




CAPACITY-STRENGTHENING IN RESEARCH MANAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY OF THE ADVANCING RESEARCH MANAGEMENT TRAINING INITIATIVE IN WEST AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

<p>What is new?</p>	<p>There is a growing recognition of the need to strengthen research management capacity in West African institutions, yet limited structured training programs exist to address capacity gaps in this field. This study presents original findings from a multi-country initiative aimed at filling that gap.</p>
<p>What was the approach?</p>	<p>The study employed a pre–post evaluation design using structured surveys administered to participants of three five-day intensive workshops held in Nigeria and Senegal between September and December 2024. The training focused on research support, research strategy, grant writing, budgeting, research communications, integrity, project management, contracts, intellectual property, and gender issues.</p>
<p>What is the academic impact?</p>	<p>The results revealed significant improvements in participants' self-reported knowledge and competencies</p>

	across all training areas. The study contributes empirical evidence to the field of Research Management and Administration (RMA), demonstrating the effectiveness of targeted capacity-building interventions in enhancing research support functions in low-resource settings.
What is the wider impact?	The positive outcomes highlight the potential of structured, context-specific training to build a more competent research management workforce, thereby supporting stronger institutional research environments across West Africa.
Keywords	Research Management and Administration, Capacity Building, West Africa, Research Development, Higher Education Institutions

INTRODUCTION

Research management (RM) encompasses a wide range of activities, including pre-award grant preparation, post-award administration, research ethics compliance, and dissemination of findings. It also involves strategic planning, infrastructure management, and monitoring and evaluation to ensure effective research oversight and impact within a complex ecosystem. These activities are critical for institutions to thrive within the increasingly complex research ecosystem (Dáher Nader et al., 2020; Derrick & Nickson, 2014). A strong RM capacity is essential for institutions seeking to access and effectively utilise research grants.

The professionalisation of research management has evolved significantly over recent decades in the global north, with established career pathways, professional associations, and competency frameworks now widely recognised. Internationally, research administration has become an increasingly important source of assistance to academics, who are expected to obtain and manage external research funding (Acker et al., 2019). Research administrators perform multiple roles, notably assisting with the complexities of grant-hunting as well as managing ethical clearance, knowledge mobilization, and related activities. The expansion of this cadre of research administrators can be linked to the surge of managerialism and regulation that has accompanied the transformation of universities, though their contribution to the successes attributed to academic researchers is often substantial yet under-recognized (Acker et al., 2019).

The global development of research management and administration as a profession has followed distinct trajectories across different regions. In the United States, research administration emerged as a distinct profession after World War II, when the creation of federal agencies such as the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health led to increased research collaborations with universities (Smith, 2019). Before 1950, research administration was vested with and the responsibility of scientists and

their research staff members. However, as federal funding expanded, recipient institutions had to create research administrative systems and employ qualified people to manage research programs, marking the birth of research administration as a profession (Smith, 2019). This North American development was formalized with the establishment of the National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA) in 1959, which has since become a leading professional association in the field (Kerridge et al., 2023).

In Europe, the professionalization of research management developed more gradually, driven by increasing research funding complexity and accountability requirements. The establishment of the European Association of Research Managers and Administrators (EARMA) and national associations across European countries reflected growing recognition of research administration as a distinct professional domain (Kerridge et al., 2023). In Australasia, similar professional structures emerged to support the expanding research enterprise (Kerridge & Scott, 2018).

However, this development has been uneven globally, with institutions in low- and middle-income countries often lacking similar infrastructure and support systems. In West Africa specifically, universities and research institutions often face significant challenges in developing these capabilities. Limited RM infrastructure has historically hindered many institutions in the region from securing and efficiently managing direct research grants. Additional constraints that have contributed to this situation include insufficient institutional infrastructure, inadequate training opportunities, and a lack of resources for research management/administration (Aidam & Sombié, 2016; Defor et al., 2017; Sombié et al., 2017). Consequently, most African researchers have been sub-contract recipients of research grants that were awarded to their collaborators in the global north (Sam-Agudu et al., 2017). Strengthened RM capacity is essential to ensure that research efforts are well-coordinated, impactful, and aligned with regional priorities.

In sub-Saharan Africa, Aboh and Barnie (2023) systematically documented key barriers, including low levels of institutional understanding and support for research management, weak identity and status of research managers, and insufficient engagement between faculty and Research Management Offices (RMOs). Their study emphasises that the perception of RMOs as secondary to academic pursuits reduces priority given to securing both internal and external funding. In West Africa specifically, Oji and Alordiah (2024) identify systemic gaps within Nigerian Research Ethics Boards, including underdeveloped policies, insufficient training, and fragmented governance structures.

The emergence of Research and Innovation Management Associations (RIMAs) in Africa was a response to the growing recognition that effective RM is critical to building institutional capacity and fostering equitable international research partnerships. In the early 2000s, international donors, including the Carnegie Corporation, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), and the Wellcome Trust, provided the financial support foundation for RM structures within African universities. The

Advancing Research Management Training Initiative in West Africa

Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) was also instrumental in promoting regional collaboration, which led to the formation of the Southern African Research and Innovation Management Association (SARIMA) in 2002. SARIMA has since become a regional leader in advancing RM across Africa through capacity building, professional standards development, and cross-institutional networking (Kirkland, 2023; Labuschagne, 2023).

The West African Research and Innovation Management Association (WARIMA) was established in 2006 to address similar challenges in the region. It provides a regional platform for strengthening RM capacity and promoting collaboration among institutions. WARIMA aims to be a catalyst for enhancing RM systems across both Anglophone and Francophone West African universities and research institutions. This has contributed to the overall growth and professionalisation of research management on the continent.

Despite various capacity-building initiatives targeting institutions in the global south, there has not yet been an equivalent structured focus upon West Africa. A landscape analysis of universities in the region revealed a clear stratification in RM capabilities, with some institutions demonstrating stronger capacities and consequently better success in securing direct research grants, while others struggle to meet the administrative requirements of major funding bodies (WARIMA, 2024). This disparity highlights the urgent need for targeted interventions to strengthen RM systems across the region.

In the past few decades, major funders such as the National Institutes of Health, Carnegie Foundation and Wellcome Trust have supported numerous research administrative capacity development programmes in universities and research institutes in sub-Saharan Africa (Izugbara et al., 2017; Karimi et al., 2023; Kasprowicz et al., 2020; Marjanovic et al., 2013; Nnodu et al., 2022). These initiatives have resulted in increased researcher capacity to apply for grants as direct recipients. Similarly, the Gates Foundation has identified the need to support research management and administrative capacity as researcher development capacity in order to ultimately increase the research portfolio of research institutions in the West African sub-region.

Recognising this gap, the Gates Foundation commissioned WARIMA to provide capacity-building training to selected institutions in the sub-region through the Advancing Research Management Capacity for Impact in West Africa (ARM-WA) initiative. This article reports on the outcomes of the ARM-West Africa research management training initiative in enhancing the self-assessed competencies and practices of research management professionals among selected West African institutions.

METHODS

STUDY SITES

The study was conducted across six academic and research institutions in West Africa participating in the *Advancing Research Management Capacity for Impact in West Africa* initiative, funded by the Gates Foundation. These six institutions represent all the institutions included in the Gates Foundation funding for this initiative. The institutions (Table 1) were purposively selected based on the Foundation's funding priorities and include representation from both Anglophone and Francophone countries.

Table 1: Participating Institutions

Institution	Country	Key Research Focus
International Centre for Research and Training on Applied Genomics and Health Surveillance (CIGASS), Université Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD)	Senegal	A leading Francophone institution with a longstanding reputation in health research and biomedical sciences; serves as a regional hub for genomics and disease surveillance.
Tropical Infectious Diseases Research Centre (TIDRC), Université d'Abomey-Calavi (UAC)	Benin	Key centre for disease surveillance and health research in Francophone West Africa.
Bayero University Kano (BUK)	Nigeria	A leading federal Nigerian university with extensive research portfolio. One of the leading centres of research is the World Bank-funded African Centre of Excellence for Population Health and Policy (ACEPHAP), which focuses on maternal, child, and infectious disease research.
Northwest University	Nigeria (Kano State)	State government-owned university collaborating with ACEPHAP.

Institution	Country	Key Research Focus
University of Lagos (UNILAG)	Nigeria	One of Nigeria’s most research-active universities, with a long history of external grants and academic collaboration. Its College of Medicine hosts the Centre for Clinical Trials, Research and Implementation Science (CCRIS), which provides postgraduate training and clinical research coordination. Researchers at UNILAG are currently developing a state-wide sample registration system for maternal mortality surveillance.
Lagos State University College of Medicine (LASUCOM)	Nigeria	Part of Lagos State University, collaborating with UNILAG College of Medicine on maternal mortality surveillance project.

These institutions were selected to strengthen research management capacity, improve institutional readiness for donor engagement, and reduce barriers to accessing research funds as prime institutions. The project includes institutional assessment, capacity-building training, and ongoing organisational development support.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Between May 21–31, 2024, site visits and consultations were conducted by the project team, including structured interviews and review of completed institutional assessment forms. Selection criteria for participants included their involvement in research support roles (e.g. research officers, grant managers, ethics coordinators), institutional recommendations, and representation across both Anglophone and Francophone West African regions. Considerations were also made for gender balance and professional diversity to promote inclusiveness and equal opportunity. The institutional assessment form captured information on existing RM structures, staffing levels, current training needs, infrastructure capacity, and institutional challenges in grant acquisition and management. The consultations identified core skills gaps in grantsmanship, budgeting, ethics, research communication, and strategic planning. These findings informed both the design and customization of training content. A pre-training survey, reflecting these domains, was administered to participants to further refine workshop content based on self-reported competency levels and training expectations.

DESIGN

A pre–post evaluation design was used to assess the outcomes of the ARM-WA research management training initiative. A quasi-experimental approach was adopted to measure changes in self-assessed competencies and perceptions of training usefulness. Data collection occurred before and after the training workshops through

structured questionnaires, allowing for comparative analysis of participant responses and the overall impact of the intervention.

STUDY POPULATION

The study population consisted of research managers and administration nominated from the institutions that received research funding from the Gates Foundation. These institutions are listed in Table 1. Three five-day intensive research management workshops were held in:

- Kano, Nigeria (September 2024)
- Lagos, Nigeria (October 2024)
- Dakar, Senegal (December 2024)

TRAINING CONTENT

The content was developed collaboratively by subject matter experts (SMEs) with extensive experience in research management. The SMEs comprised a mix of West African and international research management professionals, bringing diverse perspectives and best practices from various institutional contexts. The curriculum was directly informed by the needs assessment findings, with content customized to address the specific gaps and priorities identified during institutional consultations.

The workshops combined didactic lectures, interactive group discussions, exercises, and case studies to facilitate practical learning.

The training sessions covered:

- Research strategy and planning
- Grantsmanship and budgeting
- Research communications and visibility
- Research ethics and integrity
- Contracts, collaborations, and legal frameworks
- Project management for research
- Intellectual property and knowledge transfer
- Gender equity in research management

Each training session addressed distinct but complementary aspects of research management: Research strategy focused on institutional research planning and priority-setting; Grantsmanship covered funding opportunity identification and proposal development; Budgeting addressed financial planning and cost estimation for research projects; Research communications included dissemination strategies and stakeholder engagement; Research ethics encompassed ethical review processes and integrity principles; Contracts training covered legal frameworks and partnership agreements; Project management addressed implementation, monitoring, and reporting; Intellectual property covered patent processes and knowledge transfer; and Gender considerations addressed equity in research design and team composition.

EVALUATION

Evaluation of the training workshops was conducted through questionnaires administered before and after the training sessions to all participants. The instruments included 5-point Likert scale items measuring self-assessed competency across the nine training domains, with response options ranging from 1 = "No knowledge" to 5 = "Expert knowledge". The post-training instrument also assessed perceived gains in knowledge, usefulness of training content, delivery quality, and overall satisfaction with logistics and materials. Both surveys included open-ended questions for qualitative feedback and captured demographic data including gender, years of experience in research management, and institutional affiliation.

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Two questionnaires on Google Forms were used for data collection. The pre-test survey assessed the participants' baseline competencies and expectations across the training domains. The post-test measured changes in self-reported competencies, satisfaction levels, and feedback on content and delivery. Both surveys also captured demographic data, including gender, years of experience, and institutional affiliation.

DATA MANAGEMENT

Descriptive and inferential statistics were applied to analyse the data. Frequency distributions, mean scores, and standard deviations were calculated to summarise participant demographics and pre/post-training self-assessments. All quantitative analyses were performed using IBM SPSS version 26.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The study adhered to international ethical standards for research involving human participants. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, who were assured of the voluntary nature of participation and the right to withdraw at any point. To maintain confidentiality, all responses were anonymised and securely stored. No identifiable information was linked to survey responses, and access to raw data was restricted to the research team. The workshops promoted inclusivity by ensuring equal access to training regardless of language, institutional affiliation, or gender. All aspects of data collection and reporting adhered to principles of transparency and research integrity.

RESULTS

A total of 78 research management professionals from the selected universities and research institutions in West Africa participated in the workshops. Overall, 61 completed both the pre- and post-training surveys (Table 2), yielding a response rate of 78.2%.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Institutions		
University of Lagos	16	26.2
Lagos State University CMUL	7	11.5
Bayero University	15	24.6
Northwest University	5	8.2
University of Abomey-Calavi	5	8.2
CIGASS	13	21.3
Gender		
Male	38	62.3
Female	23	37.7
Years of experience (Years)		
0 - 5	36	59.0
6 - 10	13	21.3
≥10	12	19.7
Job Role		
Administrative and Finance Support	21	34.4
Management and Leadership	18	29.5
Research and Scientific Execution	17	27.9
Technical and Data Support	5	8.2

As shown in Table 2, participants from the University of Lagos and Bayero University constituted 26.2% and 24.6% of the respondents respectively. A majority (62.3%) were male, 59.0% had ≤ 5 years experience, while 19.7% reported 10 years of experience. In terms of job roles within the Research Management Office (RMO), most respondents occupied Administrative and Finance Support roles, followed by those in Management and Leadership positions.

Table 3: Participants' Evaluation of Workshop

Item	Excellent/Very Good %	Good %	Fair/Poor %
Overall quality of the workshop	88.5	9.8	1.6
Relevance of content to your work	88.5	9.8	1.6
Quality of instruction	88.5	11.5	0.0
Workshop materials and resources	80.3	16.4	3.3
Balance between theory and practical application	67.2	27.9	4.9
Opportunities for interaction and networking	83.6	14.8	1.6
Time management and pacing of sessions	83.6	14.8	1.6
Venue and facilities	85.2	11.5	3.3

As shown in Table 3, participants evaluated the workshop across eight dimensions, including overall quality, content relevance, instructional quality, and resource adequacy. The highest-rated aspects were overall quality, content relevance, and quality of instruction, with 88.5% of participants rating these as excellent or very Good. The balance between theory and practical application received the lowest proportion of top ratings, i.e. excellent/very good (67.2%), The majority of the participants (80.3%) rated workshop materials and resources received top ratings, while 16.4% rated them as good. All other aspects received over 83% top ratings, indicating generally high satisfaction across all dimensions.

Table 4: Knowledge and Skills of Research Management Professionals Pre- and Post-the Training

Skill Areas	Before n (%)	After n (%)
Research strategy and policy framework	37 (56.0)	59 (96.7)
Grantsmanship and funding search	31 (46.9)	60 (98.4)
Budgeting and costing for research projects	27 (40.9)	56 (91.8)
Research communications and engagement	36 (54.5)	59 (96.7)
Research integrity and ethics	42 (63.6)	59 (96.7)
Contracts, negotiations, and managing collaborations	32 (48.4)	57 (93.4)

Skill Areas	Before n (%)	After n (%)
Project management in research	41 (62.1)	59 (96.7)
Intellectual property management	30 (45.4)	55 (90.2)
Gender considerations in research management	31 (46.9)	56 (91.8)

The pre- and post-training self-assessment results are shown in Table 4. The pre-training column shows the proportion of the 61 respondents who indicated advanced or expert knowledge before the workshop, while the post-training column shows the proportion reporting this level of competency after completing the training. The participants' pre-training self-reported competencies indicated room for growth in most areas, with less than two-thirds of participants indicating proficiency in any given domain. The lowest pre-training ratings were recorded in budgeting and costing for research projects (40.9%), intellectual property management (45.4%), and grantsmanship and funding search (46.9%), suggesting notable gaps in core operational skills.

Following the training, there was a marked increase in self-reported proficiency across all areas, with post-training ratings exceeding 90% in all domains. The most dramatic improvements were observed in grantsmanship and funding search (from 46.9% to 98.4%) and budgeting and costing (from 40.9% to 91.8%).

Additionally, important gains were noted in less commonly emphasised areas such as gender considerations in research management (from 46.9% to 91.8%) and intellectual property management (from 45.4% to 90.2%). These outcomes demonstrate the training's comprehensive impact, not only on foundational research administration competencies but also on specialised and strategic areas essential for institutional research performance.

Table 5: Usefulness of the Training to Research Management Practices

Research Topic	Highly Useful	Moderately Useful	Less/Not Useful
Research Management Overview	82.0	9.8	8.2
Budgeting and Costing	83.6	9.8	6.6
Research Integrity and Ethics	83.7	9.8	6.5
Funding and Grantsmanship	82.0	13.1	4.9
Project Compliance	85.2	8.2	6.6
Contracts/Negotiations and Managing Collaborations	85.3	8.2	6.5

Research Topic	Highly Useful	Moderately Useful	Less/Not Useful
Project Management	85.2	8.2	6.6
Managing IP	75.4	16.4	8.2
Gender in Research and Research Management	75.4	18.0	6.6
Research Communication and Engagement	82.0	13.1	4.9

The participants’ perception of the usefulness of the training to research management practices is shown in Table 5. The majority of participants rated all ten training sessions highly useful, with between 75.4% and 85.3% of respondents categorising them as either "extremely useful" or "very useful." In particular, the sessions on *Project Compliance, Contracts and Collaboration Management, and Project Management* received the highest ratings. These findings suggest that the training content was broadly relevant and well-aligned with participants’ needs.

DISCUSSION

The participants’ assessment of the ARM-West Africa Research Management workshop underscores the transformative potential of structured capacity-building programmes in addressing systemic research management challenges in West Africa. The workshop predominantly attracted early-career research management professionals. The relatively younger and less experienced cohort may be more receptive to capacity-building initiatives, underscoring the importance of tailoring training content to bridge identified skill gaps among emerging professionals.

The high participant satisfaction ratings, particularly in content relevance and overall quality, align with the report of Hassan et al. (2024) findings from a similar workshop in Pakistan. These findings are supported by the assertion of Pulford et al (2020) that tailored training programmes in resource-constrained settings must prioritise context-specific strategies to overcome institutional deficits. By focusing on practical skills like budgeting and compliance areas where research management support systems are often weak, the workshop directly addressed these challenges. Hassan et al. (2024) emphasised the importance of aligning research management training with localised needs. This alignment likely contributed to the high satisfaction ratings, as participants perceived the content as immediately applicable to overcoming daily obstacles in under-resourced environments.

The pre-training self-assessment revealed substantial competency gaps in domains such as budgeting and costing for research projects, intellectual property management, funding and grantsmanship. These findings are consistent with systemic challenges documented across sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Pulford et al. (2020) identified 13

interconnected capacity gaps in African institutions. The gaps in insufficient research funding, weak pre-/post-award support, and fragmented research governance are issues that directly affect the participants' low pre-intervention expertise in grantsmanship and policy frameworks. Similarly, Aboh and Barnie (2023) highlighted that many African Research Management Offices (RMOs) operate with limited institutional recognition, leading to poorly defined roles and inadequate training opportunities. For example, their study found that only 12% of surveyed RMOs in SSA had access to formal research management training, leaving staff reliant on ad hoc learning. This situation probably explains why the participants initially rated their competency in strategic domains like policy frameworks as predominantly "moderate" or "basic".

The post-training results, however, demonstrate promising improvements in self-assessed competencies. The increase in knowledge-level ratings across all domains, especially for budgeting and costing and grantsmanship, aligns with patterns observed in the broader literature on research administration training. The V-RAMP program in Nigeria, as described by Aliyu et al. (2021), demonstrates how structured, context-specific training combined with institutional support (e.g. establishment of an Office of Research Administration, SOP development, mentorship) can significantly boost administrative capabilities and research ethics compliance. The holistic improvement reported in our current study, including in specialised areas like gender considerations and intellectual property, mirrors the V-RAMP emphasis on building both technical and strategic capacities among research support staff.

The participants' strong endorsement of the training's practical usefulness, particularly in budgeting and compliance, is evident in their feedback emphasizing immediate applicability and institutional impact. Finance staff particularly valued the budgeting components, with one participant noting that "all the funding-related topics covered in the workshop were highly valuable and relevant to their work" while another committed to applying learned principles to "manage the funds carefully and ensure that researchers are paid as at when due". Similarly, participants demonstrated clear appreciation for compliance training, with one pledging to "ensure strict adherence" to compliance protocols and proper project governance. This reflects a pressing need for research management training identified in multiple SSA contexts. Pulford et al. (2020) highlighted financial management deficiencies across sub-Saharan African universities, including weak pre- and post-award services and inefficient institutional financial systems, which often hinder effective grant utilisation. The ARM-West Africa research management workshop results thus support the broader literature: equipping research managers with technical skills in finance and compliance.

Finally, the workshop increased the participants' knowledge regarding fostering collaboration and gender considerations—a critical component of effective research governance. One participant noted plans to "incorporate gender-responsive approaches into project design and implementation", while another emphasised the importance of "building stronger partnerships with regional and international

collaborators". Integrating gender perspectives enhances equity, compliance with ethical standards, and the overall quality of research management practices, aligning with contemporary best practices in research administration. Integrating gender perspectives enhances equity, compliance with ethical standards, and the overall quality of research management practices, aligning with contemporary best practices in research administration.

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the evaluation relied on self-reported competency assessments, which may be subject to inflated self-perception following training. Second, the pre-post design captured immediate training effects but did not assess longer-term retention of knowledge or translation of competencies into improved institutional practices. Follow-up assessments at 6 and 12 months post-training would provide more robust evidence of sustained impact. Third, the study did not include a control group of non-participants, limiting our ability to attribute observed changes solely to the training intervention. Fourth, the sample was limited to six institutions selected by the funder.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this survey indicate that the ARM-WA research management training initiative shows promise in enhancing the self-assessed knowledge of research management professionals across selected West African institutions. While participants demonstrated marked improvements in perceived competencies across key domains—including research strategy and grantsmanship, budgeting, research integrity, and gender considerations—immediately following the intervention, objective measurement of actual competency enhancement and longer-term retention would require follow-up assessment through mechanisms such as increased grant capture rates, improved compliance metrics, or independent skills evaluation. High ratings in workshop evaluations further underscore the relevance and overall quality of the training program. Nonetheless, the study also identified areas for further enhancement, particularly in strengthening the balance between theoretical instruction and practical application. Based on the study's outcomes, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Program Expansion: Extend the ARM-WA training initiative to additional institutions, particularly targeting those with emerging research management systems, to foster broader capacity building across West Africa.
2. Sustain and Strengthen Networks: Leverage the regional hubs and collaborative networks established during the training to promote ongoing peer support and exchange of best practices between Anglophone and Francophone institutions.
3. Follow-Up Assessments: Implement periodic follow-up evaluations to monitor long-term impacts of the training, allowing for iterative improvements to the curriculum based on evolving institutional needs and emerging challenges in research management.

4. Integration of Digital Learning: Explore the integration of digital platforms to complement in-person training sessions, thereby increasing accessibility and enabling continuous learning for research management professionals across the region.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

The outcomes of the ARM-WA training initiative provide several important implications for both policy and practical application in research management across West African institutions:

1. Institutionalisation of RM Training: The marked improvements in participants' competencies highlight the need for universities and research institutions to integrate research management training into their regular professional development programs. Establishing ongoing training and mentorship structures can help maintain and enhance RM competencies over time.
2. Strengthening RM Infrastructure: The study underscores persistent gaps in research management practices before the training. Institutional leaders should consider investing in the development of robust RM systems—including streamlined administrative processes and digital tools—that support efficient grant management, ethical compliance, and project monitoring. Such investments are crucial to foster a sustainable research environment.
3. Promotion of Cross-Institutional Collaboration: The training workshops, particularly those that successfully bridged Anglophone and Francophone contexts, demonstrate the value of collaborative networks. Institutional policies should encourage inter-institutional partnerships and the sharing of best practices, which can lead to a more harmonised approach to research management across the region.
4. Gender Mainstreaming in RM Practices: Improvements in the area of gender considerations following the training emphasise the importance of incorporating gender mainstreaming into RM policies. Institutional and national policies should promote equitable participation in research management roles, ensuring that initiatives address gender imbalances and contribute to a more inclusive research environment.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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