



UNITAFRICA

*Empowering the Academic Cooperation between Italy and Africa for
fostering the quality and effectiveness of the higher education systems in a
mutual learning environment*

TNE23-00050 - CUP D81I24000280007

Meeting of the TNE UNITAFRICA Project

**Empowering Academic Cooperation between Italy and Africa to Foster the Quality
and Effectiveness of Higher Education Systems in a Mutual Learning Environment**

15-16th May 2025, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Venue: Italian Cultural Institute, Addis Ababa

Participation mode: in-person and virtual

Date: May 15-16th, 2025

Expected participants: 60 persons, Representatives of the African and Italian partner Universities

Language: English (talks and presentations in French will be identified in the programme)

OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING

In line with the overall scope of the TNE UNITAFRICA project to foster cooperation between Italian and African Universities through innovative teaching methods and training opportunities, the Addis Ababa first physical consortium-wide meeting represents a milestone to strengthen the interaction between the Italian and African Partners in the perspective of ensuring a solid project implementation according to its aims and structure.

The meeting intends to present current project implementation; clarify project structure; plan short term and medium-term activities; analyze project risks and contingencies and relative mitigation measures; -evaluate impacts and foresee future sustainability.

CONTENTS

The meeting will firstly focus on the overall structure, activities, major deliverables, timing and components of the 5 project work packages (WPs):

- WP 2, UNITAFRICA network and digital platform,
- WP 3, Innovative Education for Master & PhD Studies
- WP 4, Skills development
- WP 5, Impact evaluation
- WP 6 Communication and outreach

Specific sessions will focus on innovative teaching methods and training opportunities, mobilities with open interactive analysis of project strengths and weaknesses and consequent discussions among participants to define challenges and possible strategies to face them.

Past and current experiences between Italian and African partners will be presented in the field of Education, Research/PhD Programs and Public Engagement in order to contribute to strengthening collaboration in a perspective of project sustainability.



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PROGRAMME

Thursday, May 15 – Morning session

09:00 – 09:45 Registration and Welcome

09:45 – 10:10 Official Opening & Institutional greetings

- Semen Kumurzhi, Director of the Istituto Italiano di Cultura (IIC) in Addis Ababa
- Agostino Palese, Italian Ambassador in Ethiopia
- Maurizio Busanelli, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Italy to African Union
- Samuel Kifle, President Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia (TBC)
- Jemal Abafita, President Jimma University (TBC)
- Kassu Fantaye, Ethiopian Catholic University (ETH)
- Baribeshya Jean Bosco, Vice Chancellor INES-Ruhengeri (RW)
- Francesco Castelli, Rector of the University of Brescia
- Mazzola Michele, General Directorate for Internationalization and Communication, Ministry of University and Research

10:10 – 10:30 Scientific Diplomacy as a Tool for International Cooperation

- Laura Pacifici Noja, Scientific and Technological Attaché of the Embassy of Italy in Ethiopia and at African Union

10:30 – 11:00 The Role of University Cooperation between Italy and Africa: The TNE UNITAFRICA Project

- Sabrina Sorlini, Scientific Director of the UNITAFRICA Project

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee Break & Networking

11:30 – 12:00 The UNITAFRICA Project: From CUCS to Unitafrica Alliance

- Guido Zolezzi, Coordinator of CUCS and Unitafrica Alliance; Emanuela Colombo, CRUI Delegate in National Council for Development Cooperation (CNCS)

12:00 – 13:00 Session 1: EDUCATION Activities of the UNITAFRICA Project

- Teaching methods and tools, presentation of the PIT (Marcella Distefano, WP2 and WP6 Coordinator)
- Training opportunities for students (Laura Viganò, WP3 Supporter)
- Advanced Skills training opportunities for academic staff (Emanuela Colombo and Luigi Milella, WP4 Coordinators)
- Q&A

13:00 – 14:30 Lunch and Networking



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Thursday, May 15 – Afternoon session

14:30 – 15:30 Session 2: Experiences of MOBILITY towards and within the UNITAFRICA Project

Coordinator: Maria Sassi

- Presentations of innovative mobility programs
- Panel of representatives from Italian and African universities that have already carried out mobility experiences
 - Sassi Maria – Università di Pavia
 - Jean Bosco Baribeshya, INES-Ruhengeri, Rwanda
 - Temesgen Yohannes – Wolaita Sodo University, Ethiopia
 - Shawul Alemayehu Abate, Madda Walabu University, Ethiopia
 - Khan Anisa, University of Johannesburg, Sudafrica
 - Diop Cheikh Abdoul Khadir, University Cheikh Anta Diop, Senegal
 - Asante Eric Appau, KNUST, Ghana
 - Mbui David Kirimi, Kenyatta University, Kenya
 - Wondimu Kibret Bezabih, Madda Walabu University, Ethiopia
- Q&A

15:30 – 17:00 Session 3: INTERACTIVE GROUP WORK: Analysis of the Project's Strengths and Weaknesses and Proposals

- Group 1: Unitafrica Alliance & Communication (coordinators Guido Zolezzi and Marcella Distefano)
- Group 2: Education for Students & Advanced Skills (coordinators Laura Viganò and Luigi Milella)
- Group 3: International Mobility for Students and Staff (Maria Sassi, Irene De Stefani, Aiko Terao)

17:00 – 18:00 Discussion

- Rapporteur on Group outcomes
 - Discussion on project challenges and future strategies
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Friday, May 16

09:00 – 09:15 Institutional greetings

- Semen Kumurzhi, Director of the Istituto Italiano di Cultura (IIC) in Addis Ababa
- Claudio Pasqualucci, Director of Addis Abeba ITA Office at ITA - Italian Trade Agency
- Pius Mgeni, Vice Chancellor Ruaha Catholic University, Iringa (TZ)
- Gilbert Munana, University of Technology and Arts of Byumba (RW)
- Awol Seid, Wollo University (ETH)

09:15 – 11:00 Session 4: Interactive discussion on AREAS OF ACTIVITIES for strategic collaborations

- Group 1: Education (Coordinators Marcella Distefano, Laura Viganò)
- Group 2: Research&PhD (Coordinator Piergiorgio Sonato)
- Group 3: Public engagement & Third mission (Coordinator Guido Zolezzi)

Presentation of past and current experiences between Italian and African partners on each area, discussion on how UNITAFRICA can contribute to strengthening collaboration in the various fields of activity

11:00 – 12:00 Coffee Break & Matching Meetings and Opportunities

12:00 – 12:30 Evaluation of the Project Impact

- Roberto Valentino, WP5 Coordinator; Katiuscia Crispi, WP5 collaborator

12:30 – 13:00 Closing and Conclusions

Rapporteur on Group outcomes

Summary of key points

Next steps and commitments

13:00 – 14:30 Lunch and Networking



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List of Speakers

Abafita Jemal, President Jimma University (invited)
Asante Eric Appau, KNUST (Ghana)
Baribeshya Jean Bosco – INES-Ruhengeri (Rwanda)
Busanelli Maurizio – African Union
Castelli Francesco – Università di Brescia (Italy)
Colombo Emanuela – Politecnico di Milano (Italy)
Crispi Katiussia– Università di Parma (Italy)
De Stefani Irene – Università di Trento (Italy)
Diop Cheikh Abdoul Khadir, University Cheikh Anta Diop (Senegal)
Distefano Marcella – Università di Messina (Italy)
Kassu Fantaye, Ethiopian Catholic University (ETH)
Khan Anisa, University of Johannesburg (South Africa)
Kifle Samuel – Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia (invited)
Kumurzhi Semen – Italian Cultural Institute
Mazzola Michele, Ministry of University and Research (Italy)
Mbui David Kirimi, Kenyatta University (Kenya)
Mgeni Pius, Ruaha Catholic University, Iringa (Tanzania)
Milella Luigi – Università della Basilicata (Italy)
Munana Gilbert, University of Technology and Arts of Byumba (Rwanda)
Pacifici Noja Laura – Italian Embassy in Ethiopia
Palese Agostino – Italian Embassy in Ethiopia
Pasqualucci Claudio, Director ICE Addis Abeba
Sassi Maria – Università di Pavia (Italy)
Seid Awol, Wollo University (Ethiopia)
Shawul Alemayehu Abate, Madda Walabu University (Ethiopia)
Sonato Piergiorgio – Università di Padova (Italy)
Sorlini Sabrina – Università di Brescia (Italy)
Temesgen Yohannes – Wolaita Sodo University (Ethiopia)
Terao Aiko – Università di Brescia (Italy)
Valentino Roberto – Università di Parma (Italy)
Viganò Laura – Università di Bergamo (Italy)
Wondimu Kibret Bezabih, Madda Walabu University (Ethiopia)
Zolezzi Guido – Università di Trento (Italy)

List of speakers for working groups

Adal Mussa, Wollo University (Ethiopia)
Bezawork Afework Bogale, Addis Ababa University (Ethiopia)
Dawit Daniel Dando, Dire Dawa University (Ethiopia)
El Zubeir Ibtisam Elyas Mohamed, University of Khartoum (Sudan)
Hussein Ibrahim Sei, Wollo University (Ethiopia)
Mersha Sintayehu Yigrem, Hawassa University (Ethiopia)
Mukhtar Mohamed Ahmed, Somali University (Somalia)
Wittmann Gerda-Elisabeth, University of Namibia (Namibia)
Wondimu Kibret Bezabih, Madda Walabu University (Ethiopia)

The active participation of all attendees in the interactive groups is strongly welcome