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**Abstract**

The article gives an analysis of the changing context for cooperation between European and African universities. It describes the shifts in the balance between capacity building and mutual academic benefit as the focal points of cooperation. Taking VU University Amsterdam as its point of reference, it provides an outline of how the University is changing the paradigm of its cooperation with universities in developing and emerging countries; it gives concrete examples of how universities can be committed to sustainable and equitable development in spite of decreasing public funds. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)