

Worldwide Universities Network Global Africa Group

**Report on
Group Launch & Inaugural Strategic Research Workshop**

University of Ghana, Accra
8-9 June 2017



Workshop group outside the University of Ghana Business School Multipurpose Building, Accra, Ghana, Thursday 8 June 2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Heading	Page
Workshop Summary & Thanks by Co-Chairs, WUN Global Africa Group	3
Welcome Message by Professor Ebenezer Oduro Owusu, Vice-Chancellor, University of Ghana	6
Welcome Message by Professor John Hearn, WUN Executive Director	8
Introductory Remarks by Mr Andrew Barnes, Australian High Commissioner to Ghana	9
Outline of Workshop Program	11
Cultural Field Trip to Cape Coast and Kakum National Park	15
Summary of Feedback by Workshop Participants	17
Workshop Outcomes and Next Steps for WUN Global Africa Group	19
Appendices A. List of Workshop Participants B. Keynote Address by Professor Christopher Gordon C. Presentations of Draft Research Projects from Research Themes D. WUN GAG Book Project Call for Chapter Abstracts (updated version) E. University of Ghana News Items on Workshop	22

WORKSHOP SUMMARY

Professor Maano Ramutsindela & Dr David Mickler WUN GAG Co-Chairs



The launch and inaugural strategic research workshop at the University of Ghana on 8-9 June 2017 was a terrific opportunity to bring together researchers from the [Worldwide University Network Global Africa Group](#) (WUN GAG) for two days of productive and collaborative research discussions, and a further day for a fascinating cultural field trip to the Cape Coast region of Ghana. The Accra Workshop was supported by a successful grant application to the WUN Sustainability Fund. The Workshop was held at the University of Ghana Business School Graduate Multipurpose Building, and the main accommodation for non-local participants was the Mensvic Hotel, East Legon.

The WUN GAG was formed in late 2015 as a cross-cutting, regionally-focused group comprised from WUN's wider membership (currently 14 WUN members). The WUN GAG Steering Committee produced the Group's *Strategic Plan 2016-18* in August 2016.

A number of key principles informed the development of the *Strategic Plan*:

- (1) The WUN GAG should facilitate inclusive and impactful research at the intersection of the [African Union's Agenda 2063](#), the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs) and existing WUN research expertise. This led to the identification of five Priority Research Themes:
 - (a) *Environmental change and food security*
 - (b) *Public health*
 - (c) *Governance, inequality and social inclusion*
 - (d) *Higher education and research capacity*
 - (e) *Natural resources for inclusive growth and sustainable development;*
- (2) The WUN GAG should emphasise and support the physical mobility of researchers, including early career and postgraduate researchers, as a means to achieve genuine research collaboration and partnerships;
- (3) The imbalance in African vs non-African university members of GAG meant that a new approach was required to facilitate inclusive and productive collaboration. The approach chosen was one of supporting the GAG African member universities as regional research hubs (University of Ghana/West Africa; University of Cape Town/Southern Africa; University of Nairobi/East Africa), where workshops would be held to connect local/regional researchers and global WUN GAG members to develop specific projects around questions of mutual interest and expertise.

(4) The WUN GAG should collaborate with like-minded networks, including:

- [African Research Universities Alliance \(ARUA\)](#)
- [Association of African Universities \(AAU\)](#)
- [Association of Commonwealth Universities \(ACU\)](#)
- [Australia Africa Universities Network \(AAUN\)](#)
- As well as a range of other university and non-university-based individuals and organisations across government, industry, and the NGO and community sectors.

The 8-9 June 2017 WUN GAG Inaugural Strategic Research Workshop in Ghana, as the first stage in the operationalisation of the *Strategic Plan*, was designed as a creative and collaborative research ‘sandpit’, structured broadly around our five Research Priority Themes. In addition to formally launching the Group and bringing researchers from across WUN and the West African region together face to face to discuss research ideas, the key workshop outcome was to form specific research project teams under each of the 5 respective Research Priority Themes and for those project teams to then be in a position to competitively apply for external funding after the workshop. It was envisaged that project teams would have a mix: of genders, of senior and early career/postgraduate researchers, and of Africa-based and non-Africa-based researchers.

Researchers were asked to submit Expressions of Interest (EoI) prior to the workshop. The EoIs asked researchers to (1) summarise their existing research profile; (2) outline their areas of interest in research collaboration under one or more of the five WUN GAG research themes; (3) identify potential collaborators for research projects they were interested to develop; and (4) identify potential sources of grant funding for those projects.

From this, workshop participants were pre-placed into respective research thematic streams to help facilitate discussions between researchers working in similar or related areas. Some researchers were keen to take part in more than one research theme, which led to some useful cross-pollination of ideas. A facilitator for each research theme was nominated and helped to guide discussions towards the identification of potential collaborative projects. Outlines of possible projects were drafted on Day 1 and presented to the whole workshop group on Day 2, following further refinement.

The Co-Chairs would like to sincerely congratulate and thanks the University of Ghana and the Workshop Convening team for organising such a fantastic three days in Ghana. In particular, we would like to thank Vice-Chancellor Prof. Ebenezer Oduro Owusu for launching the Group and providing an inspiring and supporting welcome address. We would also like to express our gratitude to the leadership of Prof. Francis Doodoo, Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research), and Prof. Andrew Anthony Adjei (Director, Office of Research, Innovation and Development) for attending and supporting the workshop. We would furthermore like to thank the Workshop Convenor, Dr Ibrahim Bedi, who is also the UG Representative on the WUN GAG Steering Committee, and his assistants Belinda Quaye and Esi Annan and other support staff, for their highly professional organisation and hosting of the workshop.

We would also like to thank Professor Christopher Gordon, Director, Institute for Environment and Sanitation Studies at the University of Ghana, for delivering a very thoughtful keynote

address, and to our other opening speakers Prof. Koen Lamberts, Vice-Chancellor, University of York, Prof. Karuti Kanyinga, representing Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nairobi, Prof. Peter Mbithi, Mr Justin Fraser, Australian Deputy High Commissioner to Ghana representing High Commissioner Andrew Barnes, and Dr Susan Jim, Chair, WUN Coordinators Group.

Our sincere thanks also go to all of the workshop participants, including those inside and outside the WUN membership, and the thematic session facilitators, for enthusiastically supporting the work of the Global Africa Group and sharing your expertise.

We look forward with interest to following up on the research outcomes of the Accra workshop through the various drafted projects and the collaborative book project on *Africa and the Sustainable Development Goals*. We would also strongly encourage project teams to communicate their work to wider audiences through platforms such as [The Conversation Africa](#).

We are delighted that the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nairobi, Professor Peter Mbithi, has warmly accepted our invitation to have the University of Nairobi host the WUN Global Africa Group 2018 Research Workshop.

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



Prof. Maano Ramusindela
University of Cape Town



Dr David Mickler
University of Western Australia

Co-Chairs, WUN Global Africa Group

10 July 2017

WELCOME ADDRESS

Professor Ebenzer Oduro Owusu, Vice-Chancellor, University of Ghana.



Professor Ebenzer Oduro Owusu, Vice-Chancellor, University of Ghana, formally launches the WUN Global Africa Group and provides the welcome address, 8 June 2017

Co-Chairs of Global Africa Group (GAG)

The Australian Ambassador to Ghana

Pro-VC, ASA

The Registrar

WUN Coordinators

Members of GAG Steering Group

Provosts, Deans and Directors

Researchers and Presenters

Ladies and Gentlemen

All protocol Observed

On behalf of the Chancellor, Management and Staff of the University, I welcome everyone to the opening ceremony of the WUN GAG Inaugural Strategic Research Workshop.

Ghana is a beautiful country so our colleagues from other countries should find time to explore the country. University of Ghana has a serene atmosphere so find time to tour our campus and

facilities. I particularly wish to welcome and acknowledge the presence of the Keynote Speaker, Professor Chris Gordon. UG Continues to host some of the big academic events in Africa and I'm pleased we are hosting this workshop. It's a testimony of our commitment to WUN and our quest to be among the league of research intensive universities in the world.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, The World University Network Global Africa Group (WUN GAG) is a cross-cutting, regionally-focused group. The motive of this workshop is intended to bring together researchers and postgraduate students in an effort to facilitate and to promote research collaboration on five priority themes:

- (a) *Environmental change and food security*
- (b) *Public health*
- (c) *Governance, inequality and social inclusion*
- (d) *Higher education and research capacity*
- (e) *Natural resources for inclusive growth and sustainable development*

Such gatherings continuously bring great ideas to contribute to the development of the African continent. I urge you to continue to be committed, be critically and objectively find solutions to Africa's challenges and help in meeting the Sustainability Development Goals.

The University of Ghana will continue to support the WUN Global African Group and to give our immense dedication and commitment to WUN. The UG faculty are encouraged to play active role and take position as principal investigators in order to make UG, GAG hub for West Africa. GAG is not a Group for Africans but a Group for researchers with interest in Africa. I commend our colleagues from the diaspora here present and this testify that you love Africa and we will offer the needed support and collaboration for our mutual benefit.

I wish you fruitful discussions and I know that we will carry a strong message of hope for Research in Africa.

Co-Chairs of GAG, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank everyone for participating in this gathering.

THANK YOU.

WELCOME MESSAGE

Professor John Hearn, WUN Executive Director



Dear WUN Presidents, Experts, Distinguished Guests

On behalf of all of us in WUN, and with my personal regards, thank you for your engagement and participation in the launch conference of the WUN Global Africa Group

The purpose of the Group is to foster equal partnerships with and in Africa across the WUN Network, addressing mutual global challenges and facilitating research and education programs, mobility and impact.

We look forward to new alliances and partnerships with an African context.

The WUN “Cross Cutting Themes”, including the Global Africa Group, will build strength with each of the four main WUN Global Challenges, and be allied with them in order to allow maximum synergy and teamwork. The work can be shaped in the framework of the relevant United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, again in the African international context.

A deep thank you to the Group Chairs, Maano Ramutsindela and David Mickler, Professor Ebenezer Owusu and the team at the University of Ghana who are hosting the conference.

We look forward to a sharing of expertise, the emergence of strategic priorities, and approaches towards sustainable programs and support.

Wishing you all a highly successful WUN Conference

With warm regards,

John

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

**Mr Andrew Barnes, Australian High Commissioner to Ghana
Delivered by Mr Justin Fraser, Australian Deputy High Commissioner to Ghana**



Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to be here today and to participate in this seminal and important event. I would like to thank the Worldwide Universities Network Global Africa Group for the invitation and for the opportunity to share a few words.

Today's event is momentous for several reasons, not least of which is that it acknowledges the importance of Africa's contribution to education and its evolving leadership role to global scholarships but it also serves to highlight the place Africa now has at the forefront of global research and innovation.

Australia shares a long and proud history of engagement with Africa, most recognisable through our traditional linkages in area such as trade, business and tourism. Yet in recent times, as the world continues to become even more interwoven, growing prominence of ever deepening connections and collaborations in education and research between Australia and Africa are now increasingly visible - and arguably more important.

Aside from the obvious reasons, quality education remains extremely important to Australia. Education is now our fourth biggest export to the world and it is because of its ability to transform society that it remains at the heart of Australia's development, economic and public diplomacy objectives in Africa.

The challenge, however, of finding new ways to make accessing information and education more accessible remains.

That said, I'm very proud to say that across the continent, many Africans have benefitted from opportunities under the Australian government's Australia Awards scholarships scheme to pursue Master's degrees, Fellowships or short course programmes in Australia. This scheme and our commitment to Africa will continue.

Moving forward, Australia is eager to strengthen its relationship with the African continent. Education forms a significant part of this strategy as we are conscious that in order to better the world for all, we must continue into the future together. For Australia, Africa's rapid pace of

economic growth, continued investment in education, innovative youth and growing demand for information and superior research expertise to drive development outcomes, present invaluable opportunities for ground-breaking work and productive partnerships in areas of mutual interest and expertise.

It therefore comes as no surprise that more Australian universities are looking to develop linkages with Ghanaian institutions for collaborations in research, curriculum development and course delivery. Universities like UWA and RMIT University, who are both represented here today, are at the forefront of these Australia-Africa collaborations in education and research.

And partnerships like those being developed through the WUN Global Africa Group are testament to the possibilities for deeper Australia-Africa collaboration. It is my hope that the ideas and expertise that will be shared in this workshop will go a long way towards producing pioneering research that results in the development of lasting solutions to critical global and regional development challenges.

I thank you all for your time and wish you a productive session over the next two days.



The workshop venue: University of Ghana Business School Multipurpose Building, Legon campus, Accra.

PROGRAM

Overview

DATE (June)	ACTIVITY	VENUE
Wednesday 7th	Arrival in Accra, hotel check-in	Mensvic Hotel, East Legon
Thursday 8th	Workshop Day 1 (09.00-16.00) <i>UG campus bus tour (optional: 16.00-18.00)</i>	UG Business School (UGBS)
Friday 9th	Workshop Day 2 (09.00-15.30) Workshop group dinner (18.30-21.00)	UG Business School African Regent Hotel, Accra
<i>Saturday 10th</i>	<i>Cultural field trip to Cape Coast region (optional: 05.00-20.00);</i>	<i>Pick-up/drop-off at Mensvic hotel</i>

Workshop in detail

Day 1	<p>08.30-09.00</p> <p>Arrival and registration, University of Ghana Business School Graduate Multipurpose Building</p> <p>09.00-10.30</p> <p>Introductory session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WUN GAG Co-Chairs and Workshop Convenor (introductions and outline; relay congratulatory message from WUN Exec. Director Prof. John Hearn). • Welcome remarks and launch of WUN Global Africa Group, by Prof. Ebenezer Oduro Owusu, Vice-Chancellor, University of Ghana. • Introductory remarks by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prof. Koen Lamberts, Vice-Chancellor, University of York; ○ Prof. Karuti Kanyinga, on behalf of Prof. Peter Mbith, Vice-Chancellor, University of Nairobi; ○ Mr Justin Fraser, Australian Deputy High Commissioner to Ghana; ○ Dr Susan Jim, Chair, WUN Coordinators Group. • Keynote address: "EveryWUN Needs Mountains", Prof. Christopher Gordon, Director, Institute for Environment and Sanitation Studies, College of Basic and Applied Sciences, University of Ghana. http://iess.ug.edu.gh/people/faculty/prof-christopher-gordon <p>10.30-11.00</p> <p>Group photo (with UG media team) and morning tea</p> <p>11.00-13.00</p>
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	<p>Session facilitators appointed. Participants split into parallel streams based on five GAG Priority Research Themes, during which individuals made short presentations of their own research interests/proposed projects to communicate and exchange ideas and expertise. Open discussion of ideas for projects. (session continued after lunch)</p> <p>13.00-14.00</p> <p>Lunch</p> <p>14.00-16.00</p> <p>(continued) Open discussion of ideas for collaborative projects in five Research Themes.</p> <p>16.00-18.00</p> <p>University of Ghana Legon Campus bus tour (optional).</p>
Day 2	<p>08.30-09.00</p> <p>Arrival and registration, University of Ghana Business School Graduate Multipurpose Building</p> <p>09.00-10.45</p> <p>Whole group: Thematic session facilitators reported back on Day 1 thematic session discussions using Powerpoint slides containing project ideas.</p> <p>10.45-11.00</p> <p>Remarks by Prof. Francis Doodoo, Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research), University of Ghana.</p> <p>11.00 -11.30</p> <p>Morning tea</p> <p>11.30-13.00</p> <p>Participants again split into thematic sessions to refine ideas from Day 1 into draft projects.</p> <p>13.00-14.00</p> <p>Lunch</p> <p>14.00-15.30</p>

Summaries of draft project proposals presented to whole workshop group using Powerpoint slides; Q&A discussion.

WUN GAG Co-Chairs summarised workshop outcomes, outlined next steps for the Group, provided message of thanks.

18.30-21.00

Workshop group buffet dinner, African Regent Hotel, Accra.

<http://theafricanregenthotel.com/pages/restaurant>



The University of Ghana, Legon campus, Accra.



CULTURAL FIELD TRIP

On Saturday 10 June, a number of workshop participants travelled as a group on a coach from Accra to Cape Coast and its surrounding region for a cultural field trip.

At Cape Coast, participants toured the historic Cape Coast Castle, had lunch at the University of Cape Coast and then travelled to Kakum National Park for a canopy walk in the rainforest.

The field trip had particular relevance for the WUN GAG research themes of 'Governance, inequality and social inclusion' (Cape Coast Castle was a major port for the Atlantic slave trade and colonialism in West Africa) and 'Environmental change' and 'Natural resources for inclusive growth and sustainable development' (learning about the value of, and challenges for, the Kakum National Park).





SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK BY WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

In the concluding session of the workshop, participants were asked to provide feedback on the workshop using a short questionnaire.

A general summary of that feedback is as follows:

Benefits of workshop ...

- Network broadening, particularly to West African academics. Meeting potential new collaborators face-to-face;
- Identification of expertise across WUN members and countries;
- Trans-disciplinary synergies and challenges were identified;
- Clear objectives were set out;
- Opportunity to sharpen collaborative research project ideas and to focus research questions;
- Great experience and opportunity for early career researchers;
- Real potential to develop new collaborative research projects out of the workshop.

Worked well ...

- Themes broad enough to allow for productive, open discussions;
- Sharing of ideas and interesting questions by researchers from different backgrounds;
- Initial thematic group brainstorming helped to break ice and determine scope of discussions;
- Thematic groups with reporting to whole group;
- Coordination and time management;
- Excellent venue, logistics and program;
- Flexibility of the program;
- Research themes were focused and relevant.

Could have worked better ...

- A longer workshop would have been useful, perhaps 3 days;
- Thematic research groups were very broad and need more focus/narrowing within each to reach common interests;
- Some researchers wanting to participate in more than one thematic group meant some disruption to discussions;
- Needed more clarity on expected workshop outputs and links to realistic funding opportunities;
- Future workshops should have more explicit mentoring and professional development training for early career researchers;
- More linking needed between researchers across the five research themes, such as a 'speed-dating' structure in the initial session;
- Workshop could have been advertised more widely outside of WUN membership.

Other comments and questions ...

- Opportunity to link natural and social scientists together in joint projects;
- Can specific academic disciplines work together on proposals?
- Very informative and enjoyable workshop;
- The workshop atmosphere was very open;
- How do we bring in other researchers who could not participate?
- How do we take the projects forward after the workshop?
- Would be great to involve researchers from other African universities in the workshops/network;
- Would be great to secure additional funding for early career researchers to participate in future workshops;
- How can non-WUN members be part of the Group in the future?
- Can WUN GAG create a platform for students, postgraduate researchers and early career researchers?



The Environmental Change and Food Security thematic research group in discussions.

WORKSHOP OUTCOMES AND NEXT STEPS

The Workshop had three principle objectives:

- 1) To formally launch the Global Africa Group
- 2) To bring together researchers in the Worldwide Universities Network in a face to face setting to discuss ideas for research collaboration;
- 3) Based on the workshop discussions, to form project teams to take collaborative projects towards seed and larger grant funding opportunities.

With the warm and emphatic launch of the Group by Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana, Prof. Owusu, in the opening session, and with over fifty enthusiastic and engaging participants from Ghana, the West African region and the world, the first two objectives were clearly met during the course of the workshop. With regard to the second objective, each of the five teams produced key research ideas in line with the research expertise and interests of members participating in those teams.

➤ **Research projects**

It is now imperative that participants drive the research projects that were identified at the workshop to achieve the third key outcome. We would like to see at least two projects identified at the workshop reach the stage of seed funding, including in the 2017 WUN Research Development Fund round.

The potential projects identified are as follows (see appendices for full details):

Environmental Change and Food Security theme

- **Food security and better livelihoods through climate-smart agriculture and sustainable food systems.**

Public Health theme

- **Development of new strategies to tackle infectious diseases in Africa with traditional and biochemical medicine.**
- **Using citizen science to assess the human health, productivity, and economic impacts of air pollution and pollen in a sub-Saharan African setting.**

Governance, Inequality and Social Inclusion theme

- **Drivers of migration: Understanding the communications ecosystem.**

Higher Education and Research Capacity theme

- **Pedagogical techniques for evaluation of the impact of research in Africa and on policy**

makers;

- **Collecting and sharing research data to inform policy makers while engaging with schools and student communities.**

Natural Resources for Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development theme

- **Critical metals and progress toward the green economy in Africa;**
- **Oil Platform Decommissioning;**
- **Catchment area development, conservation and degradation**

➤ **Collaborative book project**

Another key outcome of the Accra workshop (and later consultations at the University of Nairobi, our newest WUN member) was to provide impetus towards the development of the WUN Global Africa Group's proposed collaborative book project on *Africa and the Sustainable Development Goals*. An updated Call for Chapter Abstracts, with revised deadline of 31 July 2017, is attached in the appendices.

➤ **Next meetings and key upcoming dates for the Global Africa Group**

Date	Venue	Event	Notes
2 Aug 2017	Teleconference	Next WUN GAG Steering Committee Teleconference	Steering Committee members will review Accra workshop and University of Nairobi consultations
Oct 2017 [date tbc]	University of Cape Town, South Africa	WUN GAG collaborative book project workshop	For accepted authors; workshop funding is currently under application
4 Sept 2017	University of Western Australia, Perth	Australia Africa Universities Network (AAUN) Forum & AGM [alongside Africa Down Under mining, oil & gas industry conference]	Side meeting of overlapping members of WUN GAG; other WUN members welcome. Click here for UWA webpage. Click here for AAUN webpage.
Sept/Oct 2017 [date tbc]	Grant Round	WUN Research Development Fund seed funding grant application deadline	Click here for RDF webpage.

3 Dec 2017	University of Cape Town, South Africa	Australia Africa Universities Network (AAUN) Africa Forum [alongside Global Food Security Conference]	Side meeting of overlapping members of WUN GAG; other WUN members welcome Click here for the GFSC.
2018 [date tbc]	University of Nairobi, Kenya	WUN GAG 2018 Research Workshop	VC of UoN has accepted invitation to host the next workshop



Prof. Karuti Kanyinga provides opening remarks on behalf of University of Nairobi Vice-Chancellor Prof. Peter Mbithi.



WUN Global Africa Group Co-Chairs, Prof. Maano Ramutsindela (L) and Dr David Mickler (R), with University of Ghana Workshop Convenor and GAG Steering Committee Representative Dr Ibrahim Bedi (C), at the workshop dinner, African Regent Hotel, 9 June 2017

APPENDICES

LIST OF ACCRA WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

University	Title	First name	Surname	Email	Priority research theme
WUN participants					
York	Prof	Koen	Lamberts	andrew.l.brown@york.ac.uk	<i>[Vice-Chancellor]</i>
	Dr	Rob	Marchant	robert.marchant@york.ac.uk	Higher education and research capacity
	Dr	Chris	Malley	chris.malley@york.ac.uk	Public Health
Leeds	A/Prof	Susannah	Sallu	s.sallu@leeds.ac.uk	Governance, inequality and social inclusion
	Dr	James	Van Alstine	J.VanAlstine@leeds.ac.uk	Governance, inequality and social inclusion
	Dr	Chris	Paterson	c.paterson@leeds.ac.uk	Governance, inequality and social inclusion
Bergen	Prof	Anne	Johannessen	Anne.Johannessen@uib.no	Public Health
	Dr	Tore	Saetersdal	Tore.Saetersdal@uib.no	Natural resources for inclusive growth and sustainable development
	Prof	David	Sam	David.Sam@uib.no	Governance, inequality and social inclusion
	Prof	Alberto	Cimadamore	alberto.cimadamore@crop.uib.no	Environmental Change and Food Security
Maastricht	Dr	Han	Aarts	han.aarts@maastrichtuniversity.nl	Higher education and research capacity
Western Australia	Dr	David	Mickler	david.mickler@uwa.edu.au	<i>[GAG Co-Chair]</i> Governance, inequality and social inclusion
	Dr	Dominic	Dagbanja	dominic.dagbanja@uwa.edu.au	Environmental Change and Food Security
	Mr	Muhammad	Suleiman	muhammad.suleiman@research.uwa.edu.au	Governance, inequality and social inclusion
Cape Town	Prof	Maano	Ramutsindela	maano.ramutsindela@uct.ac.za	<i>[GAG Co-Chair]</i> Natural resources for inclusive growth and sustainable development
	Dr	Olufunke	Alaba	olufunke.alaba@uct.ac.za	Governance, inequality and social inclusion
Ghana	Dr	Ibrahim	Bedi	ibedi@ug.edu.gh	<i>[GAG UG Workshop Convenor]</i> Higher education and research capacity
	Prof	Audrey	Gadzekpo	audreygadzekpo@gmail.com	Governance, inequality and social inclusion

	Dr	Frederick	Obese	FObese@ug.edu.gh	Environmental Change and Food Security
	Dr	Lydia	Aziato	laziato@ug.edu.gh	Higher education and research capacity
	Dr	Mary	Setrana	mbsetrana@ug.edu.gh	Natural resources for inclusive growth and sustainable development
	Dr	Dorcas	Osei-Safo	doseisafo@yahoo.com	Public Health
	Dr	Francis	Anto	fanto@ug.edu.gh	Public Health
	Prof	Gordon	Awandare	gawandare@hotmail.com	Public Health
	Dr	Kwaku	Kyeremeh	kkyeremeh@ug.edu.gh	Higher education and research capacity
	Dr	Abena	Yeboah-Banin	ayeboah-banin@ug.edu.gh	Governance, Inequality and Social Inclusion
	Dr	Samuel	Manteaw	manteaw@ug.edu.gh	
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	Dr	Chinyere	Uche	chinyere.uche@bristol.ac.uk	Natural resources for inclusive growth and sustainable development
	Prof	Rachael	Gooberman-Hill	r.goberman-hill@bristol.ac.uk	Public Health
	Dr	Susan	Jim	Susan.Jim@bristol.ac.uk	[WUN Coordinator] Higher education and research capacity
Sheffield	Dr	Rhoda	Hawkins	rhoda.hawkins@sheffield.ac.uk	Public Health

	Dr	Sharif	Khalid	s.m.khalid@sheffield.ac.uk	Governance, inequality and social inclusion
	Prof	Jim	Haslam	j.haslam@sheffield.ac.uk	<i>Theme TBC</i>
CUHK	Dr	Lawal	Marafa	Immarafa@cuhk.edu.hk	Environmental Change and Food Security
Soton	Prof	Collins	Ntim	C.G.Ntim@soton.ac.uk	Governance, Inequality and Social Inclusion
	Dr	Fifi	Johnson	faj100@soton.ac.uk	Environmental Change and Food Security
	Prof	Stephen	Roberts	steve.roberts@noc.soton.ac.uk	Natural resources for inclusive growth and sustainable development
	Dr	Martin	Dyke	m.dyke@soton.ac.uk	Higher Education and Research Capacity
	Ms	Eleonora	Gandolfi	E.Gandolfi@southampton.ac.uk	<i>[WUN Coordinator]</i> Higher Education and Research Capacity
Nairobi	Prof	Karuti	Kanyiga	karutik@gmail.com	Governance, Inequality and Social Inclusion
	Prof	John	Muthama	jmuthama@uonbi.ac.ke	Environmental Change and Food Security
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Collaborating participants					
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	Mr	Linus	Ajikhah	linusajikhah@gmail.com	Environmental Change and Food Security
	Ms	Oshingboye	Dolapo	dlparamide2012@gmail.com	Environmental Change and Food Security
	Mr	Alebiosu	Olubenga	olubengaaalebiosu@gmail.com	Public Health
	Mrs	Rotimi	Oluwatomisin	tomisinrotimi@yahoo.com	Environmental Change and Food Security
U Reading (UK)	Dr	Innocent	Okwuosa	innocent.okwuosa@online.liverpool.ac.uk	Natural resources for inclusive growth and sustainable development
RMIT University (Australia)	Dr	Olasupo	Owoeye	olasupo.owoeye@rmit.edu.au	Governance, inequality and social inclusion
Mawego Tech. Trng Inst(Kenya)	Ms	Dorothy	Opuodho	dopuodho@gmail.com	Higher education and research capacity

EveryWUN needs Mountains

Prof. Chris Gordon

Director

Institute for Environment and Sanitation Studies

08 June 2017

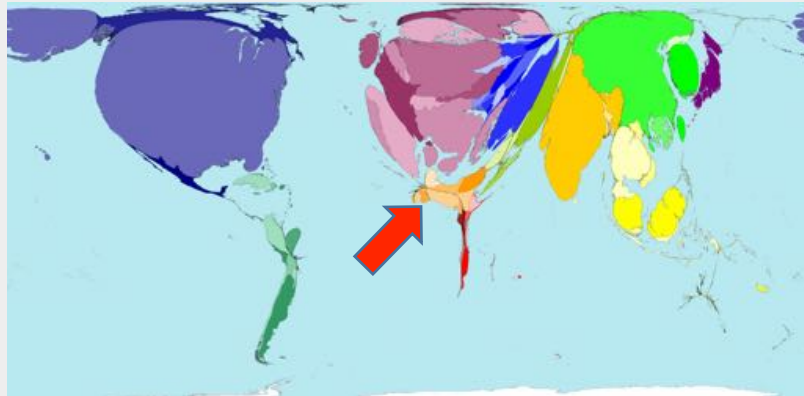
Keynote Address: Worldwide Universities Network Global Africa Group



UNIVERSITY OF GHANA



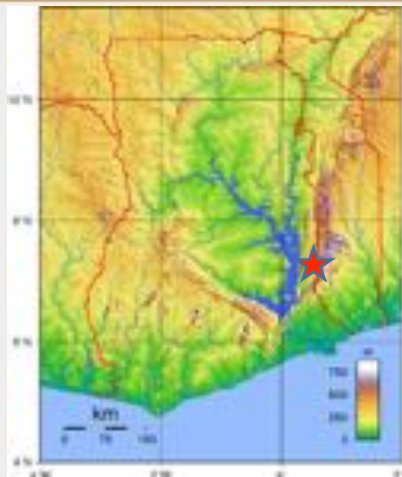
Growth in Tertiary Education Spending: Global proportions



 UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

Why do we need to carry out Research on mountains?

- We are all downstream from a 'mountain'
- What happens up there will effect us sooner or later!
- In Ghana we have no mountains? 880 m



 UNIVERSITY OF GHANA



Challenges to be overcome often shown as a hill to be climbed

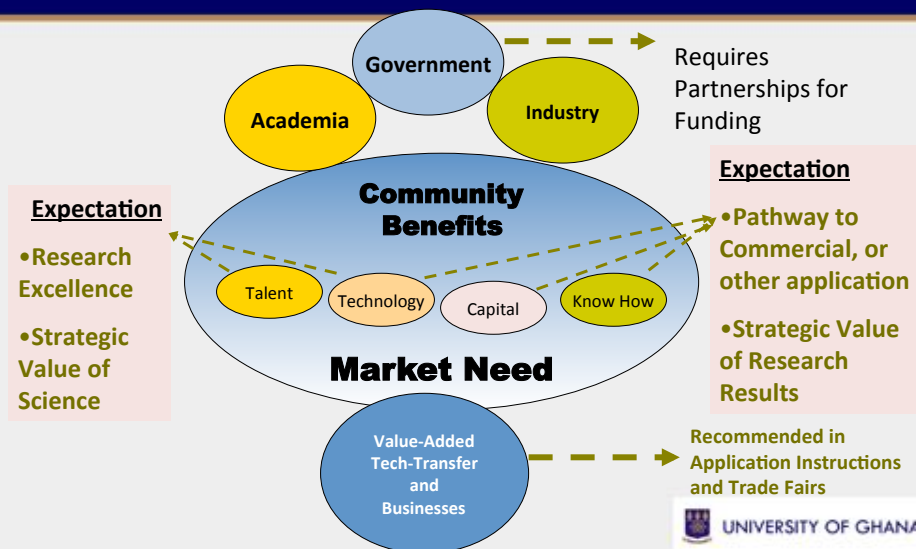
**Global
Africa
Group**

**Funding
Exposure
Critical Mass
Human Capacity
Infra-structure
Poor Networks**



 UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

The Triple Helix Model to deal with Challenges




WUN-GAG Priority Research Themes

- (a) *Environmental change and food security*
- (b) *Public health*
- (c) *Governance, inequality and social inclusion*
- (d) *Higher education and research capacity*
- (e) *Natural resources for inclusive growth and sustainable development*



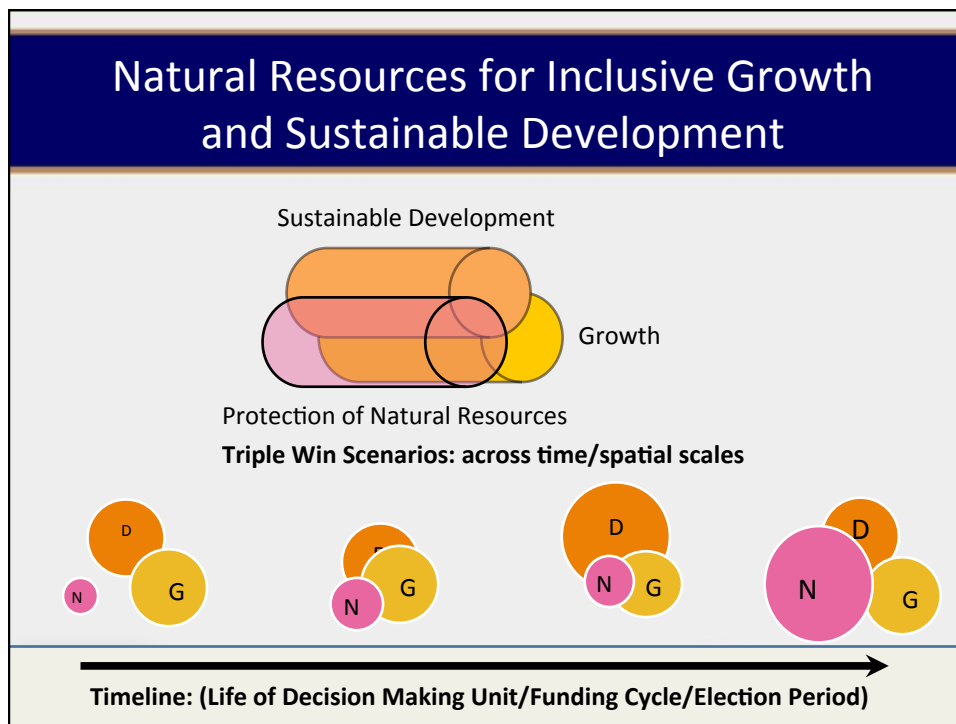

How does WUN-GAG 5 research pillars fit into the big picture? (4/5)

WUN Global Challenges, and The 12 Grand Challenges



	Energy	Enviro-ment	Food	Shelter	Space	Water	Disaster	Governance	Health	Learning	Prosperity	Security	
WUN	★	★	★	★		★					★		
Global Higher Education	[Bar spanning all 12 challenges]												
Public Health (NCDs*)		[Bar spanning Environment, Food, Shelter, Space, Water, Disaster, Governance, Health]											
Responding to Climate Change	[Bar spanning Energy, Environment, Food, Shelter, Space, Water, Disaster, Governance, Health, Learning, Prosperity]												
Understanding Cultures		[Bar spanning Environment, Food, Shelter, Space]					[Bar spanning Water, Disaster, Governance, Health, Learning, Prosperity, Security]						

*Noncommunicable - or chronic - diseases. Cardiovascular, Cancer, Chronic respiratory diseases and Diabetes.

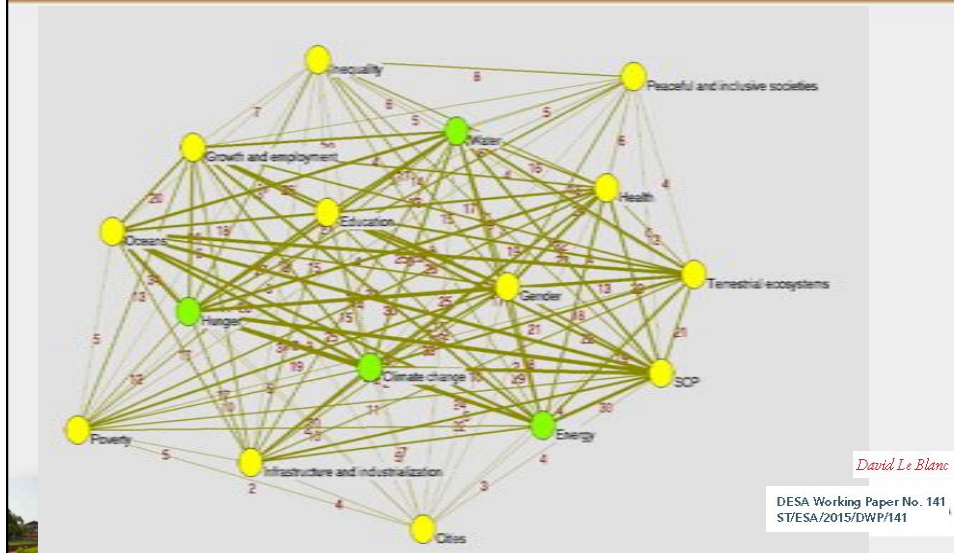


“Wicked Problems” need solutions that are innovative to be effective

- **Acknowledging** the existence of wicked problems (Rittel & Webber , 1972) means admitting the need to face societal challenges for which no definitive answer currently exists.
- Wicked problems are **structurally complex** so that it is hard to say where a given problem stops and another one begins.
- Stakeholders will frame these challenges in different ways so that a **one-size-fits-all solution is highly unlikely**.
- Thinking in terms of wicked problems opens up a **novel repertoire of strategies** to come to grips with these issues.
- There is a need for a **NEW** type of propagandist to address wicked problems with a **trans-disciplinary approach** as the **BAU** approach has not worked/shows no sign of working



SDGs AND the LINKS between the SDGs



African Mountains

- Eastern Africa: highest levels of population growth plus highest rates of deforestation, and high spatial variability in rainfall projections. Within East Africa, the (Ethiopia - Rwanda and Burundi).
- Central and Western Africa: less deforestation and population growth than East Africa, (DRC losses of mountain cloud forest)
- Southern Africa population growth and deforestation rates rival Eastern Africa, predicted to experience a decrease in annual rainfall with extended dry seasons.
- Northern African mountains have the lowest population density across Africa, with the lowest rate of change.



Mount Atewa (400m)



The Atewa Range Forest Reserve (Atewa), one of the forest reserves within Upper Guinea Hotspot, covers a total land area of 263 km² and represents about 33.5% of the remaining closed forest in Ghana's Eastern Region.



Communities: 'Galamsey'

Galamsey (Gather and Sell)

- Education
- Migration
- Child Prostitution
- Security/small arms
- Mob Injustice
- Corruption
- 2016 US\$ 7 Billion
- UG Research Group



Ecosystem Services: Water



Atewa: source of three rivers

- Ayensu
- Birim
- Densu



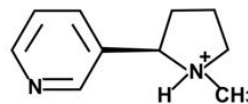
Health: Agro-Chemicals

Cocoa: Mass Spraying

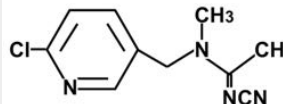
Neonicotinoids



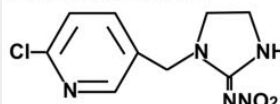
A. Nicotine



B. Neonicotinoid ACE



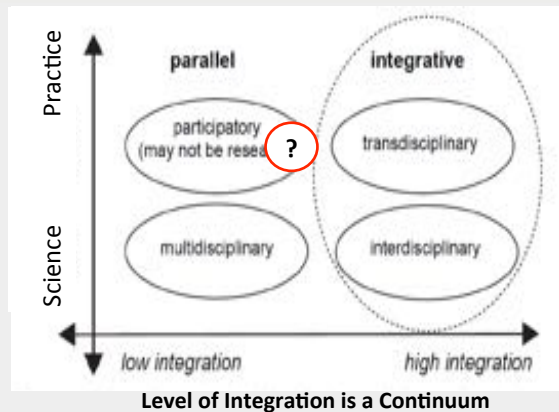
C. Neonicotinoid IMI



What are related (research /policy) processes and structures that shape knowledge sharing between science and practice and what is the governance behind these?
This is where WUN – GAG comes in with the power of a NETWORK

We need to unpack these questions and ADD to them

1. What are related (research policy) **processes** and **structures** that shape knowledge sharing between **science** and **practice** (2 x 2 question)
2. What is the governance behind these?
3. How are topics selected?
4. Who selects topics?



Adapted from Tress et. Al. 2005

5. *Why are the topics selected?*

6. *How can the topics be harmonized synergistically?*



Take home Messages (1)

1.If Research fails, we fail in Everything.

The SDGs will need to incorporate Food Security, Climate Change, Biodiversity and the Alleviation of Poverty as a **UNIFIED** agenda, and without the evidence base from research that is needed to guide policy, this agenda will never be addressed. No one will do this research for Africa unless we lead it ourselves.



Take home Messages (2)

2. Research in Africa needs a new approach.

The approach needs to address issues of:

- **relevance**
- **applicability** to national development needs,
- emphasis placed on **knowledge creation**
- better understanding of **processes** and
- **cost-effective innovation**



Close

$$S = [GI - (P/GAG)] \times WUN$$

Where

S – Successes
 GI – Good Ideas
 P – Pitfalls
 GAG
 WUN



Summary of WUN GAG Public Health Discussions



Overarching theme: *Development of new strategies to tackle infectious diseases in Africa with traditional and biochemical medicine*

- *Traditional medicine, indigenous knowledge systems, demonstrating efficacy and African solutions to African problems*
- *Plant and microbial product identification for infectious diseases*
- *Biochemical and physical mechanisms of infection*

Rationale: Use of traditional medicine up to 80% of population); potential benefits, monitoring toxicology; bolstering under-developed healthcare systems; more effective drug regimes

Aims: establishing who uses traditional medicine and their perception of it; demonstrating the efficacy of these medicines in a clinical setting; how this knowledge can impact on public health policy

Expertise: Chemists, epidemiologists, biophysicists, geneticists, social scientists, pathologists

- WUN Partners – Bergen, Bristol, Ghana, Sheffield
- WUN+ Partners –

Funding: Global Challenges Research Fund, Newton Fund, H3Africa, NIH, Wellcome Trust, Royal Society, Gates, Commonwealth Split-site (PhD) scholarships, DFID, World Bank

Summary of WUN GAG Public Health Discussions



Overarching theme: *Using citizen science to assess the human health, productivity, and economic impacts of air pollution and pollen in a sub-Saharan African setting*

Aims: Identification of community (African cities), co-producing design of air pollution monitoring experiments, identification and quantification of pollutants, modelling of distribution of exposures across different demographic sectors, investigating health and economic outcomes, development of mitigation measures to lower exposures, impact on policy makers.

Expertise: Air pollution experts (modelling), citizen scientists, public health scientists (including clinicians, allergologists), economists, social scientists, policy makers

Current partners: WUN – Bristol, Cape Town, York (Stockholm Environment Institute)
WUN+ – Lagos

Funding: WUN Research Development Fund, Global Challenges Research Fund, Tertiary Education Trust Fund, Nigeria

Summary of WUN GAG Natural Resources Discussions

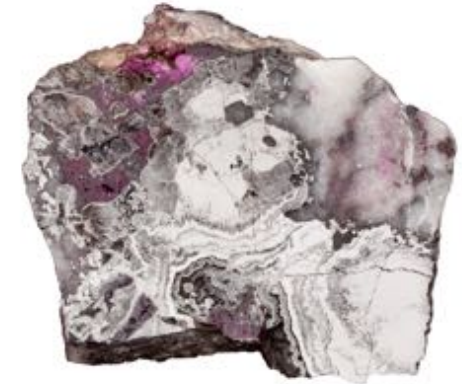
Title: Critical metals and progress toward the green economy in Africa.

Rationale. Society ever more dependent on a suite minerals that drive advanced technologies, and which are inextricably linked to sustainable development in the future. The deport of these elements are poorly understood and offer significant opportunities to develop new steams of critical elements. For example, gallium in bauxite. Also to investigate critical metals that are also conflict minerals (e.g Tungsten- tantalum – governance analysis). This grant recognises an opportunity to consider the scientific and socio economic challenges that need to be met to allow these metals to fuel an inclusive green economy. Recycling. Manufacturing demand in Africa and capital flow.

WUN Expertise: Southampton Critical Grants; Leeds Policy & Governance.

Geology. Bergen policy governance – social science. Accra Gallium markets – potential. Accounting Bristol. Nairobi Environmental. Non – WUN – BGS. Invite to WUN members to join this consortium.

Funding: WUN seed corn; NERC; EU Horizon 20:20. DIFID. African Development Bank – Economic commission for Africa. GCRF. South African Research Foundation. Bilateral agreements between South Africa and associated nations. Ministry of environment Nigeria TET Fund.



Actions: Jamie to contact African Development Bank and Economic Commission for Africa.

Action: SR – work up the page. Explore E Horizon 20:20 and GCRF, DIFID

Action: To to explore opportunities S- eptember call for a workshop.

Generate 1 page that will be distributed around the WUN workshop participants

Summary of WUN GAG Natural Resources Discussions



Title: Oil Platform Decommissioning

Rationale: Maturing assets in the Gulf of Guinea, Nigerian Delta that require decommissioning in environmental sensitive manner. Onshore and offshore with contrast ecosystems. Potential for policy learning between EU – North Sea and Africa and vice versa. Best practice in both geographical contexts but delivered by the same corporate entity. Investigation of the level of compliance with international and local agreements.

This needs a cautious approach.....

What are the accounting dimensions. What are the African Union Policy Dimensions.

WUN Expertise: Accounting Ghana - Southampton – ecosystems. Bergen Ecosystems. Decommission legal issues. Perception analyses. Reading Business School. Aberdeen – decommissioning. Bristol accounting. Potential countries Ghana; Nigeria.

Funding: Norwegian Research Council. WUN Seed corn. EU-Horizon 20:20. Potential funding of initial WUN- RTF workshop/sandpit.

Action: Jamie Petroleum in Leeds.

Summary of WUN GAG Natural Resources Discussions

Title: Catchment Area Development, Conservation and Degradation

Rationale: Land use change in catchment areas in response farming, industrial development and mining. Pollution. Policy issues trans boundary water issues. Opportunities for economic development and the development of energy resources. The river as population/migration laboratory, population resilience to flooding. Degradation of coastal environments due to flooding. Volta as a case catchment. Security issues due to military conflict over water resources and refugee crisis.

WUN Expertise: Local Expertise. Bergen – do everything, Water @ Leeds, Southampton Engineers. Mohammed - Ghana

Funding: NERC, NORAD, Embassies. EU. Local funding for workshops – Tor, Mohammed

Action: Tor to revise current text to a more manageable form.....

Summary of WUN GAG Governance Discussions



Rationale: Migration is a global challenge. On the one hand, we have grand regional integration schemes that seek a 'borderless Africa'. On the other hand, we have great concern about irregular migration across borders and continents. It is a complex phenomena with multiple impacts, and we need to identify and isolate key variables driving migration. There are trans-continental, inter-continental and internal migrations. Migration is linked to a multitude of factors, including inequality, social exclusion, climate change, and political conflicts. There is currently a lack of understanding of how the communications ecosystem shapes decision-making on migration. What information do potential migrants have about the benefits, risks and other dynamics of the destinations (and routes) that they may be considering taking? We need to understand people's choices from their own contexts, own perspectives.

Research Questions:

- What are the current push and pull factors driving migration?
- What flows of information surround people in relation to migration, and how do people make sense and make decisions on the basis of these?
- One form of research might be long-term ethnographic studies in communities from which migrants are leaving. Another would be discourse analysis of media, including social media, and messaging by governments, NGOs. Analysis of Diaspora messaging is a complimentary form of analysis.

Expertise: UG Centre for Migration Studies; Leeds Migration Research Network; UWA Migration, Mobilities and Belongings Research Cluster; Bergen Centre for Migration and Ethnic Relations; Bristol Migration Research Group; UG Communication Studies Department; Leeds School of Media and Communication; UCT Communications Department; UG LECIAD; UWA International Relations

Funding: Global Challenges Fund; Horizon 20:20; AU; ECOWAS; UK ESRC/DFID; Bristol-IOM linkage

Summary of WUN GAG Education Discussions



Overarching theme: Pedagogical techniques for evaluation of the impact of research in Africa and on policy makers

Rationale: Evaluation of pedagogical techniques used by teachers in challenging environments (including the effects of temporary movement in-countries, conflicts and lack of infrastructures)

Expertise: Education, Sciences, Teachers training,

- WUN Partners – Ghana, Southampton, UCT
- WUN+ Partners –

Funding: Global Challenges Research Fund, Newton Fund, British Council, Gates, Commonwealth, DFID, World Bank

Summary of WUN GAG Education Discussions



Overarching theme: *Collecting and sharing research data to inform policy makers while engaging with schools and students communities.*

Rationale: To train students in the science subjects while collecting data related to air pollution in schools

Expertise: Education, Sciences, students enagement, learning

- WUN Partners – Ghana, Southampton
- WUN+ Partners – TBC

Funding: Global Challenges Research Fund, Newton Fund, British Council, Gates, Commonwealth, DFID, World Bank

Summary of WUN GAG Climate Change Discussions

Food security and better livelihoods through climate-smart and sustainable food systems

Different actors (varying scale and forms)
Conflicting interests, common goal?

Pre-farm

- Production inputs providers including seed companies, breeders, fertilizer companies etc.
- Decision making
- Policy
- Power dynamics
- Land access



Farm/ Production unit

(Agro-ecosystems functions including water, nutrient, pest management etc); farm family consumption options, on-farm storage/processing/marketing...



Diverse actors

Aggregators, transporters, traders, processors...



Market

- (Local/ Domestic, Export
- (Dictates choices made by the diverse actors)



House holds/ Consumers

- Rural
- Urban

- Agri-infrastructure (roads infrastructure, powering the food supply chain (sustainable energy options)....
- Support services – research, capacity development, extension, credit, markets



WUN Global Africa Group

Call for Chapter Abstracts

Africa and the Sustainable Development Goals

Deadline: **31 July 2017 (extended)**

The WUN [Global Africa Group](#) (WUN GAG), which is co-chaired by Prof Maano Ramutsindela (University of Cape Town) and Dr David Mickler (University of Western Australia), is an international research network that was officially launched at the University of Ghana on 8-9 June 2017. WUN GAG aims to enhance the opportunities for building global research collaborations, innovations and impact in support of Africa's development agenda.

Towards this end, the WUN GAG is developing a new collaborative research project and publication on *Africa and the Sustainable Development Goals*, which will take the form of an interdisciplinary, peer reviewed, edited book to be published by a major university or commercial publisher in 2018.

The book will feature individual chapter contributions from researchers across various disciplines at WUN GAG member universities and their collaborating partners in Africa and beyond. The project will highlight both research already being done in the WUN and, importantly, the substantial value of innovative global research networks in producing inclusive, collaborative, transformative and impactful research in line with the "Global Partnership for Sustainable Development".

This is a *Call for Abstracts for prospective chapter contributions to this book project.*

The project will draw upon the expertise and international research partnerships forged through the WUN Global Africa Group. It is expected that abstracts will come from a range of different disciplines, although final chapters should be accessible to a more general rather than a narrow discipline-based or technical audience. Each chapter of 5,000 words (including references) should be co-authored by two or more contributors.

Note: Each chapter contribution must have at least one Africa-based co-author and at least one co-author from a WUN member university. Chapters should be both conceived and produced through collaboration.

The book will be divided into four parts along the following lines:

Part 1: Theoretical reflection on the SDGs

The book begins by tracing the conception and formulation of [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs), and the debates that preceded their adoption by the United Nations. The goal in Part 1 of the book is to understand SDGs as a text that evolved throughout the negotiation process, and how scholarly analyses placed them in broader and varied contexts to develop critiques. We call for papers that engage with theoretical debates on SDGs from any vantage point.

Part II: The SDGs and Africa's development agenda

The second part of the book locates the SDGs within African contexts. A key question is what are the intersections or tensions between SDGs, African and other development agendas, and how can we explain them? To answer this question we call for papers that use case studies to evaluate the impact/implications of one or more SDGs on Africa.

Part III: Scientific evidence: Rethinking SDGs

Taking the SDGs as a starting point in Africa's development risks marginalizing existing scientific evidence of what is crucial for the survival of Africa's citizens and Africa's growth. What does scientific evidence tell us about priorities for African states that should inform the direction and implementation of SDGs in Africa's regions? What are the silences in SDGs? Which obstacles should be removed in order to realize the objectives of any of the SDGs? How should we measure the success or failures of SDGs? We invite papers that tackle any of these or related questions.

Part IV: Collaborative research for SDGs

The UN makes it explicit that the realization of SDG objectives depends on collaboration by various stakeholders at various levels. It is expected that collaborative research would deliver scientific results that would guide the SDGs. This raises important questions, namely what are the weaknesses in existing research collaboration or networks? What form should collaborative research take to avoid or overcome the pitfalls associated with the North-South divide? How should collaborative research be configured to be relevant to SDGs in Africa. In other words, how can we understand the role and impact of global research collaboration and networks in relation to Africa and the SDGs? We seek papers that speak to the structure, norms and values of existing collaborative research and what has come out of those collaborative efforts. Prospective authors may also want to think about any issue that relates to collaborative research, including best practices.

Call for Abstracts

Abstracts will be selected on the basis of both quality and appropriate balances between topics, gender of authors, and collaborating institutions. Prospective collaborators are encouraged to include early career and doctoral research students as contributors.

Prospective contributors and their collaborators are invited to submit a chapter abstract (max. 300 words) by **31 July 2017** to Maano Ramutsindela (maano.ramutsindela@uct.ac.za) and David Mickler (david.mickler@uwa.edu.au).

Notification of accepted contributions will be made at in the first week of August 2017. Once abstracts have been selected, a full edited book proposal will be prepared and submitted to major university and commercial publishers in August alongside applications for publication support grants. We hope to secure a publishing contract by October 2017 after which we will plan for a workshop at the University of Cape Town in mid-October 2017 with all authors. The tentative draft chapter deadline is 30 January 2018.

Links

WUN Global Africa Group:

<http://www.wun.ac.uk/wun/research/view/global-africa-group>

UN Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform:

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>

Common African Position on Post-2015 Development Agenda:

<http://cap.africa-platform.org/>

African Union's Agenda 2063:

<http://au.int/en2/agenda2063>




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University of Ghana Hosts WUN GAG Inaugural Strategic Workshop

20 Jun, 2017 |



The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Ebenezer Oduro Owusu, delivering a welcome address

The World Universities Network Global Africa Group (WUN GAG) launched its inaugural Strategic Research Workshop at the University of Ghana in a two-day event that brought together over sixty researchers from twelve WUN partner universities and ten other universities from four continents. The workshop brought together faculty, researchers and postgraduate students from a multitude of countries in an effort to facilitate and promote research collaboration on five priority themes the Group felt were particularly pertinent to human development in the 21st century in Africa: *Environmental change and food security; Public health; Governance, inequality and social inclusion; Higher education and research capacity; and Natural resources for inclusive growth and sustainable development.*

In his welcome address, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana, Professor Ebenezer Oduro

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[University of Ghana Hosts WUN GAG Inaugural Strategic Workshop Vice Chancellor Receives Canadian High Commissioner](#)

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[University of Ghana and Toyota Ghana Limited Sign MOU for A \\$1 Million Ultra-Modern Training Centre for Engineering Science Students](#)

Owusu, described WUN as a cross cutting regional group that facilitates research collaboration, noting that partnerships with such organisations serves to improve African universities and their researchers while addressing ways to meet the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) and solve critical development problems.

According to the Vice-Chancellor, the University's hosting of, and participation of its faculty in the WUN GAG inaugural workshop, is a testimony of the University of Ghana's commitment to create partnerships with international research bodies and promised that UG faculty would play an active role in making the University of Ghana the WUN hub for Africa.

His remarks were echoed by Professor Karuiku, who speaking on behalf of the University of Nairobi's Vice Chancellor, Professor Peter Mbithi, added that while groups such as WUN facilitate networking and collaboration between researchers across universities, challenges such as a lack of government funding for research in African universities make it difficult for African researchers to initiate and complete research. Professor Kariuki also noted that it is vital for researchers to establish a connection between research and practical use of research findings in society.



Professor Karuiku a representative from University of Nairobi interacting with participants

The Co-Chair of GAG, Dr. David Mickler, Chair of WUN Coordinators Group, Dr. Susam Jim, the Deputy Australian High Commissioner, The Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University of York, and the University of Bristol expounded the various benefits of research collaboration and expressed their desire for such partnerships to grow and strengthen in the future.



Dr. David Mickler, Co-Chair of GAG speaking to participants

In his address, University of Ghana's Professor Christopher Gordon spoke at length on the difficulties faced by Ghanaian researchers. He remarked that conducting research on pertinent issues such as pesticide contamination levels in cocoa crops and the effects of 'galamsey' on major sources of water in the country is difficult for researchers because of a lack of up-to-date equipment and financing from their

government and corporate Ghana.



Professor Christopher Gordon addressing participants

Professor Gordon noted that such constraints encourage Ghana’s best students and researchers to pursue their careers in more well-funded and equipped universities overseas. To alleviate some of these constraints, Prof. Gordon encouraged researchers to seek support from non-traditional sources such as NGO’S, industry, and government bodies to whom the findings of such research should be of interest.

The second day of the Inaugural Strategic Research workshop had the researchers and postgraduate students divided into sub-groups based on five priority themes gave a summary of their discussions during their research collaborations. The five themes include Environmental change and food security; Public health; Governance, inequality and social inclusion; Higher education and research capacity and Natural resources for inclusive growth and sustainable development.

The workshop was closed by Co-Chair of GAG, Professor Maano Ramutsindela. He asked researchers to actively research issues that are relevant to their nation’s development. He expressed the hope that networks such as GAG would be able to achieve their goals and in the course of that, enhance research collaboration between African researchers and their foreign counterparts.



A group picture of participants at the workshop

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WUN GAG Holds Group Launch and Inaugural Strategic Research Workshop at UGBS

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□ WUN GAG Holds Group Launch and Inaugural Strategic Research Workshop at UGBS

Jun 21, 2017

A two-day workshop was organised by the Worldwide University Network (WUN) Global Africa Group (GAG) to formally launch the group's inaugural strategic research workshop at the Graduate Building of the University of Ghana Business School (UGBS).

The workshop which was held on the 8th and 9th June, 2017, was in line with the WUN GAG's strategic plan from 2016 to 2018, which sets out the group's objectives, research priority themes and approaches to developing Global-Africa research collaboration through the Network's mechanisms. The workshop is the first stage in the operationalisation of the strategic plan, among other aims, through physical mobility, to connect researchers from the WUN global university members.



Speaking at the inaugural launch, Professor Ebenezer Oduro Owusu, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana, formally welcomed all participants to the University and expressed the University's delight and readiness to assist the group in coming out with cutting-edge impactful research. The Vice chancellor then officially declared the WUN GAG workshop duly launched.

Professor Christopher Gordon, keynote speaker for the event and the Director, Institute for Environment and Sanitation Studies, College of Basics and Applied Sciences University of Ghana, spoke on the inaugural theme, "Building sustainable mountain systems in the sub-Saharan Africa: assessing the linkages between communities, ecosystem services, environment and health". He stated that systems do not sit in isolation and as such building mountain systems requires a comprehensive, holistic evidence based line of action led by comprehensive research.



Prof. Gordon cited the lack of resources and limited funding, exposure, critical mass human capacity and infrastructural challenges in communication, especially

LATEST NEWS

- [21st June, 2017
IMF Ghana Representative Speaks on Regional Economic Outlook for Sub-Saharan Africa \(/news/imf-ghana-representative-speaks-regional-economic-outlook-sub-saharan-africa\)](#)
- [21st June, 2017
Joy FM's Evans Mensah Speaks on Voter Behaviour at UGBS \(/news/joy-fm-%E2%80%99s-evans-mensah-speaks-voter-behaviour-ugbs\)](#)
- [21st June, 2017
Dr. Mahmoud Speaks on Branding At Radio Univers 105.7 \(/news/dr-mahmoud-speaks-branding-radio-univers-1057\)](#)
- [21st June, 2017
WUN GAG Holds Group Launch and Inaugural Strategic Research Workshop at UGBS \(/news/wun-gag-holds-group-launch-and-inaugural-strategic-research-workshop-ugbs\)](#)
- [17th June, 2017
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([ugbs-ed/short-courses-2017](#))

Internet bandwidth as some of the reasons why African Universities experience hitches in getting the critical mass of researchers to unravel mysteries surrounding systemic challenges. Against this background, Prof. Gordon noted that the WUN GAG brings together researchers from member universities to unravel various complexities surrounding African countries. He stated that lack of funding should not be the major hurdle of member universities in the WUN, but trust and respect for the mutual benefit of the group.



Participants were split into five groups under the following priority research themes: Environmental Change and Food Security; Public Health; Governance, Inequality and Social Inclusion; Higher Education and Research Capacity; and Natural Resources for Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development. The outcome was to form specific research project teams under each of the five respective research priority themes and for those projects teams to be in position to competitively apply for external funding after the workshop. The WUN GAG emphasises and supports the physical mobility of researchers, including early career and postgraduate researchers as a means to achieve genuine research collaborations and partnerships.



A day tour was organised to give participants a Ghanaian cultural experience on Saturday, 10th June, 2017, to the historic Cape Coast Castle and the Kakum National Park.

