick
- Looked at the research questions in relation to the new title and new shtick
- Had a better grip on the methodology
- Had an idea of what kind of results they are expecting to present
- Created the structure of the paper
- Identified the right literature
- Realized that research is a 'moving staircase' that there is a lot of iteration involved

Mammo Muchie's group represented by Abiodun Egbetokun on: 'Engineering Design Capacity Building and Economic Development in West Africa' also reported that they had:

- Refined the title
- Revised the shtick
- Undertook division of labor for the paper
- Realized that the data they was incomplete for the paper and they would be collecting some additional data
- Devised a strategy to continue working on the paper considering the fact that the project leader was not with them at the writeshop

Radhika Perrot's group represented by Maruf Sanni on 'Building low carbon innovation energy systems in Africa' reported they had:

- Modified the title—made it concise and to the point
- Identified the 'shtick' of the paper
- Added some key words
- Created the structure of the paper
- Refined the framework—clarified the model
- Added comparative parameters for the comparison of cases
- Talked about communication strategy

Williams Ezinwa Nwagwu's group on 'The Role of Women in Science and Technology Innovation in Grassroots Agriculture in Africa' outlined their progress as having:

- Carried out revisions on the basis of observations
- Worked on most parts of the paper
- Set deadlines for completing the proposal and the paper
- Distributed tasks among group members

Simon Roberts' group on 'Mining inputs and the development of capabilities in machinery and engineering services: technical capabilities, skills, and local content across Botswana, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe: A Research Agenda?' outlined that they:

- Had initially only a background paper and had been behind compared to the other groups.
- But now they have identified the 'shtick', the title and the abstract of the paper
- Their coordinator was away, which had been a challenge.

Abdi Yuya's on 'Does Natural Resource endowment characterizes the innovation behavior of African firms? Implications to overcome the 'resource curse'' reported that:

- He was the only member present
- He sent out a long paper (87 pages), so work on his paper started before coming to the writeshop
- The wrtieshop was useful to him
- He realized that a fine balance between intuition and actual data observation are key in paper writing

4 Writeshop delivery evaluations

A total of 21 of the participants evaluated the delivery of the writeshop. Figure 3 shows that over 70% agreed that the training had met their expectations.

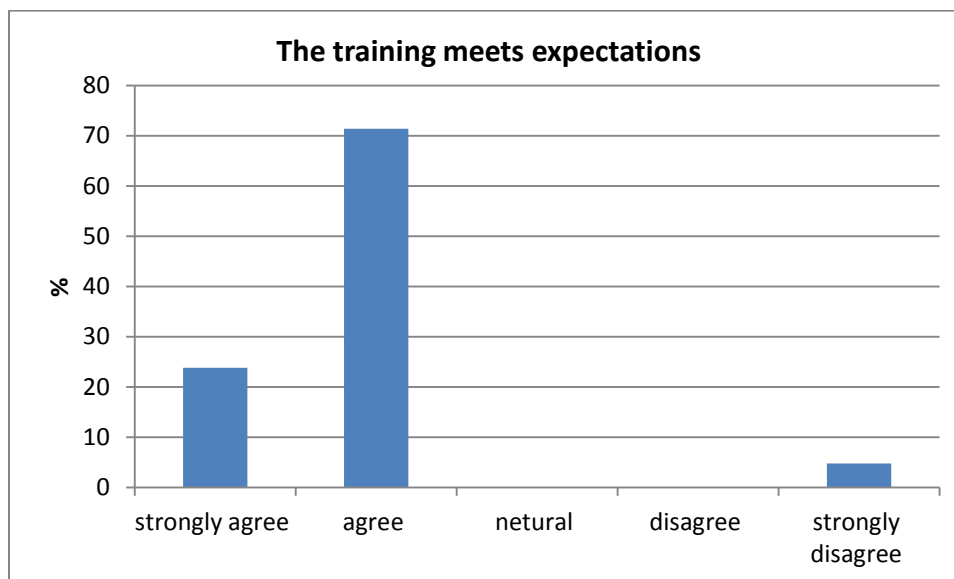


Figure 3: Evaluation on whether training meets expectations or not.

Figure 4 illustrates that over 60% of the participants strongly agreed while another 33% agreed that the knowledge they had gained was applicable in their future research careers.

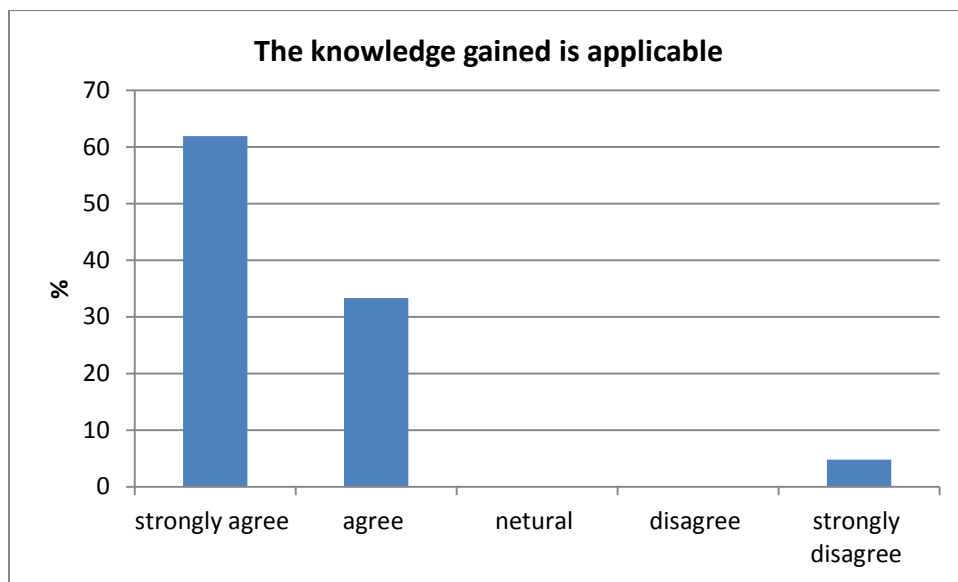


Figure 4: Evaluation on whether the knowledge that participants have gained is applicable or not.

Figure 5 shows that over 90% of the participants either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that the content of the writeshop was organized and easy to follow.

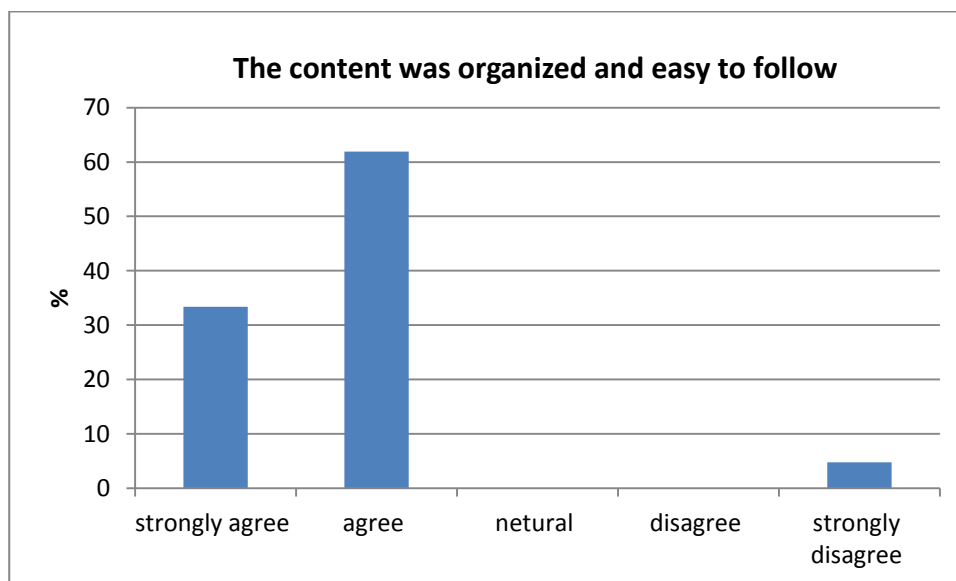


Figure 5: Evaluation on whether the content of the writeshop is organized and easy to understand.

Over 75% of the participants either 'strognly agreed' or 'agreed' that the material provided for the writeshop was pertinent and useful.

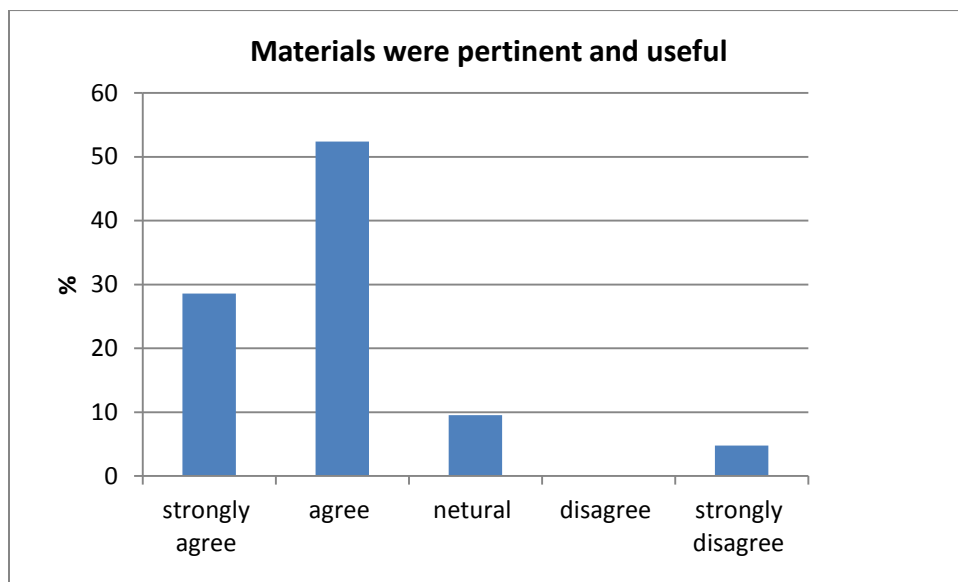


Figure 6: Evaluation on whether the materials provided were pertinent and useful.

Figure 7 shows that nearly 90% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that the trainer was knowledgeable in facilitating a workshop of this kind.

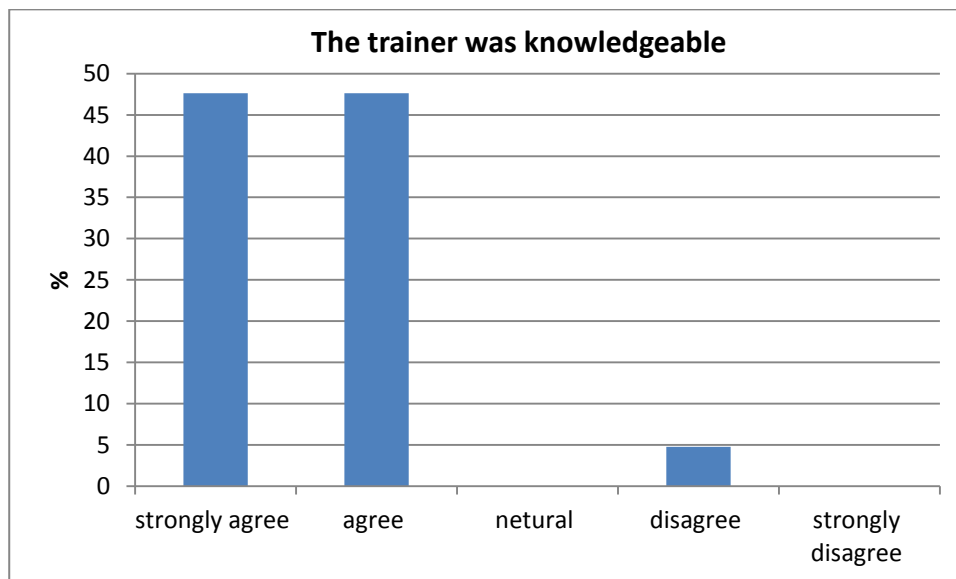


Figure 7: Evaluation on whether the trainer was knowledgeable

Over 95% of the participants 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that the quality of instruction was good.

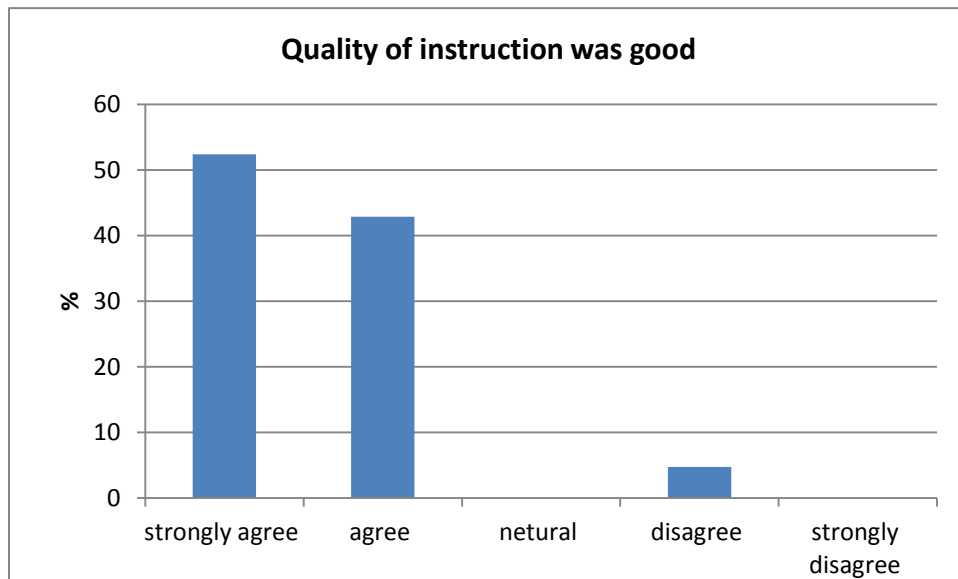


Figure 8: Evaluation of the quality of the instruction

Again 95% of respondents agreed that the objectives of the writeshop were met (See Figure 9).

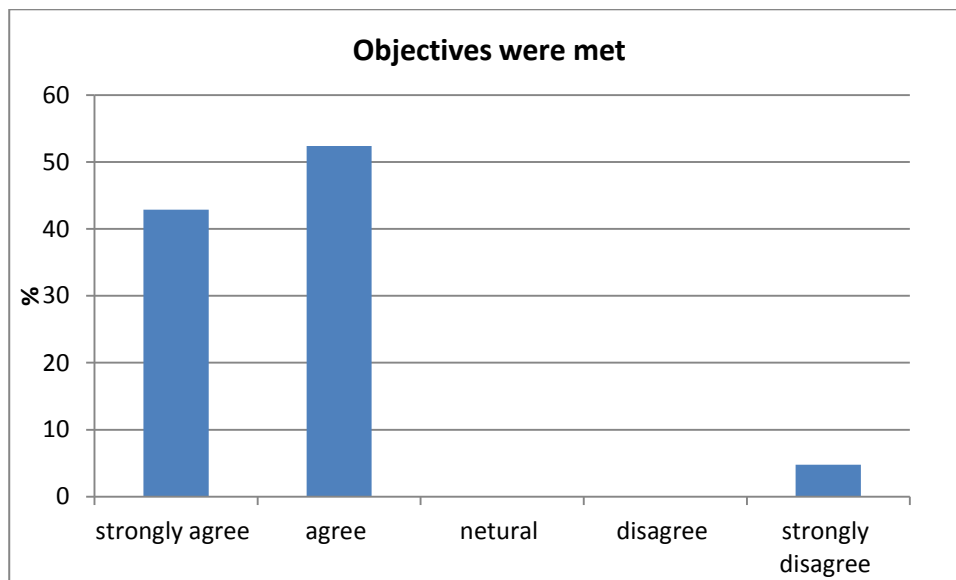


Figure 9: Evaluation on whether the objectives of the writeshop were met.

About 38% of the participants rated the program as 'excellent' whereas about 48% rated it as 'good' (see Figure 10).

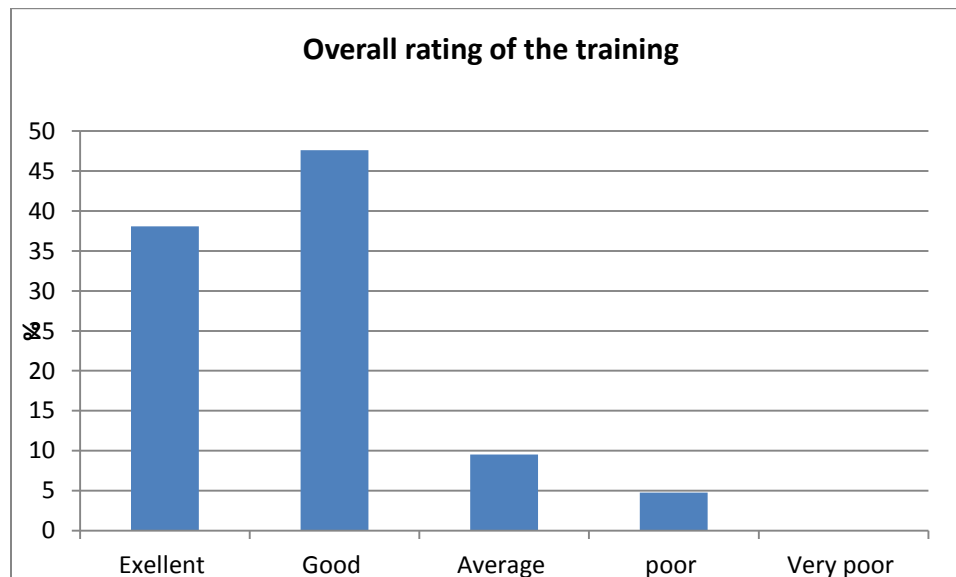


Figure 10: Evaluation on the overall rating of the training.

5. Issues and challenges raised on grants management and recommendations

Following the writeshop, a one-day training on grants management experiences and best practice was held on Friday 20th November 2015, again hosted by IERI.

The session was highly interactive and consisted of group work and plenary feedback. The key issues raised in the workshop are now outlined and will be referred to as AfricaLics designs Phase II of the research capacity building project.

5.1 Contract negotiation

Challenge:

- Lengthy process
- Only PIs were involved and other members did not have sufficient information

5.2 Project Implementation

Challenge:

- Management of projects was slow
- Lack of commitment from project members; some withdrawing and PIs not showing enough commitment
- Limited financial incentive to complete the projects. The projects finances were too small
- Tax issues. For example, in South Africa, individual researchers have received their research funding after a 40% tax cut; and these were not taken into account by AfricaLics

- Heavy bank charges, and these were not taken into account by AfricaLics
- Inflation and exchange rate fluctuations
- Issues with infrastructure, e.g. internet connection
- Time constraints/competing responsibilities by researchers
- Limited clarifications on expectations, e.g. the journal article that we are asked to write was not part of our expected output and we have not planned for it.

Opportunity

- Multidisciplinary team working together
- Capacity building—engaging postgrad students in data collection
- Knowledge sharing among participants
- Multi-country case studies helping share experiences

5.3 Recommendations of what is needed moving forward

- More consideration of infrastructure limitations
- Mechanisms to ensure that PI's communicate with team members
- Adjustment to take into account of inflation and exchange rate fluctuations
- Inform members about the nature of seed-funded projects
- Creating a database of potential funders
- Make prior travel arrangements based on participants needs e.g. Travel insurance
- Reconsider reimbursement policy (travel, visa, conference registration) policy for young scholars
- AfricaLics should consider team management workshop before project inception
- Careful consideration when appointing a PI. Need to consider previous experience and skill, interest and commitment

5.4. Some critical comments on the workshop

- There were different expectations with regards the aims and objectives of the writeshop. A writeshop in a traditional sense is a writing retreat where participants have a near draft paper and take much time in finalizing it. However, project participants were asked to develop a draft in advance which would then be 'tweaked'. Some felt that insufficient time was given to enable the preparation of a full paper.
- Expectations of finishing a publishable paper within 4 days was unrealistic
- Some participants felt that a facilitator who was from the field of study would have understood the issues affecting the papers more effectively than a facilitator with a literature background.

Appendix A

AFRICALICS WRITESHOP AND GRANTS MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

Program

Monday 24th August , 2015		Moderator
8:30 AM	Meet at Hotel lobby and walk to IERI	All
9:00 - 9:25	Welcome and aims of the workshop in the context of Africalics programme of activities	Dr. Rebecca Hanlin
9.25 -10.15	Welcome and methodology of the writeshop including overarching comments on papers received	Prof Brenda Cooper
10:15-10:30AM	Tea break	
10:30-11:30AM	Methodology of the writeshop and overarching comments on papers received (cont.)	Prof Brenda Cooper
11.30-12.30PM	Plenary review of ONE paper and discussions: ROBERTS PAPER: "MINING INPUTS..."	
12:30-1:30PM	Lunch	
1:30-2.30 PM	Plenary review of ONE paper and discussions: AHMAD's PAPER: "DOES NATURAL RESOURCE ENDOWMENT...."	Project Investigator
2:30-5:00PM	Parallel Sessions: Project groups work on their specific papers (one paper by each project, producing 6 papers at the end), with individual support and advice from Brenda and Rebecca in breakout rooms.	
6:00PM-8:00PM (at participants' convenience)	Dinner	
Tuesday 25th August , 2015		
8:30 AM	Meet at Hotel lobby and walk to IERI	All
9:00 - 10:15AM	Plenary review of papers and discussions	Prof Brenda Cooper

10:15-10:30AM	Tea break	
10:30-12:30AM	Plenary review of TWO papers and discussions: 1. KRAEMER-MBULA PAPER: "WORK ORGANISATION, COMPETENCE BUILDING...." 2. ABIYODUN PAPER: "ENGINEERING DESIGN CAPACITY BUILDING...."	Prof Brenda Cooper
12:30-1:30PM	Lunch	
1:30-5:00PM	Parallel Sessions: Project groups work on their specific papers (one paper by each project, producing 6 papers at the end), with individual support and advice from Brenda and Rebecca in breakout rooms.	Project Investigator
6:00-8:00PM (at participants' convenience)	Dinner	
Wednesday 26th August , 2015		
8:30 AM	Meet at Hotel lobby and walk to IERI	All
9:00 - 10:15AM	Plenary review of papers and discussions	Prof Brenda Cooper
10:15-10:30AM	Tea break	
10:30-12:30AM	Plenary review of TWO papers and discussions: 1. PERROT: "BUILDING LOW CARBON INNOVATION..." 2. WILLIAMS: "THE ROLE OF WOMEN..."	Prof Brenda Cooper
12:30-1:30PM	Lunch	
1:30-5:00PM	Parallel Sessions: Project groups work on their specific papers (one paper by each project, producing 6 papers at the end), with individual support and advice from Brenda and Rebecca in breakout rooms.	Project Investigator
6:00-8:00PM (at participants' convenience)	Dinner	

Thursday 27th August , 2015		
8:30 AM	Meet at Hotel lobby and walk to IERI	All
9:00 - 10:15AM	Discussion of new Titles and Abstracts	Prof Brenda Cooper
10:15-10:30AM	Tea break	
10:30-12:30AM	Discussion of new Titles and Abstracts (cont.)	Prof Brenda Cooper
12:30-1:30PM	Lunch	
1:30-3:00PM	Parallel Sessions: Project groups work on their specific papers (one paper by each project, producing 6 papers at the end), with individual support and advice from Brenda and Rebecca in breakout rooms.	Project Investigator
3:00-5:00PM	Open discussion and way forward	Rebecca Hanlin
6:00-8:00 PM (Time to be determined)	Dinner organized by IERI	
Friday 28th August , 2015		
8:30 AM	Meet at Hotel lobby and walk to IERI	All
9:00 - 10:15AM	Experience sharing session: All participants share their experiences in Grants Management and challenges they faced with the AfricaLics funded projects	Fridah Nkirete Dr. Rebecca Hanlin
10:15-10:30AM	Tea break	
10:30-12:30AM	Experience sharing session: All participants share their experiences in Grants Management and challenges they faced with the AfricaLics funded projects	Fridah Nkirete Dr. Rebecca Hanlin
12:30-1:30PM	Lunch	
1:30-2:45PM	Overviews on accepted practices in Grants Management	Fridah Nkirete

2:45-3:00PM	How to address challenges faced with AfricaLics funded projects and the way forward	Fridah Nkirote
3:00-3:30PM	Discussions on possibilities of funding in the future in Phase II	Dr. Rebecca Hanlin

Appendix B

WRITESHOP GRANTS MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP PARTICIPATION REGISTRATION

NAME	CONTACTS	COUNTRY	24 th	25 th	26 th	27 th	28 th
1. Heric Thomas	heric.thomas@stipro.or.tz	Tanzania	√	√	√	√	√
2. DiranSoummoni	Diran.Soumonni@wits.ac.za Wits Business School, Wits University	South Africa	X	X	X	X	X
3. MarufSanni	marufsanni@yahoo.com	Nigeria	√	√	√	√	√
4. AnamajMathiesen	anamaj_mathiesen@hotmail.com	Denmark	√	√	√	√	√
5. Erika Kraemer-Mbula	erikakm@gmail.com Tel: +27 12 382 3075 +27 (0)12 382 3073 Cell: +27846807113	Pretoria	√	√	√	√	√
6. OluseyeJegede	Jegede.seye@yahoo.com; oluseye.jegede@nacetem.gov.ng	Nigeria	√	√	√	√	√
7. Timothy Esemu	tesemu@mubs.ac.ug, ukwesa11@gmail.com	Uganda	√	√	√	√	√
8. Tukur Garba	ttukurus@yahoo.com, ttukurus@udusok.edu.ng	Nigeria	√	√	√	√	√
9. LottaTakala	Lotta.takala-greenish@wits.ac.za	South Africa	√	√	√	√	√
10. MusambyaMutam-bala	musambya.mutambala@stipro.or.tz	South Africa	√	√	√	√	√
11. Williams		Ghana	√	√	√	√	√

EzinwaNwagwu	willieezi@yahoo.com +234 – 8030494806 +221765469602 (cell)						
12. DessalegnMollaK etema	dessmoll@gmail.com	Ethiopia	√	√	√	√	√
13. Dolphin Caroline Anyango	anyangodc@gmail.com	Kenya	√	√	√	√	√
14. Abdi Yuya Ahmad	yuyabdi@gmail.com 0912290039	Ethiopia	√	√	√	√	√
15. Simon Roberts	sroberts@uj.ac.za	South Africa	X	X	X	X	X
16. Judith Fessehaie	judith.fessehaie@gmail.com	South Africa	√	√	X	X	X
17. Godfrey Hampwaye	hampwaye@yahoo.co.uk	South Africa	√	√	√	√	X
18. Mr. Wisdom Kaleng'a		Pretoria	√	√	√	√	X
19. Cornelius Dube	dubec@zeparu.co.zw	Zimbabwe	X	X	X	X	X
20. Evengelista Mudaconga	emudconga@gmail.com	Zimbabwe	√	√	√	√	√
21. Juliana Machuve	jullymac@udsm.ac.tz (+27)012 382 3078 Cell:+27727502841	Tanzania	√	√	√	√	√
22. Abiodun A Egbetokun	aaegetokun@gmail.com abiodun.egbetokun@nacetem.org	South Africa	√	√	√	√	√

23. Hailemichael Demisse	H.Demissie@acts-net.org	Kenya	X	√	√	√	√
24. Aschalew Tigabu	A.Tigabu@acts-net.org	Kenya	√	√	√	√	√
25. Brenda Cooper	burnishwriting@gmail.com	South Africa	√	√	√	√	X
26. Omwoye Bosire Onyancha	ONYANOB@UNISA.AC.ZA	South Africa	√	√	√	√	√
27. Shingie Chisoro Dube	shingiec@uj.ac.za	South Africa	√	X	√	√	√
28. Fridah Nikorte	f.nikorte@acts-net.org	Kenya	X	X	X	X	√

Appendix D

Professor Brenda's introductory material

INTRODUCTION

☐ THIS IS A WORK-IN-PROGRESS CONFERENCE.

☐ THE PURPOSE IS THREEFOLD:

1. A WRITING RETREAT
2. GIVING AND GETTING COLLABORATIVE FEEDBACK ☐
3. COMPLETION OF A PAPER FOR PUBLICATION.

☐ THE CHALLENGE IS TO DEVELOP YOUR PAPER'S UNIQUE ANGLE AND TO READ AND GIVE FEEDBACK TO OTHERS BY READING FOR THEIR PAPER'S UNIQUE ANGLE.

I WILL BE CALLING THIS UNIQUE ANGLE A "SHTICK":

1. THE 'SHTICK' IS A FOCUS WITH AN ATTITUDE. IT IS THE SOURCE OF THE PAPER'S ENERGY. IT IS THE REASON FOR THE PAPER TO EXIST. IT IS WHAT GIVES VOICE TO YOUR PAPER. It is sharp as the tip of a thorn. It dances on a pin.
2. THE TITLE OF YOUR PAPER IS THE 'SHTICK'
3. THE ABSTRACT OF YOUR PAPER IS THE 'SHTICK'
4. THE THEORY OF YOUR PAPER IS AT THE SERVICE OF YOUR 'SHTICK', PROVIDING ITS TOOLS/METHODOLOGY
5. THE LITERATURE REVIEW OF YOUR PAPER CONSISTS OF ONLY THOSE SECONDARY SOURCES DIRECTLY RELEVANT TO THE 'SHTICK'
6. THE STRUCTURE OF YOUR PAPER IS THE COMPONENTS OF THE 'SHTICK' - from the tip of the thorn to the tree.

IN OTHER WORDS, THE 'SHTICK' PERMEATES THE PAPER IN EVERY ASPECT.