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MAXIMIZING THE BENEFITS OF SMALL SATELLITE PROGRAMS IN AFRICA

**Abstract**

Small satellites play a key and compelling role in space-based scientific and engineering programs as they have been responsible for greatly reducing the time to obtain science and technology results, reduce overall costs and can thus provide welcome budgetary options for developing countries with highly constrained space programs. One out of every three satellites launched by African countries are nano-satellites with South Africa boasting of 6; Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana, Algeria and Morocco have one each and Mauritius is currently working on a small satellite projects. From 2017 till now, 6 out of the 10 satellites launched by African countries were nano-satellites – this is an indication that Africa is moving fully towards the small satellite options. This paper will analyze each nano-satellite mission from Africa and the effect of international cooperation on them as well as the technology transfer process, lessons learnt and the extent to which these efforts have contributed to the space maturity of these countries.