LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND IN PRACTICE: DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH FOR OR BY THE SOUTH?

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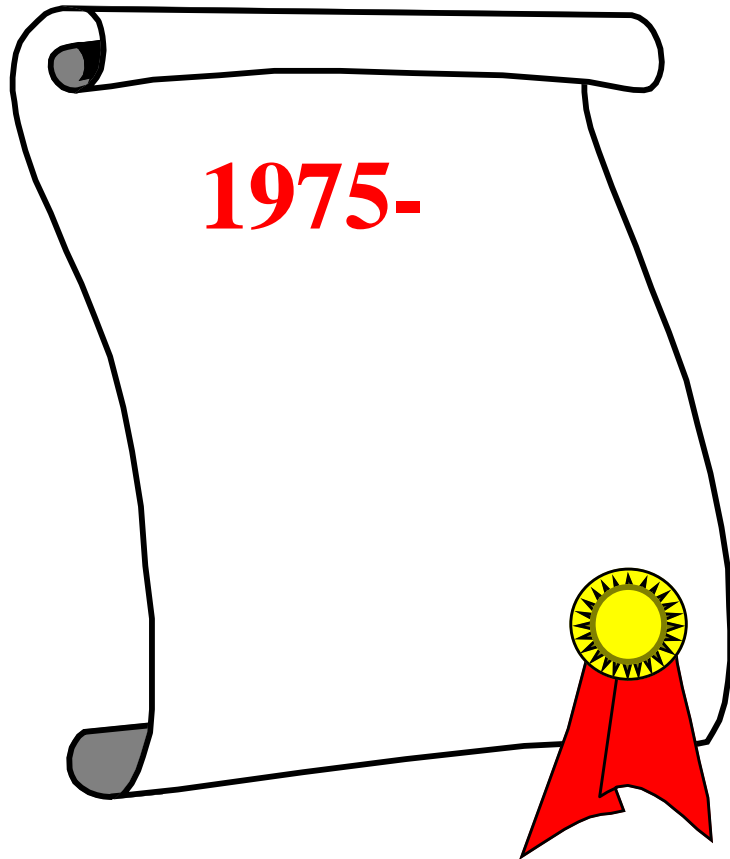
Unit for Research Cooperation

Department of Partnership and Innovation

Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

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SAREC's mandate from the beginning

1975-

Assist developing countries in

- their national research efforts

- supporting their access to relevant research findings

- Swedish development research

Loaned from Berit Olsson

From SAREC annual report 1975/76:

"International research programmes may

- *contribute to neo-colonial relations*
- *by-pass national priorities and country plans*
- *delay national capacity development*
- *contribute to brain drain*
- *distort national priorities"*

Loaned from Berit Olsson

How were relevant research needs to be identified and by whom?

How was this to be done ?

SAREC turned to National Research Councils
- – This was an assumption based on the way research is organised in Sweden

- – An Evaluation in 1985
  - • Enhance country level support, but *abandon support via research councils*
  - • It was evident that there were not enough scientists in the low income countries that SAREC had selected to fund and the research councils tended to support short term problem solving

Even with good intentions focusing on how things are done in one's own part of the world may not produce the intended results

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Swedish university support as defined in the 1990s

"Each country needs at least one university capable of providing high quality education and research"

- Management capacity
- Research infrastructure,
- Academic capacity,
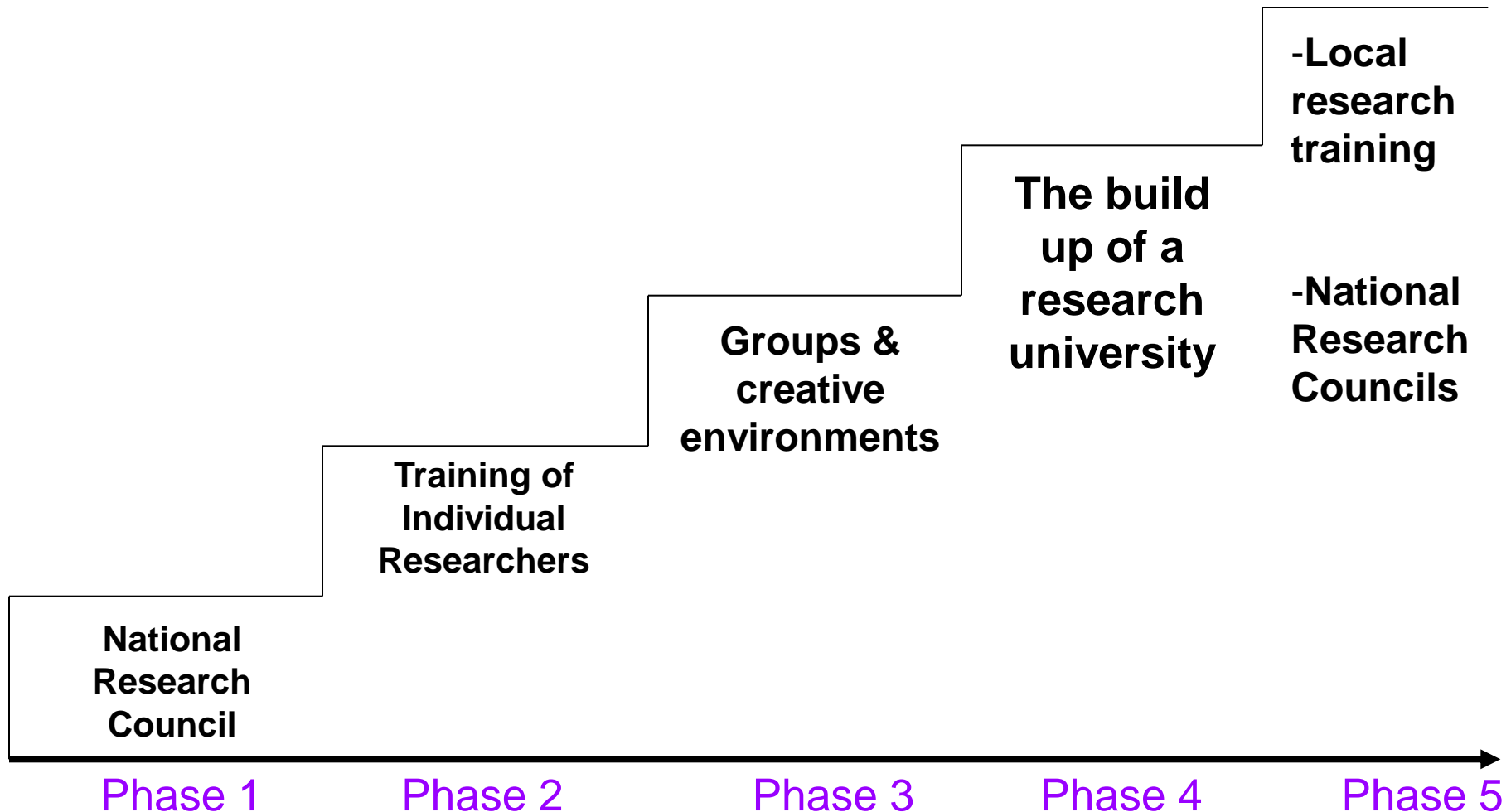- Postgraduate programmes, incl. PhD

A perspective

- About two decades ago a very prominent Scandinavian biomedical scientist who had worked in Africa for a few years made the statement:

"Not every country needs to have its own National airline; in the same vain not every country needs to have its own research institutions…."

We disagree!!!

The changing phases of Swedish supported Bilateral Research Capacity Strengthening

National Research Council

Training of Individual Researchers

Groups & creative environments

The build up of a research university

-Local research training

-National Research Councils

Phase 1 Phase 2 Phase 3 Phase 4 Phase 5

1975

2017

The present
Supporting research capacity building

A question that has influenced me and the work we do regarding research capacity strengthening

- At a Multilateral Initiative against Malaria (MIM) meeting in Cameroon in the early 2000 I asked a representative from a well known Foundation why they did not support research capacity the answer was *"We do not know what Capacity Building means!"*
  - This provoked me into trying to dissect out what we do mean with "Research Capacity"

Some will say that research capacity is about excellent researchers

Research groups that can win prestigious competitive grants

University with high ranking based on high impact factor research publications by its scientists

A cadre of individual researchers of international standing

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Sustainability of research capacity can not be achieved by excellent individual researchers alone

A robust Institutional research promoting structure is essential

To support research capacity today: From onset we need to know what we would like to achieve (outcomes – the change we anticipate) at the end of the **period** of financial support

- At least one research-led university in a partner low/middle income country that has the structures, administration and culture that promotes and rewards good research in a broad range of sciences in a sustainable way, the results of which are of relevance for the further development of the country and region.
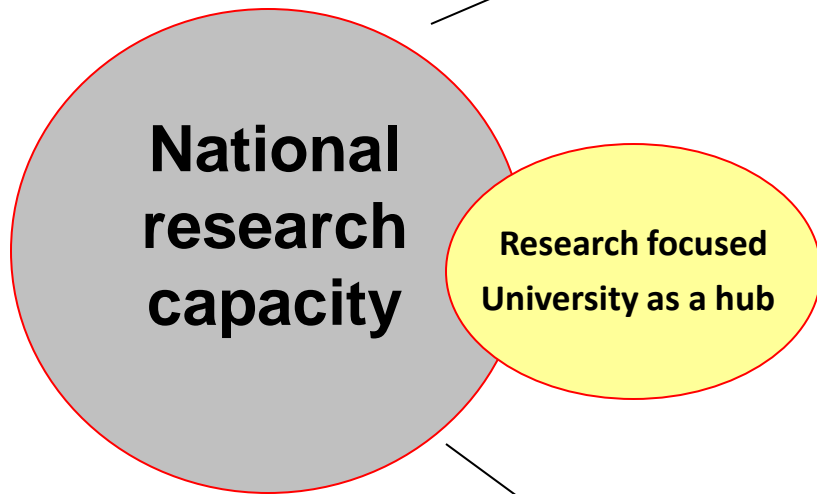
Identification of what elements of research capacity needed in a specific context

Taking a systemic approach to research capacity strengthening

Learning as we go along and making minor changes as we keep the constant

National Research capacity

National research capacity (gray circle)

Research focused University as a hub (yellow ellipse)

National commitment to research
- National system for research
- National Budget line for research
- National research policy & strategy
- Innovation systems
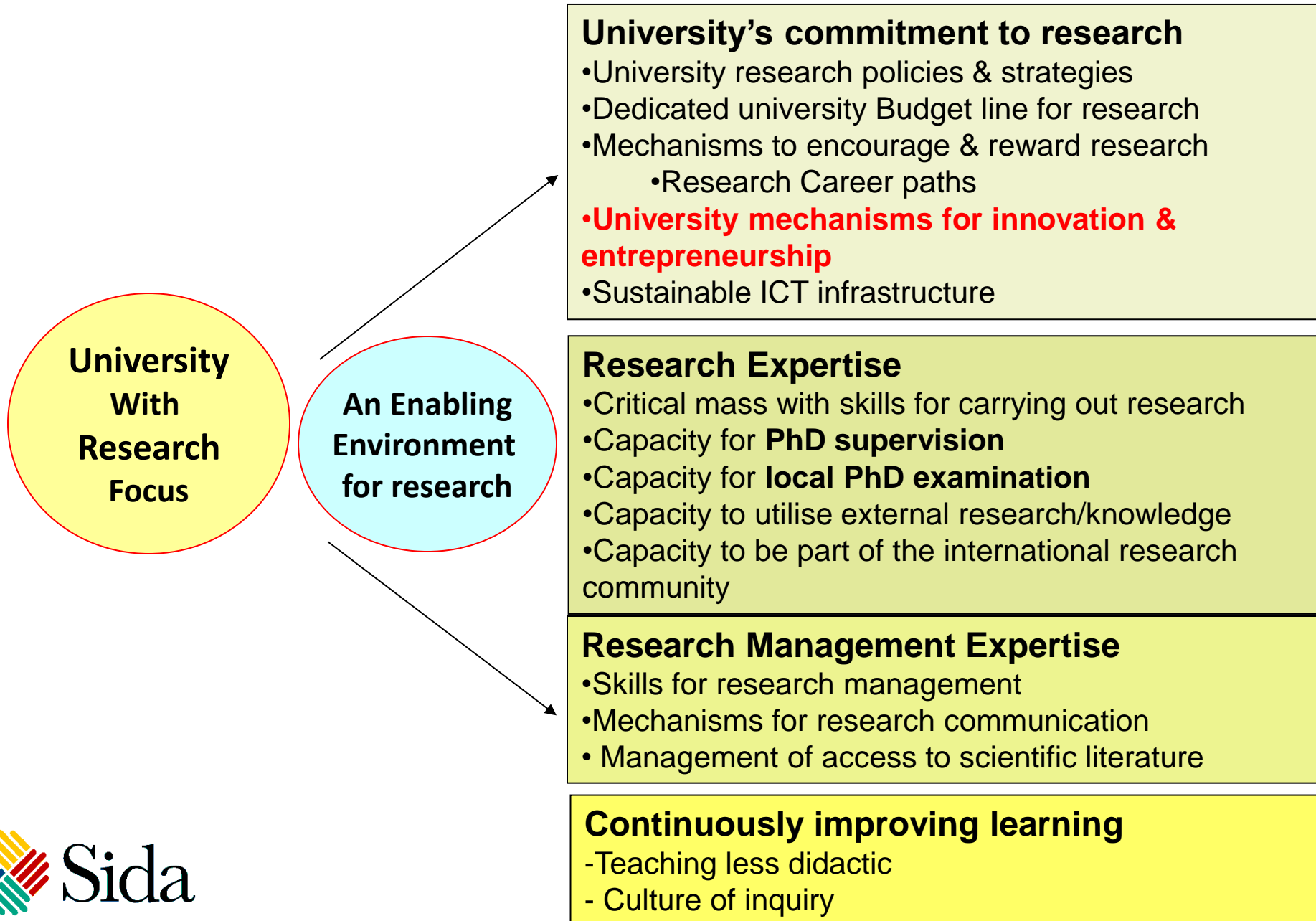- Information Communication Technology infrastructure

Research Expertise
- Skills for carrying out research
  - Asking nationally relevant questions
  - Capacity to generate own knowledge
- Capacity for analysis
- Capacity for evaluation
- Capacity to utilise external research/knowledge
- Capacity to be part of international research community

Research recognised in society
- National demand for research
- Culture of inquiry
- Agents of Change: Using evidence to question

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University Research capacity

University With Research Focus

An Enabling Environment for research

University's commitment to research
- University research policies & strategies
- Dedicated university Budget line for research
- Mechanisms to encourage & reward research
  - Research Career paths
- **University mechanisms for innovation & entrepreneurship**
- Sustainable ICT infrastructure

Research Expertise
- Critical mass with skills for carrying out research
- Capacity for **PhD supervision**
- Capacity for **local PhD examination**
- Capacity to utilise external research/knowledge
- Capacity to be part of the international research community

Research Management Expertise
- Skills for research management
- Mechanisms for research communication
- Management of access to scientific literature

Continuously improving learning
- Teaching less didactic
- Culture of inquiry

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Putting the needs of the Institution in the focus

The example of Long-Term Approach of Research Capacity Strengthening at Makerere University, Uganda

Problems identified at Makerere University (MU)

- **March 1999**: The problems identified by MU for why there is **<u>weak research</u>** opportunities in MU
  - Weak research culture
  - Lack of scientific literature
  - Lack of Information Communication Technology, **ICT**
  - Weak/cumbersome administration
  - Lack of research funds for those with PhDs to continue to do research
  - MU policy that need for PhD to be lecturer, was not coupled with increased PhD training possibilities

First Response to MU needs with Information Communication Technology and access to Scientific literature

- **2000**: Provided funding to MU to device a comprehensive **ICT Master Plan**
    - Asked other donors (NORAD, USAID, African Development Bank) to hold support until master plan finalised
- **2004**:
    - Optical fibre laid throughout campus. Local area Net works installed. Computers purchased
    - A comprehensive network including Intranet
    - Library Information System (electronic based cataloguing etc). Access to data bases including 7000 full text journals
    - Supporting the automation of the Academic registrar's & Financial management processes

Response to lack of research funds for PhD holders & PhD aspirants

2002

- Support of Faculty based programmes aimed at "Supporting the supervisor to supervise"
  - Collaboration between senior Swedish/other senior researchers on project of mutual interest with mutual PhD student registered at MU but with opportunity to spend time in Sweden/and elsewhere (Sandwich modality)
  - Provision of funds for project on a needs basis
- Competitive University wide research funds
- Competitive Faculty based research funds

Other Responses

- Supporting the setting up of **Demographic Surveillance Site** (DSS) at Iganga/Mayuge to be **owned by** Makerere University
  - Provides opportunity for interdisciplinary research
  - Provide continuous data that may be relevant for policy
- PhD research **courses** (PhD training was previously by research only)
- Support to research **administration** in MU as well as in Sweden
- **Double/Joint PhD degree** agreement signed in 2003 between Faculty of Medicine and Karolinska Institutet (historical achievement)

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Sida's support to Research Management

- Past experience has shown that the administration/management of partner institutions is often weak

- This made it essential to put more effort to strengthen this part of the Research cooperation to enhance the possibility of collaborating institutions **to attract and manage external competitive funding**

- This required putting funds into weak administrative and financial structures and supporting changes as these become evident

- Needed improvements have sometimes required major University-wide **Administrative reforms**
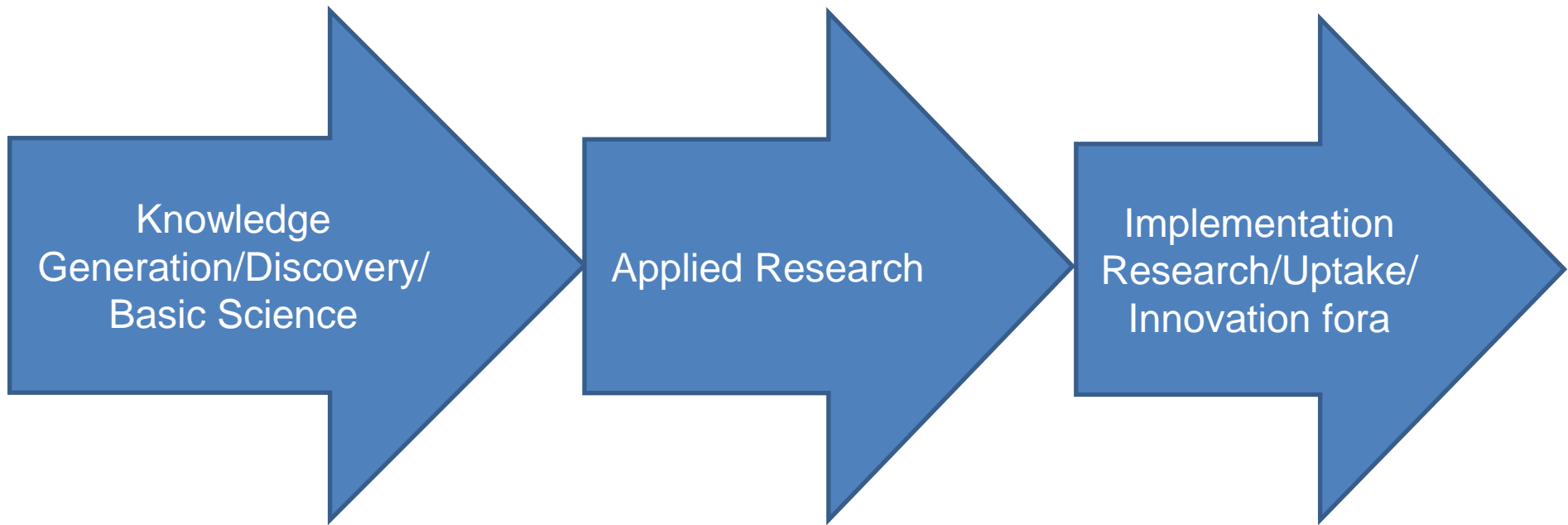
KEY SUSTAINABILITY ISSUE

2010

Sida funded Research Capacity Strengthening in low/middle income Countries and Regions.
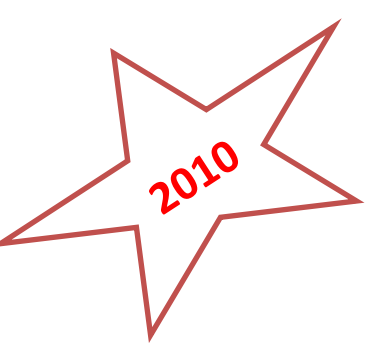
A modification in emphasis

"Research Training Partnership Programme as an integral part of Institutional Research Capacity Strengthening"

- Open calls for collaboration
- Towards local PhD training
- substantially increased number of research graduates

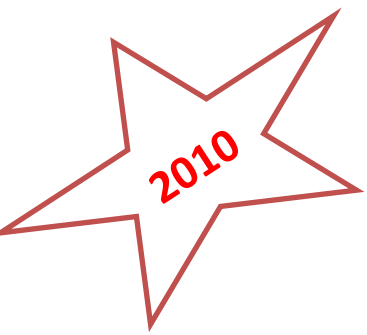# Support across the whole research/knowledge generation chain and in all areas

Ensuring ownership of target University

- **Concept note** with 10 year perspective with clear indication of human resource needs defined with SDG lens

- Sida expects *target* universities to develop their concept note in **a transparent and participatory way which allows input from a broad base of stakeholders**. Furthermore the *target* universities are to **describe the process** used to develop the 10 year plan presented in the concept note.

Considerations

- Partnerships should aim for **scaling up of the number** of high quality research graduates in prioritised areas. ***Twinning of PhD students from Partner and Swedish institutions are encouraged****.*

- Calls will be made for research training partnership with specific *target* countries. *With time, calls will be made for research training partnerships with regional perspectives.*

Research Training Partnership Programme (Round 2)

2017

- University of Rwanda (UR) has recently developed a comprehensive CONCEPT NOTE based on a open participative process.

- This Concept note in found on UR's homepage
  - A call for proposals will go out shortly inviting for proposals that are based on the CONCEPT NOTE from UR

Thank You