

Innovation: Key to Africa's Industrialisation

A first step to effectively promoting technology and innovation in Africa is for African governments to develop coherent STI policies. Over the past decade many African countries have either developed or revised their STI policies. However, there is often incoherence between STI policies and other development policies. For example, UNCTAD (2015) reviewed STI policies of three countries (Ethiopia, Nigeria and the United Republic of Tanzania) and found that there was lack of coordination between STI and industrial development policies in these countries. Other areas where there is disconnect between STI and other development policies include gender and education.

It is well-known that technological progress tends to be gender and skill-biased. In particular, new technologies tend to favour skilled workers and men (more than unskilled workers and women), which has negative consequences for income distribution and the quest for inclusive development. Despite the importance of these issues and the associated linkages, STI policies in Africa are developed independent of gender and educational policy. To enhance policy coherence, there is the need for STI policies to go hand in hand with educational policies geared towards enhancing the skills of unskilled workers and women to enable them take better advantage of technological progress and make the growth process more inclusive than in the past. There is also the need for African governments to strengthen efforts to align national and regional STI strategies

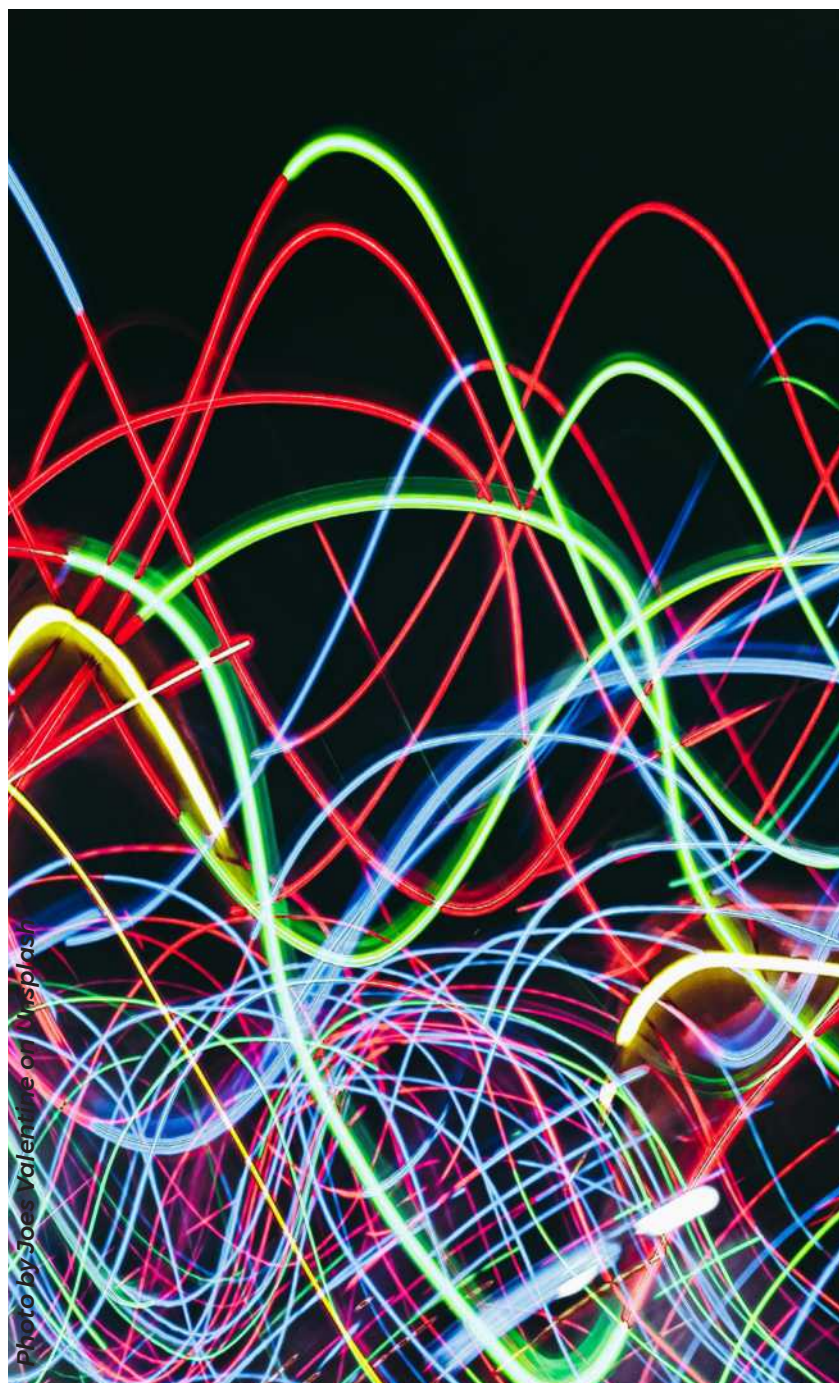


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