WorldGBC Africa Regional Network

Manifesto 2021

A smart and sustainable built environment for everyone, everywhere

The World Green Building Council (WorldGBC) Africa Regional Network represents Green Building Councils and Regional Partners in sub-saharan Africa with a vision to catalyse the uptake of a sustainable built environment for everyone, everywhere across the continent.

The Africa We Want is a resilient, socially inclusive, equitable, environmentally sustainable and culturally vibrant built environment for everyone everywhere

We intend to achieve this by transforming the building and construction sector and entire value chain across three strategic areas -climate action, health & wellbeing, and resources and circularity.

We commit to work with businesses, organisations and governments to drive the ambitions of the Paris Agreement and UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development. Through a systems change approach, our global and regional network is leading the industry towards a net zero carbon, healthy, equitable and resilient built environment.

The Africa Union demonstrates commitment through adoption of Agenda 2063 which provides collective vision and roadmap to achieve its vision, An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens, representing a dynamic force in the international arena, within a 50 year period from 2013 to 2063. Of particular alignment are the following Agenda 2063 goals;

a. A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all citizens.
b. Health and well-nourished citizens
c. Transformed economies
d. Environmentally sustainable and climate resilient economies and communities.
e. World class infrastructure that crisscrosses Africa
f. Africa as a major partner in global affairs and peaceful co-existence
g. Africa takes full responsibility for financing her development goals

In 2019 in Africa, buildings accounted for 57% of total final energy consumption and 32% of total process-related CO2 emissions1.

By 2050; Africa will be home to 1.3Billion more people than today and have more than double the total floor area with more than 80% of that growth occurring in cities especially informal settlements2

The role of a smart sustainable built environment for everyone everywhere is crucial, in fact, it would be impossible to achieve UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 and the AU Agenda 2063 goals unless the vast potential in the built environment sector is unlocked.

We define smart sustainable cities as:3

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1 Global Alliance in Buildings and Construction 2020 Global Status Report
2 World Economic Forum
3 Working Smart Sustainable Cities Definition; Coined from United 4 Smart Sustainable Cities and added inclusivity and integration to ensure vulnerable communities are not left behind
“A smart sustainable city is an innovative city that uses information and communication technologies (ICTs) and other means to improve the quality of life, efficiency of urban operation and services, competitiveness, inclusivity and integration while ensuring that it meets the needs of the present and future generations with respect to economical, social, environmental as well as cultural aspects.”

African leaders must recognise the crucial role that the built environment sector plays in achieving Africa’s climate resilience targets and the goals of the Paris Agreement. Only by prioritising climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience and by championing the establishment of strong national and local policies that support transformative climate action from both the public and private sectors, can the targets and goals of the Paris Agreement be reached. Below are the key areas where we see opportunity for transformative regional and regulatory changes that the Africa Regional Network will be working to support.

1. Climate Resilience
2. Urban Planning
3. Water Use
4. CO2 Emissions
5. Resources and Circularty
6. Health and Wellbeing
7. Biodiversity
8. Value and Cost
9. Smart Places
10. Just Transition

The WorldGBC Africa Regional Network is already at the helm of this transition and is working with national governments, regions, cities, actors across industry and civil society in the implementation of our smart sustainable built environment vision. Our framework is voluntary and requires greater resources and political support for pan-African implementation.

Transition towards a net zero carbon, healthy, equitable and resilient built environment is challenging but inevitable and achievable, and WorldGBC African Regional Network’s community of stakeholders and partners stands ready to assist the Africa Union so that the sector can realise its full potential for delivering our vision for “The Africa We Want”.
