Introduction
On February 16-17, 2009, CODESRIA organised a gender planning workshop at Ndiambour Hotel in Dakar, Senegal. The meeting was attended by Gender experts from various countries (Algeria, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Ghana, Senegal and Nigeria) and from different disciplines. In his welcome address, Prof. Adebayo Olukoshi, Executive Secretary of CODESRIA, reminded the audience that the meeting was a follow-up to the one jointly organised by CODESRIA and SIDA (The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) on June 26-27, 2007 in Dakar (Senegal). He stressed the fact that the two workshops gathered together participants with deep experience of the frontiers of Gender research in Africa.

This meeting is the result of extensive consultation on the modalities and instruments to put in place in order to support and develop Gender research. The Executive Secretary noted that in the past, topics related to reproductive health, sexuality and domestic family violence had been central to the Gender research concerns. In contrast, themes like Gender and science/technology, Gender and arts or Gender and macroeconomic issues were overlooked in African intellectual production. It is therefore urgent to promote the research capacity in training and determine the mechanisms to put in place for research funding as well as for peer review. The idea is to discuss a research scholarship programme with an independent peer review system that supports individual and institutional researches on Gender. It must be ensured that gender works can contribute to institution building within the university system, even if there is tension between State requirements and the research world.

Lastly, the aim of the programme is also to find ways and means for younger African colleagues, especially the male ones, to be able to engage seriously in the Gender perspective and impulse change in the educational system.

The Executive Secretary of CODESRIA has therefore invited the participants to submit proposals for a funding request to SIDA. The aim is to put in place an ambitious programme, a new Framework for action for a major support to researchers and institutions as well as the establishment of Gender networks.

The June 2007 meeting was introspection on how far we have come; today’s meeting is in charge of developing an action programme for stepping up gender research and fulfilling the ambitions of the institution in this area. In this respect, we must define themes that are relevant to the African continent and think up the instruments and formats to be used for studying them.

Ebrima Sall for his part clearly stated the expectations of CODESRIA and SIDA of this meeting. The two institutions wish the participants to highlight the challenges to be met and the prospects for supporting gender research. Their reflections must focus on the selection of gender-relevant themes, the modalities for the participation of communities, especially the marginalised ones, and the budgetary parameters that define the priorities and amounts to be allocated. The delegates are invited to reflect on the publication media, the management of the programme envisaged, in terms of call for proposals, participation procedures, selection committee, linguistic capacity, and follow-up and implementation mechanisms.

1. African gender researchers’ needs
Following this update on the aims of the workshop, the first session led by Adebayo Olukoshi started with the intervention of Takyiwaa Manuh who paved the way for a discussion on the
needs of African gender researchers and explored the strategies to put in place in order to meet these challenges.

The contributor started her analysis by establishing the links between gender and sustainable development. She illustrated her point with a recent international meeting on African gender productions. She gave the example of South Korea which, in particular, had presented a comparison of gender issues in terms of statistics and planning. These statistics were to be fed into the Korean government’s policies.

For Manu, to establish the gender research needs in African academia is firstly to define the identity of these gender researchers in the continent. There are young researchers, male and female, especially students from Francophone, Anglophone, as well as Lusophone and Arabophone backgrounds and who are increasingly interested in gender studies. Some use the gender approach unofficially; others are in NGOs, etc. This preparatory identification work makes it possible to understand the context and possibly to know how research is conducted in this field and, on the same occasion, to know the current trends. In this fragmentary space, there are more women’s faces. In any case, the great majority of the works result from consultancy rather than basic research.

Takyiwaa Manuh went back over the context of African universities that are in full mutation. These institutions are mainly busy enough, and most of the teachers are bogged down in teaching and devote little time to research. Moreover, the financial and physical resources are often lacking. Desk research leaves much to be desired. The bibliographies are not updated. Researchers are isolated in terms of concepts, and find it difficult to establish interdisciplinary bridges. Gender is not part of conventional teachings and therefore, is difficult to accept. The presenter showed that in Ghana, gender is not taught in undergraduate studies. Despite its institutionalisation, gender teaching is done on an informal or inadequate basis. The issue of dissemination of gender research findings, development of pedagogical tools and access to documentation is also posed.

Manuh thus concluded that there is need to create and find out norms that are appropriate for African research. For gender analysis to allow better understanding of African realities, this goes necessarily through theoretical contextual studies that are exportable and comparable. The challenge is to ensure quality and rigour in what is done, by integrating an African perspective. We must get out of the ghetto by creating a sound gender research community, and sharpen the tools used for gender research. We must find the ways and means for making research relevant, in order to raise the interest of renowned researchers and also involve younger ones. We will succeed in carrying out serious studies with standards and norms by strengthening the theorisation and going beyond the local stage. Lastly, the challenge is to develop the publications that have been peer-reviewed and to allow access of young researchers to the bibliography and works.

The discussions on this first session focused on the progress of gender studies, the research context, the identity and legitimacy of the gender specialists and lastly, the issue of publications.

The participants acknowledged that there are more and more gender research centres in Africa. However, despite their increasing number, gender studies continue to be a minority and there is a long way forward. Adding to these difficulties is a research context in the continent marked by issues of mentoring, publications and poor quality of the papers produced on gender. Women’s studies and gender studies have reached an impasse and suffer from problems of content, as well as quality of the teaching and training provided on gender, access to documentation and lack of funding. On top of these, there is also a crucial need in methodologies.

As regards the content of these studies, Godwin Murunga stressed the need to involve men in gender thinking, and raised the issue of masculinity.
Following him, Amanda Gouws showed that in the Republic of South Africa, gender works are not stated in terms of men’s or women’s studies, but they try to depoliticise the feminist bias. For her, many resources are already allocated to men while there still is real need for studies on women.

For Laroussi Amri, there is need to analyse the content of women’s studies and review the quality of the teachings to be delivered on gender. The reflection must bear on methodologies that are appropriate for the issue of women. Along the same lines, Maréma Dioum is of the opinion that we should look into the fundamental causes of the subordination and manage to articulate the gender approach as a human right and a development issue.

Isabel Casimiro as well as Naffet Keita expressed concern about the influence of donors and our dependence on the international agenda. The former made it clear that there are problems in research planning regarding the millennium development goals (MDGs) and the issue of the Bologna process, which lead to new requirements and change the research conditions.

Faced with this situation, the contributors thought that in order to create the enabling conditions for quality gender research, training appears to be necessary. But Fatou Sarr, for her part, believes that it is research that feeds training. Rather, we should reflect on gender in terms of right and social utility. In this prospect, the development issue is the fundamental challenge. We should understand how men’s attitudes can have an impact on women. There is certainly an attempt at depoliticising the gender issue, but people should be able to specialise in their disciplines. She ended her point by stressing the need to encourage interdisciplinarity and men’s awareness-raising, in order to bring the universities out of the impasses they find themselves in.

Furthermore, the contributors acknowledge that the marginalisation of gender researchers is reality. Joy Kwesiga noted in fact that there is some fear among individual researchers, in particular students, to engage in gender studies, and suggests building this confidence. According to her, interdisciplinarity could make it possible to go beyond the ghetto in which gender research finds itself.

As concerns the identity of the specialists, it has been noted that it is mainly women and NGOs who monopolize gender research. What do the works carried out by NGOs on gender represent, when we known that these ad hoc consultancy works can generate relevant knowledge in the long run?

For Jacques Kuditshni, gender studies should be de localised and gotten out of their difficult situation, in particular the pretension of all women to speak about gender (gender/feminism assimilation). It is advisable that there be more men interested in gender studies. For him, CODESRIA has instruments (institute, symposium) that are quite relevant in the area of gender research development. We need to revisit them by assigning them precise goals and to turn them into methodological and theoretical training sites. The gender symposiums will serve to the validation and confrontation of ideas. Doctoral schools can also be training and epistemological guidance sites. Ebrima Sall thinks that CODESRIA cannot substitute for the institutions that are in Africa because the effort of building up theories should be a common concern. The Institution can, however, serve as a catalyst.

For Adebayo Olukoshi, we must think of quality and longitudinal studies, following a peer review process. We must find out ways and means for bringing more people closer, with a view to producing comparative knowledge. It would be interesting, for instance, to conduct a comparative research on national gender policies in Senegal, Burkina Faso and Mali. Besides, if we are to take stock of the researches carried out on gender, the criticisms must contribute to building theories, bringing methodological innovations and identifying the areas in which much more interest should be taken. The other objective, for him, is to see how to have access to African scientific production and strengthen this access. There are productions made outside the continent and some specialists wish to publish in international reviews. In his
opinion, this structural bias should be fought, and it is for organisations like CODESRIA to resist and propose means of publication to researchers. To do so, the institution must strive to make the voices of Africans heard, and continue to play this role as research catalyst and guidance in the continent.

Responding to all the issues raised in the debates, Takyiwaa Manuh admits that we must speak about gender in terms of transformations and rights. Gender studies must enable to understand realities, if they want to be relevant. However, there remains some conceptualization work to be done.

While agreeing that CODESRIA must continue to be a catalyst for training, she also suggests using the example of the Association of African Universities. She agrees with the conception of Fatou Sarr that research is a form of training. As regards the development of publications, she proposed the putting on line of gender works as one of the solutions to be explored.

2. Meeting the needs: Challenges and prospects for supporting gender research

The second session, chaired by Amanda Gouws, was devoted to the answers to be provided to the gender research needs as well as the challenges and prospects posed by this support to research.

The key contributor, Ndèye Sokhna Guèye, started with mentioning the different needs that were identified in terms of theories, methodologies, gender researches, networking and publication. She situated the needs at three levels: individual, team and last, institutional.

Before defining them, she emphasised the need to stop for a while and question ourselves about the gender studies we carry out. There are certainly real advances in this field, but these renewals of gender research in the continent are controversial and puzzling. There are very few theoretical and methodological syntheses. Taking stock of the achievements in terms of studies, training and publications will make it possible to refine the gender analysis tools and promote a methodology tailored to the African continent. Until recently, feminist studies have contributed to the production of theoretical and conceptual tools, but these were most often defined outside the continent. This raises the issue of their contextualisation and relevance to the African continent.

According to the presenter, it is imperative not to tack on or juxtapose these concepts and theories, but to think of the articulation of gender relations with other social categories such as class, ethnicity or race, in order to understand their meaning and content. It is necessary, therefore, to foster researches interested in epistemologies, paradigms, concepts, theories and methodologies that are of relevance for the continent. Empirical studies are also important for dealing with issues that are not tackled or explaining social changes.

At this prospect, the needs of individuals or teams are expressed in terms of building the research capacity. Consistent funding of individual researches and multidisciplinary research teams will make it possible to develop the production of African knowledge on gender relations. In fact, we must avoid the compartmentalisation of gender research and conceive of transdisciplinary networks capable of carrying out comparative, collective and international research.

At the institutional level, there has been recently an increase in gender research centres, institutes or laboratories, but the competencies are not keeping pace. These institutions have real needs in terms of research financing but above all, of training, documentation and access to publications. We need to build the theoretical and methodological capacities of the learners and the teachers. In this regard, the organisation of workshops for the training of trainers from different academic traditions should be encouraged. Thanks to these workshops, African universities will be able to deliver standardised gender teaching.

For students, there is need to continue to make the most of and rationalise the gender institute which is organised every year by CODESRIA. The Council also has other tools that are the loci of theoretical and pedagogical debates. They are the National Working Groups (NWGs),
the Multinational Working Groups (MWGs), as well as the Comparative Research Networks (CRNs) which, while encouraging research, could be a stepping-stone to the training of young researchers. They contribute to the development of gender specialist networks and to the emergence of a critical mass of intellectuals who will deepen research in this area. As for the university faculties, we must show them the need to integrate gender, whatever the discipline and to convince them to introduce general gender courses that could subsequently lead to specialisations.

As regards the documentation, Ndèye Sokhna Guèye points out that important researches are being conducted, but many institutions do not have access to those documents. How can we ensure people’s access to that literature? A gender documentation grant could be allocated to those institutions. Besides, CODESRIA could propose to offer copies of gender publications to the libraries of gender research centres. On-line publications are also solutions for larger access to information. With the dissemination of these studies, women’s studies and gender studies will gain more visibility and value, especially as there is need for recognition in this field. Many gender researchers are working in disciplines or academic contexts in which their studies are poorly known or have little scientific recognition.

Following this presentation, the debates mainly highlighted the forms of support needed to develop the gender research. The important points raised are the issues of networking and institutional capacity-building for gender research centres.

For Amanda Gouws, there are sound gender research institutions; we just have to see how they should be financed. Susanna Awasom confirms the existence in Africa of new institutions working on gender, which should be invited to participate in this programme. On the issue of training, Jacques Kuditshini wondered how to train people at a high level, when the basic tools are not provided from the first year onwards. For him, the research-teaching relationship is dialectical. Thus, the answer to the training of young researchers is mentoring, which does not require much funding. In this regard, CODESRIA is going to launch the College of Mentors to contribute to the training of young researchers, according to Marindo Ravayi.

For Laroussi Amri, CODESRIA should help establish and train the critical mass that will make gender issues switch to another stage. However, this work should not be the responsibility of this institution alone; it is also for each institution to create this critical mass. But for Aminata Diaw, the question is to know how to train this critical mass. The issue of gender institutionalisation requires a duty to pass on in an immovable framework, and on the other hand, an activist research that works with the realities. Ebrima Sall replied that the critical mass is first comprised of high-level researchers and the knowledge produced. In order to create this mass in each country and turn it into networks, there is need to encourage registrations at the doctoral level. This promotion of gender also goes through individual research. The idea is to invite a researcher to think about a given issue for 6 months or one year and provide an important work that will enable us to go beyond the frontiers of our knowledge and build gender theories.

Following these discussions, the main contributor concluded by insisting on the role CODESRIA could play in the networking. Using the tools in its possession, it will manage to create a locus for multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary debates and exchanges in feminist studies, studies on women and gender studies. The programme that will be put in place will have to encourage teaching, research and dissemination of these works, within and outside the institutions. It will have to serve as a communication and solidarity network between the existing centres and also contribute to the development of new centres and programmes. The programme will also have to help break the isolation of the gender specialists. It will eventually serve as practical relay of information on publications, conferences and the
curriculum in women’s and gender studies. It will have to promote the possibilities of student and staff exchanges in the institutions working on gender issues. In facilitating this networking, CODESRIA will be able to contribute to the emergence of a critical mass of gender experts.

3. Priority themes

The third session chaired by Fatou Sarr was facilitated by Joy Kwesiga who tried to identify priority themes for individual or team research on gender. She proposed four major themes:

- “Comprendre les dynamiques de genre et de pouvoir dans les ménages” (Understanding gender and power dynamics within households) is one of the key themes for a new approach of the issue of gender equality in the households. Kwesiga admits that there have been real advances in understanding gender equality and equity in the public sphere, in terms of access to farm technologies, governance, economy (access to credit, women’s openness to new economic areas) as well as in the general access to knowledge and social services. But according to her, many questions remain unanswered. She wonders about the reasons why changes are not reflected at the individual and household levels. The same goes for the politics of positive discrimination (affirmative action) in education and poverty eradication programmes. These are as many actions showing the will of governments to fight inequalities, but they are not perceptible at the household level.

Within this general problematic, the contributor raised the issues of “property rights” such as heritage laws, traditions and practices that are unfavourable to African women and that place them in great insecurity. For Kwesiga, it is necessary to think about the root causes of this situation.

The issue of “household decision-making” must be also studied in its broadest form, and the household is a privileged analytical framework of this concept. These property rights and decision-making issues also affect other aspects of life such as access to and use of education, health, reproductive health, sexuality or political participation, etc. Studies on these sets of themes will make it possible to produce theories and practices and provide a platform for recommendations and intellectual debates.

- The second major research proposed by Kwesiga is geared towards the theorisation of women’s studies and gender studies on the one hand, and African feminism on the other hand. There still exist schools of thought that do not accept women’s studies and gender as academic disciplines. Thereby, attempts to influence changes in the educational curriculum and make institutions gender-sensitive are subject to resistance. These oppositions are justified by the lack of African conceptual and intellectual approaches, thus minimising the works already conducted in this field. This theoretical research would make it possible to consolidate what has been already studied and published to reflect the context and perspective of the continent.

- The third major research, according to Joy Kwesiga, could focus on African orature to analyse and document the statutes of men and women in the African society. We must put in place an analytical framework and landmarks to measure social progress or change. To document these beliefs, perceptions and customs is to go beyond the classical anthropological studies of a single community. Understanding African societies supposes the study of the “proverbs and enigmas”, the rituals (relating to birth, puberty, marriage and death) which pose gender problems. Old as well as new songs are to be analysed. There is certainly a lot of creativity in the messages conveyed by the rappers, but they also contain a lot of sexism, incitation to polygamy and violence etc. Would this mean that traditions and customs have not changed in the sense of gender equity or equality? This is worth thinking about. The folklore is to be analysed in order to document the different histories and accounts. The content of television and radio broadcasts as well as print media is worth studying, to see how
women are portrayed. This general thinking on what we may call “African culture” will make it possible to explain all practices assigned to culture and customs.

- The fourth priority research is a long-term comparative study on official policies in Africa. In addition to these types of researches, Joy Kwesiga suggests that we think about the areas that have not yet been the objects of research: conflict resolution, sexuality in its broadest form (rights, decision-making, absorption, homosexuality and sexual education), gender and mathematics, sciences and information and communication technologies which were reduced to parity in educational and vocational terms.

In sum, for Kwesiga, the five priority axes defined are the following:
- New approaches to understanding gender and power social dynamics at the household level
- Theories and concepts on women’s/gender studies/African feminism
- Documentation and analysis of African orature
- Long term comparative research in official policies in Africa
- Research in areas that were previously neglected

Most participants appreciated the themes proposed by Joy Kwesiga and went back in detail over a few themes. For Fatou Sarr, culture, orality, the political issue, governance, civil rights and social transformation of power relations are relevant themes for the countries of the South. She suggests that the issue of conflicts should be compared in the differentiated spaces. Takyiwaa Manuh underlines the fact that researches as well as policies have an impact on the lives of people. Therefore, we must review the concepts and theories that go with the theme. For her, working on the life of women makes it possible to analyse all levels: daily life, work within associations, women and citizenship. Afterwards, we must find out a way of refining the methodology, whatever the theme.

For Jacques Kuditshini, the issues that are of interest for a country like the Democratic Republic of Congo are the impact of China on the DRC, urban violence or transitional justice. In contrast, Ndèye Sokhna Guèye considers that we must rather define themes that can go beyond the local and be the subject of comparative study, in other words, a federating research that can make it possible to produce global knowledge. In this respect, the issues of rights, new citizenships, access to resources, are also worth being mentioned. For Maréma Dioum, it is culture that is a federating theme in which one can see the different transformations of society. Laroussi Amri subscribes to the idea of culture as the basis for all the themes. If we have to prioritise, the themes of the place of women in the labour market, the precariousness of women’s jobs, and women’s exploitation in farm works are of importance as subjects of studies. For Amanda Gouws, it is the taking into account of health, culture, politics, violence, the law, AIDS, rapes and domestic violence that makes it possible to open several windows and to see the methodologies that are appropriate for studying them.

Some, like Isabel Casimiro, raise other themes to be considered, such as the land issue, mainly at the rural level, the issue of rural-urban migrations and the problem of biofuels.

For Godwin Murunga, relatively to the centrality of gender relations, we must reengage in the studies of politicisation. According to Naffet Keita, we must rather restore commonplaces, the relationships between rural and urban women, and think in terms of relationships between urbanity and rurality, the issue of sexuality, the NICTs, policies and their impact on populations.

Ebrima Sall laid emphasis on methodologies and considers that we must avoid the perspective that consists in presenting women as eternal victims instead of considering them as responsible beings. It would be interesting to think about the forms of women’s empowerment, the marginalisation processes or the problems at the root of women’s impoverishment.
To end the session, Joy Kwesiga invited the participants to wonder about what has changed in terms of gender equity. She remains convinced that it is in studying households that we will be able to find out the sources of empowerment. Emphasis should be laid also on theorisation. She also accepts the idea that culture could be a guideline that makes it possible to better understand society. Lastly, for her, we must federate the research works and find out the thread in terms of gender and agree upon a list of priorities.

4. Modalities and instruments for mobilising individuals and teams around a gender research programme

Led by Isabel Maria Casimiro, the fourth session was a reflection on the modalities and instruments to put in place in order to mobilise individuals and teams for gender research. According to the key contributor, Godwin Murunga, the programme should target in the first place, those researchers working on gender in Africa. At this prospect, four groups are to be targeted, but the means for mobilising them differ according to their profiles. Among them, there are those who are already well integrated in networks, in particular CODESRIA’s, and others who are not. The groups that are well integrated in networks have their own priority researches and are not inclined to get interested in activities that have been defined beforehand for them. To attract them, we can use free invitations. In the form of a substantial scholarship, these invitations must be well targeted and flexible to invite these eminent researchers to write pioneering books.

The second group is comprised of those who are not well grounded in networks, particularly CODESRIA’s. They themselves and their networks are generally out of the African continent. The means for reaching them out must be creative because they have a lot to bring for raising the level of gender research in Africa and knowing the evolution of the works of African researchers in the Diaspora. This group can be useful for the visibility and validation of the knowledge produced under this programme.

The third group whose profile is not recognised but which has a potential, pertains to the third and fourth generations of African intellectuals. This group suffered from lack of training and resources in their vocational career. It needs to be integrated into the programme. In order to help them, we must facilitate their access to bibliographic searching and to recently published documents. Senior researchers can help in identifying this category.

The fourth group is made of students from different training levels. The mentors will be able to help identify, mobilise and organise them. Institutions can also recommend their promising students. In addition, CODESRIA’s open calls for applications are mechanisms that we should make the most of, in order to reach this student community.

How can we mobilise the teams? Godwin Murunga wonders. Are they the teams made of people already involved in the CODESRIA networks, or should we focus on those that are not?

His answer is that there is need for fine equilibrium in favouring the teams that wish to demonstrate change and continuity in their composition and research themes. These teams must be regional, and diversified in terms of disciplines, languages and gender. Emphasis must be laid mainly on experience.

An open call for applications could be launched on an as needed basis and on the initiative of researchers. CODESRIA would need to specify the lifetime of the teams by proposing a well defined number of years during which the theoretical and longitudinal contribution of the work must be proved.

Still for Godwin Murunga, the instruments to be mobilised can be those already existing in CODESRIA. Alongside these initiatives of the institution, there are grants that might be provided individually. Research scholarships could be proposed according to two modes of financing: scholarships for a programme of reflections, which would lead to important publications or scholarships allocated to senior researchers’ projects, together with a training component for Master’s and Doctoral students. An institutional component could be added to these
scholarships. It would cover the managerial or administrative aspects, such as the constitution of a documentary fund, the organisation of a public conference and a seminar, meant to attract teachers from the neighbouring regions, etc. Mentoring can also play a part in the training of programme managers.

The networks can be put in place with the tools already available at CODESRIA, such as the NWGs, the CRN, the MWGs and the Gender Institutes. The NWGs could serve to establish national networks with a lifetime that does not exceed three years. It will be also necessary to relate these networks to the sister organisations with which CODESRIA is working, and manage to develop joint programmes. There is need to identify the existing gender programmes, in particular the successful ones, and use them to build the regional bases of the programme. We must find out the reasons for the failure of other programmes, in order to avoid the same mistakes.

Regarding publication as a tool for disseminating the results of the gender research, it would be more useful to identify and use the existing reviews.

The discussions that followed moderate the optimism of the key presenter regarding the groups to be targeted. Thus, Takyiwaa Manuh thinks that we should mobilise people who are not only interested in gender issues, but have also demonstrated their commitment in this field. The issue of lack of confidence is also posed and she considers that it would be more convenient to change or to consolidate in the long run the existing and ongoing networks. Joy Kwesiga notes that the local universities have a tendency not to work as teams. Consequently, there is need to develop this collective work capacity, by facilitating the incorporation of the students who will be able to benefit from the experience of the group.

The following issues concerned the publications format. In this regard, Laroussi Amri had proposed publishing and co-publishing while making the most of the opportunities offered by the NICTs, in particular by building on the electronic reviews. Amanda Gouws acknowledges the importance of publications and team work, but for her, individual books receive much more recognition and awards. This tension between the two types of publishing exists, Ebrima Sall admits, but ideally, it must be possible to produce both kinds of publications, individual as well as collective.

The fourth session ended with the suggestion by Laroussi Amri of preparing an encyclopaedia on gender in Africa. This suggestion was received with enthusiasm and approved by all the participants.

The fifth session chaired by Naffet Keita and facilitated by Isabel Casimiro, continues the reflection on the modalities of mobilisation of the groups. This session is interested more precisely in the strategies to put in place in order to include the marginalised communities in this programme.

Isabel Maria Casimiro approves the mechanisms for group mobilisation, identified by Godwin Murunga. She considers that in the first place we should target the seasoned gender researchers in the continent. The second group to be targeted is that of students. All these communities must be grouped together in regional networks. Mentoring, institutional building and publication of monographs are as many instruments to put in place for developing gender research.

The presenter agrees with the preceding contributors on the need to identify the programmes that already exist in the field of gender research and training, in order to avoid duplications. One of the key mechanisms, in particular for senior researchers, is to propose sabbatical years for working on a given research. There is need also to create multidisciplinary teams that work with different profiles and share methods and theories. Isabel Casimiro also thinks of civil society in organising policy dialogue.

She admits that training in methodologies and theories is more important for marginalised communities from a linguistic point of view. Portuguese is a difficult language and there is real
problem of capacities to conduct research. Writing training sessions will have a positive impact on these categories.

As concerns the dissemination and communication of the research findings, the Monograph Series, the organisation of a workshop and an annual symposium to discuss ongoing works should be encouraged.

The debates have made it possible to specify the nature of the marginal communities. According to Takyiwaa Manuh and Ndèye Sokhna Guèye, this marginalisation can be situated at several levels: geographical, linguistic, generational, gender and scientific (sets of themes). Each of these levels has specific needs. For the generational and gender aspects, positive discrimination (affirmative action) should be carried out in favour of women and the youth when selecting candidates. The same practice can be used for geographically and scientifically isolated countries. Regarding the linguistic issue, the policies of systematic interpretation and translation of the documents during the meetings are to be continued.

Jacques Tshibwabwa Kuditshini situates the marginalisation in the North/South relationships. The question he raises concerns the sponsoring of any researcher who is marginalised because of his research theme. Fatou Sarr has doubts about the relevance of going towards new horizons and coming out with other categories for widening the scope, because we must consolidate rather than dissipate the scarce resources allocated to gender.

About the dissemination of the research findings, Godwin Murunga thinks that we must foster a culture of seminars and thematic working groups, which gather together senior and junior researchers. Regional sessions must also be considered, for individualism will have to disappear. The idea of encyclopaedia is a very strong one to be encouraged.

Ebrima Sall also notes that gender is already quite marginal as research area. But for him, individuals are free to carry out researches and publish them where they want. For him, the idea of an electronic encyclopaedia seems more convenient to envisage, and this work would require committed people for its long-term nature.

In her responses, Isabel Casimiro laid emphasis on the training need of the marginalised groups. At the institutional level, she advocated the rationalisation of gender studies in universities across the continent. She also suggested that CODESRIA should strengthen the South/South collaboration.

5. Budgeting the gender research programme

Chaired by Laroussi Amri, this session was aimed at discussing and establishing ideal budget allocations for financing researchers individually or as a team. The reflection also focused on the deadlines allocated and the research findings and outputs.

The key contributor, Saida Yahya-Othman, begins with a presentation of the general context in the African universities where States allocate little funds to research, which results in total reliance on external funding. To that may be added the current global economic and financial crisis which will have a real impact on research support. At the same time, she noted a change in the modes of funding of the donors who dictate their research conditions. Yet, donors are generally focused on the themes that are of interest for the MDGs.

How to allocate resource? On what criteria? What is expected from the beneficiary of the allocation?

In response to these various interrogations, Saida Yahya-Othman conceives of three financing modalities:

- a programme funded by a single donor and including several research activities, such as individual research, research networks, training, writing, conferences and workshops as well as institutional capacity-building. The advantage is flexibility, independence of choice, and focalisation on key areas.
- This same programme including several activities, whose funding application is submitted to several donors who will each bring its contribution. The disadvantage with this approach is that the donor may finance a single area to the detriment of the others.
- a funding project: this will be a funding request for each proposal, developed under a general gender research category. For the management, it supposes to have a unit within CODESRIA that works on gender research rather than a programme. The disadvantage is the lack of focus and this requires a lot of resources.
Saida Yahya-Othman then imagined a ten-million-dollar budget to be allocated over five years and that will serve to cover the following activities:

- individual research grant
- writing scholarship (including postdoctoral),
- development of regional teaching (PhD level),
- doctoral scholarship for the institution’s staff,
- annual conference,
- regional and multidisciplinary team research scholarship,
- national and multidisciplinary team research scholarship,
- publishing aid,
- review (on line?),
- regional gender methodological workshop for Master’s or Doctoral students,
- retreat for developing a regional research
dialogue portal.

For each of these activities, the contributor advises that institutional charges should be envisaged for institutional capacity building.

The products that can be generated by this gender programme include research proposals, working papers, conference proceedings, review and chapter articles, the web portal, books, networks, printed or on-line reviews, curricula with teaching materials, training manuals and last, policy dialogue portals.

In the discussions, the participants noted that the college of mentors and the audit issue do not appear on the proposed budget.

Takyiwaa Manuh suggests that the on-line review takes into account the marginalised communities that are capable of using paper base. We should think of recruiting a publishing officer. The institutional capacity-building should comprise an amount for the acquisition of books.

For Ebrima Sall, the institutional capacity also supposes the recruitment of a person or team, in charge of the coordination. He notes that the centralised management does not appear on the presenter’s proposals. For him, the research component could be distributed to promote the creation of the continental comparative research networks around themes of their choice.

As for the question of Saida Yahya-Othman who was wondering whether the initiative would be limited to those institutions that are already involved or will open up to those that are marginalised, Sall considers that it is for the communities to determine priorities among the proposals received and that there will probably be a joint management of activities with the institutions.

Still as part of the institutional capacity-building, Manuh advises that we should explore NORAD financing for building premises to be used as research centre and where people can meet and exchange: a “Bellagio” for African researchers.

6. The gender programme’s management framework

The aim of this session, led by Jacques Tshibwabwa Kuditchini and presented by Susanna Awasom, is to define the gender programme’s management and control framework. This reflection includes the calls for applications, the issue of eligibility and frequency of
applications, the working language(s), the evaluation process, the announcement of the results of the selection of applicants and teams, the administration of individual and team scholarships, the progress monitoring and evaluation, and the publication and dissemination of the research findings.

Susanna Awasom starts by recommending the use of the institutional memory created by CODESRIA as part of the programme management. The calls for applications must specify the target people: institutional members and partners. They are published through the CODESRIA website, then by mail to the institutional partners and in the main national newspapers. Regarding the eligibility and frequency, the criteria for the selection of applicants should take into account the academic profiles, the quality of the abstracts, the frequency of the activities carried out by CODESRIA, gender and age.

As for the working languages, Awasom points out that language policies are already effective in CODESRIA with the use of four working languages: English, French, Portuguese and Arabic. But this multiplicity of languages poses problems of equipment and costs for satisfying a large group of participants.

According to her, the selection process goes first through an acknowledgement of receipt of all applications. CODESRIA must inform all the shortlisted candidates in time, especially in the event of cancellation or postponement of workshops.

The financial administration of individual and team scholarships poses the problem of bank transfers, especially with inexperienced banks.

The monitoring and evaluation of projects suppose interim reports with a very precise schedule on which are based the payments of the installments of the scholarship. The activity evaluation process should take into account the number of replies to the call, the researchers’ performance, the quality, level of participation and teaching methods of the resource persons, the evaluation by participants after the workshops, and the results of the peer reviews, in order to revise the articles and the compliance with the deadlines.

The presentation ended with the deadlines for the dissemination of the research findings which must be complied with in order not to frustrate the promotion of researchers; however, it was noted that the delays may come from the researchers who take time to revise their texts, thus delaying the publication. In this regard, a number of copies of the publications should be offered to the authors who participated in an activity and whose works have been published.

The reaction to Susana Awasom’s presentation focused mainly on the applications to be targeted for the programme and the means for reaching them.

Amanda Gouws thinks that above all, there is need to involve gender researchers and envisage larger dissemination of the calls for applications. Laroussi Amri recommends that we should try to reach the marginalised groups in countries such as Libya, Burundi, Rwanda, Chad, and the DRC.

It should be envisaged to make available a link between the CODESRIA site and university web sites. Ndoumbé Faye suggests putting in place a data base of researchers in Africa in order to facilitate communication as well as a gender observatory for mutualising efforts.

According to Ebrima Sall, CODESRIA envisages field visits in places where its presence is less effective. The marginalised communities which send weak proposals can be helped from the methodological point of view and receive capacity-building funds. As concerns the selection of applicants, an independent panel is needed to decide upon the group’s skill or the quality of the research.

It was proposed that the funds should be administered by CODESRIA with a steering committee comprised of a group and limited institutions, which meet periodically. When all is said and done, the solution is in the creation of a gender department, managed by a senior and an
assistant. It will have a Board of Directors for its scientific functioning and for establishing the connection with the other international communities.

**Conclusion: next stages and concluding remarks**

The conclusions were drawn by members of the Executive Secretariat of CODESRIA. In her closing remarks, Marindo Ravayi, administrator of the Scholarships and Training Department, invited the participants to think about an initiative that is a consolidation and a renewal of what exists already in gender research. This programme must be a new way of reconsidering old ideas. She confirmed that the issue of mentoring is close to her heart for, according to her, it makes it possible to ensure continuity between generations. Lastly, she considered that this programme, which will have an impact on the continent, will enable gender to be at the front line.

Following her, Ebrima Sall summarized the salient points that were raised during the two-day reflections on the challenges of gender research and how to manage them. The types of activities proposed are about research, the production of gender theories and methods as well as empirical studies in the continent. We must also conceive of a space and mechanisms for leading senior researchers into carrying out researches. This will ensure a critical mass of experienced and skilled researchers who will serve as mentors to younger researchers in need of support. We must promote the formation of research teams or groups. A report must be prepared with the different structures working on gender, for the institutional capacity-building policies.

Regarding the publication of the works, the idea is to find out more outlets; an electronic review is a possibility to explore. Libraries should be strengthened with gender studies. The idea of creating an encyclopaedia should be considered as a complete and sustainable activity that supposes regular updates and available resources. Finally, there is need to ensure the creation of a central structure, in charge of the programme coordination.

A budget was proposed, but its review requires a department in charge of the coordination and monitoring with all the institutions and communities involved.

An advisory council comprised of a limited group may be created to improve the quality of the programme. A programme monitoring and evaluation system that is efficient, transparent and credible and will respond to all the scientific concerns should be put in place. Communication with policy-makers, regional and subregional organisations, such as the African Union, should be promoted. Besides, no discipline and no community shall be neglected in this initiative.

For Adebayo Olukoshi, we would need, in addition, to find out a means for collecting all the knowledge of aged or retired seniors. The plate-form should also receive independent senior researchers who will be useful for their idea. He agrees with the idea put forward by Takyiwaa Manuh for the construction of an African Bellagio, destined to receive researchers who will be invited for a limited time to work on a given subject.

The Executive Secretary of CODESRIA assured the participants that a proposal for the gender programme will be submitted to the SIDA and DANIDA Secretariat by late March-early April, before its finalisation planned for late October.

He notes that the Executive Committee of CODESRIA has already approved the revitalization of the Gender department. A firm resolution is taken so that the programme be anchored and managed by a senior researcher who is a gender expert, and who will hold the position of programme officer and will have support personnel (programme assistant).

A Gender Series will be implemented. Themes in conformity with the CODESRIA strategic plan and intellectual agenda will be identified. A more structured network of centres working on gender and in charge of thinking about a research agenda will be established.

Olukoshi reasserts his optimism as for the future of gender at CODESRIA and in Africa in general. He is convinced that the institution, through the sets of themes it deals with, will change the terms of the debate on gender and question former premises.
In this respect, CODESRIA is already on track with the abundance of books resulting from the gender symposiums, and which will be published shortly. He concludes that in the long run, this gender research programme will succeed in promoting production at the individual level as well as in Pan-African centres.