The promise of the SDGs is indeed glamorous. But without concrete actions, it will remain but fine words on paper. The continent of Africa cannot afford to let this promise pass. And I will tell you why.
Imagine for a moment....
AFRICA’S NATURAL CAPITAL WORTH

Energy Potential

1300GW

0.3% of sunlight

1852TWh

15,000GW

65% of worlds’ arable land

10% of worlds’ internal fresh renewable water sources
Agro-value chain projected to be worth an estimated $1 trillion by 2030.
Growing middle class estimated at about 300 million
350 million young people will be entering the labor market by 2035

Percentage of Africans still live in poverty on less than 1.25 US$ per day

60% Youth unemployment rate

70% The percentage of people living on less than $2 a day
AFRICA STATISTICS

Malnutrition causes death of over 50% of children below 5 years affecting 200 million people.

The number of people going to 240 million people.

The continent spends $35bn annually to import food.

Malnutrition causes death of over 50% of children below 5 years affecting 200 million people.
GROWING THREAT OF CLIMATE CHANGE

7%

Energy poverty, ecological degradation and the growing threat of climate change whose economic cost is estimated at US$45-50bn annually by 2040

Translating to 7% of Africa’s average GDP by 2100.
We when optimally managed, this increasingly mixed bag of challenges and opportunities, coupled with an increasingly favourable high level global policy framework represents the best chance we have as a continent to actualize the SDGs.
Questions

What are the bottleneck areas that Africa’s research should target to ensure relevance in achievement of the SDGs?

How do researchers and innovators take the frontline position in the solutions process, where their leadership is urgently needed?

What practical avenue exists to engage researchers and innovators at the frontline of the SDGs journey?
As the African proverb goes, “When the cock crows, it signals a new day”...
Africa is home to 12% of the world’s people, but accounts for less than 1% of the global air service market. Flying to an African city via Europe is cheaper and easier than a direct intra-Africa flight.
Yet African heads of state and governments endorsed the Yamoussoukro decision that commits its 44 signatories to deregulate air services, and promote regional air markets open to transnational competition.
In Europe, liberalization greatly increased competition on many routes, resulting in a 34% decline in discount fares.
South Africa and Kenya liberal air market agreement of early 2000 lead to a 69% rise in passenger traffic.
It is reported that on intra-African routes with more liberal bilaterals, Ethiopians benefit from 10-21% lower fares and 35-38% higher frequencies (compared to restricted intra-Africa routes).
Open skies in only 12 African countries could encourage tourism thereby create more than 150,000 jobs and add $1.3bn to the continent’s gross domestic product. This would directly buttress achievement of SDGs 1 & 8 and enhance country incomes where through prioritized expenditures in health & education, SDGs 3 and 4 would be achieved.
It is up to you as researchers and innovators to inject fresh ideas towards unlocking full implementation. For instance, you should tell us what policy & institutional reforms should be prioritized at country and regional level to catalyze full implementation.
Targeting policy and actions to unlock sustainable agro-industrialization powered by clean energy offers great hope for Africa in converting this comparative advantage to substantive socio-economic development for the majority and actualizing multiple SDGs.
10% increase in yields will reduce poverty by 7%.
EBA approaches are known to not only lower the risk of crop-failure under the changing climate but to enhance yields by up to 128%.
Further linking ecological production to supply and demand side value chains especially clean energy for processing, efficient access to markets through effective transport links and storage facilities means that we don’t waste so much food after it is harvested.
catalyze an agro-sector and industrialization projected to be worth $1 trillion by 2030 and 17 million jobs
And examples across the continent demonstrate practicality. Right here in Kenya, a micro-grid pioneer firm SteamaCo has managed to put up 25 village grids across Kenya, supplying up to 10,000 people and businesses with clean energy, creating 2.5 million jobs.
M-KOPA, the pay-as-you go solar power company, has connected more than 330,000 homes in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda to decentralized solar power with over 500 new homes being added every day. The company employs 757 full time staff and 1,251 field agents.
Renewable energy is also finding application in transport. In Togo, the first African-made solar-powered three- and four-wheeled cars are coming to market. Equipped with a 250W solar panel, they can keep going for 180km at a speed of 60km/h.
On the industry front, another Kenyan company - SunCulture AgroSolar is transforming agriculture through the power of the sun. Combining cost-effective solar-pumping technology with high-efficiency drip irrigation to help farmers grow more while spending less.
Cumulatively, expanding clean energy application for domestic, industrial or transport use will meet SDG 1 on poverty by creating jobs. SDG 3 on health given minimized emissions. SDG 7 given the expanded accessibility of clean energy. SDG 8 on decent jobs. SDG 9 on innovation., SDG 13 on climate action through carbon offset and SDG15 by conserving ecosystem resources.
As researchers and innovators, it is you who should develop new, context specific business models critical to upscaling this paradigm. It is you who should research optimal policies that can enable this upscaling.
70% of SSA’s population resides in the countryside and these are the majority poor. Those who dare make the journey to urban areas in the hope of better livelihoods end up in much worse conditions. Joining the millions of urban poor living in squalor conditions, deprived of proper food, shelter and sanitation.
However, targeted actions to open up rural Africa to agro-industrialization offers a very practical way out of this quagmire.

Less than 50% of the rural population lives close to adequate roads.
Currently, less than 50% of the rural population lives close to adequate roads. In addition, only 1-8% has access to electricity. This scenario has to change to ensure Africa’s rural areas become the hub of agro-production.
To achieve this, a mix of enabling policy, institutional arrangements, financial & technological investments will have to be in place. For instance, which clean energy technologies will be most relevant to Africa and how can they be sourced? How best can global provisions such as the Paris agreement be leveraged to access these critical means of implementation?
Intra-Africa trade is the lowest in the world at 12% compared to 25% in South East Asia, 65% in Western Europe and 45% in North America.
Enhancing intra-African trade will consolidate Africa’s goods, services and labour markets, and earn Africa an extra US$ 20 billion annually from agriculture.
Africa needs to urgently mobilize $50-100bn by 2050 to build climate resilience. On infrastructure it is estimated that Africa will cumulatively need nearly $500bn up to 2025 to finance infrastructure projects in transport & energy.
In education, up to USD 26billion annually is needed to achieve universal education. In healthcare, a reserve figure of $31.5bn annually is needed for a population of 900million, to achieve standard healthcare.
Official development assistance (ODA) to Africa is declining, falling **10%** annually over the past 4 years and pledges remain unmet. Currently, in the critical area of climate resilience, it is projected that to meet costs by the 2020s, funds disbursed annually to Africa need to grow at an average rate of **10 – 20%** annually from 2011 levels. So far this has not been achieved.
The continent loses an estimated $50–60bn annually due to illicit financial flows (IFFs).

For instance, the continent loses an estimated $50–60bn annually due to Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) and reversing these means injecting enough money to meet the regions education (SDG4) and healthcare (SDG3) financing needs.

Achieving sustainable development will require diversified financing - looking internally in addition to international public financing.
The 2015 Africa Adaptation Gap Report concluded that Africa could domestically raise up to $3bn annually. Diaspora remittances to Africa average $62bn annually. Which is more than the $55bn annually the region receives as Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and total foreign aid, of about $50bn. There is an urgent need to maximize potential benefits of these diaspora funds towards meaningfully actualizing the SDGs.
Considering the highly vulnerable yet critical agriculture sector employing up to 70% of the poor and vulnerable, governments can work with commercial banks to develop appropriate policies that enable small-holder farmers who are regular recipients of remittances to build a credit history.
It is documented that an investment of $1 in capacity building in policies and strengthening tax administration institutions can return as much as $1,650. A thousand fold return in saved losses.
SCRAPING UNNECESSARY TAX EXPENDITURES IN INCENTIVES AND SUBSIDIES SUCH AS OIL SUBSIDIES

For instance, 65% of oil subsidies end up benefiting 40% of the richest in society.

Scraping unnecessary tax expenditures in incentives and subsidies such as oil subsidies & commodity investor incentives, means Africa recoups as much as $8bn annually. Monies that can be re-investment in health care, education, agriculture and other inclusive sectors, towards catalyzing achievement of SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4 among others.
Beyond the above, comprehensive studies including the 2015 joint AU/ECA high level panel report on IFFs, the 2nd Africa Adaptation Gap Report (AAGR2), the UNEP inquiry into sustainable financing and the 3rd Financing for Development Outcome recommend comprehensive actions that countries can take to raise domestic resources.
Energy is a critical input to unlocking socio-economic development that will make SDGs a reality for all. If Africa is to maximize its comparative advantage in renewable energy, then there is an urgent need to reconsider energy policy beyond production and consider a more holistic perspective – balancing economics, geopolitics and technology accessibility.
On geopolitics, countries with fossil fuel resources consider this a strategic resource to enhance their energy independence and economic development. This automatically translates to disincentive for clean energy development.
On technology, accessibility to technology & innovation is a major determinant of the extent to which given energy resources can be exploited. For instance, the USA leveraged their expertise in fracking to exploit unconventional natural gas / fossil fuel reserves.
Energy policy should take into account the need for Africa to develop local capacity for developing applicable technology and innovations to economically exploit its clean energy resources.
Adequately empowered human capacity to seize opportunities in contemporary sectors like clean energy that catalyze achievement of multiple SDGs remains an urgent imperative.
This compounds the unemployment and poverty scenario in the continent, directly curtailing achievement of SDGs 1 and 8 and indirectly curtailing many others. It is documented that most educated people in Africa confront a mismatch between their training and available opportunities. In South Africa, for instance, firms report 600,000 vacancies, while 800,000 young university graduates are unemployed.
Lack of skilled manpower has limited the success of renewable energy technology development in the continent. It is documented that Africa is losing out in this sector because there are “very few” African higher learning institutions offering renewable energy program.
As the African proverb goes, “a roaring lion kills no game”.

FROM TALK TO ACTION – AVENUES FOR ENGAGEMENT AS RESEARCHERS AND INNOVATORS TO CATALYZE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SDGS
ATTRACTION DEVELOPMENT BLUE-PRINTS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1. NO POVERTY
2. ZERO HUNGER
3. GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
4. QUALITY EDUCATION
5. GENDER EQUALITY
6. CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
7. AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
8. DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
9. INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
10. REDUCED INEQUALITIES
11. SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
12. RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
13. CLIMATE ACTION
14. LIFE BELOW WATER
15. LIFE ON LAND
16. PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
17. PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
Mutual partnerships that ensure your contributions as researchers and innovators complement other key areas critical to actualizing the SDGs is paramount.
**EBAFOSA BENEFITS**

**GOVERNMENT**

Enriching policy development and delivery in food security, climate adaptation, ecosystem productivity, environmental sustainability and job creation;

- supporting governments to domesticate relevant continental and global development blueprints on leveraging ecosystems for food security, inclusive growth and sustainable industrial development so benefits accrue at country level;

- job creation for youth through leveraging global, continental and country level supply and demand side agro-value chains;

- facilitating partnerships including PPPs leading to increased investments through providing a networking platform;

- country branding through leveraging the EBAFOSA continental and global appeal.

**PRIVATE SECTOR**

- EBAFOSA provides a continental platform for business to business and business to consumer networking and partnership;

- Business to government partnership, business to educational and research institution partnerships along areas of mutual interest - food security, climate change adaptation, job creation and employment.

EBAFOSA is a platform that brings together many complementary actors across the continent and globe in a mutual relation.

- It provides an opportunity for national level businesses to network with contemporaries across the continent and the globe.

- EBAFOSA facilitates creation of more income opportunities. By focusing on upscaling policy and practice that facilitates optimization of the entire EBA-value chain.

- Facilitating the entire value chain holistically through appropriate policy means more opportunities are created for income generation.

**INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS**

- By focusing on leveraging Africa’s natural capital and ecosystems to upscale EBA-driven agriculture

- Beyond existing strategies, EBAFOSA also provides a platform for actualizing the SDGs for Africa.

- EBAFOSA’s mandate to leverage Africa’s ecosystems and natural capital toward upscaling EBA-driven agriculture

- EBAFOSA rollout will indirectly contribute toward achievement of the overarching global sustainability goals.

**EDUCATIONAL**

- EBAFOSA provides a platform where continental institutions can build mutual partnerships between themselves and also across sectors with private sector, international organizations, NGOs across countries, at continental levels and global level.

**NGOS, CSOS, CBOs, EBOs etc.**

- EBAFOSA provides these organizations with a platform through which their mandate can be delivered at a broader scale.

- It also provides opportunity for technical capacity building and partnerships as interactions are fostered across diverse sectors.

**INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS**

- Interaction across and within sectors to foster technical capacity building, opportunities to foster incubation of ideas, employment opportunities etc.
Partnerships between state and non-state actors in Kenya and Nigeria are on-going to pilot a model EBA based climate risk sharing facility. The objective is to leverage the climate risk mitigating properties of EBA and credit facilities from finance partners.
Conference Establishes Pan-African Institution on EbA for Food Security

Experts & Policymakers ...

Nairobi, 31 July 2015 - Over 1,200 experts, policymakers and participants today adopted the Nairobi Action Agenda on...

Rules of procedure
African ecosystem-based...
EBAFOSA Strategic layout
Experts & Policymakers Re-Imagine African...
EBAFOSA Benefits Powerpoint...
I have every confidence that, with researchers and innovators being engaged in these front-line areas, we will feed Africa, create jobs and expand our economies towards actualizing multiple SDGs.
The SDGs and Agenda 2030 promise to leave no one behind. The AU Agenda 2063 promises to give us the Africa we
THANK YOU

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