

Equity, Africa and Collaboration for the SDGs in the Global South

This Special Interest Group (SIG) meeting builds on the June 2025 webinar “Rethinking Research Partnerships—Perspectives on Research and Project Administration in a North–South Collaboration Context”, which explored the dynamics of equitable research partnerships. Co-chaired by Wesley Maraire and Umesh Bawa, the SIG aims to deepen the conversation around transformative collaboration, mutual respect, and inclusive research ecosystems, particularly in the context of Africa and the Global South.

The meeting will revisit key themes from the webinar, including the Africa Charter for Transformative Research Collaborations, the role of language and funding structures, and the importance of centring dignity and respect in partnerships. Participants will engage in critical discussions on how to move forward with collaborative efforts that support the SDGs through equitable and decolonial research practices.

Opening & Context

- Welcome by co-chairs Wesley Maraire and Umesh Bawa.
- A brief reference to the June webinar as the starting point of this ongoing dialogue.
- Emphasis on the SIG as a space to build new connections and deepen the conversation.

Transformative Research Collaborations

- Discussion on principles for equitable and respectful partnerships.
- Reflections on how these principles can guide SDG-related collaborations.

Language, Power, and Funding Structures

- Exploration of how language in funding proposals shapes collaboration.
- Discussion on shifting narratives from “capacity building” to “strengthening.”
- Consideration of how funding models can support or hinder equity.

Mutuality and Administrative Realities

- Challenges of balancing research and administrative roles.
- Strategies for fostering mutual collaboration despite hierarchical structures.
- Importance of long-term impact over short-term outputs.

Decolonisation and Indigenous Knowledge

- Addressing historical imbalances in research agendas.
- Highlighting innovation and expertise within African institutions.
- Opportunities to integrate indigenous knowledge systems meaningfully.

Next Steps and Collaborative Opportunities

- Identifying shared interests and potential joint initiatives.
- Exploring mechanisms for continued engagement within the SIG.
- Discussing how the SIG can support the Africa Charter on Equity in Research Collaboration and the SDG goals.