

# Innovations for Sustainability

**Francis B. Zotor, PhD; RNutr; FHEA - *Trustee, eNutrition Academy;  
President of the Africa Nutrition Society (ANS); Senior Academic & Director,  
International Programmes, University of Health and Allied Sciences, Ho, Ghana;  
Member, SUN Civil Society Steering Group.***



# Capacity Building

- **Definition in context**

often refers to strengthening the **skills, competencies** and **abilities** of faculty in developing societies so they can overcome the causes of their exclusion and suffering:

- an approach to development that builds independence.
- increases the range of **faculties, institutions and communities** who are able to address problems – especially those that arise out of inequity and exclusion.
- Is a continual process of development
- Uses a country's human, scientific, technological, organizational, and institutional and resource capabilities

➔ **Goal:** *to tackle problems related to policy and methods of development, while considering the potential, limits and needs of the people of the country concerned*

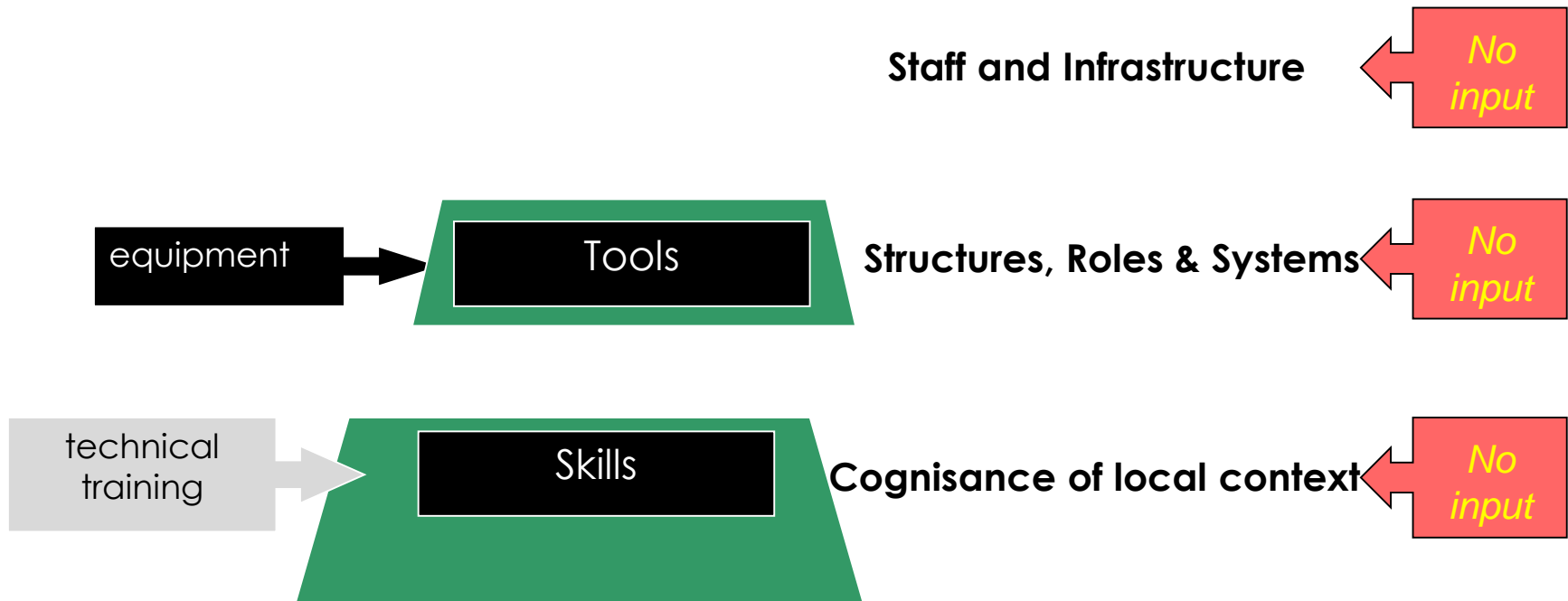
# Implications

- ***Human resource development***
  - equipping individuals with the understanding, skills and access to information, knowledge and training that enables them to perform effectively.
- ***Organizational development***
  - the elaboration of management structures, processes and procedures, not only within organizations but also the management of relationships between the different organizations and sectors (public, private and community).
- ***Institutional and legal framework development***
  - making legal and regulatory changes to enable organizations, institutions and agencies at all levels and in all sectors to enhance their capacities.

***A health team that works with each other and has the capacity to raise the alarm***

# Capacity building challenges in Africa

Technical training and equipment supplied, but relatively ineffective because staff overstretched, supervision weak, and funding for maintenance inadequate



Thanks to: Steve Wootton (University of Southampton); adapted from Richard Brough

To scale up, we need to develop the capacity to design, implement and manage our institutional programmes

What can be done to build research capacity for Africa??

Need to build institutional and individual capacity through:

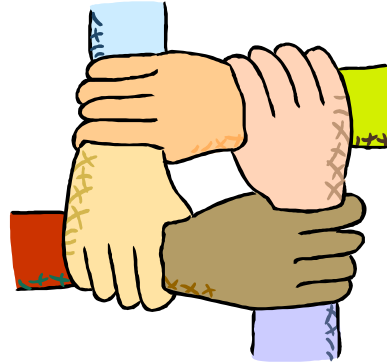
1. North-South collaboration
2. South-South collaborations

# Institutional partners: The Ghana Example of a north-south collaboration

*4 projects involving two Ghanaian institutions & 3 North American institutions*

Iowa State University, USA

University of Ghana  
Legon



University of Connecticut  
Storrs, USA

McGill University,  
Canada

Noguchi Memorial Institute  
for Medical Research (Ghana)

**Outcome: 9 PhD; 36 MSc over a five year period**

# South-South collaborations for research capacity-building

Benefits can be far-reaching because both have similar problems and can better understand each other with regards to interventions needed to address common problems.

- *similarities in history, geography and challenges*

We need to strengthen South-South collaborations, especially collaborations among African countries.

- *to promote closer technical and economic cooperation amongst each other*
- *share best practices, build newer partnerships*
- *Diversify and expand development options and economic links*

Build capacity in grant writing skills: This is the lifeline of a productive research career

Build capacity in scientific writing: Poor publication record of African scientists due to lack of nurturing and training in writing.





# Mentoring initiatives:

Mentoring in most African Universities has broken down due to large student numbers and few faculty

Mentoring of junior faculty  
**“constitutes the most effective form of research capacity development”**  
*Harry Sawyer (2004) (Former VC of Univ. of Ghana)*

“We should pass simple messages of the development of agriculture to the people right down there. Arm in arm, extreme poverty and hunger can be eradicated”  
*Olive Mugende (2010) (VC of Kenyatta University)*

“Let us not depend on outsiders to solve our problems; wherever you are, you can make a difference”  
  
Anna Lartey (2010)  
IUNS President-Elect



SEARCHID: 11010344

**Award Extraordinaire** – prestigious award conferred on individuals who have a proven track record of distinguished services to successful international collaborations

**Special award** - special award given by the African institutions to an individual within Africa who has a proven track record of services in their field of expertise

## Provide opportunity for networking

\* Scientific meetings (e.g., ANS-ANEC; workshops, etc.)

*Young scientists **must** be supported to attend meetings and conferences to network with other colleagues*

**travel fellowships**



Building research capacity is costly in terms of time and resources, however the rewards far exceed the costs

A nation that fails to build its research capacity is a nation doomed for failure





# Thank You

[francisfirst@gmail.com](mailto:francisfirst@gmail.com)



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Scaling Up  
NUTRITION

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