



WUN Global Africa Group Research Impact Workshop

Implementing the SDGs in East Africa: Translating collaborative research into policy impact



Workshop participants, University of Nairobi Towers, 29 November 2018

University of Nairobi, Kenya, 29-30 November 2018

Workshop Report

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Workshop summary and thanks: Conveners and GAG Co-Chairs

Dear workshop participants and other stakeholders,



The Africa We Want challenge governments, scholars and the international community to meaningfully contribute to Africa's development agenda. Previous development agendas, many of which were imposed on African states, did not yield the expected results. Instead, they opened up Africa for exploitation and also marginalised ordinary people. In the era of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it is expected that research will provide much of the data needed to guide policy formulation and decision making. Two questions arise from this expectation:

how can or should the research community organise itself to play a critical role in Africa's development? How should research on SDGs engage with existing policies but also translate into impactful policies for 'The Africa We Want'.

Using a regional research hubs approach, the <u>Worldwide Universities Network</u> <u>Global Africa Group</u> convened its annual Research Impact Workshop at the University of Nairobi, Kenya, to examine the roles of collaborative research in achieving the SDGs in the East Africa region and, in doing so, deliberately explored the opportunities and challenges for research-policy linkages.

A regional approach is useful for three reasons. First, the Global Africa Group aims to develop regional research hubs anchored on its member universities on the continent (Nairobi, Ghana, Cape Town) but also drawing in regional universities and researchers and partnering with likeminded research networks and other organisations. The University of Nairobi, as the East African hub, hosted the 2018 Global Africa Group workshop following previous research workshops in Accra (June 2017) and Cape Town (December 2017). Second, the approach appreciates regional variation and context-specific development challenges to which research should contribute in tangible ways. Third, a regional approach provides a platform for developing regional policy responses to Agenda 2063 and the SDGs.

The workshop was held at University of Nairobi Towers, Kenya, on 29-30 November 2018. Accommodation and the workshop dinner were held at the Nairobi Safari Club hotel. Some relevant workshop pre-reading materials were made available on the WUN Global Africa Group website, and collated workshop presentation slides are also available on the website to accompany this report.

As workshop Co-Convenors and Co-Chairs of the Global Africa Group, we were extremely impressed by the quality and range of presentations and by the level of active participation by the 60 participants—who included both senior and postgraduate researchers and a range of regional policy and media practitioners. The workshop findings and feedback, as presented later in this report, indicate that our approach of combining a Forum with a series of Masterclasses was useful to participants as they considered the nature of research-policy linkages

in the implementation of the SDGs in East Africa. We would like to thank all of the workshop participants for their time, energy and engagement.

We would also like to sincerely thank our generous hosts at the University of Nairobi, including Vice-Chancellor Prof. Peter Mbithi, who invited us to convene this workshop in Nairobi in 2018 during WUN consultations in Nairobi in June 2017, and Acting DVC Research, Production and Extension Prof. Madara Ogot, who also serves as UoN's WUN Coordinator. Furthermore, we would like to thank Emmanuel Guantai and the UoN support team for so ably facilitating the logistical matters for the workshop, as well as Collins Mucha for the photography. The workshop ran very smoothly—thanks to our hosts!

We would also like to thank Wilna Venter, the WUN Global Africa Group Coordinator based at the University of Cape Town, for her excellent support across all aspects of the workshop program, and Dr Susie Jim, Chair of the WUN Coordinators Group based at the University of Bristol, for her active support for the workshop. We would also like to thank the members of the WUN Global Africa Group Steering Committee—both those who participated in the workshop and those who provided advice from afar.

This was the final workshop under our Co-Chairing of the Group (2016-18) and we look forward to transitioning to the incoming leadership of Prof. Floretta Boonzaier (University of Cape Town) and Prof. Sue Parnell (University of Bristol) as they take over as Co-Chairs for the 2019-21 term. We wish them all the best and look forward to participating in future Global Africa Group workshops.

We strongly encourage workshop participants to continue to build their professional networks—both within academia as well as in the policy world—and to actively work towards producing an academic paper, policy briefing, media piece or grant application based on the ideas and practical advice provided at this workshop. The Global Africa Group is keen to support these tangible outcomes.

Please see our website for further information and future updates: http://www.wun.ac.uk/wun/research/view/global-africa-group

Kind regards,

David and Maano

Prof. Maano Ramusindela

University of Cape Town

Dr David Mickler

University of Western Australia

Co-Chairs, WUN Global Africa Group

13 December 2018



Opening remarks Prof. Peter M. F. Mbithi Vice-Chancellor, University of Nairobi



Distinguished guests Ladies and gentlemen

On behalf of the University of Nairobi and on my own behalf, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the University of Nairobi and to the WUN Global Africa Group workshop on 'Implementing SDGs in East Africa: translating collaborative research into policy impact'.

It is quite a privilege for us, the University of Nairobi fraternity to be a member of WUN and an honour to host this WUN GAG research impact workshop.

Ladies and gentlemen, the *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want* places an expectation on governments, scholars and the international community to contribute to Africa's development. The UN 2030 development agenda, from which many national development blueprints are derived, expects that research should play a critical role in development.

At the national level, the Vision 2030 also recognizes the role of research and development, science and technology and innovation in improving the economy and human development.

On our part, the University of Nairobi being a research intensive university is committed to ensuring that our research, across all disciplines remains relevant and that it positively impacts the community and the region.

As such the University of Nairobi in its strategic direction remains alive to the significance of research and how it impacts development, making conscious and deliberate efforts to achieve the same.

The role that research plays in identifying problems afflicting society and providing solutions for the same cannot be overemphasized. This workshop therefore comes at the right time when the focus is on research to impact policy and development, nationally and globally.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am aware that this workshop will be examining the role of collaborative research in achieving SDGs in East Africa and will explore the link between research and policy, identifying gaps that may exist. I am also aware the WUN Global Africa Group has taken a regional approach of strengthening the contribution of research to development by creating research hubs.

I sincerely believe that the regional approach of strengthening the contribution of research to development within each region is a viable approach bound to make tangible contributions in addressing the region-specific development challenges.

Ladies and gentlemen, with these remarks, I welcome you again, to the University of Nairobi, and declare the WUN GAG Research Impact Workshop officially open. I wish you all fruitful discussions.

Thank you

<u>PETER M.F. MBITHI, PHD, EBS</u> VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PROFESSOR OF VETERINARY SURGERY



Main entrance: University of Nairobi campus



Workshop members with Vice-Chancellor Prof. Peter Mbithi

About the workshop host: University of Nairobi, Kenya

Our Vision is to be a world-class university committed to scholarly excellence.

Our Mission is to provide quality university education and training and to embody the aspirations of the Kenyan people and the global community through creation, preservation, integration, transmission and utilization of knowledge.

Website http://www.uonbi.ac.ke/



Workshop venue: University of Nairobi Towers

The University of Nairobi, a body corporate established under the Universities Act 2012 of the laws of Kenya and the University of Nairobi Charter, is the pioneer institution of University education in Kenya and the region.

The only institution of higher learning in Kenya for a long time, the University of Nairobi responded to the national, regional and Africa's high level manpower training needs by developing and evolving strong, diversified academic programmes and specializations in basic sciences, applied sciences, technology, humanities, social sciences and the arts.

Through module II (continuing education) programmes, invaluable opportunity has been opened to hundreds of Kenyans and non-Kenyans, on a paying basis, who meet university admission requirements, but who have not been able to access university education due to restricted intake into the regular programmes that is determined by limited resource allocation by Government.

In this effort, the location of the seven campuses of the University in the capital city and its environs and facilitating easy access, has been an asset that has seen the university increasingly become the busy hub and citadel of academic activity at all times.

In addition to the regular and evening and weekend programmes, classes are conducted at the University's Extra Mural Centres located at the country's county headquarters.

The university is proud of its distinguished record of achievements in teaching, research, development and consultancy while strategizing for a greater future as the centre of academic, research and professional excellence.

The inception of the University of Nairobi is traced back to 1956, with the establishment of the Royal Technical College which admitted its first lot of Alevel graduates for technical courses in April the same year. The Royal Technical College was transformed into the second University College in East Africa on 25th June, 1961 under the name Royal College Nairobi and was admitted into a special relations with the University of London whereupon it immediately began preparing students in the faculties of Arts, Science and Engineering for award degrees of the University of London. Meanwhile, students in other faculties such as the Faculty of Special Professional Studies (later renamed Faculty of Commerce) and Faculty of Architecture continued to offer diplomas for qualifications of professional bodies/ institutions.

On 20th May 1964, the Royal College Nairobi was renamed University College Nairobi as a constituent college of inter-territorial, Federal University of East Africa, and henceforth the enrolled students were to study for degrees of the University of East Africa and not London as was the case before. In 1970, the University College Nairobi transformed into the first national university in Kenya and was renamed the University of Nairobi.

In view of the rapid expansion and complexities in administration, the University underwent a major restructuring in 1983 resulting in decentralization of the administration, by creation of six (6) colleges headed by principals. The following are the names and respective locations of the colleges:

- 1. College of Agriculture & Veterinary Sciences situated at Upper Kabete Campus
- 2. College of Architecture & Engineering situated at the Main Campus
- 3. College of Biological & Physical Sciences situated at Chiromo Campus
- 4. College of Education & External Studies situated at Kikuyu Campus
- 5. College of Health Sciences situated at the Kenyatta National Hospital
- 6. College of Humanities and Social sciences situated at the Main Campus Faculty of Arts; Parklands-Faculty of Law; Lower Kabete Campus -Faculty of Commerce

Map of East Africa region and surrounds



Source: extract from United Nations, Department of Field Support, Geospatial Information Section, "Africa", Map No. 4045 Rev. 8.1., July 2018, Full map available: http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/africa.pdf

SUSTAINABLE GOALS



1 NO POVERTY





8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH























Workshop format

The workshop was structured into two days. The first day was a Forum with three sessions each featuring a panel of presenters followed by Q&A with the audience. The second day was a series of three masterclass sessions facilitated by experts covering policy writing, research communication and grant writing. The masterclasses were designed to provide professional development to PhD students and early career scholars, but all participants were invited to join in.

<u>Africa.</u> This session featured a range of regional policy practitioners who respectively discussed some of the key challenges to SDGs implementation in the East African region, drawing on their different areas of work, expertise and experience.

<u>Day 1, Session 2: The Roles of Collaborative Research in Sustainable</u>
<u>Development in East Africa</u>. This second panel featured a range of academics from across the Worldwide Universities Network. They each presented some of their research and discussed the role of research in the conceptualisation and implementation of SDGs, including opportunities for research collaboration.

Day 1, Session 3: Translating Collaborative Research on Sustainable Development into Policy Impact in East Africa. This final session brought together a panel of academics and practitioners to discuss approaches to, and examples of, building better linkages between the academic and the policy worlds in relation to sustainable development issues in the region.

<u>Day 2, Masterclass 1: Policy writing: How to translate your research into</u> <u>policy briefings</u>. This session, facilitated by regional policy practitioners, provided practical advice on how to write for policy-related audiences. This assisted academics in thinking about how to translate their scholarly work into policy-relevant forms, which can in turn enhance the wider impact of academic research. The interactive session included an opportunity for participants to discuss some aspects of policy writing relevant to their own research areas.

<u>Pay 2, Masterclass 2: Research communication: How to communicate your research via the media.</u> This second session, facilitated by regional media experts, provided practical advice on communicating research to a wider audience through the media. This can take a number of forms, including TV, radio, print, online and via social media. Advice included how to translate your work into digestible forms for effective wider consumption and hence build the visibility and impact of your research. In this interactive session, participants had an opportunity to consider the media in relation to their own work.

Day 2, Masterclass 3: Grant writing: How to translate your research into funding applications. This final session, facilitated by grant managers and senior academics, provided practical advice on how to approach and write grant application to fund your research projects, whether smaller or larger in scale. Participants had an opportunity to discuss some relevant grant schemes, such as the WUN RDF, and to begin to think about drafting applications, building potential collaborations with other participants.

Workshop Program

Day 1 Forum: Thursday 29 November 2018

Times	Session Theme	Speakers
8.30-9.00	Arrival and registration	
9.00-9.15	Welcome and introduction	Prof. Maano Ramutsindela and Dr David Mickler, GAG Co-Chairs; Prof. Peter Mbithi, Vice-Chancellor, University of Nairobi
9.15-10.15	Session 1: Panel of regional policy practitioners Key Policy Challenges for SDG Implementation in East Africa	Chair: Dr David Mickler, UWA Speakers: 1. Dr Tilahun Temesgen , African Development Bank Group, Nairobi 2. Senait Berhane , UN Assistance
10.15- 11.00	Q&A between audience and panel	Mission for Somalia 3. Dr Barbara King , Second Secretary, Political, Australian Embassy Addis Ababa 4. Titus Maina , Kenya Business Guide

Morning Tea (11.00-11.30)

Times	Session Theme	Speakers
11.30-	Session 2: Academic panel	Chair: Prof. Maano Ramutsindela, UCT
12.30		Speakers:
	The Roles of Collaborative	1. Prof. John Muthama , University of
	Research in Sustainable	Nairobi
	Development in East Africa	2. Prof. Sue Parnell, University of
		Bristol (*via Skype)
		3. Prof. Rob Marchant , University of
12.30-1.30	Q&A between audience and panel	York
		4. Dr Ibrahim Bedi , University of
		Ghana
		5. Prof. Florida Karani , University of
		Nairobi







Lunch (1.30-2.30)

Times	Session Theme	Speakers
2.30-3.30	Session 3: Mixed academic/practitioner panel Translating Collaborative Research on Sustainable Development into Policy Impact in East Africa	Chair: Dr Susan Jim, Bristol Speakers: 1. Dr George Nyabuga, University of Nairobi, former Editor, The Standard 2. Charlotte Mueller, Maastricht University 3. Tigist Grieve, University of Bristol
3.30-4.30	Q&A between audience and panel	4. Prof. Maano Ramutsindela , University of Cape Town
4.30-5.00	Day 1 Forum Conclusions	Dr David Mickler, WUN GAG Co-Chair

Free time (5.00-6.30)

Times	Session Theme
6.30-9.00pm	Workshop dinner Nairobi Safari Club Restaurant



Workshop hotel and dinner venue: Nairobi Sarfari Club

Day 2 Masterclasses: Friday 30 November 2018

Times	Session Theme	Co-Facilitator(s)
09.00-	Masterclass 1: Policy Writing	
11.00		1. Dr Andrew Marriott, First
	How to translate your research into	Secretary, Australian High
	policy briefings	Commission Nairobi
		2. Sahil Shah , Kenya Business Guide
	Led by regional policy practitioners	3. Yehualashet Mekonen, African
		Child Observatory
		,

Morning tea (11.00-11.30)

Times	Session Theme	Co-Facilitator(s)
11.30-1.30	Masterclass 2: Research	
	<u>Communication</u>	1. Moina Spooner, Commissioning
		Editor: East Africa, The
	How to communicate your research	Conversation Africa
	via the media	2. Dr Joseph Nyanoti , former Editor,
		Nation Media Group, Journalism
	Led by regional media experts	Lecturer, United States
		International University, Nairobi
		3. James Mutua , Journalism Lecturer,
		United States International
		University, Nairobi

Lunch (1.30-2.30)

Times	Session Theme	Co-Facilitator(s)
2.30-4.30	Masterclass 3: Grant Writing How to translate your research into funding applications Led by senior research managers	 Prof. Madara Ogot, Acting DVC, Research, Production & Extension, University of Nairobi Prof. Floretta Boonzaier, University of Cape Town Dr Susan Jim, Chair, WUN Coordinator's Group, University of Bristol
4.30-5.00	Workshop conclusions, actions and next steps	Prof. Maano Ramutsindela and Dr David Mickler , GAG Co-Chairs

Workshop Findings and Outcomes

Four main outcomes were expected from the workshop:

- 1. There will be deep engagement between policy practitioners, university leaders, network convenors, academics and postgraduate students on three key sets of issues:
 - a. Key policy challenges for SDG implementation in East Africa;
 - b. The roles of collaborative research in sustainable development in East Africa;
 - c. Translating collaborative research into policy impact on SDGs in East Africa
- 2. Workshop participants will be provided with professional development through expert training to build capacity in four areas:
 - a. Collaboration between academics and policy practitioners
 - b. Policy writing
 - c. Communicating research via the media
 - d. Grant proposal writing
- 3. Production of three types of outputs:
 - a. Policy briefing papers on the SDGs in East Africa: These will be published on the WUN GAG website and sent to targeted policy making bodies;
 - A journal special issue/section: selected contributions to the workshop will be published in a Special Issue/Section on "Implementing the SDGs in East Africa: Translating collaborative research into policy impact" in an academic journal based on the continent:
 - c. WUN Research Development Fund collaborative grant applications in the 2019 funding round.
- 4. The workshop will further support the University of Nairobi's role as the East African regional research hub and deepen linkages between WUN GAG and other relevant African research networks.

Day 1 Forum: Findings from concluding session

Participants were asked to gather in small groups and spend 15 minutes discussing what they learned and took from the first day of the workshop. Each group then relayed the most important finding back to the whole workshop group and this was recorded. Below is a selection of responses:

- Key policy challenges include capacity deficits within organisations, and are an issue for the implementation of SDGs in the region;
- Role of collaborative research on SDGs implementation is important Life Long Learning must be continuous:
- Local languages are critical for achieving SDGs. For example, an idea arose for a paper titled 'Integrating local languages in SDGs', such as Tanzanian languages. The government doesn't recognise these languages. Task is to draft a briefing in Masterclass tomorrow to push the government to consider this!during the
- Seeing African "brain drain" as actually an investment! What does it mean to be a globally mobile African professional networking for successful achievement of SDGs?;
- Somalia extent of challenges facing this country and enormity of what needs to put into place. Difficult to see achievement of SDGs in the context of conflict and instability;
- Need for the establishment of policy schools/entities at African universities with policy-related research as their focus;
- Key policy prioritisation of work in SDGs. Collaboration to be well-defined, with common goals and accountability for where the funds are sources and spent;

- Media role in achieving SDGs is important but not effectively utilized, including to better identify and mobilise funds for the regional priority areas of the SDGs;
- o Importance of collaboration in real and meaningful ways, including bringing in communities we are working with and for through participatory research techniques.
- We need to always take a critical approach by asking question such as 'whose agendas drive the SDGs?' Questions about the roles of languages and cultures and the arts should also be asked.
- Need to recognise the complexity of development agendas, including relationships between local, national and regional agendas and those being driven by others outside of Africa;
- Negative stereotyping of African and Africans, drawing unwarranted attention to the difficult ways in which people live. This can reproduce problematic representations. Need more critical approach to development issues;
- Need for academia to ensure and provide meaningful evidence for policy makers so that they can hit their target and help people who will be affected. Gender issues also need to be at the forefront of the SDGs in the region;
- How do we draw synergy in SDGs to make them work? For example, training, research mobility, capacity building. Examples include centres of training for disease in Kenya and also in China;
- Tackling all SDGs is overwhelming; perhaps we need to need to focus on priority areas to have more impact?

Day 2 - Findings from Masterclass sessions

What is the key finding or point that you discussed in your small group?

- o In order to highlight the relevance of research to policy makers, we need to articulate the magnitude of problem and contextualise it in our research;
- Local language promotion is important how do we do this? Indigenous centres could be set up to teach these. How can people who do not use English articulate their issues? This are critical issues for SDG implementation in the region;
- We need to always be conscious of who is implementing the policy? Who is funding the research?:
- It may be very useful to work 'backwards' to engage stakeholders at the outset of research to facilitate buy-in;
- Researchers should identify where the policy gaps are and inform themselves before engaging with relevant policy and other actors;
- In order to tackle problems facing women in small business, we should engage relevant policymakers and stakeholders such as the minister of trade and transport, private sector, others;
- Women's empowerment faces challenges for policy change, including in relation to lack of funds, negative attitudes and opportunities for collective action;
- A key challenge for using the media to highlight research findings is that often the media and political system are tied in ways that produce what's in the interests of political power.
 Is it beneficial to the community? Perhaps we should instead bypass the media and communicate/engage directly with the research users;
- We need to analyse news media items, including recent examples from Kenya. Do they
 promote issue of knowledge or some other values? Do the media cares about what our
 people consume, wither its news or knowledge?
- Benefits of ongoing communication with media outlets and journalists can enhance relationships, reduce misinterpretation and build collaboration for better social outcomes.

Samples of post-workshop feedback from participants

1. To what extent was the workshop theme relevant to your work/research and to the East Africa region?

"The conference theme was very relevant. Reality of Aid Africa Network focusses on research analysis on development effectiveness in Africa. We were therefore keen in knowing how our research can better impact policy outcomes in the region."

"To a great extent, I realized the relevance of the workshop in three key areas: research proposal development, converting my research findings to policy issues and communicating policy issues to responsible authorities."

"The workshop was, unexpectedly, very relevant to my work on thinking about the role of the social sciences in Africa, especially towards tackling the SGDs."

2. Forum Day 1: Were the sub-themes and structure of the Forum on Day 1 effective? Would you have liked to see any other themes or presenters included?

"The subthemes were effective. In future it would be good to have civil society organizations on the panel as we have done a lot of independent research on various topics."

"Yes, because the focus was on Sustainable Development Goals, and my area of research is on SDG No. 4."

"The mix of presenters around specific thematic areas was well planned, effective and very informative. I felt they were useful for thinking critically about the implementation of the SGDs in East Africa but they also provided crucial contextual information for those not fully familiar with the issues in the region."

3. To what extent did this format enable a productive discussion of research-policy linkages in relation to implementing the SDGs in East Africa?

"I would say to a large extent"

"The format initiated in my thinking the desire to conduct more research that is related to policy issues affecting East Africa, with respect to improving quality education, equality of gender and eradicating poverty and diseases."

"Discussion was very productive and relevant and it appeared that most attendees could find some meaning in the presentations and the discussion it raised."

4. Masterclasses Day 2: was the inclusion of Masterclass sessions useful in a workshop such as this? If so, why?

"The inclusion of master class sessions was important because it challenged me to adopt critical thinking when conducting a research paper and the dimension of research proposal writing and funding."

"I was surprised by the high attendance in the masterclass sessions as well as the level of participation – so I think this was a very useful inclusion in the programme and was obviously very necessary."

5. What were the main benefits of the workshop for you?

"Opportunities for networking, information sharing and access"

"Knowledge expansion. Skills in carrying out research. Networking and making friends. Desire to complete a Master's degree and register for PhD, possibly in a foreign university."

"The opportunity to network with colleagues at UoN and to meet participants in the network. The workshop also helped me gain a sense of what a network like this can accomplish and what its potential limits might be."

6. What worked particularly well at the workshop?

"Great panellists; well informed on issues, had good cases of presentation."

"Time was well managed and all presentations perfect."

"I thought the programme was well planned and especially suited the aims of the workshop."

7. What didn't work so well and could be improved for future WUN Global Africa Group workshops?

"Involve civil society more. Have more private sector engagement. Involve government ministries and departments to attend. More branding and visibility."

"Some delegates did not attend the second day of the workshop. There should be a commitment to attend all sessions."

8. Do you have any other suggestions for future WUN Global Africa Group workshop themes, formats, locations, etc?

"The organisers did a good job and should keep it up. The location for holding the workshop should adopt the proposed rotational system."

"More workshops on research development, eg. Writing for publication might be suitable. It would also be useful to conduct workshops/symposia where participants present some of the work they are conducting in order for members to find opportunities for collaboration."

9. Space for any final comments

"The workshop introduced me to further experiential learning with respect to thorough research, presentation techniques, though-provoking academic engagements and an opportunity to network. I look forward to the next workshop, and hopefully, I will be in attendance. May God bless the idea behind this workshop and its continuity."

"Great workshop that I think was well received by most participants!"





Workshop Participants

Name	Institution	Email	UoN or WUN role
HOSTS			1010
Prof. Peter Mbithi	U Nairobi	vc@uonbi.ac.ke	Vice- Chancellor
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