



UNIVERSITY OF BUEA MAIDEN RESEARCH CONFERENCE
“Enhancing the Capacity of Emerging Researchers”



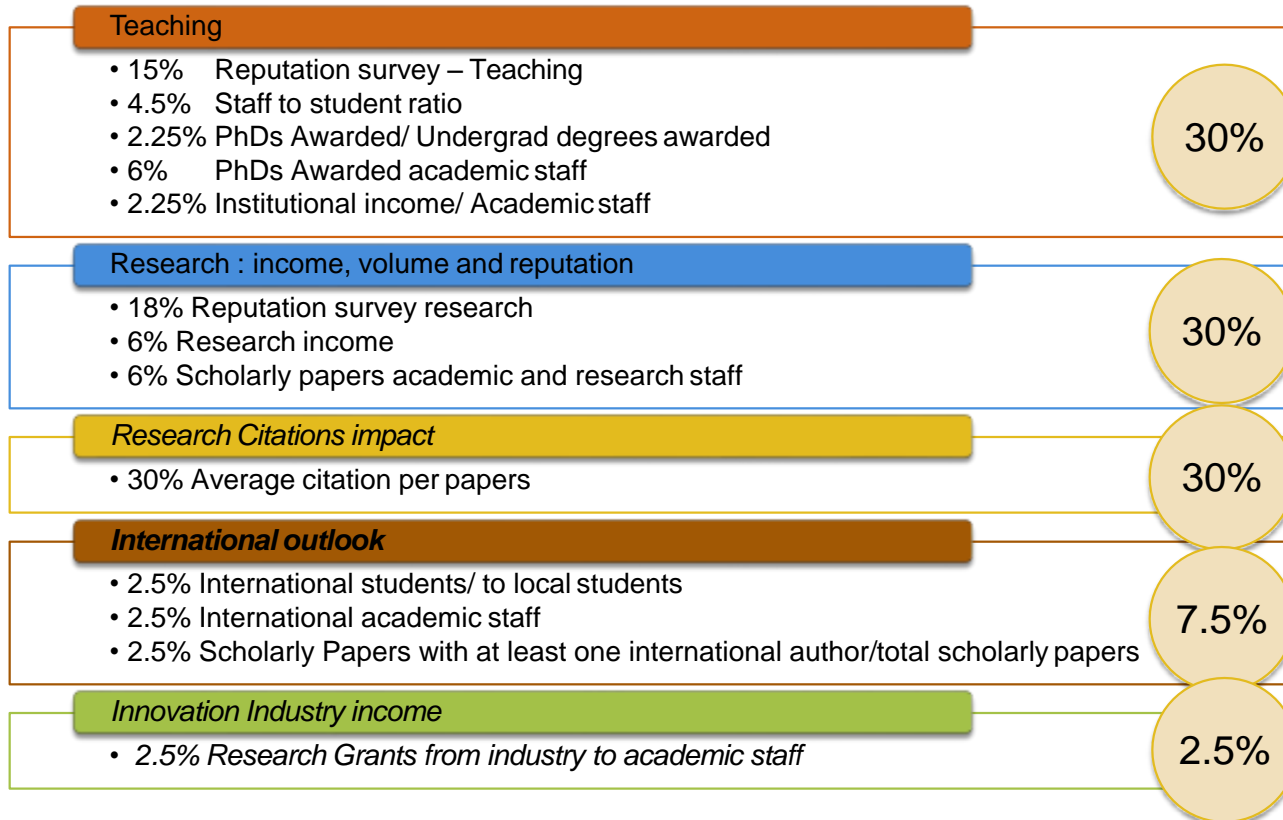
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Research Networking

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Times Higher Education (THES) Ranking:



Outline!

- **Why the Need for Research Networking?**
- **How to Build a Research Network?**
- **How to Manage a Research Team and Network?**
- **How to Get Things Done Properly and Timely in a Network?**

Why the need for Research Networking?



Why the need for Research Networking?

- Research collaboration (Institutional, National or International) is growing exponentially and researchers from different institutions and countries increasingly work together as consortia focused around specific research questions.
- Such consortia are especially valuable for health research because they offer interdisciplinary expertise and allow recruitment of patients in different settings.
- Establishing research networks and collaborations in the form of non-governmental organizations (NGO) and non-profit, voluntary participants' groups provides the necessary flexibility to adapt to a wide spectrum of arising challenges.

Why the need for Research Networking?

- **Some of the most prominent advantages of Research Networking:**
 - Shared learning.
 - New research opportunities.
 - Establishing new research projects.
 - **Joint applications for funds.**
 - Technology transfer.
 - Increase citations of research manuscripts, especially if there is an international team of authors involved.

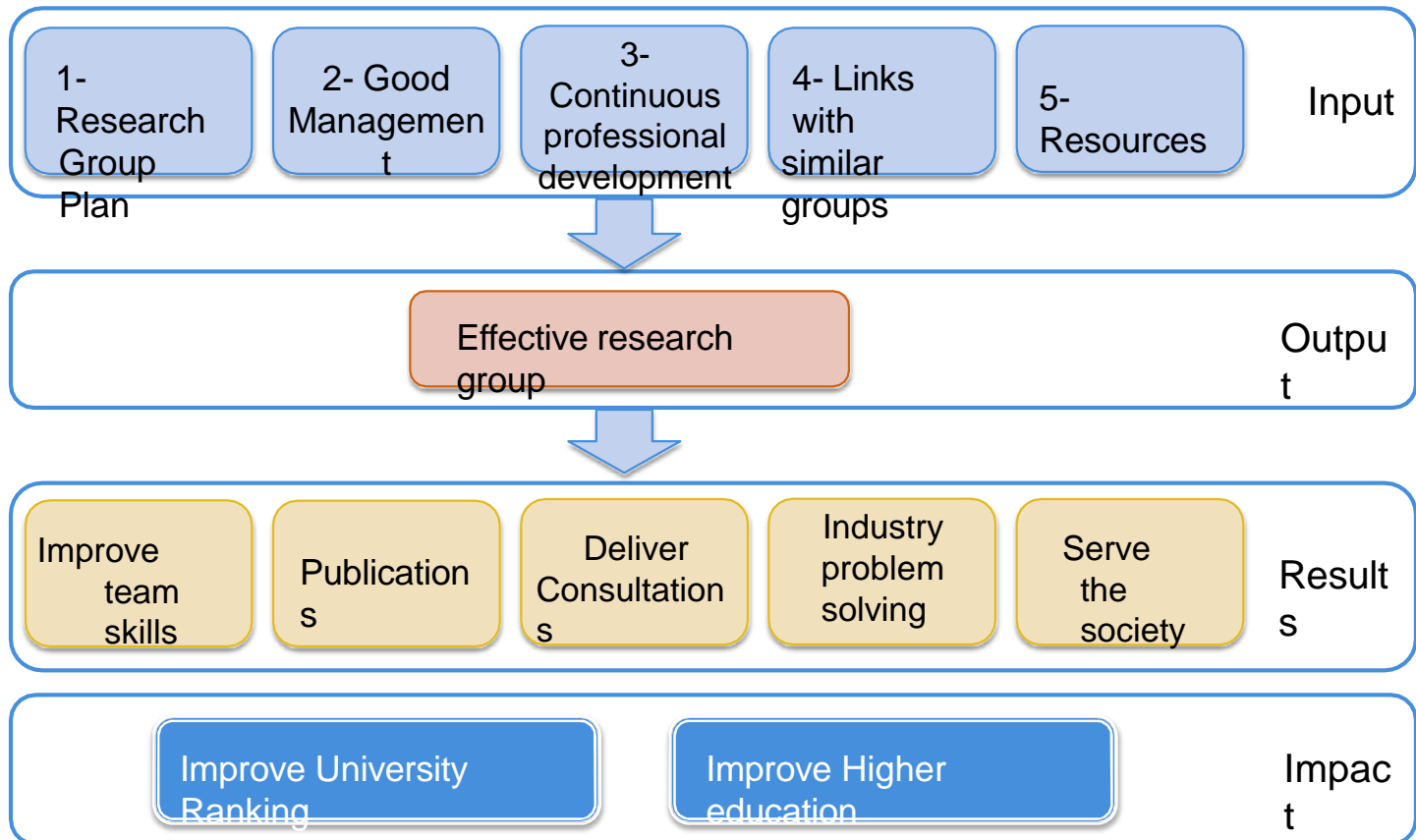
How to Build a Research Network?



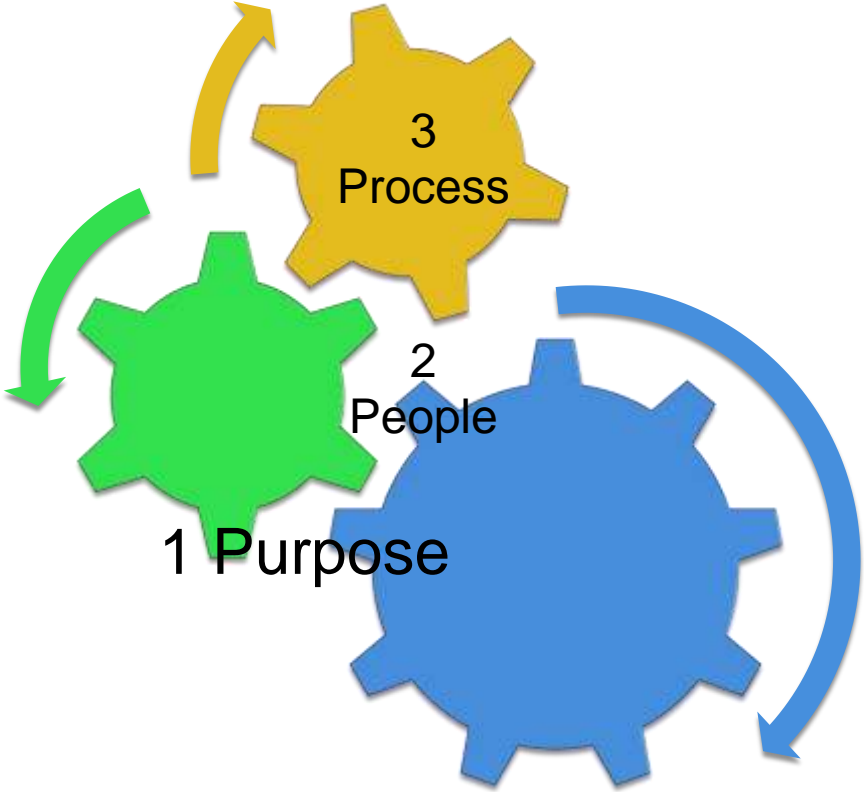
ONE GOAL: REDUCING THE BURDEN OF INJURIES IN CAMEROON AND OTHER SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN COUNTRIES



Critical success factors



How to build a Research Network!



The purpose!

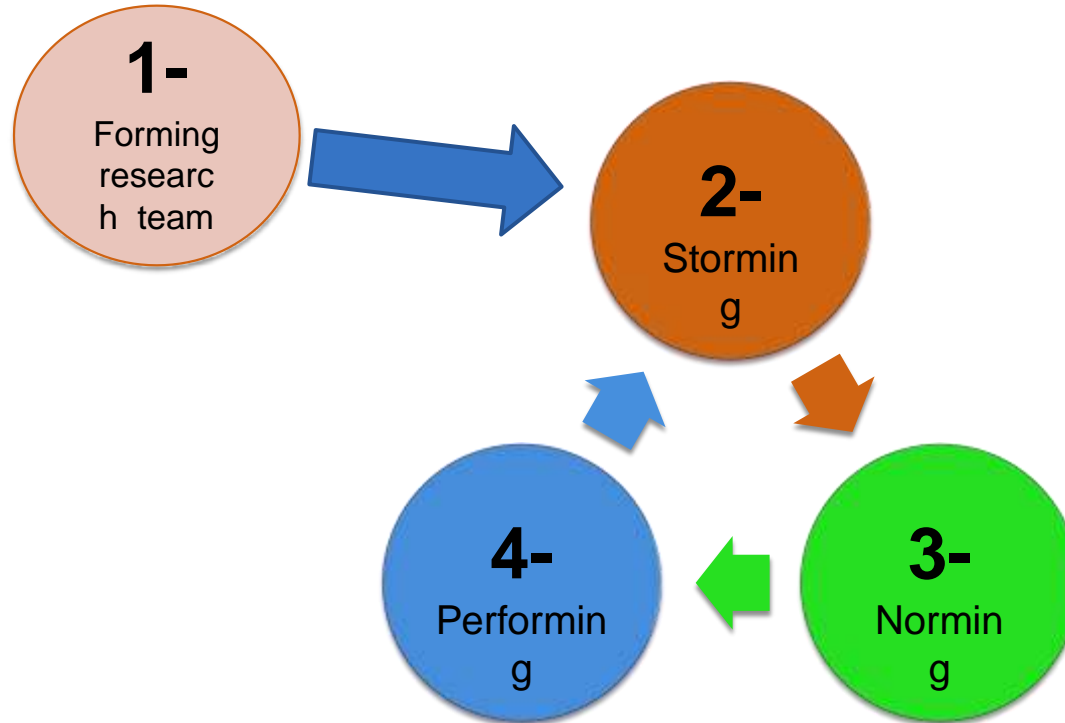
- An essential part of any successful research network: having the momentum and clarity of purpose.
 - What is the group for and does it already exist?
 - Are you bringing together researchers in new and exciting ways who wouldn't otherwise be in the same group?
 - Is it a growing new area that could do with concentrated energy?

The purpose!

- Do not set up a snazzy ‘international research network’ for something that others are already doing.
 - It could be all about truly setting up the only thing like it in the world!
 - You could try to bring several smaller groups together to gain better profile for all and generate wonderful intellectual fizz!
 - If there’s a research network out there that covers what you’re wanting to do, think about participating more strongly in that one rather than starting your own.
 - If you’re set on starting your own even though there’s something already out there that’s very similar, think about your reasons for doing so. There may be good and valid reasons, but you need to think them through because you’ll be trying to draw scholars to yours in particular ways.

2- People

Forming the team Group Dynamics



Bruce **Tuckman's** classic description of the stages of group development

The people!

- If you're struggling to find enough people or interest, it's good to know early rather than after you've tried to start a new network:
 - › See if you can convene a good stream on the area through an existing conference
 - › Hold a focused symposium and see what the response is like during the call for papers/interest
 - › Again, using an existing conference or association gathering, gauge interest in a 'special interest group' or 'research focus cluster' in that area and get people together to have a chat about it.
- If you have a large personal network through which you're discerning strong threads of interest, find a way to bring those people together to talk further.

The people!

- **Identify the right people for your research team**
 - Establish a research team structure that can help you achieve the goals.
 - Identify people that can not only perform delegated tasks effectively, but can also adapt smoothly to the culture of your group.
 - If you are leading a heterogeneous research team of technicians, interns, graduate students, and postdocs, it is important to consider their individual calibre and time availability while assigning specific roles.
 - The question of how to manage a research team will become simpler to answer once you have gauged your teammates' capabilities.

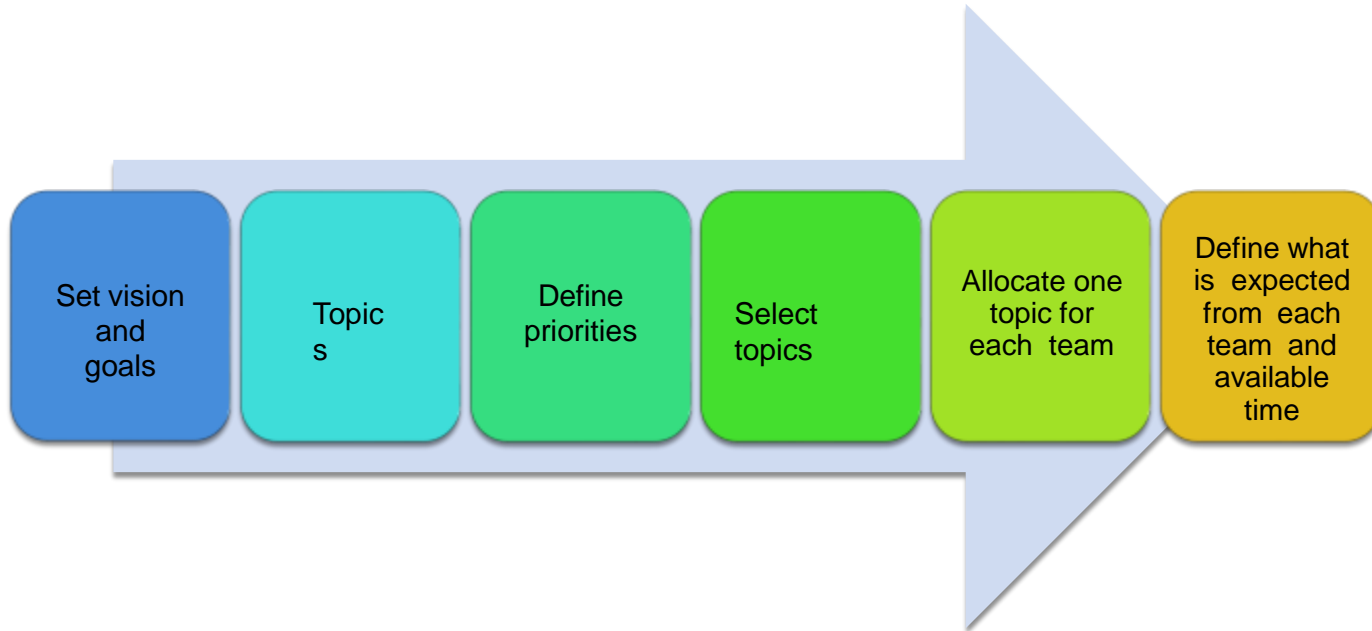
The people!

- **Eight ways of connecting to the right people!**
 - Attend and present at conferences. select them wisely!
 - Collaborate through service appointments: volunteer to serve in technical committees.
 - Go on an exchange.
 - Keep in touch with the people you meet. Reconnect with them shortly.
 - Try to reach out to authors of interesting articles you read.
 - Develop an online presence: [Orcid](#), [LinkedIn](#), [ResearchGate](#), [Google scholar](#), common social media...
 - Invite international colleagues to all aspects of thesis and dissertations work.
 - Send your students on an exchange and receive students from other institutions.

3- Process

Research Team

Plan



Ho to Manage a Research Network?



Managing a Research Team-Network!

- **Responsibilities of team leader!**

- Establish, agree and communicate standards of performance and behaviour
- Establish style, culture, approach of the group - soft skill elements
- Monitor and maintain discipline, ethics, integrity and focus on objectives
- Anticipate and resolve group conflict, struggles or disagreements
- Assess and change as necessary the balance and composition of the group
- Develop team-working, cooperation, morale and team-spirit
- Develop the collective maturity and capability of the group - progressively increase group freedom and authority

Managing a Research Team-Network!

- **Responsibilities of team leader!**

- Encourage the team towards objectives and aims - motivate the group and provide a collective sense of purpose
- Identify, develop and agree team- and project-leadership roles within group
- Enable, facilitate and ensure effective internal and external group communications
- Identify and meet group training needs.
- Give feedback to the group on overall progress; consult with, and seek feedback and input from the group.

Managing a Research Team-Network!

- **Team roles and development: the Belbin model!**

- In the 1970s, Meredith Belbin and colleagues at the Henley Management College identified nine team roles, based on long-term psychometric tests and studies of business teams.
- Belbin defined team roles as "a tendency to behave, contribute and interrelate with others in a particular way".
- The resulting role definitions fall into three categories, each with strengths and allowable weaknesses, and have been used widely in practice for team development in the intervening decades.
- Further research by Belbin has led to the addition of a tenth 'Specialist' role in recent years.

Managing a Research Team-Network!

- **Team roles and development!**

- Teams, like individuals and organisations mature and develop and have a fairly clearly defined growth cycle. [Bruce Tuckman's 1965 four-stage model](#) explains this cycle.
- It may be helpful to reflect on your team's current stage of development in order to identify relevant approaches to leadership and management.
- In addition to understanding the development of your team over time, having an understanding of the preferred 'team roles', the characteristics and expected social behaviour, of individual team members, including the team leader, will help ensure that the team performs effectively together.
- Using team role or individual profiling tools can offer insights into building and maintaining an effective team, but team role analysis is most useful if all members evaluate their own and others' preferred roles, whichever tools are chosen.
- Use team role and individual profile tools to understand your preferred team roles or working styles.

How to Get Things Done Properly and Timely in a Network?



How to get things done!

- **Continually** communicate: create all possible channels for this!
- Have more conflicts: This may sound counterintuitive, but conflict is a way to move forward.
- Know your team members and know the reason why they are in the collaboration: this will help identify synergies!
- Always clearly define next actions and structure action around specific tasks: a list of “To DOs” for each team member after each concertation.
- Define milestones: they allow flexibility while maintaining the minimum pressure!

How to get things done!

- Encourage junior people to participate and enable career and capacity building!
- Be transparent: Nothing blocks progress in a collaboration more than the perception that others have a hidden agenda.
- Look for synergies, not compromise!
- Foster the community!
- Review the initial plan periodically if possible: this will make your project more ambitious!
- Plan for sustainability: we all like to see that our project will have lasting effect!



We probably need more commitment and more discipline!!!