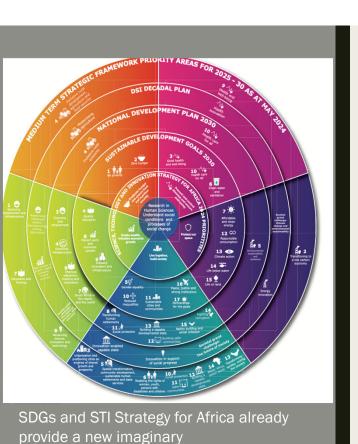
FORGING NEW SOCIO-TECHNICAL IMAGINARIES TO SHAPE INNOVATION POLICY FOR DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

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The need to shift dominant sociotechnical imaginaries

- Socio-technical imaginaries:
 - Powerful, because collective, strongly embedded in institutions
 - Interpret current knowledge, innovation and technological possibilities, set norms for a desirable future, direct research, policy and investment
- Using dominant STI policy imaginaries reveal absence in least developed and low-income African innovation systems:
 - Centred on modernization, knowledge economy and catch up as goal of STI based on limited conceptualisations of the kinds of conditions and development required
 - Do not include in theorization: long history of neo/colonialism, unequal and ecologically damaging extractive insertion into global systems, high degrees of inequality and living in resource poor settings for the majority of citizens
- ⇒ Unable to shape innovation policies towards the desired inclusive and sustainable development goals, and social transformations



- Interpret current technological and digital possibilities, and set norms for a desirable future, in terms of well-being "for all" and planetary boundaries
- What, how and whereby remains underspecified, under theorized and underresearched
- What kinds of knowledge and innovation policy frameworks and strategies can build local capabilities for change processes?

Critical dimensions towards a new socio-technical imaginary

- Frame innovation policy within a decolonisation narrative, informed by a political economy lens on the conditions and contexts of heterogenous countries.
- Align STI, industrial and trade policies in ways that build local capabilities towards technological upgrading that can facilitate local, regional, and continental systems building, to facilitate integration into global value chains.
- Build **new sectoral innovation and production systems** that exploit the opportunities inherent in **new and old technologies** for **meeting human well-being and needs** for shelter, food, energy, water and health.
- Build local innovation and production capabilities and systems that enable interaction with and inclusion of, the large proportion of informal enterprises necessary for livelihoods and resilience.
- Utilise the creativity of local languages, local knowledges and local cultures for solutions relevant and belonging to African agents