

Africa Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund for Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology

Progress Report to the PASET Executive Board January– March 2020

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Executive Summary

The Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund of the Partnership for skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (PASET) aims to strengthen the institutional capacity of African universities to train quality PhD graduates, enhance research and innovation environments at these institutions and to generate transformative technologies that respond to key African challenges. This report provides summary of progress in implementation of the RSIF Program for the period January to March 2020. Key achievements during the period are:

1. Resource Mobilization: Burkina Faso has signed the *icipe* subsidiary agreement (SA) confirming their contribution of USD 2m to RSIF through the World Bank (WB) African Centres of Excellence Impact (ACE Impact) Project. Previously Ghana signed the SA with *icipe* with funding from the same WB project. Several other countries including Benin, Nigeria, and Senegal are at various stages of agreement preparation for RSIF. Discussions were held with these governments during the period.
2. *icipe* continued its active engagement with donors, including with prospective RSIF partners. Discussions were held with DAAD-Bonn on partnership with RSIF to strengthen institutional capacities for doctoral supervision and accreditation in African universities and ways to link with DAAD's ongoing projects for quality assurance in higher education in Africa.
3. A grant writing workshop for RSIF African Host Universities and their partners was held at *icipe* from 20-24 January 2020. The purpose of the workshop was to support the building of research capacity at the RSIF host universities. To further strengthen resource mobilization and networking by universities, the RCU has continued sharing information weekly with universities and students on funding opportunities and providing online support.
4. The draft Progress Report for the Feasibility Study to establish the RSIF Endowment Fund was reviewed. The consulting firm undertaking the study, Lion's Head Global Partners, interacted with members of the CAG, World Bank and *icipe*. An updated progress report was presented to the EB for guidance. The final report is expected by May 2020.
5. A three-member team of experts undertook further review of the course content for the proposed PhD Program in Material Sciences at Kenyatta University in Kenya and recommended that the EB confirm the selection of the program. The report is forwarded for consideration by the EB.
6. Following RSIF Call for proposals published in the last period for the award of Research grants Type 1 (RSIF Research Award) and Innovation Grants Type 2 (RSIF Cooperability Grants) which had a submission deadline of January 20, 2020, *icipe*, advanced in the review of proposal applications by independent expert reviewers. *icipe* appointed a Grants Independent Technical Committee (GITC) to provide technical and advisory support in the review, selection and implementation of the Program's Research and Innovation grants. The recommendations of the GITC will be submitted to the EB for approval in the next reporting period.

Key planned activities for the next period (Annex 1) include i) completing the feasibility study on the establishment of the Endowment Fund; ii) launching the third cohort of student applications; iii) launching pre-call for the third call for RSIF AHUs; iv) reviewing and selecting proposals for award in response to the RSIF Research Award (Research Grants Type 1) and Innovation Grants (RSIF

Cooperability Grants and RSIF ICBP); v) completing the capacity building strategy for AHUs and Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) and social risk management framework for the project, and v) responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key Challenges

Key challenges during the reporting period were:

- The immediate impact of COVID 19 is that RSIF PhD scholars from Cohort one are restricted in terms of movement (staying in dorm areas and a few with access to laboratories) to ensure self-distancing. Most are expected to face delays in undertaking research during the period, and more so if field research is part of their research plans. The situation remains unclear.
- The onboarding of Cohort two scholars has been postponed due to the global outbreak of COVID-19. All scholars have been informed of university closures and a webinar was held on March 26th to inform scholars of how to move forward. RSIF AHUs have announced indefinite closures in accordance with government measures.
- There is need to confirm the status of signing of the Subsidiary Agreement between Senegal and *icipe*. There are seven students that are earmarked for support by the Government of Senegal in Cohort 2. It may not be prudent to automatically move these students to the third cohort but allow them to compete again for the next call as there may be a different level of competition and to maintain merit-based selection without prior ring-fencing of scholarships for these students.
- There was a lower than anticipated number of proposal application submitted in response to Call for Proposals for Research grants (Type 1) and Innovation grants (Type 2). *icipe* has analyzed possible reasons behind these low responses and proposed recommendations to address the issues noted.

Introduction

The Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund (RSIF), the flagship program of the Partnership for skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (PASET) aims to address fundamental gaps in skills and knowledge needed for increasing the use of science, technology and innovation for sustained economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). This Report provides a summary of progress in implementation of the RSIF Program for the period January to March 2020. The report is arranged in the two component areas of the program: viz, Component 1: Capacity Development for Operation of the Scholarship, Research and Innovation Fund; and Component 2: PhD Scholarships, research grants and innovation grants. Overall, the activities for the program remain “on-track” with some delays expected due to the Covid-19 situation.

A. Component 1: Capacity Development for Operation of the Scholarship, Research and Innovation Fund

1.1 Capacity building for management of the RSIF General Fund and setting up the RSIF Endowment Fund:

1.1.1 Resource mobilization

The RCU continued to implement the resource mobilization plan and related activities to enhance the visibility of the RSIF program. Key updates during the period are:

- a) African country contributions are at various stages (see Annex 2). Burkina Faso have now signed the Subsidiary Agreement (SA) and the previously signed subsidiary agreement with Ghana has become effective. Agreements with Senegal, as well as Benin and Nigeria are expected to be signed soon. If all are executed, this will bring total PASET membership to eight countries (Benin, Cote d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda and Senegal).
- b) A side event on RSIF was held at the Third ACE Impact and 12th ACE 1 Workshop in Abuja, Nigeria from 24-29 February 2020. The Session was organised to provide an update on the RSIF initiative to government officials at the ACE workshop, and to provide clarifications on emerging issues. Participants at the Session included government delegations from Ghana, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Nigeria and other participants. Side meetings were held with government representatives from Ghana, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Nigeria and the World Bank to discuss actions towards signing of subsidiary agreements, withdrawal procedures and to provide clarifications. Meetings were also held with the Government of Cote d’Ivoire to follow up on the second payment¹.
- c) Discussions are underway on PASET/RSIF with other African countries including Mauritius, Tanzania, Malawi, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe who have expressed interest in joining RSIF. The RCU prepared letters for endorsement by Prof. George A.O. Magoha, Chair of the PASET Governing Council and Cabinet Secretary for Education of the Government of Kenya, inviting additional African governments to join PASET. *icipe* dispatched the signed letters to the respective Ministries of Higher Education, Innovation and Scientific Research and through Nairobi based embassies² in early February 2020 (Annex 3) and have since had several responses and follow-up conversations with senior officials from various Ministries, e.g. Zimbabwe, Uganda, Malawi. *icipe* also continues to follow up with South Africa, which had earlier expressed interest in joining PASET.
- d) *icipe* continues its active outreach to prospective donors, including during a visit to Israel in January and travel to partners in Switzerland. However, several events in March where RSIF was scheduled to be presented were cancelled due to the Covid-19 situation. This included the

¹ Cote d’Ivoire made 1st Instalment of US\$1million towards membership. A second instalment of US\$ 1million is pending.

² Angola, Djibouti, DRC, Malawi, Sudan, Uganda, Zimbabwe

Next Einstein Forum, GoFoWiser, and the Higher education and philanthropy in Africa dialogue through Carnegie Corporation of New York.

- e) Further engagement was held with prospective partners from Norway, Switzerland, the UK and Mastercard Foundation. Following submission of a concept note in the previous quarter, positive follow-up discussion was held with DAAD-Bonn on partnership with RSIF to strengthen institutional capacities for doctoral supervision and accreditation in African universities and ways to link with DAAD's ongoing projects for quality assurance in higher education in Africa.
- f) *Icipe* has led and supported preparation of proposals to competitive calls for proposals as below:
 - *Icipe* led partnership with the Agropolis Foundation in France, University Abomey-Calavi, in Benin and Gearbox Pan Africa Network Limited for strengthening innovation in West Africa in response to an innovation call for proposals to be funded by European Commission.
 - Support provided to RSIF host universities to respond to the EU Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education and the Inter-Africa Academic mobility call for proposals;
 - Exploratory discussions with Swiss institutions, including École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) for fundraising from the Swiss government TRANSFORM fund
 - Contact with Norwegian institutions for possible joint proposal for capacity building in higher education – NORHED II call for proposals.
 - University of Tokyo to partner with the University of Gaston Berger on several research topics, including applying to the AJ-Core call for proposals.
- g) A proposal writing workshop was organised for over 30 staff from African Host Universities and their partners to develop proposals for capacity building in higher education under Erasmus+. The focus was to strengthen communities of practices and networks on the continent. The key outcomes were: 1) Improved proposal writing skills of participating faculty and university staff, 2) Increased awareness of the relevant funding opportunities and how to develop winning proposals; 3) Innovative ideas/ challenges supported into proposals, including through partnership with RSIF AHUs and other partners and; 4) Relevant long term research 'consortia' to respond to the needs of the broader RSIF agenda developed. A planned second workshop is currently on hold due to the Covid-19 situation, but online engagement continues without disruption.
- h) *icipe* continued identifying, classifying and sharing information weekly with universities and students on new funding possibilities.
- i) Further discussions were held with UM6P for linkage with OCP group on joint research areas to pursue for Cohort 2 and 3 scholars. *icipe* also presented RSIF to Norwegian companies during the Norway-Kenya Business Forum and to participants at the 7th Sankalp Africa Summit in Nairobi in February.

1.1.2 Endowment Fund design

Following approval of the inception report in December, the firm commissioned to conduct the feasibility study, Lion's Head Global Partners submitted a draft progress report to *icipe* (February 2020) to which comments have been received from key stakeholders and the World Bank implementation review mission on 25 March 2020. The comments highlighted the need for the report to better capture RSIF vision, in terms of its impact on building capacities for the science, engineering and technology sectors on the continent and how the Fund would deliver on this impact.

The EB is requested to take note of the above update on resource mobilisation and the feasibility study on establishment of the Permanent Fund. The EB is also requested to confirm situation of contribution of the Government of the Republic of Senegal as an RSIF Founding member to PASET & RSIF.

1.2 Capacity development for the operation and management of doctoral training scholarships in selected AHUs

1.2.1 Host university selection

A team of consultants³ was identified to review the Kenyatta University (KU) PhD program to clear confusion on its accreditation status and recommend to the PASET EB on next steps. The expert team visited Kenyatta University and engaged with KU management, faculty and the Commission for University Education (CUE) to clarify the status of the accreditation for the PhD program. The team report has been submitted to the PASET EB.

1.2.2 Routine monitoring and evaluation visits to AHUs

During this reporting period, the RCU conducted routine visits to the University of Gaston Berger (UGB), Senegal; University Félix Houphouët-Boigny (U-FHB), Côte d'Ivoire and the University of Ghana. These visits included meetings with university leadership, key departmental staff and students to engage in discussion about partnerships, capacity building, research, innovation and student matching.

1.2.3 Selection of Second Cohort of PhD Scholars

During the last period, the EB awarded 71 students for the Second Cohort of PhD Scholars⁴ from 17 African countries (Table 1). Following PASET EB approval, 64 students have received award letters and scholar agreements with most having confirmed their commitment. The Second Cohort students were expected to initiate their studies between March- May 2020. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in all the AHUs closing. Orientation for the second cohort will be held remotely and include training sessions on key skills and information needed for the scholars to initiate their PhDs.

Table 1: Distribution of shortlisted candidates by nationality, gender and faculty

Nationality	Total shortlisted applications	Female	Faculty
Burkina Faso	3	-	-
Cote d'Ivoire	4	1	-
Ghana	11	2	3
Kenya	13	10	7
Senegal	5	3	-
Rwanda	8	2	3
Benin	4	1	1
Cameroon	4	2	2
Chad	2	-	1
Congo	1	-	-
Ethiopia	2	1	1
Malawi	1	-	1
Nigeria	4	3	2
Sudan	1	1	1
Tanzania	3	1	2

³ The Team comprised Prof. Emmanuel Tanyi, Dean, Faculty of Engineering, University of Buea, Cameroon; Prof. Mabel Imbuga, Former Vice Chancellor, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya; and Prof. Burton Mwamila, Former Vice Chancellor, Nelson Mandela Institute of Science and Technology, Tanzania.

⁴ See the Briefing Note to the EB for more details https://icipedudu-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/mosiru_icipe_org/EVdNID4bCiROjD48t5WU5jIBb2HJecd1FfxYVLV13CSiQg?e=Id8kqC

Uganda	3	2	1
Zimbabwe	2	-	2
Total	71	29	27

1.2.4 Strategies for increasing the participation of women in PhD training in research in ASET fields

The gender study consultant, Prof. Salome Bukachi, completed site visits to four RSIF-host institutions in three countries: Kenya, Rwanda, and Senegal. Each site visit comprised interviews with faculty members and focus group discussions with current students. Data from these visits are currently being analysed. A Survey Monkey survey was launched to collect data from individuals that pursued their PhD studies in an ASET field at an institution in sub-Saharan Africa in the last ten years. The aim is to quantitatively analyse the data to reveal the key sociocultural, economic, and institutional factors associated with the graduate student experience, PhD performance, and persistence in an ASET field. Gender-based differences will be assessed. Results from analysis of data from the site visits and Survey Monkey survey will be used to develop the RSIF gender strategy with a target date of April 30, 2020.

1.2.5. International partner organizations

Over and above the existing eight international partners with signed MoUs, in this period the MoU was signed with University of Greenwich’s Natural Resources Institute. Progress continues to discuss new partnerships, including with John Innes Center, the University of Tokyo, and Albi Mines Kobe Institute of Computing, Japan. A draft tripartite agreement between AHUs-icipe-IPI was developed to facilitate the partnerships. This will be shared with the IPIs and the AHUs as they move to the next steps of collaboration.

Mohamed VI Polytechnic University (UM6P) has committed to providing 20 PhD fellowships to RSIF scholars to support internships at UM6P and its partners in the north. A list of UM6P faculty and related topics of interest that built on agreements at the meeting at UM6P has been provided to facilitate matching with AHUs and discussions are on-going. A draft call for RSIF scholars to engage in sandwich training at UM6P is under review. Once finalized, *icipe* will launch a unique call for cohort two and three scholars to undertake sandwich training at UM6P.

The EB is requested to take note of progress made by the RCU in the capacity development for the operation and management of doctoral training scholarships in selected AHUs and the RCU response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.3 Capacity development for improving the quality of PhD programs and research in ASET fields

1.3.1. Scoping exercise and gap analysis

The draft capacity building strategy, that builds on the results of the scoping exercise and gap analysis is almost complete. The validation was initially to be done at the Technical Annual Learning Meeting which had been planned for early April 2020. This has been postponed to a later date due to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

1.3.3. Capacity Building of host University libraries

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, several publishers of peer reviewed journals have opened up free access to their e-resources temporarily. A collated list with relevant links was shared to all the AHUs and this now provides them with access to 26,030 additional journals and 42,255 e-books until August 2020.

1.3.4. ICT

A survey was carried out amongst AHUs to assess the status of ICT facilities to inform the RSIF Capacity Building Strategy including the establishment/ strengthening of video conferencing facilities at universities. Nine universities have responded to the survey. Roll out of the of the Video Conference equipment is ongoing. A Call for Proposals was published for the development of a management information system (MIS) for RSIF to support the automation of the scholarship and innovation components of the program. Selection is ongoing.

The RSIF ICT ecosystem components under development are:

- RSIF Website revamp (involving new design, database restructuring, web 2.0 improvement and Search Engine Optimization (SEO))
- RSIF repository and knowledge hub
- Enterprise Resource Planning implementation
- Implementation of the Management Information System (MIS).

1.3.5 Implementation status of Research Grants (Window 2, Type 1)

The inaugural Call⁵ for applications for an RSIF Research Award (Window 2, Type 1)⁶ had a submission deadline of January 20,2020. The Grant is targeted to faculty at the RSIF Africa Host Universities (AHUs) who are actively involved in the RSIF PhD program and aims to support them to establish research programs that respond to key developmental challenges in sub- Saharan Africa (SSA). RSIF PhD scholars' research projects may also be supported through the program.

A total of 17 applications⁷ to the RSIF Research Award Call were received and screened by the RCU for compliance with the Call guidelines and eligibility. 11 of the 17 proposals were found to be eligible to move to the next stage of external independent review. Three external independent reviewers were identified for each of the five priority thematic areas of PASET. The reviewers were selected from a pool of experts compiled by *icipe*. Eligible proposals have been reviewed and will be presented to the Research and Innovations Grants Technical Committee (GITC) on April 17, 2020. Their recommendations will be submitted to the PASET Executive Board.

The EB is requested to take note of efforts by the RCU to enhance ICT capacity to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.4 Capacity development for the operation and management of innovation grants

1.4.1 Implementation Status of Innovation Grants (Window 3)

In the last reporting period, *icipe* received and reviewed 9⁸ applications to the published Call for proposals⁹ for the award of Window 3 Type 1¹⁰ grants. The proposals together with review comments from the external reviewers will be evaluated by the Research and Innovations Grants Technical Committee (GITC) on April 17,2020.

, The Call for Proposal for the award of **Innovation Grants (Type 2 – RSIF Cooperability Grants)** had a submission deadline of January 20, 2020. Up to five grants of up to \$50,000 each are expected to be awarded. Four applications were received and screened by the RCU for eligibility and compliance with

⁵ With a total amount of \$900,000 initially available for this category, the RSIF is expected to competitively award approximately 10 grants of up to \$90,000 each

⁶ Window 2, Type 2 focuses on postdoctoral research awards for RSIF PhD students that have completed their studies and returned to their home institutions. This Call for this award will be issued at the end of Year 3 of the Project.

⁷ Proposal applications received per thematic area: Materials, Mining and Engineering – 4, ICT (Big Data and AI)-4, Food Security – 1, Energy (Including renewables)-6, Climate Change- 1, Other Non RSIF AHU submissions

⁸ Each AHU was allowed to submit one application.

⁹ With a total budget of \$300,000 available for this category, RSIF will award up to six (6) grants of up to \$50,000 each.

the Call requirements. Three of the proposals were identified to be eligible for expert review and have been reviewed by a panel of three independent expert reviewers. The proposals will be evaluated by the Research and Innovations Grants Technical Committee (GITC) on April 17, 2020.

Timelines for award of published Research and Innovation grants

The RCU will advance in the selection and award of the published Call for proposals as per the timelines below.

Activity	Timeline/ Status	Comments
Independent expert reviews of proposals	Completed	Awaiting GITC review and selection
GITC meeting	17 April 2020	To review and recommend for EB approval
Submission of full report on the selection process and GITC recommendations for approval	21 April 2020	For approval by EB
Formal contracting and funds disbursements	30 June 2020	Provision of technical backstopping support

1.4.2 A study of research and innovation ecosystems at African Host Universities and development of IP guidelines

On February 19th to March 6th, 2020, the RCU conducted visits to four (4) AHUs¹¹ to assess the existing research and innovation ecosystems. The objectives of the assessment were to i) provide an analysis of university research and innovation strategic policy and practice related to technology transfer and intellectual property management; ii) analyze selected country national innovation systems (NIS) including key stakeholders, institutional functionality and available innovation infrastructure, and, iii) provide recommendations on research and innovation related interventions towards strengthening innovations ecosystems at RSIF AHUs and PASET RSIF participating countries. The study is ongoing.

icipe is also in the process of developing guidelines to support universities to improve IP management for research and innovation activities including for scholars hosted in international partner institutions as well as faculty implementing research and innovation projects. An analysis has been done of IP provisions in various documents including; (i) AHU policies, (ii) PASET MoUs with International Partner Institutions (IPIs), (iii) *icipe*-student contracts and (iv) specific AHU agreements with IPIs. The draft guidelines will be shared in the next report.

1.4.3 Key issues and challenges for Windows 1 & 2 Call for Proposals

Several issues were identified during implementation with recommendations for redress as highlighted in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Key issues identified by RCU and proposed recommendations

No	Issue	Recommendation to address the issue
1	Low number of faculty involved in RSIF PhD programs at the AHUs who were expected to be the lead applicants to the Calls.	Expand the target group and eligibility requirements for the Calls to include other faculty in the AHUs to propose projects related to the selected thematic area.

¹¹ AHUs visited: University of Nairobi, University of Ghana, Nelson Mandela African Institute of Science and Technology and University of Felix Houphouet-Boigny

No	Issue	Recommendation to address the issue
2.	Most faculty are new to the concepts of innovation and commercializing research results with low capacity of designing and implementing innovation related grant proposals	Conduct capacity building workshops to equip faculty with skills on how to design, write and implement innovation grant proposals in ASET fields.
3.	The design of the Calls required mandatory partnerships with international and private sector partners. Applicants expressed concerns on the difficulties in obtaining the required partnerships especially with private sector	Review the design of the Calls to provide some flexibility on partnerships requirements, while maintaining focus on key objectives for the Calls.
4.	The design of the Calls required matching funding in cash and in kind by the international and Private sector partners. Applicants expressed challenges convincing partners to provide matching funding. Additionally, most private sector partners willing to partner have limited financial resources to provide matching funding	Review the design of the Calls to allow flexibility on matching funding requirements and encourage in-kind contributions and not mandatory cash contributions.
5	The limited engagement with private sector by faculty involved in RSIF PhD programs	The RCU will work closely with the existing research and innovation support structures at the AHUs to support interested applicants obtain partnerships with relevant private sector partners.
6	The complexity of support documents and application templates	Simplify the templates and reduce the number of support documents required for eligibility especially those requested from private sector partners e.g financial statements, tax compliance certificates, certificate of no bankruptcy.

The EB is requested to take note of progress on implementing the research and innovation grants window.

B. Component 2: PhD Scholarships, Research Grants and Innovation Grants

2.1 Status of the first cohort of scholars

The 15 first cohort RSIF Students submitted their quarterly reports and have received stipends for the next quarter- January, February and March 2020. Overall students are progressing well, and most have initiated their internships. For this Cohort, COVID-19 impact has been that scholars are restricted in movement (staying in dorm areas and a few with access to laboratories) to ensure self-distancing. Most are facing delays in undertaking research during the period, particularly if field research is part of their research plans. The situation is continually being assessed.

The EB is requested to take note of progress by RSIF First Cohort Scholars

C. Crosscutting activities

3.1 RSIF communications

Procurement of a firm to support RSIF communications is expected to be completed in the next quarter. The firm will support *icipe* to develop and implement a brand strategy for RSIF, further refine key messages for RSIF and to support delivery of these messages. The tendering process to undertake the website re-development was completed. The Nairobi based firm (Kihingu Ltd) has initiated the task. This process is expected to be complete within 6 months.

Ms. Whitney Mwangi has been hired as a consultant to support RSIF Communications. Ms. Pauline Achoka, the RSIF Communications officer has been on sick leave for a few months and is now back in office.

3.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

A programme evaluation framework has developed to guide program evaluations and learning activities. The framework includes a program Theory of Change (ToC), theory of change-based results framework and how the framework will be operationalized. Tools for student data collection are being updated and revised regularly.

The programme designed four online learning surveys for PhD students (both Cohort I and Cohort II), AHUs contact persons and International Partners Institutions contact persons. The online surveys provided a wide range of lessons and corrective actions for different components of the programme. The programme intends to systematize these surveys to continuously provide lessons to programme implementation including lessons to inform the Third Call for Students.

3.3 World Bank Implementation Support Mission to *icipe*

A World Bank virtual implementation support mission for the RSIF project was held on March 24 and 25, 2020. The key objectives of the mission were to: (i) review the status of recommendations from the mission conducted in October 2019, including fiduciary and safeguards actions; (ii) discuss the status of resource mobilization for RSIF, and related planned activities for the next quarter; (iii) review the status and management of the doctoral training component including the status of each student under cohorts one and two, and the next steps for cohort three students; (iv) review overall performance of the African Host Universities (AHU), and discuss the proposal for additional AHUs; (v) review implementation progress of windows 2 and 3 (research and innovation) and agree on the next steps to fast track these activities; (vi) review the status of the proposed RSIF Permanent Fund; (vii) review fiduciary and safeguards aspects of the RSIF project; and (viii) discuss implications of the coronavirus (COVID 19) for RSIF operations, and associated measures being taken for the students undertaking the sandwich program in international institutions.

3.4 Key Challenges during the period

- a. There remains a challenge in identifying adequate numbers of qualified women applicants for RSIF Scholarships. The proportion of women applicants in cohort two was approximately 20%. For the third call, there will be need to increase the actions to target more women to apply.
- b. Due to Covid-19 and university and border closures, second cohort students are not able to proceed to AHUs and a strategy for managing the current situation is needed. *icipe* is currently developing this strategy.
- c. There is a need to confirm the status of signing of the Subsidiary Agreement between Senegal and *icipe*. Seven students were earmarked for support by the Government of Senegal in Cohort 2¹². A

¹² Five Senegalese students, one from Nigeria and one from Cameroon.

- request has been made to Senegal to consider the five students and response is awaited. It may not be prudent to automatically move these students to the third cohort but allow them to compete again for the next call as there may be a different level of competition and in the interest of maintaining merit-based and open evaluation process.
- d. During the first year, the African University of Science and Technology had several governance and management challenges. Following an RSIF mission to the university and actions by the Ministry of Education in Nigeria, it was agreed by the PASET Board that they would not take students for Cohort 2. There is need to verify the current status to confirm their eligibility to receive students for Cohort 3.
 - e. COVID 19 present several challenges, some not yet identified. We highlight that in addition to restrictions on research, teaching and movement, staff, RSIF scholars, AHU and IPI representative and RSIF partners alike are being expected to work from home. As long as schools are closed, children are at home and parents are required to ensure teaching as well as parental roles for the children. Many RSIF scholars have families and will be similarly affected. Some AHU staff might also be affected and unable to deliver their usual teaching and research responsibilities during the period- this will not only affect the scholar supervision, but also the implementation of research and innovation grants as well as capacity building activities. The impact on the programme will depend on the duration of the crisis.

3.5 A summary of utilization of funds from the Governments of Kenya, Rwanda and Côte d'Ivoire

INCOME	Recipient	Description			Total
B8501G00001	<i>icipe</i>	Balance from AAU			3,413,977
B8501G00001	<i>icipe</i>	From Ivorian Govt			1,033,497
	Total Income				4,447,474
EXPENDITURE	Payee	Description	Oct 18-Dec 19	Jan-Mar 20	Total
B8501G30001	Maxwell Waema	Student's scholarship costs	14,400	-	14,400
B8501G30002	Sylvia Wairimu Maina	Student's scholarship costs	10,800	-	10,800
B8501G30003	Humphrey Mabwi	Student's scholarship costs	10,800	-	10,800
B8501G30004	Levi Omache	Student's scholarship costs	18,000	-	18,000
B8501G30005	Lilian Mulewa	Student's scholarship costs	3,600	-	3,600
B8501G30006	Gahamanyi Noel	Student's scholarship costs	14,400	-	14,400
B8501G30007	Jean Hakizimana	Student's scholarship costs	18,000	-	18,000
B8501G30008	Emmanuel Effah	Student's scholarship costs	31,907	-	31,907
B8501G30009	Fatoumata Thiam	Student's scholarship costs	25,220	-	25,220
B8501G30010	Richard Kipyegon Koech	Student's scholarship costs	25,348	-	25,348
B8501G30011	Pauline Munganyinka	Student's scholarship costs	25,653	-	25,653
B8501G30012	Jean Baptiste Habinshtuti	Student's scholarship costs	25,348	-	25,348
B8501G30013	David Afolayan	Student's scholarship costs	25,348	-	25,348
B8501G30014	Sodedji Frejus	Student's scholarship costs	14,400	-	14,400
B8501G30015	Traore Abdoulaye	Student's scholarship costs	14,400	-	14,400
B8501G31201	Other PHD Expenses*	Lilian Mulewa costs	6,628	-	6,628
	Total Expenditure		284,252	-	284,252
	Balance				4,163,222

*Investigation by RSIF on the causes of Lilian Mulewa separation with RSIF

3.6 RSIF Funds Allocation Report -Government Contributions

INCOME		Notes	KENYA		RWANDA		COTE D'IVOIRE	TOTAL
Funds received		A	1,979,177		1,963,292		1,033,497	4,975,966
Less : AAU Admin charges		B	131,105		130,387		-	261,492
Funds available for Scholarships		C =A-B	1,848,072		1,832,905		1,033,497	4,714,474
Scholarship Cost per student (4 years)		E	97,300		97,300		97,300	
Number of Scholarships Available		F=C/E	18		18		10	46
Allocation of Scholarships								
80% to Nationals	80%	G	15		15		8	38
20% to Non Nationals	20%	H	3		3		2	8
Scholarships Awarded								
Nationals	60%	I	6	80%	4		-	10
Non Nationals	40%	J	4	20%	1		-	5
Scholarships to Award								
Nationals		K=G-I	8		11		8	27
Non Nationals		L=H-J	-		2		2	4
Funds spent on Scholars								
By AAU		M	178,000		89,000		-	267,000
By <i>Icipe</i>		N	168,944		115,308		-	284,252
Fund Balance		O=C-M-N	1,501,128		1,628,597		1,033,497	4,163,222

Annex 1: Key planned activities for the next quarter (April-June 2020)

General Fund and Endowment Fund

- 4.1. Complete feasibility study on the establishment of the Endowment Fund.
- 4.2. Continue to implement the interim resource mobilization plan with emphasis on written and online engagement due to Covid-19
- 4.3. Develop a comprehensive fundraising strategy

Management of PhD Scholarships and Research/Innovation Grants

- 4.4. Further advance in the selection of international partner organizations
- 4.5. Continue discussion of matching of students with partner institutions
- 4.6. Organise postponed onboarding of second cohort of students in Covid-19 context
- 4.7. Launch third cohort of student applications
- 4.8. Finalise review and selection of proposals for award in response to the RSIF Research Award (Research Grants Type 1) and Innovation Grants (RSIF Cooperability Grants and RSIF ICBP)
- 4.9. Finalize study of existing innovation support organizations (tech hubs, accelerators and incubators) in participating RSIF countries
- 4.10. Finalise assessment of innovation systems of RSIF AHUs and PASET Countries
- 4.11. Develop online mechanism for supervision and mentorship of PhD students

Capacity building of host universities

- 4.12. Finalise strategy and start implementing capacity building strategy for AHUs
- 4.13. Launch third call for RSIF African Host Universities
- 4.14. Enhance access to journals and databases for RSIF scholars

Cross cutting activities

- 4.15. Finalize development of an RSIF communication strategy
- 4.16. Finalize hiring of a communication firm to support communications and branding for RSIF
- 4.17. Finalize Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) and social risk management framework for the project.

Annex 2: RSIF engagement with countries

Country	Targeted/ expected Contribution (US\$)	Payment modality	Expected date of contribution (by calendar year)	Current status
Angola	2 Million	Direct payment to RSIF	Unclear	Discussions initiated
Benin	2 million	World Bank ACE Impact Phase 2	Q4, 2020	Awaiting approval of ACE Impact Phase 2 by WB Board
Burkina Faso	2 million	World Bank ACE Impact Phase 1	Q2, 2020	Awaiting project effectiveness. SA signed
Ghana	2million	World Bank ACE Impact Phase 1	Q2, 2020	Agreement signed and project effective
Malawi	Unknown	Unknown	Unclear	Discussions underway
Mauritius	2 million	Direct payments	Unclear	Discussions underway
Mozambique	6 million	World Bank Country project	Q2 2020	Awaiting approval of Project by WB Board
Nigeria	4 million	World Bank ACE Impact Phase 2	Q4, 2020	Awaiting approval of ACE Impact Phase 2 by WB Board
Senegal	2 million	World Bank ACE Impact Phase 1	Q1, 2020	Awaiting signing of SA
South Africa	Unknown	Direct payment to RSIF	Unclear	Discussions underway
Tanzania	2 million	World Bank Country Project	Unclear	Not clear
Zambia	Unknown	Unknown	Unclear	Discussions underway
Zimbabwe	Unknown	Unknown	Unclear	Discussions underway

Annex 3: List of invitations to participate in PASET* prepared by RSIF-RCU

COUNTRY	NAME OF MINISTER	TITLE
Angola	Hon. Maria do Rosário Bragança Sambo	Minister of Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation
Cabo Verde	Hon. Maritza Rosabal Peña	Minister of Education and Minister of Family and Social Inclusion of Cabo Verde
Cameroun	S.E. Pr. Jacques FAME NDONGO	Le Ministre d'Etat, Ministre de l'Enseignement Supérieur
Chad/Tchad	S.E. Dr Houdeingar David Ngarimaden	Ministre de l'Enseignement supérieur, de la Recherche scientifique et de l'Innovation
Djibouti	S.E. Dr. Nabil Mohamed Ahmed	Ministre de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche
DRC	Hon. Thomas Luhaka	Ministre de l'Enseignement supérieur et Universitaire
Gambia	Hon. Mr. Badara Alieu Joof	Minister of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology
Guinée	S.E. Abdoulaye Yéro Baldé	Ministre de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche
Malawi	Hon. Dr William Susuwele-Banda	Minister of Education, Science and Technology
Namibia	Hon. Dr. Itah Kandjii-Murangi	Minister, Higher Education, Training and Innovation
Sudan	Hon. Dr Intisar El Zein	Minister of Higher Education
Togo	H.E. Prof. Koffi Akpagana	Ministre de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche
Uganda	Hon. Mrs. Janet Kataaha Museveni	First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports
Zimbabwe	Hon. Prof. Amon Murwira	Minister of Higher & Tertiary Education, Science & Technology Development

*Explanatory notes:

All sub-Saharan African countries are welcome to join PASET if they agree with the provisions in its charter and contribute to RSIF.

Letters to Mauritius and South Africa were sent previously. Letters were not done to current and incoming members including Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda and Senegal. Letters to Botswana, Mali and Mauritania were not done at this stage.

Additional countries not in this list that have since expressed an interest to receive communication from PASET-RSIF include: Central African Republic, Congo-Brazzaville, Eswatini and Lesotho.