

Invitation to Online Launch of PASAE Report: *Agricultural Engineering in Africa: A Key Driver for Transforming Agriculture to Deliver Food Security and to Support Economic Prosperity*

Agriculture is the mainstay in the economy of most countries in sub-Saharan Africa. With the majority of Africa's population dependent on agriculture-related activities for their livelihood, what happens in African agriculture will determine the future of food security in Africa and the world at large. However, African agriculture is characterised by very low productivity and, therefore, offers very limited opportunities for Africa's growing youth population. An analysis of contributing factors shows that Agricultural Engineering in Africa is a key driver for transforming agriculture to deliver food security and to support economic prosperity.

In a report on "*Agricultural Engineering in Africa: A Key Driver for Transforming Agriculture to Deliver Food Security and to Support Economic Prosperity*" produced by the Pan African Society for Agricultural Engineering (PASAE/AfroAgEng), the role of Agricultural Engineering in developing, adapting and applying technology and thus providing critical input in the solution to many of the challenges facing the African continent is considered and highlights the vital role of Agricultural Engineers in contributing to delivering food and nutrition security.

In a unique collaboration, engineers and educationalist involved in agri-food systems from across the continent have come together to agree on a plan of action to improve this critical engineering and technology solution.

Professor Umezuruike Linus Opara, President of PASAE commented:

"Agricultural Engineering is a unique engineering discipline. It brings together engineering and technology with biological sciences in a truly multi-disciplinary way. It is a wide ranging and exciting area of work with great career opportunities. Many people forget that it includes everything from tractors and mechanisation through to soil and water management, postharvest handling, packaging, storage and food processing, together with the application of novel and emerging technologies such as automation, robotics, and artificial intelligence to improve productivity and efficiency in the agri-food system. Our challenge is to harness the energies of Africa's young population to embrace it as a great career choice"

The Report investigates the challenges facing Africa and highlights the contribution which Agricultural Engineers can make with a particular focus on "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want" and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Editor of the Report and international Agricultural Engineering specialist, Alastair Taylor added:

“It is very clear that Agricultural Engineers will make a huge contribution to the challenges facing Africa and are a crucial component in delivering the aspirations of Africans and the continent. We hope that policy makers and those who shape the future will grasp the contents of this exciting report in their work to utilise and grow the role of this crucially important discipline”.

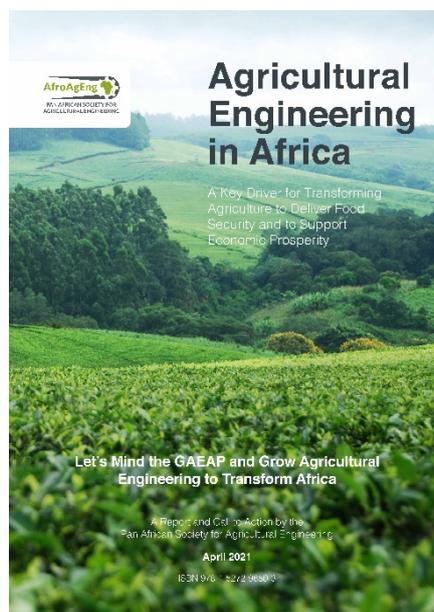
The Report makes 25 recommendations under the broad areas of Raising the Profile of Agricultural Engineering, Reforming and Modernising the Discipline, Growing the Profession, Creating New Opportunities, and Sustaining the Contribution.

Of great importance is the need to reform technical and academic education for Agricultural Engineering to make it better suited to sustainable agri-food systems, entrepreneurship and the needs of employers. Added dimensions include the impacts of variable and changing climate and the environmental impact of agricultural production systems and the need for environmental regeneration and sustainability – subjects that resonate with many governments and are of great interest to the next generation of technologists.

“With such a vibrant young population across Africa, it is all of our interests to engage the African youth in seizing the opportunities which Agricultural Engineering offers. We owe it to them to get them involved” added Mr Taylor.

The report will be launched publicly on Tuesday 3 August 2021. For more information e-mail event@pasae.org.za or contact Professor Jeff Smithers, e-mail: smithers@ukzn.ac.za.

A copy of the report can be downloaded from: <https://pasae.org.za/publications.html>



Registration and Further Information

1. The report will be launched on Tuesday 3 August 2021 via the Zoom platform. The invitation and details to register for the launch are as follows:

You are invited to a Zoom meeting.

When: **3 August 2021 12:00 PM Johannesburg (GMT+2)**

Please register in advance for this meeting:

<https://ukzn.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEqce6prD8tE91290xmJvfXvQ-aOKBCK5W2>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation e-mail containing information about joining the meeting.

2. Questions should be referred to either the report editor, Alastair Taylor, at alast.taylor@gmail.com or the PASAE Secretary-General, Professor Jeff Smithers, at Smithers@ukzn.ac.za.
3. The report can be downloaded from: <https://pasae.org.za/publications.html>
4. The Pan African Society for Agricultural Engineering (PASAE - <http://www.pasae.org.za/>) is often referred to as AfroAgEng and was formed in 2012, as the network of professionals in academia, research, industry and policy, as well as companies and private individuals with interest in the application of engineering principles in agriculture, food and related land-based industries. The Mission of AfroAgEng is to promote and advance the profession of Agricultural Engineering in Africa. The Society seeks to become a key knowledge partner and visible policy advocate on the role of engineering and technology in the transformation and industrialization of agriculture in Africa towards Agenda 2063 and beyond – the Africa We Want.

**Programme of the Launch Event for the PASAE Report on:
*GROWING AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING IN AFRICA***

Date: Tuesday, 03 August 2021 Time: 10:00-11:00 am GMT

10:00	Introduction and Welcome: Objective of the Webinar	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor Jeff Smithers, PASAE Secretary General 	
	Overview of the Report	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Alastair Taylor, Report Coordinator 	
	Statements by selected stakeholders – 5 mins each	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Royal Academy of Engineering (RAEng), UK 	Mr David Thomlinson FEng RAEng Fellow, International Secretary and Chair of Africa Catalyst Steering Committee
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Commission on Agricultural & Biosystem Engineering (CIGR) 	Professor Remigio Berruto CIGR President
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South African Institute of Agricultural Engineers (SAIAE) 	Mr Thabo Mavundza Pr. Eng. SAIAE President
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN 	Mr Patrice Talla Subregional Coordinator for Southern Africa and FAO Representative for Zimbabwe, Lesotho and eSwatini
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modernising African Agriculture Initiative of the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE) 	Dr Margaret Gitau Purdue University and ASABE
	Official launch of the GAEAP Report	
	Professor Adipala Ekwamu	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Secretary, Regional Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) 	
10:55	Closing remarks	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor Umezuruike Linus Opara, PASAE President 	

Registration is required to participate in this webinar. Please register in advance using the following Zoom link:

<https://ukzn.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEqce6prD8tE91290xmJvfXvQ-aOKBck5W2>

For more information, contact:

- PASAE Secretary General, Prof Jeff Smithers, e-mail: smithers@ukzn.ac.za
- PASAE Administrator, e-mail: administrator@pasae.org.za