



YOUNG CHANGEMAKERS /// WEDNESDAY 17 JANUARY 2018

The Africa Green Collar Project: Young Africans Supporting Sustainability

By Churchill Omondi Agutu and Oderick Ilunga

Young Africans are building a movement for the future based on a simple question: What does sustainability mean to you?

Just like the rest of the world, Africa is in dire need of sustainable use of its immense resources. The Africa Green Collar Project aims to empower young African minds by providing them with insight and knowledge from experts, students movements, organisations and students in the field of sustainable energy, water and food. The sustainability space offers a myriad of opportunities and we believe that they can be utilised to unleash the great African potential which is vital to create a better, sustainable future.



Why Young Voices Matter

The Africa Green Collar Project was inspired by two conferences; The 2017 Student Energy Summit (Merida, Mexico) and the Responsible Business Forum (Johannesburg). Attending these two events led us to realise that there is already a great transition globally towards a sustainable future by key players: governments and the private sector. Sub-Saharan Africa, has the opportunity to leap into a sustainable future because this part of the of the world has not been locked into a particular pathway.

We also realised that there was no proper channel to create awareness on this field and its potential benefits to our peers. We therefore, decided to create an online platform where we could engage experts, students, student movements and organisations. To ask them questions about the biggest challenges and available opportunities in sustainability that can be filled to create a sustainable future for Africa and also create jobs for youth! Additionally, we wanted to create content that is more engaging and relatable with our peers!

The project started in November 2017 and currently we have a following of 200 youth on our social media platforms spanning South Africa, East Africa and West Africa. We have managed to publish 4 podcasts, attended two conferences on Wind energy (WindAc, South

Africa 2017) and the Royal Academy of Engineering's 2017 Symposium on Agriculture, Data and the Knowledge Economy. We have also run a social media campaign finding out what sustainability means to people!

Sustainable Sundays



Dr. Olufolahan Osunmuyiwa

Sustainable Energy Transitions in Sub-Saharan Africa

Sustainable Energy Transitions in Sub-Saharan Africa

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As part of our work at the Africa Green Collar Project, we produce a series of digital resources – including videos and podcasts – where we share insight and knowledge as part of a series we call ‘Sustainable Sundays’. In our latest podcast, we spoke to Dr. Olufolahan Osunmuyiwa, a development professional and researcher at the institute for Environmental studies in Amsterdam, on sustainable energy transitions in developing countries more specifically in Sub-Saharan Africa. Listen here: <https://www.greencollarafrica.org/podcasts>

Get Involved

If you're a young person, academic, community organiser or energy professional interested in getting involved in the project please e-mail us at greencollarafrica@gmail.com. You can contribute through an article/blogpost, be part of one of our podcasts, send us a video or a picture telling us "what sustainability means to you"!

Here are some thoughts from our team on why The Africa Green Collar Project is vital for Africa's future!

Fatima Bibi Ahmed (Consultant)

"In every aspect, there are often trends that are followed. These trends come and go while the trends that inspire change remain and often become the foundation for endless possibilities. Sustainability is one such trend that I think youth today should be involved in. It is applicable to our lifestyles and is essential if we plan on having a future that is healthy. The Africa Green Collar Project allows a view into sustainable issues that hit close to home. The content makes the problems and solutions relevant to us and therefore makes the issue more real.

I have often asked myself, like many others, what difference can one person possibly make? The first step is to realise that you are not the only person that is passionate about a cause. There are many people out there who have the same objectives and all it takes is reaching out and voicing your ideas. More importantly, you are never too young or too inexperienced to encourage change; innovation often comes from the most unexpected of places. This is exactly what The Africa Green Collar Project does; it connects people across countries and occupations, utilising the talent and opportunities available to help in realising a sustainable Africa for all."

Simone Jade Naicker (Writer/Blog Consultant)

"Why is the Africa Green Collar Project so important for our time? Well my answer is simple – we need to learn, share and inspire. Engaging with people from various walks of life with different experiences, opens one's mind to new possibilities. Being a chemical engineer, this is extremely valuable to me as I would like to be able to use my technical skills to provide solutions and support to those in need as effectively as possible.

The world is becoming a smaller and smaller place with global communities and social platforms becoming more accessible. I want to be part of the team that shifts the focus to sustainability. Many of us have fantastic ideas about how to improve the world but no dedicated space to share these ideas or hear the ideas of others – that is where this wonderful platform comes in and I am so privileged and excited to be on this sustainability mission!"

Adenuga Dorcas (Social Media and Marketing Director)

“Green Collar Africa is an organisation that was born out of an intense passion for sustainable environment and development with major focus on energy, water and the environment. In a world where resources are being depleted and alternate sources are being researched, there is a need to create awareness and continuously update “the people” about their available options while educating them about the benefits of sustainable production and consumption and how their “footprint” is contributing to the environment and hence, its effect on future generations.

To me, this seems like a noble cause which gives me a chance to be a part of something much bigger than myself while contributing my part, to ensuring that everyone lives sustainably.”

If you’re a young person, academic, community organiser or an expert interested in getting involved in the Africa Green Collar project please e-mail us at greencollarafrica@gmail.com. You can contribute through an article/blogpost, be part of one of our podcasts, send us a video or a picture telling us ”what sustainability means to you”!

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This blog is part of Changing The Story’s #YoungChangemakers series. If you are a young person leading alternative actions for civil society building in ODA-recipient countries and would like to be featured in the series, [contact us](#).