

YOUTHCONNEKT AFRICA SUMMIT 2022

REPORT









YouthConnekt Africa is a continental initiative with the mission to empower young people by enhancing their knowledge, experiences, and skills while investing in their ideas, innovations, and initiatives to harness Africa's demographic dividend. YouthConnekt Africa takes a "platform approach to solving challenging development issues, and brings together a wide range of stakeholders, including heads of state, policymakers, business leaders, development partners, and the civil society, to address the multiple needs of young people while also fully involving them in the solution-building process.

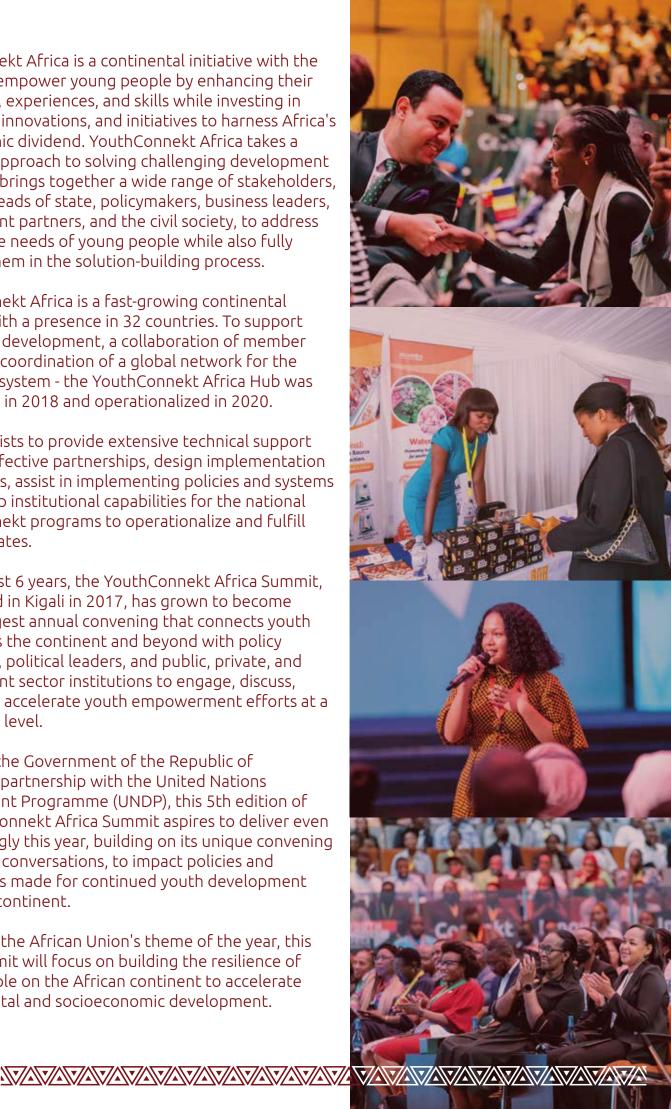
Youth Connekt Africa is a fast-growing continental platform with a presence in 32 countries. To support knowledge development, a collaboration of member states, and coordination of a global network for the African ecosystem - the YouthConnekt Africa Hub was established in 2018 and operationalized in 2020.

The Hub exists to provide extensive technical support to Forge effective partnerships, design implementation mechanisms, assist in implementing policies and systems and develop institutional capabilities for the national Youth Connekt programs to operationalize and fulfill their mandates.

Over the last 6 years, the YouthConnekt Africa Summit, First hosted in Kigali in 2017, has grown to become Africa's largest annual convening that connects youth from across the continent and beyond with policy influencers, political leaders, and public, private, and development sector institutions to engage, discuss, design, and accelerate youth empowerment efforts at a continental level.

Hosted by the Government of the Republic of Rwanda, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), this 5th edition of the YouthConnekt Africa Summit aspires to deliver even more strongly this year, building on its unique convening power, rich conversations, to impact policies and investments made for continued youth development across the continent.

Inspired by the African Union's theme of the year, this year's summit will focus on building the resilience of young people on the African continent to accelerate human capital and socioeconomic development.





"It has already been ten years since this important forum was launched, right here in Rwanda. YouthConnekt has become a powerhouse, bringing together thousands of young people every year, to contribute solutions, and learn from each other. I thank all partners and friends for being part of this journey, from the beginning, with particular recognition of the United Nations Development Program, and the Korea International Cooperation Agency."

H.E Paul Kagame
Presiednt of the Republic of Rwanda



"Prendre soin de notre jeunesse est le meilleur investissement que nous pouvons faire pour le présent et le futur. Parce que ce sont les jeunes qui assureront la relève demain."

S.E Macky Sall Président de la République du Sénégal



"By uniting to fight the common enemy of Covid19, bonds of solidarity and social cohesion were consolidated, which gives us a renewed opportunity to accelerate investments in our young people."

H.E. Hage Geingob,
President of Republic of Namibia



"Without the youth, Africa isn't going to discover any new significant opportunities or resources for transformative growth. You have the energy and passion but most importantly the brain to take Africa to the next level."

H.E. Rigathi Gachagua Deputy President of Kenya

Foreword

This October 2022, Kigali convened the 5th edition of the YouthConnekt Africa Summit with the theme "Accelerating investment in the youth: Resilient youth, Resilient Africa". Bringing together over 9,000 youth, leaders, policy makers, personalities, artists and sports legends. It was a fine opportunity to shape together concerted efforts to continue to empower Africa's Youth through policy conversations that addressed their leadership, their entrepreneurial endeavours, employment and health.

Young people called for increased investment in youth entrepreneurship, agile and friendly policies, for Made in Africa startups to become resilient and to grow into enterprises.

Additionally, Young people engaged with their leadership in shaping the narrative on Africa's development to ensure that Africa is portrayed for what it truly is: a continent rich in talent, natural resources and resilience, Africa is indeed the future. This 5th edition of the YouthConnekt Africa Summit held important discussions on the matter of Youth Well Being, particularly engaging Mental Health and Sexual Reproductive Health. Indeed youth being a majority, the focus of our public health should be tailored to support their specific needs. Young Entrepreneurs engaged policy makers and experts on their participation in agriculture and food systems as a defining industry in Africa.



We also recommended to converging efforts to raise Africa's Cultural and Creative Industries and Sports Economies given the immense potential of creation of decent and high value jobs for youth.

Finally, we put a special focus on the Digital Economy as an important emerging sector, which promises to create countless high value jobs connecting African Youth to Global Markets.

To our wonderful and resilient young people, thank you so much for showing up and actively participating in this unique opportunity. YouthConnekt will continue to work with Governments, Development Partners and Private Sector to curate solutions that deliver on your clear call to actions.

We could not have achieved this monumental engagement without our esteemed partners. We thank you all, most especially recognising the leadership of the Government of Rwanda which Hosted this summit and continues to champion Youth Development.



YCA Summit is a continental youth gathering with a goal to connect youth with their peers, leaders, role models, skills and resources to promote employability skills, access to finance, civic engagement & enhance entrepreneurship opportunities.

Hon. Rosemary Mbabazi Minister of Youth and Culture | Rwanda

"Young people do not have access to the funding that they need to run their business. Up to 42% of young people fail to get that funding. Sometimes for those young people their dreams remain a hobby and they are unable to face the challenge of taking their dream to the market and reaching their customers."

Maxwell Gomera
UNDP Rwanda Resident Representative

"The Government of Korea will continue to share its experience and strategies from the unique development journey accelerated by investing in youth based on long term and trust-based partnership".

H.E. Jin-Weon Chae Ambassador of the Republic of Korea | Rwanda









YouthConnekt Africa Genesis

YouthConnekt was inspired by the visionary leadership of H.E. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda, who sought to create a Government led platform for young people to contribute to policy dialogues, co designing and informing decisions on the investments and programs aimed at empowering them.

In 2012, for the first time, YouthConnekt platform convened young people, civil society, development partners, private sector to deliver a nationwide innova- tion and entrepreneurship challenge, and a Meet the President Dialogue, both efforts which since birthed many new initiatives co-created by young people and various stakeholders.

Inspired by the YouthConnekt Rwanda initiative that won the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa Innovation Award in 2013, a number of African countries and UNDP Country Offices demonstrated an increasing interest in estab-lishing a similar model. In 2016, following recognition by the UNDP, five other countries adopted the YouthConnekt model: The Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Liberia, the Republic of Congo, the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Republic of Uganda.

In 2017, the Government of Rwanda, in partnership with UNDP and UNCTAD, organized the first YouthConnekt Africa Summit which was hosted by H.E. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda.

Alongside this inaugural summit, a Ministers of Youth Roundtable convened and deliberated on the following:

- 1.Scaling up of the YouthConnekt initiative to the regional level beyond the six initial countries (Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone and Uganda);
- 2.The establishment of a YouthConnekt Africa Hub and offering regional support to national youth programs, and
- 3.The establishment of a YouthConnekt Empowerment Fund, which would seek to finance youth empower- ment initiatives across the continent.

Championed by the Ministry of Youth Rwanda, which was appointed chair of the Youth-Connekt Africa Steering Committee, the motion to endorse the YouthConnekt Africa Initiative as a model implementation framework of the Africa Youth Charter was presented and adopted, at the Alger African Union Specialized Technical Committee which convened between October 21st – 25th, 2018.

Following this, the African Union Executive Council, in February 2019, endorsed the YouthConnekt Africa as a model initiative to be scaled and supported the establishment of the YouthConnekt Africa Hub, an indepen- dent secretariat to support the scaling of the Youth-Connekt Africa initiative.

To date YouthConnekt Africa counts 31 member states. The YouthConnekt Africa (Hub) was operationalised in 2020 and is based in Kigali, Rwanda.

YouthConnekt in Africa

Thirty one countries have established YouthConnekt Africa national chapters to date.

YouthConnekt Africa Hub's central role is to primarily strengthen the African youth empowerment ecosystem by equipping existing initiatives with technical resources, knowledge sharing and improved national ownership of the youth's socio-economic transformation agenda.

and financial

The Hub provides extensive technical support to forge effective partnerships, design implementation mechanisms, assist in implementing policies and systems and develop institutional capabilities for the national YouthConnekt programs to operationalize and fulfill their mandates. We do this by:

Coordinating a global network to create a continental ecosystem for African youth

- Sharing experience and knowledge on program and policy design, youth initiatives, fund
- setting and reporting
 Providing a conduit for resources at scale and data on youth to up-skill and finance African
- youth-led enterprises.

National Chapters



Accelerating Investments in Youth

"Resilient Youth, Resilient Africa"

Africa is estimated to have a population size of 1.3 billion in 2022, and within the framework of the continental free trade area, it is to be worth USD 3.4 Trillion. Africa is the youngest continent with the fastest rate of urbanization at a growth rate of more than 2.6 percent.

The large youth population presents a potential demographic dividend that, if adequately leveraged with the right investments, will contribute to accelerating sustainable and equitable development. With over 450 million young people (Mo Ibrahim, 2019), Africa has the largest population of young people in the world, with current trends indicating a doubling of the numbers by 2045.

As a critical resource worth harnessing, the youth are key to the realization of Africa's demographic dividend. Young people in Africa are more affected by unemployment than older age adults. ILO estimates that possibly one in five young Africans neither has a job nor is enrolled in education or training. On the other hand, studies show that in Subsaharan Africa, 8 out of 10 jobs are within the informal economy. Low wages and sporadic and volatile work characterise the informal economy.

Youth Entrepreneurship is on the rise and there is a clear pathway for employment in Africa. African Youth has shown that they can be initiators and change-makers by setting up innovative businesses despite challenging business environments.

The emergence of the digital economy across Africa demonstrates that with the right skills, young people now have access to new opportunities, possibly offering many within the informal economy to transition to new jobs. A study conducted by the Mastercard Foundation (2019), estimates that 80 million young people could benefit from the rise of the digital economy in Africa.

A study conducted by the African Union Commission on Youth Entrepreneurship, in 2020, proposes that Governments can further catalyze youth entrepreneurship through policies and investments that reduce barriers and create conducive entrepreneurial ecosystems. Ecosystems should address human capital, supportive networks that enable access to markets, facilitate technology exchange, preferential procurement of youth enterprises, tax incentives, and affordable and effective financing.

Through a series of plenaries, roundtables, masterclasses, and other activities, the Summit will deliver on seven thematics:

- Enroute to COP27
- Youth Discourse for Peace
- Reimagining Business for Africa's Cultural and Creative Industry and Sports Economy

- Leapfrogging into the Digital Era
- Made in Africa The Future of Africa's Production and Trade
- Forum on the Future of Agriculture and Food Systems in Africa

En Route to COP 27

The 5th edition of the YouthConnekt Africa Summit is a major continent event that took place before the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change) Conference of Parties No. 27 (COP 27) held in November in Charm el-Cheikh, Egypt. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) YouthConnekt Africa (YCA) Hub, the Ministry of Environment, Rwanda, and the Ministry of Youth and culture, Rwanda used this strategic event to produce a position paper to ensure that the Voice of African Youth is heard at the COP27. This Youth position paper was an outcome of discussions among youth peers. A panel discussion themed "A just transition to a more resilient, inclusive sustainable climate future" was conducted, here are key quotes." We need to take climate change seriously so we don't pass on the problem to the next generation. We want to make the conversation bigger and create more awareness."

The choices we make today may impact favorably the future of Africa the future of Rwanda but the future of the world of each and every community

We want to shake that tree and open their eyes so that we make the space for the future generations decisions not to be locked in a 50-year cycle of bad decisions

Michelle Candotti UNDP Chief of Staff





"Any contribution [to fighting climate change] is useful. We all have a role to play...If you're an entrepreneur with a solution or smart idea, keep fighting. We have to be a resilient Africa...The future is in our hands."

Teddy Mugabo, CEO, Rwanda Green Fund



Youth discourse Peace

Peace is essential for human beings in all aspects of life. It is a concept of societal friendship and harmony in the absence of hostility and violence. In a social sense, peace is commonly used to mean a lack of conflict.

The media, as a great tool of information sharing, mobilization and propaganda dissemination, is among the major channels of the people behind the conflicts to incite hatred among the targeted population.

The Media, commonly known as the fourth power, plays an important role to foster good governance by providing the platform to leaders and citizens to exchange on different matters to a particular community. The media enables the population to hold accountable their leaders on the issues that they face.







Reimagining Business for Africa's Cultural and Creative Industry and Sports Economy



"The Creative & Cultural Industries along with Sports, are two sectors that deserve true recognition. It is no coincidence that both arts and sports are referred to as 'disciplines'. Indeed, it is through discipline that one awakens success, which follows us in all aspects of life. "

Sandrine Umutoni Director General | Imbuto foundation

"A call to all our governments to do more and more each day for people with disabilities. Not only should we have to create space for them, we should not undermine the power they have to inspire us to do more."

Michaella Rugwizangoga, Chief Tourism Officer | Rwanda Development Board



Leapfrogging into the Digital Era

In the next 2 decades, 20 million young people will be entering the workforce every year, 42% of the world youth population will be Africa's youth by 2030. Lastly, according to the World Economic Forum, 230 million jobs across the continent will require some level of digital skills by 2030. Recognizing where the potential for technology-led leapfrogging is high, identifying which gap areas are prime candidates for intervention, and prioritizing resources appropriately will enable the continent to leapfrog into the digital Era.



"We must leverage the tri-factor of Policy, Advisory and Effective Delivery to tackle the challenges we face as we continue to use technology to empower our youth."

H.E. Tony Blair
Executive Chairman | Tony Blair Institute



"We have to be deliberate about investing in our youth. Let's stop depending on the rest of the world. We need to re-invent and re-imagine new practice and go much faster."

Fred Swaniker
Founder and CEO,
African Leadership Group

Made in Africa: The Future of Africa's Production and Trade



Let's change our mindset so that we as Africans can start to believe that Made in Africa is actually made for us. It is very important that young people take ownership of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and say what they want to accommodate their needs.

H.E. Wamkele Mene Secretary General of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)











Forum on the Future of Agriculture and Food Systems in Africa

Agriculture has been described as the lifeblood of Africa.

The agricultural sector in Africa has a massive economic and social impact. In sub-Saharan Africa, more than 60 percent of the population is smallholder farmers, and agriculture contributes about 23 percent of the nation's GDP. Yet, Africa's total agricultural potential remains untapped (FAO, 2017).

It is an important call to engage Africa's youth to consider Agriculture as a sector which offers them the opportunity to start small and scale rapidly as the demand for healthy food continues to increase globally. African youth also have the opportunity to feed upstream or low stream within the food value chain by introducing technology for efficiencies, data, and to accelerate market consumption of products by positioning them the Made in Africa.

This year the YouthConnekt Africa sought to put a spotlight on Youth Enterprises which are solving for the agriculture sector, to demonstrate the potential of creating sustainable industries and the need for increased investments.

"In order for Africa to fulfill its SDG 2030 commitments for zero hunger, we will need to prioritize our food system and its ramification on how we do agriculture, how we do post-harvest and ultimately how we ensure agriculture production is moved in our regional markets."

Hon. Gérardine Mukeshimana Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources | Rwanda





Si on parle de développement du secteur agricole, il faut qu'on investisse davantage dans l'accès à l'information. Pour moi l'accès à l'information est primordial pour les entrepreneurs, en particulier pour le secteur agricole pour prendre de meilleures décisions.

Tamarah Moutotekema Boussamba CEO Agridis

Making the Case for Youth Mental and Sexual Health



The era where African youth couldn't take center stage in influencing the future of science around the world, of technology, of education, has come to an end. May they be replaced by a kinder, more equitable world.

HE Jeannette Kagame The First Lady of the Republic of Rwanda



I'm truly encouraged to see and hear young people take leadership, share their innovative initiatives to create jobs across different sectors including the creative industries of film, music, arts, culture and technology. Access to sexual and reproductive health and mental health information and services is a shield and an enabler to those dreams.

Ms Lydia Zigomo UNFPA Regional Director





Hosted by H.E. President Paul Kagame, the 2022 YouthConnekt Africa Summit, delivered on a high note, over three days, engaging and rich dialogue on various pertinent issues affecting the development of Youth in Africa.

Convening over 10,000 young people, Heads of State, Ministers, Youth Development Champions, Private Sector Actors, Investors, Artists and Prominent Personalities from the various regions of Africa and beyond, the Summit committed to delivering bolder action to accelerate youth empowerment in Africa.

Today Africa is 1.4 Billion strong, it is estimated that 450 Million of Africa's population are aged between 15 – 35 years, whilst 930 Million are aged below 30. Africa is a young continent, and is expected to double in size by 2050. Africa's youth are resilient, talented, innovative and willing to drive the continent to its next level of development, however, to harness this demographic dividend will require investments in the young people's ideas, innovations, creativity, and knowledge.

Partnership between all stakeholders is required to make this a reality. Governments, development partners, private sector, and civil society all need to come together to build ecosystems for the socio-economic transformation for the youth. The YouthConnekt Africa Summit provides such platform connecting youth to opportunities.



The 2022 YouthConnekt Africa Summit curated important exchanges between young people and the various leaders to deliver the recommendations presented below.

Investments in Youth Entrepreneurship Trade in Africa Youth Employment

- Strengthen Entrepreneurship Ecosystems by availing funding modalities for youth entrepreneurship at ideation, start-ups, and growth phases;
- In partnership with the AfDB, and other relevant stakeholders, build capacity of national chapters to identify and address gaps in funding for youth entrepreneurship within national ecosystems;
- Further enable the success of youth entrepreneurs through continued and increased investment in entrepreneurship incubation and accelerator programmes.
- Capacitate youth entrepreneurs and facilitate cross border trade through the YouthConnekt Africa mechanism in partnership with the AfCFTA secretariat and other relevant stakeholders;
- Provide pathways to seize market opportunities and to comply with relevant regulations;
- Develop mechanisms and programmes under YouthConnekt national chapters to enable young entrepreneurs to participate in cross border trade.
- In partnership with the AfCFTA and relevant stakeholders develop platforms for young people to produce and trade in the African digital market.
- Advocate for the implementation policy and regulatory frameworks governing digital trade, including the Africa Digital Transformation Strategy (2020 2030) and forthcoming AfCFTA Digital Trade Protocol.
- Increase strategic investments in the economy to respond the current gaps between number of youth graduating into the job market in comparison to the number of new jobs created;
- Reskill youth to participate in strategic economic sectors for the nation. Aligning investment in skilling to the investments in developing industries.

Youth in Agriculture

Youth Leadership

Youth Well Being

Youth and the Digital Economy

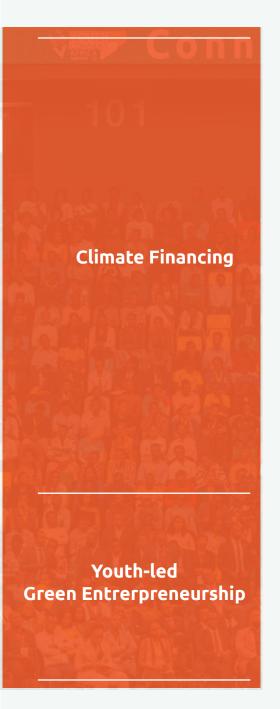
- Skill young people in the various specific agriculture and livestock production to improve their participation and success as entrepreneurs and workers in the field;
- Make available diverse opportunities and forms of investment to support young people to invest into agriculture;
- Reshape the narrative on agriculture as a viable sector for investment and employment for young Africans.
- Conduct consultations and intergenerational dialogue with youth on matters concerning policies that affect the various sectors of national economies;
- Skill young people to understand policy making processes and improve constructive participation;
- Establish programmes and mechanisms that enable sustainable youth participation in policy making Youth Councils, Youth Advisory Bodies and Youth Observatories;
- Broaden policy and programming on youth health to address Youth Mental Health and Sexual Reproductive Health, which are interlinked and affect the capacity of youth as economic agents;
- Advocate for education policies to be inclusive of teen mothers during pregnancy and following birth to ensure that girls can equally attain education and skills for better earning capacity.
- Engage youth in developing scaleable solutions for communication, education and services that address youth mental health and sexual reproductive health
- Engage families and society at large to destigmatize mental health, and promote healthy conversations with youth on their sexual and reproductive health.
- Enable global partnerships for scaled skilling of Youth in strategic Digital Skills
- Enable global partnerships for skilled youth to access remote digital jobs.
- Facilitate affordable access to infrastructure to enable learning and access to opportunities for youth.

YOUTHCONNEKT POSITION PAPER ON CLIMATE CHANGE 2022

Young people who attended the YouthConnekt Africa summit proposed the following call to action on Climate Change to Global Leaders:

The YouthConnekt Position Paper to the COP27:

As Africa Youth, we recommend the following:



Mobilizing finance for climate change is urgently needed, as it is to a large extent a prerequisite for many of the actions African countries need to take to address climate change.

COP27 should lay out concrete actions for assisting developing countries in getting climate finance required to boost climate actions. **Although developed countries pledged US\$100 billion** per year by 2020 for climate action in developing countries, this is yet to be fulfilled. At COP27, there should be concrete actions to initiate plans and showcase how the funds will transform over the years to ensure its sustainability.

Aside the \$100 billion, which is only a fraction of what is needed to deal with climate change, more innovative financing models and new financing instruments are needed.

COP27 should clarify the steps need to address loss and damage. Here is an urgent need to secure a dedicated new financing facility that will help developing countries ravaged by climate induced losses and damages. More policy-making efforts should be channeled toward understanding and laying out an action plan for tackling loss and damage across vulnerable communities alongside mitigation and adaptation.

Africa needs to prioritize and harness to empower youth led innovative solutions as a tool for green and climate resilient economic growth. The role of young people in climate action should not be underestimated as they can be powerful catalysts in spearheading climate actions especially through green entrepreneurship. Investments need to be increased to support initiatives that provide young green entrepreneurs with the skills, knowledge, networks and opportunities to play a more substantive role in addressing climate change



Africa needs to scale up adaptation now. As it stands, climate change threatens the lives and livelihoods of over 100 million in extreme poverty. With the low levels of adaptive capacity, poor diffusion of technologies and information relevant to supporting adaptation, as well as high dependence on agroecosystems for livelihoods, Africa will be severely affected. Investments need to be made in early warning systems and infrastructure that can withstand extreme weather conditions, and we need to develop plans and policies to deal with the effects of climate change. Adaptation will be critical to ensuring that Africa can continue to prosper in the face of a changing climate.

COP27 needs to prioritize the just energy transition for Africa and ensuring sustainable energy access for the 600 million people and counting who still lack access to energy in Africa. Development on the continent cannot occur while leaving these people behind.

Africa needs to accelerate the drive towards Climate Smart Agriculture.

Increases in temperature and changes in rainfall patterns are significantly affecting agricultural productivity across Africa. This undermines the continent's ability to feed its population making it a top priority to address. To address the mounting food insecurity in the face of climate change, agricultural productivity needs to be improved and resilience built.

Africa must take a firmer stance against the problem of plastic pollution and waste management. We need to improve the management of waste, particularly plastic waste management as this is a serious threat to our continent, affecting human health, flora and fauna and our ecosystems. More investments must be made in this area, either by building more public- private partnerships or scale up support to social entrepreneurship efforts that are addressing these issues. Currently 34 countries have partially or completely banned single use plastics, we need more African countries to take this step but also for strict regulations to ensure that these bans are upheld.

Average national climate change literacy rate is 37% in Africa, highlighting a severe deficit

for Africa that needs to be addressed. This is far behind the climate change literacy rates across Europe and North America, which are generally over 80%. Africa needs to prioritize continental climate change literacy. Without climate change literacy, hundreds of millions of people across Africa lack climate risk knowledge for proper adaptation to climate change. This also limits the ability to draw strategies, conduct policies and create behavioral change.

Partners





































Thank you