

# Embedding training in African and Asian university professional development programmes

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# Why embed research communication skills?

## The PROBLEM:

- This type of training rarely exists in universities in low income countries
- When it does exist, it is often as an ad-hoc writing workshop that only reaches a small group of people
- Individuals may benefit but what about the broader institutional capacity?
- Flying in international trainers is costly and does not contribute to building local university capacity.
- New staff/academics entering each year → always demand

# Our approach

## Approach:

- 10 universities / research institutes in 4 countries
- Long-term partnerships (2-3 years) to build capacity in communicating research
  - Face to face training
  - Online courses and blended learning

## Partnerships involve:

- Kick-off meeting with all key people
- Training of Trainers workshop
- Co-production from the start and accountability
- Local context setting and understanding
- Adapt all materials for low-resource environments.

# What we have learnt

**Capacity development is not just about input → output:**

- There is no **one-size-fits-all** approach – every partnership requires equal attention and co-design.
- **Adaptability** is key and should be anticipated.
- Long-term partnerships are successful because of time spent forging **relationships**, and by moving beyond north-south funder-funded relations
- Regional or country **networks** are an important component in sustainability

# How we have applied what we have learnt:

- We work closely with the partner to **co-design** the ‘embedding’ programme based on local needs
- We **adapt** as we go along, sometimes mid-workshop
- ‘**Working sessions**’ complement all kick-off Training of Trainer workshops → protected planning time
- Institutional work is underpinned by regional **peer support** networks
- Link up partner institutions with wider **AuthorAID** network.

## Some successes:

### **Tanzanian Fisheries Research Institute (TAFIRI):**

“the number of manuscripts being developed is overwhelming. We are currently preparing for the African Great Lakes Conference and the number of abstracts submitted from Kigoma alone are 5—all written by course participants”

### **Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Ghana:**

- 80% of past workshop participants had submitted a grant proposal.
- 21 had authored or co-authored a manuscript that was accepted.