

# Key policy recommendations from a dialogue on transdisciplinary research funding for sustainable development in Africa

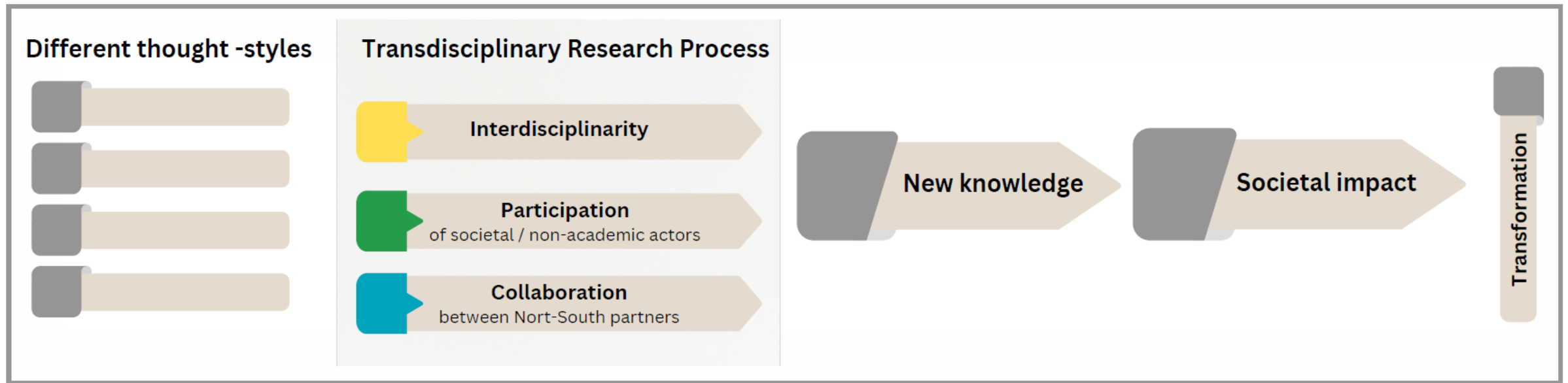
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SUPPORTING PATHWAYS TO SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA



# Transdisciplinary research (TDR)



Source: own elaboration based on Pohl et al. (2021)

# Problem definition

- TDR is costly and needs flexibility, often limited by funding conditions
- Funding conditions can embed inequalities, limiting African partners' roles
- Building trust with local stakeholders is crucial, but short-term projects struggle to accommodate this
- Adapted funding conditions are needed to support genuine TDR

# Objectives

Conduct **meta-research** on TDR funding for sustainable development in Africa

- How are principles of TDR embedded in funding frameworks?
- What are considered good practices enabling TDR by different actors involved?

Engage in a **dialogue** on good practices in TDR funding

- Formulate recommendations for funders
- Advocate and disseminate recommendations

# Activities

German dialogue forum  
June 2024



African dialogue forum  
October 2024



Panel session at ITD conference  
November 2024



Final online workshop  
May 2025

# TDR in existing funding frameworks

- Several research funders are increasingly interested in supporting transdisciplinary research
- Funders are learning by doing and experiment with new practices
- TDR programmes can be enhanced through targeted measures in different stages of the funding cycle
- TDR can be more effective if these measures are common practice across the board

IZNE Working Papers

Research Paper

Nr. 24/2

Good practices in funding transdisciplinary and participatory research for sustainable development in Africa

Learning lessons from German public funding programmes on sustainable land management and agricultural development in Africa

Eefje Aarnoudse, Tina Beuchelt, Berenice Fischer, Hannah Jaenicke, Wiltrud Terlau

# Recommendations to funders

1. Foster long-term funding partnerships
2. Focus proposal requirements on TDR principles
3. Ensure equitable budget allocation
4. Support inclusive proposal development
5. Embed TDR quality in selection process
6. Invest in joint learning on TDR
7. Enable adaptive project management

Advocate and  
disseminate

# Your opinion!

## **Ensure equitable budget allocation**

Allocate sufficient funds for African researchers and practice partners, including fair compensation for stakeholder engagement. Budgets must explicitly cover participatory activities and honour practice partners' contributions.

## **Enable adaptive management**

Allow flexibility for mid-project adjustments (e.g. shifting methods or partners) to reflect evolving stakeholder needs. Share best practices among funders on managing such dynamics.



Watch our video on  
the dialogue forum

Thank you!



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