

Research Capacity within IAPRCB Partner Institutions

**An Interim Report on the findings of the First Phase of the IAPRCB
Stakeholder Consultation**

DRAFT

by

Dr Eimear Barrett and Dr Mary Goretti Nakabugo

IAPRCB

October, 2008

Table of contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Methodology	4
3. Findings	5
3.1 Opportunities and Constraints to Individual Research Capacity Building	5
3.1.1 Opportunities for building individual research capacity ...	5
3.1.2 Constraints to building individual research capacity	6
3.1.3 Opportunities for building individual capacity for development research	8
3.1.4 Constraints to building individual capacity for development research	9
Institutional Opportunities and Constraints to RCB	11
3.2.1 Institutional Opportunities for RCB	11
3.2.2 Institutional Constraints to RCB	12
3.2.3 Institutional Opportunities and Constraints to building capacity for international development research	13
3.3 Research Priorities in Health and Education in partner institutions	16
3.4 Building Research Capacity through Partnership	23
3.4.1 Current partnerships with partner institutions	23
3.4.2 Perceived advantages and disadvantages of partnerships	24
3.4.3 Perceived value of participating in an IAPRCB	26

List of Tables

Table 1: Stakeholders consulted in each partner institution	4
Table 2: Opportunities for building individual research capacity	6
Table 3: Constraints to building individual research capacity	7
Table 4: Opportunities for building individual capacity for development research	8
Table 5: Constraints to building individual capacity for development research	9
Table 6: Institutional opportunities for RCB	11
Table 7: Institutional constraints to RCB	12
Table 8: Institutional opportunities and constraints to building capacity for International development	16
Table 9: Research priorities in health in partner universities	18
Table 10: Research priorities in education in partner universities	21
Table 11: Current partnerships within partner institutions	23
Table 12: Perceived advantages and disadvantages of partnership	24
Table 13: Perceived value of participating in an Irish-African partnership	26
Table 14: Maximising the value of the IAPRCB	27

1. Introduction

This is an interim brief of the findings of the first phase of the Irish-African Partnership for Research Capacity Building (IAPRCB) stakeholder consultation. The stakeholder consultation, a core activity of the project, has a dual aim. First, it aims at identifying the opportunities and constraints to research capacity building (RCB) for development within the project's 13 partner universities, and second, it aims at identifying the priority research themes within health and education both within partner universities and as identified by other key stakeholders.

This first phase of the research is focused on RCB within the IAPRCB's 13 partner universities. The research sought to elicit the views of administrators and researchers within the 13 universities on the opportunities and constraints to RCB at both individual and institutional levels within their institutions, together with their views on the key emerging themes in health and education research within their universities. This interim report brings together the key findings from this research.

2. Methodology

Field research for the stakeholder consultation took place between June and September, 2008. During the process, two project researchers visited a total of 13 institutions and spent 3-4 days in each location. In total, three hundred and twelve (312) academics participated in the research. Table 1 below summarises the breakdown of research participants per institution and discipline.

Table 1: Stakeholders Consulted in Each Partner Institution

Institution	Health	Education	Other disciplines	Admin	Total
DCU	08	03	-	01	12
UCD	07	02	10	01	20
TCD	06	02	02	03	13
NUIM	03	04	02	03	12
UL	01	02	-	-	03
MIC	-	06	-	03	09
UCC	02	02	02	01	07
QUB	10	04	02	-	16
UNIMA	03	02	25	03	33
EMU	10	14	06	05	35
UDSM	-	15	13	02	30
MAK	22	43	07	03	75
NUIG	05	04	08	02	19
UU	06	13	08	01	28
Total	83	116	85	28	312

DCU=Dublin City University UCD=University College Dublin TCD=Trinity College Dublin NUIM=National University of Ireland Maynooth UL=University of Limerick MIC=Mary Immaculate College UCC=University College Cork QUB=Queens University Belfast UNIMA=University of Malawi EMU=Eduardo Mondlane University UDSM=University of Dar es Salaam MAK=Makerere University NUIG=National University of Ireland Galway UU=University of Ulster

Data was collected using one to one interviews, group interviews and workshops. For interviews with individuals from a health background, the health researcher led the discussion and for interviews with those from an educational background, the discussion was led by the education researcher. Both researchers took notes and participated in the discussion.

During some of the group interviews and workshops researchers employed an exercise whereby participants were asked to plot perceived level of research capacity against their research career during the last ten years. This allowed an evaluation of the factors perceived to be responsible for low or high levels of capacity and the factors that represented turning points from low to high levels or vice versa.

Group discussions were also used to explore factors associated with institutional capacity building.

Overall, this phase of the stakeholder consultation comprised one hundred and seven (107) one to one interviews, eighteen (18) group interviews and six (6) workshops.

3. Findings

This Section sets out the findings of the field research in three main areas. Sections 3.1 and 3.2 present the opportunities and constraints to RCB in partner universities, at individual and institutional levels respectively. Section 3.3 then outlines the priority research themes in health and education within the universities, while Section 3.4 goes on to present the perceived advantages and disadvantages to partnerships, together with stakeholders' views on their potential benefits.

3.1 Opportunities and Constraints to Individual Research Capacity Building

This Section sets out the opportunities and constraints experienced by individual researchers to research in general (Sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2) and, for stakeholders in Irish universities¹, development research in particular (Sections 3.1.3 and 3.1.4).

3.1.1 Opportunities for building individual research capacity

Several factors were identified as key drivers of individual research capacity in the partner institutions. Some factors cut across Irish and African institutions, while others are applicable to either African or Irish counterparts (North & South). The factors presented in Table 2 below, in order of priority, demonstrate that building individual research capacity benefits from a multilevel approach.

¹ All research conducted within African partner universities constitutes development research whereas a distinction in research within Irish partner universities was made with some researchers speaking of the research environment in general, whilst others spoke specifically about development research.

TABLE 2: Opportunities for building individual research capacity

Shared (African-Irish)	African Partners	Irish (N&S)	N. Ireland
Increased wider demand and support for research (locally and globally)	Opportunity to acquire postgraduate training	Tapping into low-key / low-cost research in the Arts and Humanities	The Research Assessment Exercise (RAE)
Personal networks at national, regional and international level	Access to up-to-date library resources such as online journals and materials obtained through interlibrary loan	Contractual appointments with explicit expectation of research productivity	Opportunity to tap into research funding from the UK and Republic of Ireland
Mentorship and peer-support	Exposure to the international community through conferences and workshops	Minimal/manageable teaching loads in some faculties with one or two days a week dedicated to research	
Undergraduate training with a research component	Internet access		
	Supervision of postgraduate students		
	Prior research experience in NGOs		
	African publishing avenues		

The wider demand for research at 3rd level and the global emphasis on building knowledge economies has compelled institutions in Africa and Ireland to start nurturing environments that encourage individuals to engage in research. For example, individuals have benefited from research offices that offer them administrative support, disseminate funding opportunities and organise short-term research training programmes to beef up researchers' skills. At the departmental level, a culture of supportive research and mentorship schemes that ensures that research and teaching go hand in hand and builds the confidence of young researchers has also been central to individual RCB. Nevertheless, individual researchers have to take personal responsibility to look out for research opportunities and exploit them. Examples of personal efforts include networking with other researchers, not regarding research as a mere funding package but also tapping into low-cost research (as is the case with some researchers in Ireland), utilising research experience acquired in other working contexts such as NGOs (as is the case with some African researchers) and fully exploiting funding opportunities wherever they exist (as is the case with Northern Ireland Irish-British links).

Within the African context, undergoing postgraduate training at Masters and PhD level and supervising graduate students at these two levels, as well as access to key resources such as library facilities, the internet, conference funding opportunities and African publishing avenues are rated highly as key drivers of individual capacity. In the case of Ireland, having explicit expectation of research productivity in staff contracts, creating staff time for research, and participating in external research assessment exercises (as is the case with Northern Ireland) are a powerful catalyst for individual research development. Researchers in all contexts feel that their institutions need to create conducive environments that motivate individuals to reach their full research potential.

3.1.2 Constraints to building individual research capacity

More constraints to research capacity building were identified than opportunities within both African and Irish institutions. The situation was even worse within African partner institutions where multiple constraints were identified in addition to the shared barriers. The constraints, presented in order of priority are summarised in Table 3.

The major barrier to individual RBC is the lack of time to engage in research due to heavy teaching loads, particularly in the humanities, compounded by several other job responsibilities such as supervision of students on placement in professional disciplines (such as teaching and nursing), meetings, and programme management. Some early career research staff take on administrative responsibilities as heads of units/departments before establishing themselves as solid researchers within their disciplines. Although the policy in most institutions is to divide up time equally between teaching, research and community service/outreach, research tends to be marginalised with staff over-charged with many other responsibilities. Other general barriers include a lack of funding, especially in the humanities, limited institutional support that prioritises undergraduate training, and gender-related factors that mainly affect female academics when they start families.

TABLE 3: Constraints to building individual research capacity

Shared (African-Irish)	African Partners	Republic of Ireland
Time constraints	Lack of mentorship and peer support	No research career structures
Lack of research funding especially in the Arts & Humanities	High fees for postgraduate training and limited scholarship opportunities	
Limited institutional support	Skills deficiencies e.g. writing funded proposals and research management skills	Unclear expectation of productivity
	Lack of and/or poor ICT infrastructure (hardware & software) and low broad bandwidth	
Gender-related patterns and difficulties in striking a work-life balance	Low salaries leading to involvement in consultancies to earn extra pay	
Part-time study, part-time research	Power-cuts	
Scarcity of local high tier journals as publishing avenues	Training abroad that is detached from reality	
Low self drive / motivation	Engagement in opportunity-based research	
Resource constraints such as inadequate humanities libraries and lack of physical space (Africa & Republic of Ireland)	English language barrier	
Contractual appointment	Coursework only or monograph Masters/PhD training	

Within the African institutions the culture of mentorship and peer support is quite scarce. This has, in many instances, created a big generation gap with many upcoming researchers struggling on their own in largely competitive research fields. Other barriers are the difficulties in accessing postgraduate training opportunities, infrastructural constraints, low salaries, lack of targeted funding streams leading to many taking on any funded research assignment that comes up, lack of grant proposal writing skills, and training abroad that is sometimes detached from the African realities, especially in science disciplines. In the Republic of Ireland the lax research career structure, with no secure career ladder and no secure payment for researchers is a hindrance to many young researchers when compared to their counterparts in the United Kingdom where permanent research institutes exist. Previously, there have also been unclear expectations of research productivity in most professional disciplines in institutions in the Republic of Ireland thereby limiting individuals' motivation to engage in research.

3.1.3 Opportunities for building individual capacity for development research

One of the long-term goals of IAPRCB is to build capacity for development research in Irish Universities. Although development research is generally a new concept in the partner institutions and there seems to be no agreed upon definition of what it means, there are several opportunities for building individual capacity as summarised, in order of priority, in Table 4.

TABLE 4: Opportunities for Building Individual Capacity for Development Research

Shared (North & South)	Republic of Ireland
Experience of working and/or living in developing contexts	Development research as a new research paradigm
Supervision of international students from developing countries	Development research adding value to technical research
Interest in doing socially-relevant research	Socialisation around development research
Flexible research strategies	
Funding strands for development research	
Teaching development-related courses/modules	
Undertaking research relevant to development	
Staff from developing countries	

There are several individuals on the staff of Irish universities who have experienced working and/or living in developing contexts, especially Sub-Saharan Africa. At least for every 3 stakeholders we met in the Irish universities, one had had a short or long-term assignment in a developing context, or had had links with researchers/academics in an African institution. Similarly, there are several individuals who are supervising international students from the developing world or Irish students whose research projects are rooted in developing contexts. There are also many researchers who are interested in doing socially relevant research. Such individuals are genuinely interested in engaging in practitioner research with practical relevance, as opposed to theoretical research. Fortunately, there are increasing funding strands for development research from within the European Union and other funding agencies such as DFID, NORAD and other international NGOs. With the flexible research strategies existing in all

partner institutions, individuals with a genuine passion for development research have the freedom to pursue their interests. This is further facilitated by the fact that several individuals are already doing research that is development-oriented and/or relevant to development. There are also individuals who are teaching development-related modules who would be inclined to undertake research in the area in order to enrich teaching and student learning. Finally in all the 9 Irish universities, there is an increasing number of individuals from the developing world serving as academic/research staff.

All the above are powerful opportunities for nurturing individual capacity for development research where there is real interest. Socialisation of staff around development research has started in some universities in the Republic of Ireland. In such cases, some researchers have gained an appreciation of development research as a new research paradigm that widens the research scope in addition to adding value to technical research.

3.1.4 Constraints to Building Individual Capacity for Development Research

Despite the increased interest in development research in Irish universities, there are some factors that pose as barriers to building individual capacity for this type of research. All constraints were mentioned by individuals in various universities in the Republic of Ireland who had had comprehensive engagement with development-related work and had experienced the barriers. Five factors (summarised in Table 5 in order of priority) were outlined. Without hands-on experience in development research it would be difficult to change individuals’ mindsets and openness to learn.

TABLE 5: Constraints to Building Individual Capacity for Development Research

S/N	Constraint
1	Funders’ restricted priorities
2	Development research is resource intensive
3	Universities’ restricted and unbalanced reward systems
4	Early academic career pressure
5	The technical nature of most calls for research

It was noted that funders tend to prioritise research with immediate measurable outcomes (mainly experimental). Development research which is normally process-oriented and whose results are measurable in the longer-term does not suit this model. At the same time, development research is not an attractive option because it is resource intensive in terms of travel, time and personal involvement in the research process. Unlike other types of research where Research Assistants (RAs) can collect the data or do the work for the Principal Investigator (PI) and the PI gets rewarded, in development research “the PI has to get his/her boots dirty” (SH006H). The university rewarding/incentive system also favours outputs (publications in first tier journals) rather than products of social engagement such as research reports. For early career researchers

who want to ground themselves in the research career path, especially those in professional disciplines such as nursing and education who normally join academia with limited research experience, development research is not an immediate option. Young staff that joined academia without doctorates are now focused on completing their studies, and those who had doctorates are focused on consolidating their expertise within their disciplinary specialisations. Finally, most calls for research are natural science-focused and technical in nature, giving little chance for engaging in social research. It was estimated that 80% research funding in Irish universities was for sciences and only 20% went into research in the humanities.

3.2 Institutional Opportunities and Constraints to RCB within Partner Institutions

Capacity development at the institutional level is critical if research capacity is to be sustained. Institutional capacity development places an emphasis on the institutional or ‘enabling’ environment to maintain the interest and commitment of researchers. During the stakeholder consultation, institutional capacity development was assessed by exploring the processes through which research strategies and priorities are set and through discussion around the institutional supports and incentives to engage in research.

3.2.1 Institutional Opportunities for RCB

Throughout the 13 institutions included in the consultation, there was clear desire to become more research intensive. This was also accompanied by a drive towards 4th level education and a strong focus on efforts to build a critical mass of researchers around key themes or ‘clusters’. Funding, leadership and support for research emerged as key opportunities for the building of research capacity at the institutional level.

Table 6 below lists, in order of priority, opportunities for institutional RCB.

TABLE 6: Institutional Opportunities for Research Capacity Building

Shared (African & Irish)	African Partners	Irish Partners
Building a critical mass of researchers.	Increasing the number of staff and students with both masters and PhD qualifications.	The Quality Assurance review (South) and Research Assessment Exercise (North) have focused institutional research strategies.
Support in the form of advice, workshops or training courses on writing of funding applications, grant proposals and budgets.	Networks or linkages with institutions in the global North who have access to funding.	Seminars hosted by key speakers or forums allow researchers to discuss interests and exchange ideas.
Dedicated research support departments or managers that provide assistance.	Curricular reform and the development of areas of excellence were viewed as opportunities to focus research strategies/priorities.	Promoting research leaders to develop research agendas and attract resources and new researchers.
International networking opportunities through institutional partnerships.	Deciding own research priorities and follow own interests rather than that of a funding body.	Recruiting key players from international stage.
Supporting staff to attend conferences and to go on sabbatical.	Partnerships with individuals who have experience of publishing in high impact journals.	Allowing the buy out of teaching time.
Allocation of funds for seed or start-up projects.	Adoption of the European credit system.	
Linking research to promotion and introduction of benchmarking schemes to make the process more transparent.		

3.2.2 Institutional Constraints to Research Capacity Building

Constraints to institutional RCB drew from both the internal environment within partner institutions and the external environment. The greatest constraints were in the availability of funding for research projects and building a mass of researchers with an appropriate skills base. Table 7 below lists constraints to institutional capacity building according to priority.

TABLE 7: Institutional Constraints to RCB

Shared (African & Irish)	African Partners	Irish Partners
Both the Irish and African institutions felt that governments should increase the level of funds for research.	Lack of research funding.	Need to target non-exchequer funding, resulting in added pressure attract funding.
Lack of skills to attract funding.	Institutions not being able to provide access to library resources, computers and laboratory equipment.	Some Irish stakeholders felt that Ireland is still developing in terms of international research.
Departments not traditionally associated with research such as nursing or education are still young in terms of research.	Many staff members are still working to obtain post graduate qualifications.	
Need to increase the number of postgraduate students and decrease the number of undergraduate students.	Insufficient institutional focus on research.	
Need to support capacity building in the humanities to a level equivalent to that of the sciences.	Lack of coherence in setting research agendas. Inability to set research priorities when no funding is available.	
In some institutions there is still a lack of transparency around promotion.	Being a passive partner in research projects – not writing proposals or deciding priorities.	
Action based research is not recognized or given the same weighting as theoretical research resulting in publications.	More training in writing of proposals needed.	
	High cost of bandwidth, e.g. \$26,500 per month .	
	Institutions using the same criteria for promotion as those institutions in the North even though access to resources is unequal.	

3.2.3 Institutional Opportunities and Constraints to International Development Research

International development activities are supported at the highest levels of the Irish institutions. Furthermore, there is a recognition that development research cross-cuts virtually all academic disciplines. All of the 9 Irish institutions have established linkages with institutions in developing countries. In fact, many of these collaborations involve at least one of the four IAPRCB partner institutions with Memoranda of Understanding already in place.

Even so, development research does not feature as a major institutional research priority in any of the Irish institutions. However, efforts have been made to mainstream and incorporate development or development related studies into the curriculum. This has been achieved through the introduction of specific development modules or 'streams' into pre-existing courses or by the establishment of new courses at the postgraduate level. The list below provides an example of the range of postgraduate courses available throughout the nine Irish universities.

- Development Studies
- Development Education
- Development & Globalisation
- Globalisation
- Global Health
- Immunology & Global Health
- International Studies
- Intercultural Studies
- Climate Change
- Human Rights
- Migration, Race & Ethnicity
- Anthropology & Development

A number of institutions are also investigating the feasibility of implementing distance learning courses directed at developing countries. One example is from a School of Agriculture that is in the process of establishing an online Masters for an African partner institution. This is based on an existing Masters in Rural Development but will be rewritten to make use of African examples in case studies.

Linked into these new streams or courses are specific research centres or projects which centralise, manage and promote development activities. The initiatives listed below span across all 9 Irish institutions.

1. Centre for Global Education – Queen's University Belfast

The Centre for Global Education was established in 1986 by eight development agencies including Irish Aid, DFID, Trocaire and Concern. The centre aims to use education as a means of challenging the causes of poverty and inequality in both local and global contexts by working with all sectors of education.

2. UNESCO Centre – University of Ulster

The UNESCO Centre at the University of Ulster was established in 2001 and is supported by UNESCO, DFID, Irish Aid, The World Bank and the European Union. The mission of the

UNESCO Centre is to be a centre of excellence, providing and supporting research, teaching and development to promote pluralism, human rights and democracy locally and globally.

3. Development Education & Research Network – NUI Galway

The Development Education and Research Network is funded by Irish Aid and was established in 2005. The network aims to enable and enhance the sharing of knowledge and skills relevant to development issues and contribute to capacity building for development education and research at NUI Galway.

4. UBUNTU Network – Coordinated by University of Limerick

All of the Southern Irish institutions are members of the UBUNTU network which aims to enable and support post primary teacher educators to effectively integrate development education and education for sustainable development into their professional practice.

5. Centre for Sustainable Livelihoods – University College Cork

The Centre for Sustainable Livelihoods was established in 1998 and supports research, advocacy, and action on the ground in countries threatened by famine. It brings together relief and development practitioners and academics drawn from the fields of geography, politics, agriculture, economics, sociology, anthropology, and others.

6. Combating Diseases of Poverty Consortium – NUI Maynooth

The Combat Diseases of Poverty Consortium was established in 2007 and is funded by the Higher Education Authority and Irish Aid. The consortium comprises NGOs, Irish SMEs and higher education and research institutes in both Ireland and Africa and aims to build educational capacities for combating diseases poverty. The initial focus is on East Africa.

7. Centre for Global Health and Trinity International Development Initiative – Trinity College Dublin

The Centre for Global Health aims to build collaborative links with universities in high-income countries who have already well-established reputations in international health, as well as universities in the South and East who have developed significant expertise in global health research countries. They also endeavour to provide a focal point for global health activity in Ireland by collaborating with third-level institutions on an all-Ireland basis through the Irish Forum for Global Health.

Trinity International Development Initiative (TIDI) was established in 2007. TIDI's task is to manage and promote TCD's expanded engagement with research and teaching on subjects related to international development. By helping to forge links between different teaching and research activities, it aims to ensure that the College's overall approach to international development is distinctive, coherent and integrated.

8. Centre for Global Development through Education – Mary Immaculate College Limerick

Centre for Global Development through Education was established in 2008 and aims contribute to poverty reduction in partner countries in Uganda and Lesotho, by enhancing the quality of basic education through capacity building in teacher education. The project is a consortium of 18

higher education institutions from across Ireland and Uganda and Lesotho and is funded by Irish Aid.

9. Building Inclusive Governance Systems for Poverty Reduction – Dublin City University

This project was established in 2007 under the Programme of Strategic Cooperation between Irish Aid and Higher Education and Research Institutes. The aim of this project is to build sustainable relationships between DCU and the University of Dar es Salaam and the University of Addis Ababa. Proposed outputs include joint research projects in gender and development, research seminars and publication of research findings in international peer-reviewed journals.

10. International Development Studies Initiative - University College Dublin

The International Development Studies Initiative is funded by Irish Aid and hosts a new Chair to coordinate activities including; establishment of multi-disciplinary teams of researchers working on poverty reduction throughout the various research institutes, expansion of development modules available to students in UCD and development of a partnership with the University of Dar es Salaam.

Listed in Table 8 below are the perceived opportunities and barriers to institutional engagement in international development

TABLE 8: Institutional Opportunities and Constraints to building Capacity for International Development Research

Opportunities	Barriers
Institutions making financial commitments to support research and teaching in development issues.	Irish Aid is the main funder of development research in higher education institutions and tends to fund projects for 3-5 years. Such short term projects, with no guarantee of renewal of funds, has created concern about sustainability.
Institutions employing staff to build the capacity for development research and focus development initiatives at the institutional level.	Funding provided by Irish Aid is for partnership or networking projects only. Funding for research must be sought from other sources. Only one group from each institution can submit a proposal at any time.
Hosting student electives reflecting the MDGs across an entire institution.	In the area of neglected diseases such as malaria the main Irish funders are reluctant to fund research in areas not classed as relevant in Ireland.
Incorporation of development research or activities into the Irish institutions was viewed as an opportunity to rebuild development strategies in Ireland whilst performing Ireland's duty as a global citizen. The reputation of the universities' was also seen to benefit.	In terms of the number of calls for proposals for development research projects, it was suggested that Ireland compares poorly to other European countries. It was felt that development research needs to be developed more in Ireland.
Income may be generated from postgraduate student fees paid by aid agencies. Postgraduate students would also increase institutional outputs by graduating and publishing papers.	Academic fees for EU students are €5000, whereas fees for non-EU students are €13,000.
Postdoctoral researchers from developing countries could help to increase the number of PhD students in disciplines where there is a low level of interest from Irish students for example in civil engineering.	Certain professional bodies e.g. nursing boards will not recognise placements completed outside of the EU . Even in the case where students work outside the EU during holiday time, the work may not be recognised.

3.3 Research Priorities in Health and Education in Partner Universities

In addition to identifying opportunities and constraints to RCB, research participants were asked what they felt to be the principal research priorities in health and education in the future within their universities. Tables 9 and 10 below detail the responses of stakeholders at each of the thirteen institutions. Both Tables show many overlaps in interest, and it is hoped that these interests will provide opportunities for new partnerships to emerge.

It should be noted that due to time constraints it has been possible only to provide information on the broad thematic areas at this stage. However, further details will be provided in the full report.

TABLE 9: Research Priorities in Health in Partner Universities

Research Area	UNIMA	UEM	MAK	UDSM	UU	QUB	NUIG	UL	MIC	UCC	NUIM	UCD	TCD	DCU
Ageing								X				X	X	
Agriculture and Healthcare							X			X	X	X		
Alzheimers/Dementia						X					X			
Biodiversity/Biosafety/Conservation	X			X						X	X	X	X	
Cancer		X		X	X									
Cardiology/CVD		X			X	X				X			X	
Cerebral Palsy						X								
Child Health						X						X	X	X
Climate Change/Climate Change & Environment	X			X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	
Coastal & Marine Res					X									
Complex pregnancy						X								
Curricular Reform in Medicine/Health														
Dentistry			X			X								
Disease Control			X											
Diabetes		X								X				
Disease Modelling				X		X	X							
Economics												X	X	
Ethics														X
Family Planning			X							X				
Food Security/Food Studies/Nutrition	X		X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X
Fuel Poverty/Renewable Energy		X		X		X					X			
Genetically Modified Organisms				X										
Geophysical Research					X		X							

Geriatric Medicine						X						X		
Research Area	UNIMA	UEM	MAK	UDSM	UU	QUB	NUIG	UL	MIC	UCC	NUIM	UCD	TCD	DCU
Gender		X	X	X							X	X	X	
Health & ICT			X			X	X					X	X	
Health Education		X					X				X			
Health Equity							X				X			
Health Information Systems		X												
Health & Law						X								
Health Management		X												
Health Policy														X
Health Systems Research							X					X	X	
HIV/AIDS	X	X	X							X	X			X
Human Geog & Societal Research		X		X	X						X			
Human Resources in Health		X					X							
Industrialisation	X													
Infant mortality			X											X
Infectious Medicine		X			X	X	X				X		X	
Kaposi Sarcoma		X												X
Learning Disabilities					X									
Malaria		X	X		X		X			X			X	
Maternal health	X			X		X	X					X		X
Meningitis			X											
Microbiology					X	X								
Natural Hazards					X									
Natural Products/Pharmacology				X	X							X	X	
Neglected Diseases				X										
Neonatal/ Perinatal Research			X			X							X	
Non infectious disease										X				
Nursing Practice	X													X
Plant Biotechnology	X			X	X					X	X			

Research Area	UNIMA	UEM	MAK	UDSM	UU	QUB	NUIG	UL	MIC	UCC	NUIM	UCD	TCD	DCU
Public Health		X	X			X	X			X		X	X	X
Rapid Diagnostics		X	X							X				
Reproductive health		X	X											
Rural Development	X	X								X	X	X		
Sexual Health					X		X							
TB		X	X								X			
Tetanus			X											
Tobacco related disease										X				
Trauma		X												
Trypanosomes											X		X	
Vaccines (Polio, Whooping Cough, Malaria)											X			
Water	X	X			X					X		X	X	X
Zoology/Vet				X								X	X	

TABLE 10: Research Priorities in Education in Partner Universities

Research Area	UNIMA	UEM	MAK	UDSM	UU	QUB	NUIG	UL	MIC	UCC	NUIM	UCD	TCD	DCU
Adult & Child Literacy		X		X		X					X			
Community Development		X			X	X	X				X	X		X
Curriculum Reform		X	X	X				X			X			
Curriculum Development		X	X			X		X						
Citizenship					X							X		X
Diversity in Education			X		X			X				X		X
Early Childhood Education				X						X				
Education & Environment			X											
Education & Language			X	X										
Education for Sustainable Development			X					X						
Education in Post-Conflict areas			X		X	X								
Educational Evaluation Survey/Study		X	X											X
Educational Management			X	X		X								
E-learning		X	X											
Family Studies	X													
Gender & Inclusion			X	X	X			X		X	X	X		
Globalisation	X												X	X
Governance	X													
Health & Human Rights						X	X							
Health Psychology and early pregnancy		X												
HIV/AIDS		X	X				X			X	X		X	
ICT in Education		X	X	X	X						X	X		X
Immigration & Emmigration	X													
Inclusive Education	X			X	X					X	X	X	X	
International Relations	X													

Research Area	UNIMA	UEM	MAK	UDSM	UU	QUB	NUIG	UL	MIC	UCC	NUIM	UCD	TCD	DCU
Lifelong Learning	X		X											
Occupational & professional development		X	X	X	X									
Physical Education				X		X								
Poverty & Unemployment/Underprivilege	X				X		X			X		X		
Problem based learning		X												
Reflective Practice					X									
Research in Divided Societies					X									
Research Processes	X		X											
Science & Mathematics Education		X	X	X		X								
Security & Domestic Violence	X													
Student Learning										X				
Teacher Education/Initial Teacher Education		X	X					X		X	X			X
Truth & Reconciliation					X									
Underperforming Education System				X										
Learning Disability/Special Education		X		X	X								X	

3.4 Building Research Capacity through Partnership

The IAPRCB embraces the notion of partnership as a key driver of RCB at individual and institutional level. The stakeholder consultation explored what the different stakeholders perceived as the advantages and disadvantages of any form of partnership, what they viewed as the added-value of participating in an Irish-African research partnership, and the different ways in which such a network can be maximised.

3.4.1 Current Partnerships within Partner Institutions

The increasing importance of partnership in research was recognised in all of the institutions. Virtually all stakeholders reported some level of partnership, including joint research projects, co-authoring of papers, teaching or lecturing in partner institutions, providing consultancy or peer review services, supervising research students, and serving as external examiners. The requirement of many funding bodies that proposals be submitted by consortia means that inter-institutional partnerships are now essential.

Table 11 below details examples of current partnerships. These partnerships exist at individual, departmental and institutional levels.

TABLE 11: Current Partnerships within Partner Institutions

Shared (African-Irish)	African Partners	Irish Partners
Existing partnerships between Irish institutions and at least one of the four African IAPRCB partner institutions.	Partnerships with universities linked to cooperation programmes run by countries including Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Canada, USA, Ireland, UK, and Japan.	Links to other European institutions through Framework Programme 7 and ERASMUS type programmes.
Links between Irish institutions and African institutions in countries such as Sudan, Ethiopia, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Gambia, Lesotho, Sierra Leone, Ghana and Kenya.	All of the African partner universities are members of the Association of African Universities.	All Southern institutions linked through the UBUNTU network.
Partnerships through Irish Aid and DFID.	Partnerships between regional institutions through the Southern African Development Community (SADC) of which Malawi, Mozambique and Tanzania are members.	Cross border collaborations in disciplines such as nursing & midwifery, public health, engineering and education.
Partnerships through NGOs such as Goal, Plan, Trocaire, Christian Aid, Concern.	A high proportion of collaborations between the African partner institutions are in education and ICT.	Some partnerships through the Centre for Cross Border Studies in Armagh.
Partnerships with institutions in the USA.		Irish universities are partnered with institutions in China, India, Malaysia and Indonesia in the areas of science and technology.

Partnerships between schools of Nursing & Midwifery and hospitals and clinics for student assessments.		Links with institutions in South American countries such as Bolivia, Brazil, Cuba and Columbia where more common in the humanities.
--	--	---

3.4.2 Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of Partnerships

Stakeholders cited more advantages than disadvantages to partnership approaches. Table 12 below summarises these perceived advantages and disadvantages in order of priority. High on the list of shared advantages among African and Irish partners was the opportunity to share knowledge and understanding, thereby opening up new ways of looking at the world and building individual research capacity. Partnerships crossing borders were perceived to be influential in facilitating international outreach and engagement with other cultures. On a broader perspective, partnerships were deemed useful in addressing local, regional and global disparities and inequality generally. In the context of capacity development, partnerships were perceived to create the basis for research capacity building through the sharing of expertise as well as widening research funding opportunities.

TABLE 12: Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of Partnerships

Shared Point of View (I-A)	African Point of view	Irish (N&S) Point of view	Republic of Ireland
Advantages			
Knowledge sharing	Accessing unavailable resources and equipment		Facilitate multidisciplinary research
Broaden funding opportunities	Exposure to new areas of research		
Create basis for RCB			
Address disparity and inequality			
Help institutionalise research			
Disadvantages			
	Disproportionate allocation of resources	Management constraints	
	Lack of transparency	Resource intensity	
		Un-matching partners	

Some stakeholders in the African institutions viewed partnerships to be useful in enabling resource-constrained partners to access facilities and equipment in other partner institutions. They also perceived partnerships to be powerful in exposing them to new areas of research being undertaken by other partners.

One identified advantage of partnership identified by some researchers in the Republic of Ireland was the ability to facilitate multi-disciplinary research engagement between the sciences and the humanities. This view could have arisen from the fact that most Irish universities have traditionally been science-based. The multi-disciplinary approach is favoured because

development problems require multi-disciplinary solutions, and the world works in a multi-disciplinary way.

The disadvantages of partnerships were divided among Irish and African counterparts.

Some Irish partners considered partnerships to be difficult to manage and that they could be time consuming if not well structured. As one partner noted, “one can be caught up in the games of partnerships” (SH053E). There was also the expressed difficulty of matching/twinning principal investigators and postgraduate students in cross-border research partnerships where this was a requirement. Individuals felt it was difficult to find researchers with similar expertise to match with. Some stakeholders in Ireland also perceived partnerships to be intensive in terms of time and financial resources.

Two weaknesses of partnerships noted by some African counterparts were the disproportionate allocation/distribution of resources, particularly in north-south partnerships, and the lack of transparency leading to mistrust and disrespect among partners.

3.4.3 Perceived value of participating in an Irish-African Research Capacity Building Partnership

In addition to the general advantages of partnerships, and despite the perceived disadvantages as outlined in the preceding section, stakeholders highlighted the value of participating in an Irish-African Partnership specifically and offered a number of suggestions for how the potential of the IAP can be maximised. Tables 13 and 14 below summarise the emerging issues in these two areas in order of priority.

TABLE 13: Perceived Value of Participating in an Irish African Partnership

Shared (African-Irish)	African Partners	Irish (N&S)
Opens funding opportunities	Quality enhancement of staff practice and output through external review mechanisms, mentorship schemes and staff exchange	The partnership can provide good training and learning to Irish staff and students to think beyond Ireland
Opportunity to engage in collaborative comparative research thereby facilitate cross-cultural exchange of ideas including south-south and cross-border understanding	Short-term training to curb skills deficiency e.g. grant proposal writing and research management for academic and administrative staff	Can help contribute to universities' civic engagement and build their reputation as actors in global development.
Development of human capital in Africa and Ireland with skills to address global issues	Benefiting from Masters, PhD and postdoctoral scholarships/fellowships that might be available in Irish institutions	Accessing good doctoral students
	Resources and equipment access e.g. making use of hi-tech and electronic databases in Irish Institutions	Learning how partnerships work
	Gaining insights in how to build research capacity	Easy acquisition of research samples such as for clinical trials
		Universities influencing governments to get interested in development cooperation
		Opportunity for student placements

It was agreed among African and Irish stakeholders that an Irish-African RCB partnership would broaden research funding opportunities. Most development research funding agencies are interested in North-South and South-South initiatives. With funding in place, it would be possible to engage in collaborative research activities. This would not only provide a cross-cultural learning dimension, but would also build the capacity of Irish and African researchers as a result of the hands-on experience.

There appears to be a two-way anticipation of the Irish-African Partnership. Both Irish and African counterparts see it as a great learning experience that will improve the quality of their staff and students in various ways.

TABLE 14: Maximising the value of the IAPRCB

Shared (African-Irish)	African Partners	Irish (N&S)	Republic of Ireland	N. Ireland
Nurturing two-way expertise and two-way learning	Learning from other existing RCB partnerships	Developing joint online/distance education programmes	Addressing the issue of whether to build capacity of Irish scholars to engage in development research or support African institutions to deal with problems	Engaging other structures beyond the universities e.g. policy makers, local communities, NGOs and other donors
Prioritising Masters, PhD and Post-doctoral training/fellowship as the basis for RCB	Civic education of stakeholders on how partnerships work		Be mindful of disparities	
Devising ways of minimising the digital divide between Irish and African institutions			Operating at high, middle and lower levels for sustainability and to institutionalise	
Dedicated and sustainable funding streams				
Formation of sub-groups around similar interests and specific research questions				
Mentorship schemes for Irish and African upcoming researchers				
Support staff beyond PhD training and have then grounded in the research career				
Striking balance between human resource capacity and infrastructural development				
Nurturing south-south partnerships within IAP and having Irish partners as enablers				
Focus on practical and result-oriented research				
Create avenues for dissemination of research findings from IAP				

African partners hope to benefit from resource and equipment sharing as well as accessing Masters, PhD and Postdoctoral fellowship opportunities that might exist in Irish institutions. Similarly, Irish academics consider the prospects of getting good doctoral students, sharing research samples and accessing student placements where necessary. The Irish partners also view the IAPRCB as an opportunity for them to participate actively in global development.

Based on the anticipated mutual benefits from IAPRCB, both African and Irish stakeholders propose short-term, mid-term and long-term ways in which to exploit the massive benefits that the partnership is hoped to yield. The suggestions, summarised in Table 14 above, include, but not limited to, two-way sharing of resources and expertise; developing and implementing joint training programmes; working on concrete joint research projects; mentoring upcoming researchers as well as involving university management, administrative staff, researchers and stakeholders beyond universities to ensure relevance and sustainability of the partnership. While some of the proposals might be developed within the 3-year pilot phase of IAPRCB, most of them are long-term and need individual and institutional commitment to the partnership.